



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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Melvin Bell, Chair | Stephen J. Poland, Vice Chair
John Carmichael, Executive Director

AGENDA Snapper Grouper Committee Via Webinar

Tuesday, June 15, 2021 8:30 am – 5:30 pm

Wednesday, June 16, 2021 8:30 am – 12:00 noon

Approval of Agenda

Approval of March 2021 Minutes

1. Status of Amendments under Formal Review – NMFS SERO
 - a. Regulatory Amendment 34 (SMZs in NC and SC)
2. Gag Grouper (*Attachment 1*)
 - a. Assessment Presentation – SEFSC Staff
 - b. SSC Recommendations – Genny Nesslage, SSC Chair
 - c. [Gag Grouper Fishery Overview](#) – Michael Schmidtke
 - d. **Committee Action:** Determine Acceptable Biological Catch and management response
3. Red Porgy (Amendment 50) (*Attachment 2 and AP Report*)
 - a. AP recommendations – Jimmy Hull, AP Chair
 - b. Overview of Decision Document – Myra Brouwer
 - c. **Committee Action:** Review draft amendment and consider approval for public hearings
4. Tilefish (*Attachment 3*)
 - a. Assessment Presentation – SEFSC Staff
 - b. SSC Recommendations – Genny Nesslage
 - c. [Tilefish Fishery Overview](#) – Michael Schmidtke
 - d. **Committee Action:** Determine Acceptable Biological Catch and management response
5. Yellowtail Snapper (*Attachment 4 and AP Report*)
 - a. [Yellow Snapper Fishery Overview](#) – Chip Collier
 - b. AP recommendations – Jimmy Hull
 - c. Review Discussion Paper – Myra Brouwer

6. Red Snapper (*Attachment 5*)
 - a. Assessment Presentation – SEFSC Staff
 - b. SSC Recommendations – Genny Nesslage
 - c. [Red Snapper Fishery Overview](#) – Chip Collier
 - d. **Committee Action:** Determine management response
7. AP Recommendations on Items not Covered Elsewhere on the Agenda (*AP Report*) – Jimmy Hull
8. Updates on South Atlantic Red Snapper Count and Greater Amberjack Count – Myra Brouwer and Chip Collier
9. Other Business

Adjourn

Committee Members

Jessica McCawley, Chair

Kerry Marhefka, Vice-chair

Mel Bell

Anna Beckwith

Chester Brewer

Kyle Christiansen

Chris Conklin

Andy Strelcheck

Tim Griner

Carolyn Belcher

LT Robert Copeland

Steve Poland

Art Sapp

Spud Woodward

Mid-Atlantic Members: Tony DiLernia, Dewey Hemilright

Attachments:

AP Report: Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel (AP) Report – April 2021

Attachment 1: Gag Grouper Assessment Presentation

Attachment 2: Amendment 50 Decision Document

Attachment 3: Tilefish Assessment Presentation

Attachment 4: Yellowtail Snapper Discussion Paper

Attachment 5: Red Snapper Assessment Presentation

Staff Lead: Michael Schmidtke (mike.schmidtke@safmc.net)

OVERVIEW

Snapper Grouper Committee

The Committee will approve the minutes from the March 2021 meeting and the agenda for the June 2021 Committee meeting.

1. Status of Amendments under Formal Review

NMFS SERO staff will update the Committee on the status of amendments under review or recently submitted.

Required Committee Action: None.

2. Gag Grouper (*Attachment 1*)

SEDAR 71 included data through 2019 and indicated that the Gag Grouper stock in the South Atlantic is overfished and experiencing overfishing. Since the last update (2012), the current assessment has estimated very poor recruitment (2010-2019), and despite declines in landings over the same period, spawning biomass has continued to decline while fishing mortality has increased. SEFSC staff will deliver a presentation on the assessment's results to the Committee. The South Atlantic SSC reviewed results of SEDAR 71 in April 2021. Genny Nesslage, Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) Chair, will deliver the SSC's recommendations. In addition, Council staff will provide an overview of available Gag Grouper landings and other pertinent data. Click [HERE](#) to access the data online.

Required Committee Action: Discuss ABC determination and management response and direct staff as needed.

