

**Port Meetings
Titusville, FL
3/26/14, 2:00 p.m**

1) Closures – not being able to harvest fish

Issues/Not Working—

- Closure of red snapper fishery and length of closure.
- Black sea bass season (ESA and protection of right whale measures not applicable to fishery).
- Four month spawning season closure.
- Gag season split season and the opening of the season.
- Grouper season appears to cater to NC and SC.

Solutions--

- Educate new recreational fishermen about potential damage to reef habitat from fishing.
- Collaborate with the states and develop best management practices training for fishing - fish handling training; ethical angling.
- Implement closures based on reliable data
- Open the red snapper fishery year round and implement a 200-lb commercial trip limit.
- Gag grouper - Split the season for gag (January-June; July-December) and keep March/April closed to spawn region-wide. Implement a commercial trip limit of 1,000-lb.
- Re-open gag for January/February for east central Florida fishermen; open red snapper at same time.
- Black sea bass – set management measures that allow for year-round fishing; consider a split season.
- Align seasons to eliminate derby fishing.
- Consider a 500-lb deepwater species limit (commercial).
- No new MPAs under the SAFMC's vision.
- Maximize usage of Total Allowable Catch - many species are underutilized and fishermen should be rewarded when they fish under their TAC by allowing any remaining quota to roll over;
- No more artificial reefs.

2) Lack of cooperative research opportunities for fishermen

Issues/Not Working--

- Cooperative Research – not enough.
- Resistance to cooperative research – do the managers use the information collected during this research? Fishermen perceive the data isn't used in the management process, that this data isn't trusted.

Solutions--

- Collect data and research from fishermen; pair fishermen with scientists to collect data.
- Screening process for scientists – Need to ensure that the scientists conducting research are qualified, up to date on current fishing practices, and using the newest fishing technology/gear in their studies that match what the fishermen are using.
- MRIP - needs to be more focused.

- Consider having the Atlantic coast and Gulf coast of FL use a state-issued reef fish permit that will result in a greater database for the agency and managers.
- Consider a South Atlantic Reef Fish permit that would incur revenue that would go back to states and fund the science.

3) Data issues –assessments not up to-date

Issues/Not Working--

- Assessments are inaccurate and/or use inaccurate data.
- Stock assessments too infrequent and not up to date.

Solutions--

4) Annual Catch Limits (ACLs)- Monitoring and Calculations

Issues/Not Working--

- MRIP overestimates recreational participation.
- The process ignores valid questions submitted inquiring about the science used in an assessment.
- Stock assessments are too infrequent to inform setting the ACLs.

Solutions--

5) Discards

Issues/Not Working--

- Incorrect discard estimates
- Discard mortality is not adjusted for circle hooks.
- Fishermen are paying for discards.

Solutions--

6) Jacks Complex –

Issues/Not Working--

- Jacks complex needs to be separate –
 - The jacks complex ACL is too low.
 - Fishermen/dealers sometimes aren't aware of which species they have. A fisherman discussed that his landed jacks were sold as 'amberjack' and they were in fact almaco jack.
 - South Florida boats catch them all and expend the entire quota.

Solutions--

- Create trip limits for the jacks complex species.
- Create Annual Catch Limits for the 3 separate species.
- Almaco jacks - open year round and a 1,000-lb trip limit.
- Stock assessment for Almaco jacks.

7) Access to the snapper grouper fishery

Issues/Not Working--

- Issues with endorsement programs (mainly golden tilefish); eligibility requirements forces some fishermen out of the fishery.
- Stop fishermen from being squeezed out of fisheries via endorsements
- Consider no additional special endorsements to manage the snapper grouper fishery.

- No pushing of IFQs - potential threat in the future of catch shares being brought up again.
- Do not support new Marine Protected Areas.

Solutions--

- Pioneers/veteran fishermen fishing these species should be rewarded in their fishery.
- The gag trip limit could be decreased even further from 1,000 lbs in order to benefit the market. This would allow the season to continue even longer.
- Require that owner/operators are the only folks allowed in fishery - president of corporation must be on the boat.
- Develop an internship/mentoring process – new folks coming in find out about boats/resources.
- Cease new endorsement programs.
- Keep catch shares / sectors out of the visioning process
- Fire any council members affiliated with an NGO

8) Other Issues

Issues Not Working--

- Cross fishery issues associated with closures; Closure of sandbar sharks.
- The social/economic value of fisheries is not current or being captured in the management documents; 30 year old data used to determine the economic value of fisheries and the total value of impacts isn't captured.
- Management is too policy focused- the policy rather than the science is dictating what fishermen see because there is a basic lack of science.
- Delay in the science and applying it to the management side.