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Amendment 44 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Snapper Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region

Amendment 55 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Reef Fish Resources of the Gulf of Mexico

Catch Level Adjustments and Allocations for Southeastern U.S. Yellowtail Snapper

Environmental Assessment

June 2023

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Snapper Grouper Amendment 44 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Snapper Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region/Reef Fish Amendment 55 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Reef Fish Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico

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Proposed actions: The actions in Amendment 44 to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for the Snapper Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region and Amendment 55 to the FMP for the Reef Fish Resources of the Gulf of Mexico would modify management of Southeastern U.S. yellowtail snapper. Actions would revise the jurisdictional allocation, annual catch limits, and South Atlantic sector allocations.

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This Environmental Assessment (EA) is being prepared using the 2020 CEQ NEPA Regulations as modified by the Phase I 2022 revisions. The effective date of the 2022 revisions was May 20, 2022, and reviews begun after this date are required to apply the 2020 regulations as modified by the Phase I revisions unless there is a clear and

fundamental conflict with an applicable statute. This EA began on [Date] and accordingly proceeds under the 2020 regulations as modified by the Phase I revisions.

Abbreviations Used in This Document

TO BE UPDATED/COMPLETED

ABC	acceptable biological catch
ACL	annual catch limit
ACT	annual catch target
AM	accountability measure
APAIS	Access Point Angler Intercept Survey
CHTS	Coastal Household Telephone Survey
Councils	South Atlantic Fishery Management Council and Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council
EA	Environmental Assessment
EEZ	exclusive economic zone
F	Fishing mortality
FES	Fishing Effort Survey
FHS	For-hire Survey
FMP	Fishery Management Plan
F_{MSY}	Fishing mortality at maximum sustainable yield
GMFMC	Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council
Gulf	Gulf of Mexico
Gulf Council	Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council
lb	pound
Magnuson-Stevens Act	Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act
MFMT	maximum fishing mortality threshold
mp	million pounds
MRIP	Marine Recreational Information Program
MRFSS	Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey
MSST	minimum stock size threshold
MSY	Maximum sustainable yield
mt	metric tons
nm	nautical miles
NMFS	National Marine Fisheries Service
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
OFL	overfishing limit
OY	Optimum yield
Reef Fish FMP	Fishery Management Plan for Reef Fish Resources in the Gulf of Mexico
SAFMC	South Atlantic Fishery Management Council
SEDAR	Southeast Data Assessment and Review
South Atlantic Council	South Atlantic Fishery Management Council
SPR	Spawning potential ratio
SSB	Spawning stock biomass
SSC	Scientific and Statistical Committee
ww	whole weight

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Summary

Why are the South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Councils considering action?

Yellowtail snapper is considered a single stock in the South Atlantic and the Gulf of Mexico. It is jointly managed by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (South Atlantic Council) and the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Gulf Council) (together, Councils) under two separate fishery management plans (FMP). An Interim Analysis (2022 SEDAR 64 Interim Analysis) was conducted for yellowtail snapper following the benchmark 2020 Southeast Data Assessment and Review (SEDAR) assessment (SEDAR 64), which used data through 2017. Both the South Atlantic Council and the Gulf Council determined that too much time had passed after SEDAR 64 had been completed to address the acceptable biological catch (ABC) guidance they received from the Councils' Scientific and Statistical Committees (SSC) review of SEDAR 64. Therefore, both Councils requested an interim analysis to the 2020 SEDAR 64 using data through 2020. The 2022 SEDAR 64 Interim Analysis applied updated landings and discards data for each fleet from 2018 through 2020. Adjusted projections of spawning stock biomass, recruitment, retained yield, and updated landings and discards were used to inform the overfishing limit (OFL) and the ABC. The Councils will use this information when they consider the jurisdictional allocation, catch limits, and sector allocations (South Atlantic only). The 2022 SEDAR 64 Interim Analysis estimated that the stock was **not overfished nor undergoing overfishing** as of 2020. In addition, the 2020 SEDAR 64 assessment and the 2022 SEDAR 64 Interim Analysis used revised estimates for recreational catch from the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) Fishing Effort Survey (FES). In 2018, MRIP fully transitioned its estimation of recreational effort to the mail-based FES. Previous estimates of recreational catch for yellowtail snapper were made using the Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey (MRFSS). The latter was not considered as reliable and robust as the new FES survey method (see Section 1.6). Updated projections of catch and data changes incorporated in the 2022 SEDAR 64 Interim Analysis provided information to update the overfishing limit (OFL), ABC, South Atlantic annual optimum yield ([OY], see section 1.4 for stock OY information), and annual catch limits (ACL), see Table 1.4.1.

Both the South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico's SSCs jointly recommended a new OFL and ABC for the stock based on results of the SEDAR 64 Interim Analysis. Because SEDAR 64 includes updated recreational landings estimates based on MRIP-FES the Councils are reviewing the jurisdictional allocation. The South Atlantic and Gulf ACLs would be adjusted based on the preferred jurisdictional allocation. In addition, South Atlantic sector allocations need to be reviewed to comply with the South Atlantic Council's Allocation Review Trigger Policy (Appendix C).

Purpose and Need

Purpose: The *purpose* of this fishery management plan amendment is to revise the overfishing limit, acceptable biological catch, the jurisdictional allocation between the South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Councils, South Atlantic annual optimum yield, South Atlantic and Gulf annual catch limits, and South Atlantic sector allocations, for southeastern U.S. yellowtail snapper based on the results of the 2020 SEDAR 64 stock assessment and following 2022 SEDAR 64 Interim Analysis.

Need: The *need* for this fishery management plan amendment is to update existing catch limits and allocations for southeastern U.S. yellowtail snapper to be consistent with the best scientific information available, and achieve optimum yield while minimizing, to the extent practicable, adverse social and economic effects.

What actions are being proposed in this plan amendment?

Amendment 44 to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for the Snapper Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region (Snapper Grouper Amendment 44)/Amendment 55 to the FMP for the Reef Fish Resources of the Gulf of Mexico (Reef Fish Amendment 55) proposes three actions.

Action 1: Modify the yellowtail snapper stock acceptable biological catch and the jurisdictional allocation of the stock acceptable biological catch between the South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Councils' Jurisdictions

> **Purpose of Action:** This action will update the overfishing limit and stock acceptable biological catch for southeastern U.S. yellowtail snapper, based on the results of the Scientific and Statistical Committees' review of the 2022 SEDAR 64 Interim Analysis. This action will also divide the Scientific and Statistical Committees' recommended yellowtail snapper ABC between the South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico jurisdictions. The Councils are considering revising the jurisdictional allocation because of the change to the MRIP FES data units for estimating and monitoring recreational landings.

