

For the reasons set out in the preamble, 50 CFR part 622 is proposed to be amended as follows:

PART 622--FISHERIES OF THE CARIBBEAN, GULF OF MEXICO, AND SOUTH ATLANTIC

1. The authority citation for part 622 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 et seq.

2. In § 622.190, the last sentence in the introductory paragraph for paragraph (a) and paragraphs (a)(7) and (b) are revised to read as follows:

§ 622.190 Quotas.

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(a) * * * The quotas are in gutted weight, that is eviscerated but otherwise whole, except for the quotas in paragraphs (a)(4) through (7) of this section which are in both gutted weight and round weight.

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(7) Gag--(i) For the 2015 fishing year--295,459 lb (134,018 kg), gutted weight; 348,642 lb (158,141 kg), round weight.

(ii) For the 2016 fishing year--297,882 lb (135,117 kg), gutted weight; 351,501 (159,438 kg), round weight.

(iii) For the 2017 fishing year--318,231 lb (144,347 kg), gutted weight; 375,513 lb (170,330 kg), round weight.

(iv) For the 2018 fishing year--335,188 lb (152,039 kg),

gutted weight; 395,522 lb (179,406 kg), round weight.

(v) For the 2019 and subsequent fishing years--347,301 lb (157,533 kg), gutted weight; 409,816 lb (185,889 kg), round weight.

(b) Wreckfish. The quotas for wreckfish apply to wreckfish shareholders, or their employees, contractors, or agents. The quotas are given round weight. See § 622.172 for information on the wreckfish shareholder under the ITQ system.

(1) For the 2015 fishing year--411,350 lb (186,585 kg).

(2) For the 2016 fishing year--402,515 (182,578 kg).

(3) For the 2017 fishing year--393,490 lb (178,484 kg).

(4) For the 2018 fishing year--385,985 lb (175,080 kg).

(5) For the 2019 fishing year--376,960 lb (170,986 kg).

(6) For the 2020 and subsequent fishing years--369,645 lb (167,668 kg).

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3. In § 622.193, paragraphs (c) and (r) are revised to read as follows:

§ 622.193 Annual catch limits (ACLs), annual catch targets (ACTs), and accountability measures (AMs).

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(c) Gag--(1) Commercial sector. If commercial landings, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the applicable commercial quota, specified in § 622.190(a)(7), the

AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the commercial sector for gag for the remainder of the fishing year.

(2) Recreational sector. (i) If recreational landings, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the applicable recreational ACL, specified in paragraph (c) (2) (iv) of this section, and gag are overfished, based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the gag recreational sector for the remainder of the fishing year. On and after the effective date of such notification, the bag and possession limits for gag in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero. These bag and possession limits also apply in the South Atlantic on board a vessel for which a valid Federal commercial or charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, without regard to where such species were harvested, i.e., in state or Federal waters.

(ii) Without regard to overfished status, if gag recreational landings exceed the recreational ACL, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register, at or near the beginning of the following fishing year, to reduce the recreational ACL for that fishing year by the amount of the overage.

(iii) Recreational landings will be evaluated relative to the ACL based on a moving multi-year average of landings, as described in the FMP.

(iv) The recreational ACL for gag is 310,023 lb (148,025 kg), gutted weight, 365,827 (165,936 kg), round weight, for 2015; 312,351 lb (149,137 kg), gutted weight, 368,574 lb (175,981 kg), round weight, for 2016; 331,902 lb (158,472 kg), gutted weight, 391,644 lb (186,997 kg), round weight, for 2017; 348,194 lb (166,251 kg), gutted weight, 410,869 lb (196,176 kg), round weight, for 2018; and 359,832 lb (171,807 kg), gutted weight, 424,602 lb (202,733 kg), round weight, for 2019 and subsequent fishing years.

(r) Wreckfish--(1) Commercial sector. The ITQ program for wreckfish in the South Atlantic serves as the accountability measures for commercial wreckfish. The commercial ACL for wreckfish is equal to the applicable commercial quota specified in § 622.190(b).

(2) Recreational sector. (i) If recreational landings for wreckfish, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the recreational ACL specified in paragraph (r)(2)(ii) of this section, then during the following fishing year, recreational landings will be monitored for a persistence in increased landings and, if necessary, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register, to reduce the length of the following

recreational fishing season by the amount necessary to ensure recreational landings do not exceed the recreational ACL in the following fishing year. However, the length of the recreational season will also not be reduced during the following fishing year if the RA determines, using the best scientific information available, that a reduction in the length of the following fishing season is unnecessary.

(ii) The recreational ACL for wreckfish is 21,650 (9,820 kg), round weight, for 2015; 21,185 lb (9,609 kg), round weight, for 2016; 20,710 lb (9,394 kg), round weight, for 2017; 20,315 lb (9,215 kg), round weight, for 2018; 19,840 lb (8,999 kg), round weight, for 2019; and 19,455 lb (8,825 kg), round weight, for 2020 and subsequent fishing years.