3. Red Porgy (Amendment 50) (*Attachment 2 and AP Report*)

The most recent assessment of the Red Porgy stock in the South Atlantic followed a standard approach with data through 2017 (SEDAR 60 2020) and incorporated the revised estimates for recreational catch (Fishing Effort Survey). The findings of the assessment indicated that the South Atlantic Red Porgy stock is overfished and undergoing overfishing. The Council received the results of the assessment and the SSC's recommendations at their June 2020 meeting and directed staff to begin work on a plan amendment. Scoping hearings were conducted in February 2021 and, during the March 2021 meeting, the Committee reviewed, modified, and approved actions and the range of alternatives under each action for further analyses. Jimmy Hull, Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel (AP) Chair, will deliver feedback from the AP. Council staff will provide an overview of the decision document and updated analyses.

Required Committee Action: Review decision document, consider AP and consider recommending approval for public hearings.

4. Tilefish (*Attachment 3*)

SEDAR 66 included data through 2018 and indicated that the Tilefish stock in the South Atlantic is not overfished and is not experiencing overfishing, although the assessment notes high uncertainty in both statuses. SEFSC staff will deliver a presentation on the assessment's results to the Committee. The South Atlantic SSC reviewed results of SEDAR 66 in April 2021. Genny Nesslage, SSC Chair, will deliver the SSC's

recommendations. In addition, Council staff will provide an overview of available Tilefish landings and other pertinent data. Click [HERE](#) to access the data online.

Required Committee Action: Discuss ABC determination and management response and direct staff as needed.

5. Yellowtail Snapper (*Attachment 4 and AP Report*)

The Council received catch level recommendations for the Yellowtail Snapper stock in the South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico during its December 2020 meeting. The Council instructed staff to initiate an amendment to the Snapper Grouper FMP to respond to those recommendations in cooperation with the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council since the stock overlaps both Councils' jurisdictions. The Snapper Grouper AP discussed the Yellowtail Snapper Fishery during its April 2021. Council staff will provide an overview of available Yellowtail Snapper landings and other pertinent data. Click [HERE](#) to access the data online. The Committee will receive the AP's feedback, a tentative timeline of development, and the suite of actions that were once considered for the fishery (*Attachment 4*).

Required Committee Action: Review tentative amendment timing and provide guidance. Review actions previously considered in Amendment 44 and Regulatory Amendment 32 and public and AP input. Provide guidance on actions to develop for September 2021.

6. Red Snapper (*Attachment 5*)

SEDAR 73 included data through 2019 and indicated that the Red Snapper stock in the South Atlantic is not yet rebuilt and is experiencing overfishing. Compared to the last benchmark assessment (SEDAR 41, 2017), this assessment suggested lower levels of overfishing in terminal years and higher values of stock size relative to their benchmarks. SEFSC staff will deliver a presentation on the assessment's results to the Committee. The South Atlantic SSC reviewed results of SEDAR 73 in April 2021, and will revisit these results with additional information in the summer of 2021. Genny Nesslage, SSC Chair, will deliver the SSC's comments and recommendations. In addition, Council staff will provide an overview of available Red Snapper landings and other pertinent data. Click [HERE](#) to access the data online.

Required Committee Action: Discuss or determine a management response and direct staff as needed.

7. Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel (AP) Recommendations not covered in previous items (*AP Report*)

The Snapper Grouper AP met on April 21-23, 2021, and discussed a list of topics besides those addressed in this Committee meeting. Some of these topics are scheduled to be discussed in September. Jimmy Hull, AP Chair, will deliver the AP's recommendations on items not scheduled for discussion at this meeting or scheduled for September.

Required Committee Action: Discuss and provide guidance as appropriate.

8. Updates on Red Snapper and Greater Amberjack Research Projects

Council staff will update the Committee on the status of research projects to obtain abundance estimates for Red Snapper and Greater Amberjack.

In 2020, the NMFS Sea Grant Consortium received funding to administer programs to solicit research on Red Snapper (South Atlantic) and Greater Amberjack (South Atlantic and Gulf). The goal is to support research that would generate absolute estimates of abundance, with accompanying measures of uncertainty, for these stocks. The intent is for this information to be used as an “anchor point” for future stock assessments. These are sister projects to the much larger “Great Red Snapper Count” that was conducted in the Gulf of Mexico. Council staffs serve on the Steering Committees for each project and will be providing updates on progress to date for each project.