Action 2: Revise the total annual catch limit and annual optimum yield for yellowtail snapper in the South Atlantic and revise the total annual catch limit for yellowtail snapper in the Gulf of Mexico

> **Sub-Action 2a: Revise the South Atlantic total annual catch limit and annual optimum yield for yellowtail snapper to reflect the new overfishing limit, acceptable biological catch, and jurisdictional allocation of the stock acceptable biological catch limit**

Purpose of Sub-Action: The yellowtail snapper total ACL is being revised to incorporate the best scientific information available via the new ABC recommendations of the Scientific and Statistical Committees, based on the 2020 SEDAR 64 stock assessment and following 2022 SEDAR 64 Interim Analysis, both of which included updated recreational landings from the MRIP FES. The total ACL and South Atlantic annual OY in pounds whole weight that results from each alternative depends on the preferred alternative selected in **Action 1**.

Sub-Action 2b: Revise the Gulf of Mexico acceptable biological catch buffer to set the total annual catch limit for yellowtail snapper

Purpose of Sub-Action: The yellowtail snapper total ACL is being revised based on the jurisdictional allocation selected in Action 1, and to incorporate the best scientific information available as reflected in the SSC's new ABC recommendations, based on the 2022 SEDAR 64 stock assessment and the subsequent 2022 SEDAR 64 Interim Analysis, which includes updated recreational landings from the MRIP FES.

Action 3: Revise the South Atlantic yellowtail snapper sector allocations and sector annual catch limits

Purpose of Action: Allocations need to be reviewed since the recreational landings estimates changed in the new assessment. Recreational landings are now estimated using data from the MRIP FES rather than the Coastal Household Telephone Survey (CHTS).

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 What actions are being proposed in this plan amendment?

The actions in Amendment 44 to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for the Snapper Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region (Snapper Grouper Amendment 44)/Amendment 55 to the FMP for the Reef Fish Resources of the Gulf of Mexico (Reef Fish Amendment 55) would modify management of yellowtail snapper in the South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico (Gulf). Actions include revising the overfishing limit (OFL) and acceptable biological catch level (ABC) based on the best scientific information available, the jurisdictional allocation of the ABC between the South Atlantic and Gulf, annual catch limits (ACL), and South Atlantic annual optimum yield (OY) and sector allocations.

Management Agencies

Gulf of Mexico and ***South Atlantic Fishery Management Councils*** – Engage in a process to determine a range of actions/alternatives and recommend action to the National Marine Fisheries Service.

National Marine Fisheries Service and ***Council staffs*** – Develop alternatives based on guidance from the Council and analyze the environmental impacts of those alternatives.

Secretary of Commerce – Will approve, disapprove, or partially approve the amendment as recommended by the Councils.

1.2 Who is proposing the amendment?

The Southeastern U.S. yellowtail snapper stock is considered a single unit in the South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico. As such, the fishery is managed jointly by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (South Atlantic Council) and Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Gulf Council) (together, Councils) under two separate fishery management plans (FMP). This is a joint FMP amendment for each Council's FMP and must be approved by both Councils. Once both Councils approve the amendment, it will be submitted to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) for approval and implementation by the Secretary of Commerce. NMFS is a line office in the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

1.3 Where is the project located?

Management of the South Atlantic stock of yellowtail snapper occurs in the 3-200 nautical miles (nm) U.S. exclusive economic zone (EEZ) in the South Atlantic, and 9-200 nm in the Gulf of Mexico (Figures 1.3.1 and 1.3.2) and is conducted under the Snapper Grouper FMP (SAFMC 1983) and Reef Fish FMP (GMFMC 1984).

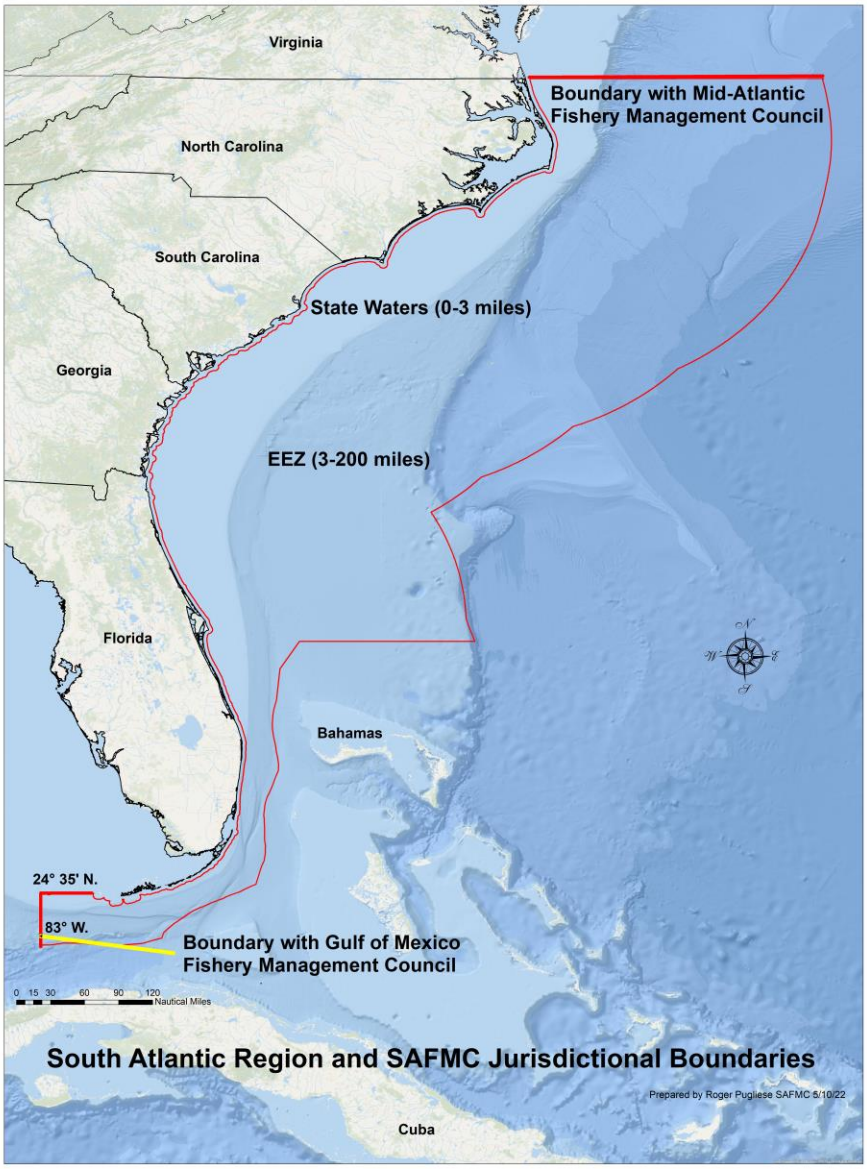

Figure 1.3.1. Jurisdictional boundaries of the South Atlantic Council.

