

# OVERVIEW

## Snapper Grouper Council Session

March 3-5, 2010  
Jekyll Island Club Hotel  
371 Riverview Drive  
Jekyll Island, GA

The Snapper Grouper Committee needs to: (A) receive a report on data analyses from the Science Center (including new rebuilding projections for red snapper) and a report on fishery dependent and independent plans; (B) receive a report on the findings and recommendations of the fishery independent workshop; (C) review alternatives in Amendment 17A, modify document as necessary, and select preferred alternatives for the actions specifying the monitoring program and accountability measures; (D) review alternatives in Amendment 18, modify document as necessary, select preferred alternatives where possible, and provide guidance to staff; (E) review alternatives in Amendment 20 and the options paper, modify documents as necessary, select preferred alternatives where possible, and provide guidance to staff; (F) receive a presentation on the ABC Control Rule; and (G) review the proposed actions in the Comprehensive ACL Amendment, modify document as necessary, and provide guidance to Team.

### **A. Presentation of Red Snapper Rebuilding Projections and Fishery Dependent and Independent Monitoring Plans (Attachments 1-4)**

Amendment 17A includes actions to end overfishing and establish a rebuilding plan for red snapper. The amendment specifies a number of rebuilding strategies based on constant fishing mortality projections at  $F_{40\%SPR}$ ,  $F_{REBUILD}$ ,  $85\%F_{40\%SPR}$ ,  $75\%F_{40\%SPR}$ , and  $65\%F_{40\%SPR}$ , which include an assumption of very high recruitment as defined in the document entitled Red Snapper Projections VII dated November 8, 2009. At their December 2009 meeting, the Council requested additional rebuilding strategies that consider very high recruitment for an  $F_{30\%SPR}$  proxy for  $F_{MSY}$ . NMFS requested projections of spawning stock biomass, recruitment, landings, discards, and probability of stock recovery from 2007 to  $T_{MAX}$  that considers very high recruitment for fishing mortality rates  $F_{45\%SPR}$ ,  $F_{30\%SPR}$ ,  $F_{REBUILD}$ ,  $85\%F_{30\%SPR}$ ,  $75\%F_{30\%SPR}$ , and  $65\%F_{30\%SPR}$  (**Attachment 1**). The analyses were sent to SERO (**Attachment 2**).

At the December 2009 meeting, the Council made the following two motions:

MOTION #18: Request the SEFSC to provide a fishery independent monitoring plan for red snapper at our March 2010 meeting.

MOTION #20: Request the SEFSC to provide a fishery dependent monitoring plan for red snapper at our March 2010 meeting

**Attachment 3** contains the request to SEFSC. SEFSC will present the plans to the Council (**Attachment 4**).

**REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION:** Take action as necessary.

**B. Fishery Independent Monitoring Program Development Workshop**

SAFMC and SEFSC convened a workshop to develop a fishery independent monitoring program for South Atlantic Snapper grouper species. The workshop was held November 16-20, 2009 in Beaufort, NC. John Carmichael will present the findings and recommendations of the workshop.

Previous assessments and Fishery Management Plans document the need for increased fishery independent monitoring programs in the South Atlantic, and this need is becoming even more critical as the Council considers large scale time and area closures to end overfishing for red snapper. The goals of the workshop were to determine what new monitoring programs may be required and how existing programs may be expanded to provide adequate coverage of the snapper grouper resource over the range managed by the South Atlantic Council.

**REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION:** Take action as necessary.

**C. Amendment 17A (Attachments 5-7)**

A SEDAR assessment was completed in February 2008 and indicated that red snapper are overfished and undergoing overfishing (**Attachment 5**). The Council received notification, in a letter dated July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2008, that the South Atlantic red snapper stock is undergoing overfishing and is overfished and that the Magnuson-Stevens Act requires the Council to prepare a plan amendment or proposed regulations to end overfishing within one year (**Attachment 6**). Measures to end overfishing and establish a rebuilding program are being developed in Amendment 17A.

Actions proposed in Amendment 17A (**Attachment 7**) would:

- Specify an ACL and an AM for red snapper with management measures to end overfishing and to reduce the probability that catches will exceed the stocks' ACL.
- Specify a rebuilding plan for red snapper.
- Specify status determination criteria for red snapper.
- Require the use of circle hooks in the snapper grouper fishery.
- Specify a monitoring program for red snapper.

The Committee will receive a presentation from Dr. Stephen Holiman on the economic effects of the closed area. The plan is for NMFS to file the DEIS on February 19th with a publication date of February 26.

**REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION:** Review alternatives in Amendment 17A, modify document as necessary, and select preferred alternatives for the actions specifying the monitoring program and accountability measures.

**D. Amendment 18 (Attachment 8)**

Actions proposed in Amendment 18 (**Attachment 8**) would:

- Extend the range of the Snapper Grouper FMP north;
- Limit participation and effort in the golden tilefish fishery;
- Limit participation and effort in the black sea bass pot fishery;
- Separate the snowy grouper quota into regions/states;
- Change the golden tilefish fishing year;
- Improve the accuracy, timing, and quantity of fisheries statistics; and
- Designate EFH in the new northern areas.

**REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION:** Review alternatives in Amendment 18, modify document as necessary, select preferred alternatives where possible, and provide guidance to staff.

**E. Amendment 20 (Attachments 9 & 10)**

Actions proposed in Amendment 20 would:

- Specify ACLs & AMs for wreckfish
- Modify and update the wreckfish ITQ program

Staff has developed two documents for Council review. The first document is a revised version of Amendment 20 based on the changes requested at the last Council meeting (**Attachment 9**). The second document is an options paper that could replace Chapter 2 of Amendment 20 if the Council thinks it is appropriate (**Attachment 10**). Staff devised this options paper to make it consistent with the catch share options consider for Gulf red snapper and grouper catch share programs while at the same time incorporating all of the actions and alternatives already devised by the Council in Amendment 20. Staff will review the actions and alternatives with the Council.

**REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION:** Review alternatives in Amendment 20 and the options paper, modify documents as necessary, select preferred alternatives where possible, and provide guidance to staff.

**F. ABC Control Rule and Comprehensive ACL Amendment (Attachments 11 & 12)**

The Council will receive a presentation from the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) on the ABC Control Rule (**Attachment 11**). The Comprehensive ACL amendment will specify the ABC Control Rule, ABCs, ACLs, ACTs, AMs, and allocations for all species managed by the Council not subject to overfishing (**Attachment 12**). This includes species in the Snapper Grouper, Coral, Sargassum, and Dolphin Wahoo FMUs. The SSC is scheduled to provide OFL and ABC recommendations by April 2010.

**REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION:** Modify document as necessary and provide guidance to Team.