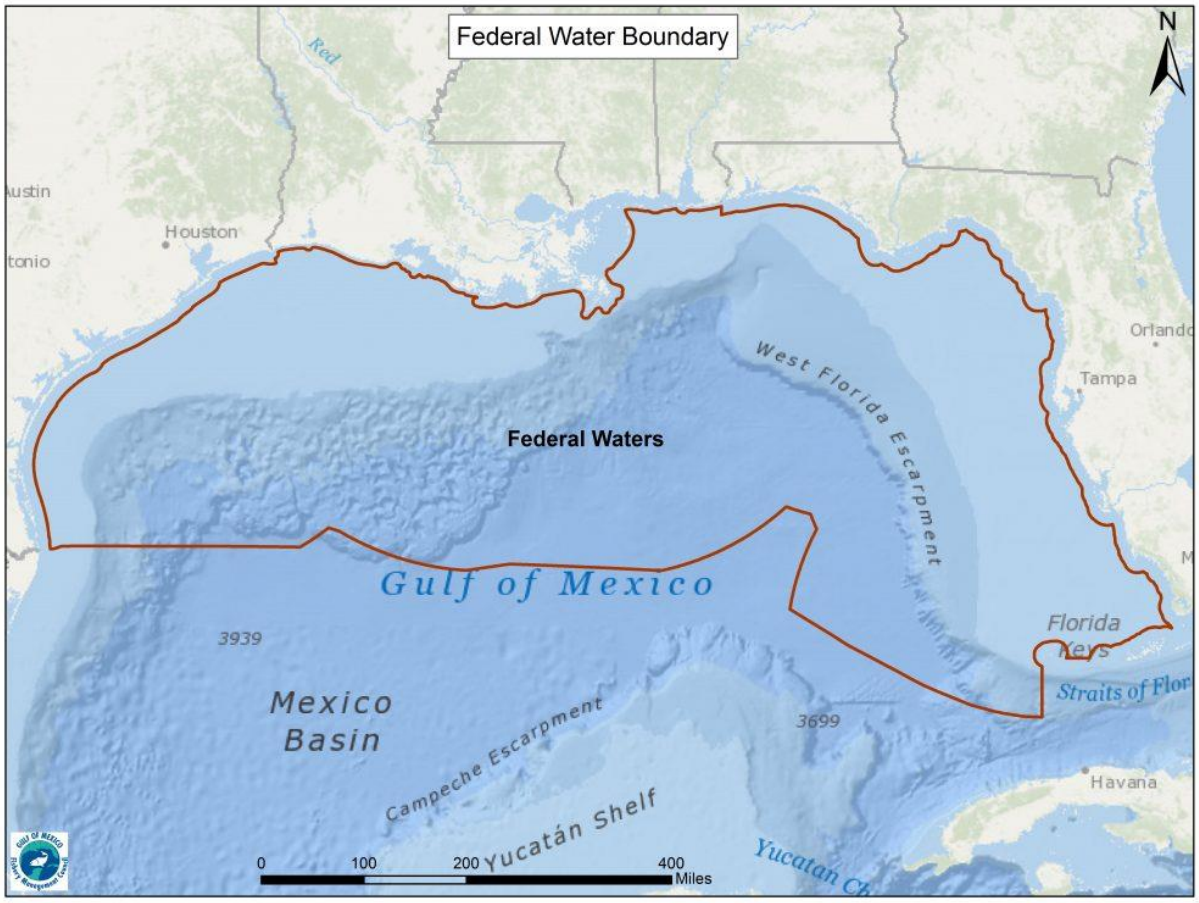

Figure 1.3.2. Jurisdictional boundaries of the Gulf Council.

1.4 Why are the Councils considering action (Purpose and Need statement)?

Purpose: The *purpose* of this fishery management plan amendment is to revise the overfishing limit, acceptable biological catch, the jurisdictional allocation between the South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Councils, South Atlantic annual optimum yield, South Atlantic and Gulf annual catch limits, and South Atlantic sector allocations, for southeastern U.S. yellowtail snapper based on the results of the 2020 SEDAR 64 stock assessment and following 2022 SEDAR 64 interim analysis.

Need: The *need* for this fishery management plan amendment is to update existing catch limits and allocations for southeastern U.S. yellowtail snapper to be consistent with the best scientific information available, and achieve optimum yield while minimizing, to the extent practicable, adverse social and economic effects.

The Councils are considering action to respond to the most recent Southeast Data Assessment and Review (SEDAR) stock assessment for southeastern U.S. yellowtail snapper (2022 SEDAR

64 Interim Analysis). The findings of this analysis indicated that the South Atlantic yellowtail snapper stock is not overfished or undergoing overfishing. The Interim Analysis was finalized in 2022, using data through 2020. The South Atlantic and Gulf Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) reviewed the 2022 SEDAR 64 Interim Analysis and determined that the assessment is based on the best scientific information available. The current OFL and ABC for yellowtail snapper is based on the 2012 SEDAR 27A stock assessment. That assessment used landings information that has since been revised by the 2020 SEDAR 64 stock assessment, and then again by the 2022 SEDAR 64 Interim Analysis. The OFL and ABC, and all subsequent catch level recommendations proposed in this document are based on the 2022 SEDAR 64 Interim Analysis. The most recent landings data through the 2020/2021 fishing year will be reviewed by the Councils. Landings from the 2021/2022 fishing year are still considered preliminary as of this publishing. The current fishing season is August 1 to July 31.

SEDAR 27A (2012) defined the following maximum fishing mortality threshold (MFMT), minimum stock size threshold (MSST), maximum sustainable yield (MSY), and OY for yellowtail snapper. Amendments shown in Table 1.4.1 established the following values:

- MFMT (fishing mortality [F] 30% spawning potential ratio [SPR]): 3,072 metric tons (mt) or 6.8 million pounds (mp)
- MSST (0.75*spawning stock biomass [SSB] at 30%SPR): 5,079,750 pounds whole weight (ww)
- OFL (equilibrium MSY) (recommended by Joint SSCs): 4.51 mp (landed catch without discards). 4.61 mp (landings plus dead discards).

Table 1.4.1. Existing status determination criteria for Southeaster U.S. yellowtail snapper.

Criteria	Definition	Amendment	Year Established
MSST	$0.75*SSB_{30\%SPR}$	SG Reg Am 21 RF Am 48	2015
MFMT	$F_{30\%SPR}$	SG Reg Am 15 RF Am 48	2014
MSY	Yield $F_{30\%SPR}$	SG Reg Am 15 RF Am 48	2014
OY	40% (static) SPR	SG Amendment 11	1998
	90% of MSY or MSY proxy	RF Amendment 48	2022

Snapper-Grouper Amendment 15 and Reef Fish Amendment 48 defined MFMT, MSST, MSY, and OY. MFMT is defined as $F_{30\%SPR}$. SEDAR 64 (2020) estimated $F_{current}$ for yellowtail snapper to be 0.438 yr^{-1}. MSST is defined as 75% of the spawning stock biomass associated with $F_{30\%SPR}$ ($0.75*SSBF_{30\%SPR}$) and estimated to be 1,428 metric tons (mt) or 3,148,201 pounds (lb). Reef Fish Amendment 48 established a stock OY as 90% of MSY or MSY proxy, and Snapper-Grouper Amendment 15 established an annual OY for the South Atlantic portion of the ABC. Snapper-Grouper Amendment 15 and Reef Fish Amendment 48 also established an MSY proxy as the yield at $F_{30\%SPR}$.

1.5 What are the overfishing limit and acceptable biological catch recommendations for yellowtail snapper?

The current OFL and ABC for yellowtail snapper is based on the 2012 SEDAR 27A stock assessment. The Councils accepted their SSCs' recommendations of a stock ABC of 4.05 million pounds (mp) for yellowtail snapper (landed catch without dead discards) (Joint SSC Report). This apportionment of the stock ABC was based on a jurisdictional apportionment of the ABC of 75% to the South Atlantic and 25% to the Gulf, which resulted in 3.0375 mp whole weight (ww) for the South Atlantic and 1.0125 mp (ww) for the Gulf. The Councils implemented this stock ABC and jurisdictionally allocated ABCs through Snapper Grouper Regulatory Amendment 15 (SAFMC 2013) and a 2013 Reef Fish Framework (GMFMC 2013). The jurisdictional apportionment was implemented with the Generic ACL/AM Amendment (GMFMC 2011) and the Comprehensive Annual Catch Limit Amendment (SAFMC 2011).

Recreational landings of yellowtail snapper are estimated using the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) Fishing Effort Survey (FES), and are converted to be comparable to the OFL, ABC, and ACLs, which were derived, in part, using recreational landings estimates from the Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey (MRFSS). In general, landings estimates are higher using MRIP-FES as compared to the prior methods. Information about the changes to the recreational data collection survey and the implications of those changes is provided in Section 1.6.

The OFL, ABC, and all subsequent catch level recommendations, proposed in this document are based on the 2022 SEDAR 64 Interim Analysis and are directly comparable to the recreational landings estimates produced by MRIP-FES (Table 1.5.1).

The Councils are not exploring options for adjusting the stock status determination criteria or formulae for determining the associated stock status values in this FMP amendment (Table 1.5.2).

Table 1.5.1. Annual combined (South Atlantic and Gulf) OFLs and ABCs for yellowtail snapper, based on the 2022 SEDAR 64 Interim Analysis. Values are in mp whole weight (ww) and were derived, in part, using MRIP-FES recreational landings estimates.

Year	OFL from SEDAR 64 Interim Analysis	ABC (mp ww) from SEDAR 64 Interim Analysis
2023	3.922	3.887
2024	3.774	3.749
2025	3.684	3.665
2026	3.625	3.610
2027+	3.584	3.572

Note: ABC was provided by calendar year. Fishing year for yellowtail snapper for both commercial and recreational sectors in both jurisdictions is August 1 through July 31.

For the purpose of associating the calendar year provided catch limits to the fishing year, 2023 refers to the 2023/2024 fishing year, 2024 refers to the 2024/2025 fishing year, 2025 refers to the 2025/2026 fishing year, 2026 refers to the 2026/2027 fishing year, and 2027+ refers to the 2027/2028 and all fishing years thereafter. While the SSCs provided OFLs and ABCs based on the calendar year, the OFLs and ABCs need to be associated with the fishing year, which runs August 1 through July 31. Due to the SSCs providing a decreasing yield stream where catch levels are the highest in year 1 (2023/2024) and decrease until 2027/2028 and remain in place until modified, but based on the fact the yellowtail stock is not overfished or undergoing overfishing, the IPT decided to associate the calendar year catch limits with the forward fishing year as described above.

Table 1.5.2. The stock status determination criterion for southeastern U.S. yellowtail snapper according to the 2022 SEDAR 64 Interim Analysis.

Criteria	Definition	Interim Base Model Value
$F_{30\%SPR}$	The fishing mortality rate associated with 30% SPR and the proxy used for F_{MSY}	0.429 yr^{-1}
MFMT (Maximum Fishing Mortality Threshold)	$F_{30\%SPR}$	0.429 yr^{-1}
$F_{current}$ (recent average fishing mortality rate on age-4 fish)	The geometric mean of F on age-4 fish for 2018-2020	0.292 yr^{-1}
$SSB_{F30\%SPR}$	the estimated spawning stock biomass associated with F at 30% SPR	1,915.86 mt (4,223,743 lbs.)
MSST (Minimum Stock Size Threshold)	$0.75*SSB_{F30\%SPR}$	1,436.90 mt (3,167,807 lbs.)
$SSB_{current}$ (recent average of SSB)	The geometric mean of SSB for 2018-2020	2,810.33 mt (6,195,718 lbs.)
MSY (Maximum Sustainable Yield)	Yield at $F_{30\%SPR}$	1,587.08 mt (3,498,908 lbs.)

1.6 How has recreational data collection changed in the southeast?

MRFSS was created in 1979 by NMFS. The program included the Access Point Angler Intercept Survey (APAIS), which consisted of onsite interviews at public marinas and other points where recreational anglers fish, to determine catch. MRFSS also included a Coastal Household Telephone Survey (CHTS), which used random digit dialing of homes in coastal counties to contact anglers to determine fishing effort. In 2000, the For-Hire Survey (FHS) was implemented to incorporate for-hire effort due to lack of coverage of charter boat anglers by the CHTS. The FHS used a directory of all known charter boats and a weekly telephone sample of the charter boat operators to obtain effort information.

MRIP[1] replaced MRFSS in 2013 to meet the increasing demand for more precise, accurate, and timely recreational catch estimates. MRIP is considered a more scientifically sound methodology for estimating catch because it reduces some sources of potential bias as compared to MRFSS, resulting in more accurate catch estimates. Specifically, CHTS was used to better estimate private angling effort. Instead of random telephone calls, MRIP-CHTS used targeted calls to anglers registered with a federal or state saltwater fishing registry. The MRIP also incorporated a new survey design for APAIS in 2013. This new design addressed concerns regarding the validity of the survey approach, specifically that trips recorded during a given time period are representative of trips for a full day (Foster et al. 2018). The more complete temporal coverage with the new survey design provides for consistent increases or decreases in APAIS angler catch rate statistics, which are used in stock assessments and management, for at least some species (NMFS 2021).

MRIP also transitioned from using the CHTS to a new mail survey (FES) beginning in 2015, and in 2018, the FES replaced the CHTS. Both survey methods collect data needed to estimate marine recreational fishing effort (number of fishing trips) by shore and private/rental boat anglers on the Atlantic and Gulf coasts. The new mail-based FES uses angler license and registration information as one way to identify and contact anglers (supplemented with data from the U.S. Postal Service, which includes virtually all U.S. households). Because the FES and CHTS are so different, NMFS conducted side-by side testing of the two methods from 2015 to 2018 and developed calibration procedures to convert the historical catch estimates (MRFSS, and MRIP-CHTS) into MRIP-FES.[2] In general, landings estimates are higher using the MRIP-FES as compared to the prior methods. This is because the FES is designed to more accurately measure fishing activity than the CHTS, not because there was a sudden rise in fishing effort. NMFS developed a calibration model to adjust historic effort estimates so that they can be accurately compared to new estimates from the FES. The new effort estimates alone do not lead to definitive conclusions about stock size or status in the past or at current. NMFS determined that the MRIP-FES data, when fully calibrated to ensure comparability among years and across states, produced the best available data for use in stock assessments and management (NMFS 2021).

1.7 What is the history of management for the yellowtail snapper fishery?

Snapper grouper regulations in the South Atlantic were first implemented in 1983 and reef fish regulations in the Gulf of Mexico were first implemented in 1984. The reader is referred to the following link for the management history, summary of changes under each amendment, implementation dates, an up-to-date list of amendments under development and more, for all of the species in the Snapper Grouper FMP: https://safmc.net/fishery-management-plans/snapper-grouper/ and Reef Fish FMP: https://gulfcouncil.org/fishery-management-2/implemented-plans/reef-fish/. Below are amendments to the Snapper Grouper FMP and Reef Fish FMP

[1] https://media.fisheries.noaa.gov/2021-09/MRIP-Survey-Design-and-Statistical-Methods-2021-09-15.pdf/

[2] Although both MRFSS and MRIP-FES generate estimates measured in pounds of fish, these estimates are not directly comparable because FES generates larger estimates than MRFSS, as described below. To signify that the estimates use different scales, this document uses the terms "MRFSS units" and "MRIP-FES units" to describe the recreational catch limits.

addressing southeastern yellowtail snapper within both the South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico EEZ.

Snapper Grouper FMP (1983)
The Snapper Grouper FMP included provisions to prevent growth overfishing in thirteen species in the snapper grouper complex and established a procedure for preventing overfishing in other species; established minimum size limits for red snapper, yellowtail snapper, red grouper, Nassau grouper, and black sea bass; established a 4-inch trawl mesh size to achieve a 12-inch total length minimum size limit for vermilion snapper; and included additional harvest and gear limitations.

Reef Fish FMP (1984)
The Reef Fish Fishery Management Plan implemented regulations designed to rebuild declining reef fish stocks, included: (1) prohibitions on the use of fish traps, roller trawls, and powerhead-equipped spear guns within an inshore stressed area; (2) a minimum size limit of 13 inches total length (TL) for red snapper with the exceptions that for-hire boats were exempted until 1987 and each angler could keep 5 undersized fish; and, (3) data reporting requirements. It also established a calendar fishing year for managed reef fish species.

Reef Fish Amendment 1 (1990)
This amendment established a 12-inch minimum size limit and a 10 fish per person bag limit within the 10 per person reef fish snapper aggregate for the Gulf of Mexico region.

Snapper Grouper Amendment 4 (1992)
This amendment established a 12-inch total length minimum for yellowtail snapper in the South Atlantic.

Snapper Grouper Amendment 8 (1997)
This amendment established initial eligibility for two limited entry snapper grouper permits: a non-transferable permit with a 225-pound trip limit and transferrable unlimited landings permit in the South Atlantic.

Snapper Grouper Amendment 9 (1998)
Snapper grouper Amendment 9 established a recreational 20-fish snapper aggregate inclusive of all snappers that did not currently have a bag limit for the South Atlantic region.

Snapper Grouper Amendment 11 (1998)
Amendment 11 defined MSY for snapper grouper species, including yellowtail snapper, as a proxy of 30% static spawning potential ratio (SPR), the OY as 40% static SPR and the OFL as the fishing mortality rate (F) in excess of the fishing mortality rate at 30% static SPR, which is the snapper grouper MSY proxy.

Snapper Grouper Amendment 17A (2010)
This amendment required the use of non-stainless steel, and non-offset circle hooks, when fishing for or possessing snapper grouper species with hook and line gear north of 28º N

Latitude. The circle hook requirement was not required below 28º N Latitude to exclude the yellowtail fishery, which is unable to use circle hooks.

Comprehensive Annual Catch Limit Amendment (2011)
This amendment established ACL Control Rule, ABC levels, ACLs, sector and jurisdictional allocations, and accountability measures for species not undergoing overfishing; including yellowtail snapper.

Generic ACL Amendment (2012)
This amendment established a stock ACL of 725,000 lbs gutted weight and ACT of 645,000 lbs gutted weight for yellowtail snapper for the Gulf of Mexico region. However, the ACT was never used for management purposes. This amendment also established jurisdictional allocation between the South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico.

Snapper Grouper Regulatory Amendment 15 (2013)
This amendment revised the total South Atlantic ACL and set it equal to the South Atlantic ABC based on the 2012 FWRI stock assessment. Regulatory Amendment 15 also updated both the commercial and recreational sector allocations for the South Atlantic region.

Reef Fish Framework Action Addressing Vermilion Snapper, Yellowtail Snapper, and Venting Tool Requirements (2013)
This framework action increased the Gulf of Mexico annual catch limit from 725,000 lbs gutted weight to 901,125 lbs gutted weight. The action also removed the requirement to have onboard and use venting tools when releasing reef fish.

Snapper Grouper Regulatory Amendment 21 (2014)
Regulatory Amendment 21 modified the minimum stock size threshold (MSST) for select species (including yellowtail snapper) to 75% of spawning stock biomass at maximum sustainable yield (SSB_{MSY}) for the South Atlantic portion of the stock.

Snapper Grouper Regulatory Amendment 25 (2016)
This amendment modified both the commercial and recreational yellowtail snapper fishing season from a calendar year to August 1 – July 31 in the South Atlantic.

Reef Fish Framework Action Addressing Gear Requirements and Fishing Year for Yellowtail Snapper in the Gulf of Mexico (2017)
This amendment changed the Gulf of Mexico commercial and recreational yellowtail snapper fishing year so that it opens on August 1 and runs through July 31, each year. The amendment also modified the circle hook requirement so that the use of circle hooks is not required while commercial fishing with natural bait for yellowtail snapper south of Cape Sable (the line extending due west from 25°09' N. latitude off the west coast of Monroe County, Florida, to the Gulf and South Atlantic Councils' shared boundary).

Reef Fish Amendment 48 (2022)
This amendment confirmed status determination criteria (including MSY, MFMT, and MSST) for reef fish, including yellowtail snapper to be consistent with the South Atlantic's definitions. It also set the stock OY as 90% of MSY.

Chapter 2. Proposed Actions and Alternatives

2.1 Action 1. Modify the yellowtail snapper stock overfishing limit and stock acceptable biological catch and jurisdictional allocation of the stock acceptable biological catch between the South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Councils' Jurisdictions

2.1.1 Alternatives

Alternative 1 (No Action). Retain the **current** yellowtail snapper overfishing limit and stock acceptable biological catch, and allocation of the stock acceptable biological catch for yellowtail snapper between the South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Councils' jurisdictions. **The current jurisdictional allocation between the South Atlantic and the Gulf of Mexico is 75% and 25% of the stock acceptable biological catch, respectively, and is in Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey data units**. This jurisdictional allocation is based 50% on the average landings from 1993-2008, plus 50% on the average landings from 2006-2008.

Alternative 2. Update the yellowtail snapper overfishing limit and stock acceptable biological catch based on the results of the 2022 SEDAR 64 Interim Analysis and the Scientific and Statistical Committees' recommendations. Retain the current jurisdictional allocation of yellowtail snapper **updated stock acceptable biological catch** between the South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Councils' jurisdictions at 75% for the South Atlantic and 25% for the Gulf. The updated stock acceptable biological catch to be allocated is in the Marine Recreational Information Program's Fishing Effort Survey data units.

Alternative 3. Update the yellowtail snapper overfishing limit and stock acceptable biological catch based on the results of the 2022 SEDAR 64 Interim Analysis and the Scientific and Statistical Committees' recommendations. Applying the Marine Recreational Information Program's Fishing Effort Survey data units to the current formula (50% on the average landings from 1993-2008, plus 50% on the average landings from 2006-2008) results in allocating 81% of the **updated stock acceptable biological catch** to the South Atlantic and 19% to the Gulf of Mexico. The updated stock acceptable biological catch to be allocated is in the Marine Recreational Information Program's Fishing Effort Survey data units.

Alternative 4. Update the yellowtail snapper overfishing limit and stock acceptable biological catch based on the results of the 2022 SEDAR 64 Interim Analysis and the Scientific and Statistical Committees' recommendations. Applying the Marine Recreational Information Program's Fishing Effort Survey data units to the 2012 – 2021 fishing years, the average landings from that period yield a jurisdictional allocation of 84% of the **updated stock acceptable biological catch** to the South Atlantic and 16% to the Gulf of Mexico. The updated stock acceptable biological catch to be allocated is in the Marine Recreational Information Program's Fishing Effort Survey data units.

NOTE: For Alternatives 2 through 4 above, recreational landings from Monroe County, Florida, are attributed to the South Atlantic region. Commercial landings are attributed to the location of reporting from state trip tickets.

Discussion:

SEDAR 64 was completed in 2020 and then reviewed by the Councils respective Science and Statistical Committees (SSC). The Southeast Data, Assessment, and Review (SEDAR) 64 assessment was completed in part to incorporate the revised recreational data landings estimates using data from Marine Recreational Information Program's Fishing Effort Survey (MRIP-FES). The use of MRIP-FES data changed the understanding of the magnitude of historical recreational catch and the relative rates of participation from the recreational and commercial sectors. In October 2020 the Gulf and South Atlantic SSCs held a joint meeting and accepted the southeastern U.S. yellowtail snapper assessment as the best scientific information available and agreed with the assessments results that southeastern U.S. yellowtail snapper is not overfished or experiencing overfishing. The 2022 SEDAR 64 Interim Analysis updated the time series of landings used and confirmed this stock status. The SSC made overfishing limit (OFL) and acceptable biological catch (ABC) recommendations, noting that the change in recreational data units from the Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey (MRFSS) to MRIP-FES affects estimates of historical landings and stock productivity. As such, the new catch level recommendations are not directly comparable to those in previous assessments or related management actions. New recommended catch levels result in a decreasing yield stream. This is due to the current spawning stock biomass (SSB) being greater than the yield at SSB of maximum sustainable yield ([MSY] SSB_{MSY}), which is considered the stock's equilibrium. This decreasing yield stream allows for fishing to the stock's equilibrium SSB_{MSY} (Table 2.1.1.1). Because SEDAR 64 or the Interim Analysis did not include an estimate of ABC if MRIP-FES had been available for SEDAR 27A, the Environmental Consequences analysis in Chapter 4 of this document use five-year averages of recent commercial landings and recreational landings in MRIP-FES units to compare the impacts of **Alternative 1** and each of the action alternatives (**Alternatives 2-4**). While the fishery is managed jointly by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (South Atlantic Council) and Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Gulf Council) (together, Councils) under two separate fishery management plans, both Councils decided to proceed with a joint document to reduce workload and time to implement new catch limits.

Alternative 1 (No Action) would retain the current jurisdictional allocation percentages between the South Atlantic and the Gulf as 75% and 25%, respectively, of the current stock ABC, which is based on 50% of average landings from 1993-2008 + 50% of average landings from 2006-2008. This formula was applied to landings as of 2011. The Councils implemented the jurisdictional allocation through the Generic Annual Catch Limit (ACL)/Accountability Measure (AM) Amendment [GMFMC 2011] and the Comprehensive ACL Amendment [SAFMC 2011]) to obtain the current ABC jurisdictional allocation in weight of fish (lb). The allocation formula used recreational landings estimated by the (MRFSS), which has been since replaced by the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP). The catch limits in **Alternative 1** also do not reflect the outcomes of the SEDAR 64, the 2022 SEDAR 64 Interim Analysis, and the SSC's

OFL and ABC recommendations, which is not considered to be consistent with the best scientific information available. Therefore, it would not be consistent with National Standard 2 of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) to retain the OFL and stock ABC under **Alternative 1**.

The stock ABC based on the 2022 Interim Analysis and SSC recommendation in **Alternatives 2-4** is allocated between the Gulf and South Atlantic based on the percentage considered in each alternative (Table 2.1.1.1). **Alternative 2** retains current jurisdictional allocation percentages between the South Atlantic and the Gulf as 75% and 25%, respectively, but applies these percentages to the updated stock ABC provided through the 2022 SEDAR 64 Interim Analysis. The new ABC is in MRIP- FES data units, which are considered by the National Marine Fisheries Service to be BSIA. **Alternative 2** maintains status quo percentages for the allocation, but addresses the change to MRIP-FES by using this allocation to set the jurisdictional stock ABCs provided through the 2022 SEDAR 64 Interim Analysis. However, the recreational data used in establishing the current allocation underestimated the historical landings and effort from the recreational sector and thus, does not reflect the nature of the fleets harvesting yellowtail snapper during the reference period if MRIP-FES was used. **Alternative 3** addresses this by using the same formula as **Alternative 1,** but updates recreational landings estimates that have been converted to MRIP-FES units to set the jurisdictional allocation. This results in an allocation of 81% to the South Atlantic and 19% to the Gulf. The resulting allocation is applied to the updated stock ABC. This shift to the South Atlantic jurisdiction reflects the additional recreational effort and landings that NMFS estimates occurred during this period as reflected in the MRIP-FES data. Like **Alternative 3**, **Alternative 4** also uses recreational landings estimates in MRIP-FES units, but for the most recent ten years of landings data (2012-2021). This also addresses more recent recreational effort and results in an allocation of 84% to the South Atlantic and 16% to the Gulf. The resulting allocation is applied to the updated stock ABC. **Alternative 4** represents the largest allocation to the South Atlantic and the least to the Gulf of the alternatives considered in this action.

Table 2.1.1.1 The yellowtail snapper overfishing limit (OFL) stock ABC, and acceptable biological catch allocations for the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic jurisdictions, for all alternatives under Action 1. Note: Alternative 1 (No Action) is not a viable option (not best scientific information available) and cannot be directly compared to the other alternatives due to differences in data units. 2027/2028 values will remain in effect until modified.

Year	OFL (lb ww)	ABC (lb ww)	Gulf Stock ABC (lb ww)	South Atlantic Stock ABC (lb ww)
Alternative 1 (No Action) GOM 25%/SA 75% - Current Stock ABC				
2023/2024	4,510,000	4,050,000	1,012,500	3,037,500
2024/2025	4,510,000	4,050,000	1,012,500	3,037,500
2025/2026	4,510,000	4,050,000	1,012,500	3,037,500
2026/2027	4,510,000	4,050,000	1,012,500	3,037,500
2027/2028	4,510,000	4,050,000	1,012,500	3,037,500
Alternative 2 GOM 25%/SA 75% - Updated Stock ABC				
2023/2024	3,922,000	3,887,000	971,750	2,915,250
2024/2025	3,774,000	3,749,000	937,250	2,811,750
2025/2026	3,684,000	3,665,000	916,250	2,748,750
2026/2027	3,625,000	3,610,000	902,500	2,707,500
2027/2028	3,584,000	3,572,000	893,000	2,679,000
Alternative 3 GOM 19%/SA 81% -Updated Stock ABC				
2023/2024	3,922,000	3,887,000	738,530	3,148,470
2024/2025	3,774,000	3,749,000	712,310	3,036,690
2025/2026	3,684,000	3,665,000	696,350	2,968,650
2026/2027	3,625,000	3,610,000	685,900	2,924,100
2027/2028	3,584,000	3,572,000	678,680	2,893,320
Draft Alternative 4 GOM 16%/SA 84% - Updated Stock ABC				
2023/2024	3,922,000	3,887,000	621,920	3,265,080
2024/2025	3,774,000	3,749,000	599,840	3,149,160
2025/2026	3,684,000	3,665,000	586,400	3,078,600
2026/2027	3,625,000	3,610,000	577,600	3,032,400
2027/2028	3,584,000	3,572,000	571,520	3,000,480

Note: The recreational portion of Alternative 1 is in MRFSS units. The recreational portion of Alternatives 2-4 are in MRIP-FES units.

2.1.2 Comparison of Alternatives:

TO BE COMPLETED UPON COMPLETION OF CHAPTER 4.

2.2 Action 2. Revise the total annual catch limit and annual optimum yield for yellowtail snapper in the South Atlantic and revise the total annual catch limit for yellowtail snapper in the Gulf of Mexico

2.2.1 Sub-action 2a. Revise the South Atlantic total annual catch limit and annual optimum yield for yellowtail snapper to reflect the new overfishing limit, acceptable biological catch, and jurisdictional allocation of the stock acceptable biological catch

2.2.1.1 Alternatives

NOTE: Annual catch limit totals for Alternatives 2 through 6 under Action 2 will be dependent on the jurisdictional allocation from Action 1.

Alternative 1 (No Action): The South Atlantic total annual catch limit and annual optimum yield for yellowtail snapper are **equal to the current South Atlantic acceptable biological catch** (3,037,500 pounds whole weight). The current acceptable biological catch and overfishing limit are based on the results of SEDAR 27A, which included recreational landings estimates from the Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey.

Alternative 2. The total annual catch limit and annual optimum yield for yellowtail snapper is **equal to the updated South Atlantic acceptable biological catch level** resulting from the jurisdictional allocation in Action 1. The updated South Atlantic acceptable biological catch and overfishing limit are based on the results of the 2022 SEDAR 64 Interim Analysis, which included recreational landings estimates from the Marine Recreational Information Program's Fishing Effort Survey.

Alternative 3. The total annual catch limit and annual optimum yield for yellowtail snapper is equal to **90% of the updated South Atlantic acceptable biological catch level** resulting from the jurisdictional allocation in Action 1. The updated South Atlantic acceptable biological catch and overfishing limit are based on the results of the 2022 SEDAR 64 Interim Analysis, which included recreational landings estimates from the Marine Recreational Information Program's Fishing Effort Survey.

Alternative 4. The total annual catch limit and annual optimum yield for yellowtail snapper is equal to **95% of the South Atlantic acceptable biological catch level** resulting from the jurisdictional allocation in Action 1. The updated South Atlantic acceptable biological catch and overfishing limit are based on the results of the 2022 SEDAR 64 Interim Analysis, which included recreational landings estimates from the Marine Recreational Information Program's Fishing Effort Survey.

Alternative 5. The total annual catch limit and annual optimum yield for yellowtail snapper is equal to the lowest updated South Atlantic acceptable biological catch value. The updated South Atlantic acceptable biological catch and overfishing limit are inclusive of recreational estimates from the Marine Recreational Information Program's Fishing Effort Survey.

Alternative 6. The total annual catch limit and annual optimum yield for yellowtail snapper is equal to the constant catch at the fishing mortality rate at a 30% spawning potential ratio at equilibrium.

Discussion:

Alternative 1 (No Action) would retain the current South Atlantic ACL. Since updated catch levels have been provided through the 2022 SEDAR 64 Interim Analysis, this alternative is not based on best available science and is non-viable. **Alternative 2** would set the South Atlantic ACL and annual optimum yield OY equal to the updated South Atlantic ABC (Action 1). **Alternatives 3** and **4** would include a 10 and 5% buffer between the ACL/South Atlantic annual OY and the updated South Atlantic ABC, respectively.

Alternative 5 would set the ACL and South Atlantic annual OY equal to the lowest ABC value, which would be implemented and remain in place until modified. Similarly, **Alternative 6** would set the ACL and South Atlantic annual OY equal to the yield at 30% of the spawning potential ratio at equilibrium and this would remain in place until modified.

Table 2.2.1.1.1 The total ACLs for each option for Action 2 under each viable jurisdictional allocation of Action 1 (**Alternatives 2-4**). All values are in pounds whole weight.

	Total ACL (Action 2)				
Alternative	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**	**2027**
Current SA ABC (lb ww)	**3,037,500**	**3,037,500**	**3,037,500**	**3,037,500**	**3,037,500**
Alternative 1 (No Action)	3,037,500	3,037,500	3,037,500	3,037,500	3,037,500
Action 1, Alternative 2 Updated SA ABC (lb ww) 75%	**2,915,250**	**2,811,750**	**2,748,750**	**2,707,500**	**2,679,000**
Action 2, Alternative 2	2,915,250	2,811,750	2,748,750	2,707,500	2,679,000
Action 2, Alternative 3	2,623,725	2,530,575	2,473,875	2,436,750	2,411,100
Action 2, Alternative 4	2,769,488	2,671,163	2,611,313	2,572,125	2,545,050
Action 2, Alternative 5	2,679,000	2,679,000	2,679,000	2,679,000	2,679,000
Action 2, Alternative 6	2,555,728	2,555,728	2,555,728	2,555,728	2,555,728
Action 1, Alternative 3 Updated SA ABC (lb ww) 81%	**3,148,470**	**3,036,690**	**2,968,650**	**2,924,100**	**2,893,320**
Action 2, Alternative 2	3,148,470	3,036,690	2,968,650	2,924,100	2,893,320
Action 2, Alternative 3	2,833,623	2,733,021	2,671,785	2,631,690	2,603,988
Action 2, Alternative 4	2,991,047	2,884,856	2,820,218	2,777,895	2,748,654
Action 2, Alternative 5	2,907,251	2,907,251	2,907,251	2,907,251	2,907,251
Action 2, Alternative 6	2,760,186	2,760,186	2,760,186	2,760,186	2,760,186
Action 1, Alternative 4 Updated SA ABC (lb ww) 84%	**3,265,080**	**3,149,160**	**3,078,600**	**3,032,400**	**3,000,480**
Action 2, Alternative 2	3,265,080	3,149,160	3,078,600	3,032,400	3,000,480
Action 2, Alternative 3	2,938,572	2,834,244	2,770,740	2,729,160	2,700,432
Action 2, Alternative 4	3,101,826	2,991,702	2,924,670	2,880,780	2,850,456
Action 2, Alternative 5	2,907,251	2,907,251	2,907,251	2,907,251	2,907,251
Action 2, Alternative 6	2,862,415	2,862,415	2,862,415	2,862,415	2,862,415

2.2.1.2 Comparison of Alternatives:

TO BE COMPLETED UPON COMPLETION OF CHAPTER 4.

2.2.2 Sub-action 2b. Revise the Gulf of Mexico acceptable biological catch buffer to set the total annual catch limit for yellowtail snapper

2.2.2.1 Alternatives

NOTE: Annual catch limit totals for Alternatives 2 and 3 under Action 2 will be dependent on the jurisdictional allocation from Action 1

Alternative 1 (No Action). Retain the current 11% buffer between the Gulf of Mexico's apportionment of the total acceptable biological catch buffer and the total annual catch limit. Use this acceptable biological catch buffer to update the Gulf of Mexico annual catch limit based on the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council's jurisdictional allocation of the yellowtail snapper stock acceptable biological catch selected in Action 1. The 11% buffer is based on the calculation of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council's Annual Catch Limit/Annual Catch Target Control Rule using Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey landings data from 2008 – 2011.

Alternative 2. Modify the buffer between the Gulf of Mexico's apportionment of the total acceptable biological catch and total annual catch limit using the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council's Annual Catch Limit/Annual Catch Target Control Rule using the Marine Recreational Information Program's Fishing Effort Survey data. Use this modified buffer to update the Gulf of Mexico annual catch limit based on the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council's jurisdictional allocation of the yellowtail snapper stock acceptable biological catch selected in Action 1. Based on Marine Recreational Information Program Fishing Effort Survey landings data from the 2017/2018 – 2020/2021 fishing years, the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council's Annual Catch Limit/Annual Catch Target Control Rule recommends an 8% buffer between the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council's jurisdictional allocation of the yellowtail snapper stock acceptable biological catch and the Gulf of Mexico annual catch limit.

Alternative 3. Eliminate the buffer between the Gulf of Mexico's apportionment of the total acceptable biological catch and total annual catch limit. The Gulf of Mexico annual catch limit for yellowtail snapper is equal to the updated Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council's jurisdictional allocation of the stock acceptable biological catch level in the Marine Recreational Information Program's Fishing Effort Survey data units as calculated in Action 1.

Discussion:

Alternatives in Action 2, Sub-Action 2b address the buffer between the Gulf of Mexico's apportionment of the total ABC and the total Gulf ACL. The resulting ACLs are based on the jurisdictional allocations selected in Action 1 and the ABC buffer selected in Action 2. A 2013 Reef Fish Framework (GMFMC 2013) established the buffer between the ABC and ACL using the Gulf ACL/ACT Control Rule, which resulted in a buffer of 11% (**Alternative 1**). The ACL/ACT Control Rule considers the number of times the ACL was exceeded, the precision of recreational landings based on proportional standard error, the precision of commercial landings, in-season accountability measures (AM) in place, and the stock status. The 11% buffer was

based on using the years 2008-2011 and recreational landing estimates were in MRFSS units. These same factors were considered for **Alternative 2** (Appendix B, buffer 8%), using a more recent time series (2017/2018-2020/2021) and recreational landing estimates in MRIP-FES units. The ABC is set equal to the ACL under **Alternative 3.**

Alternative 1 retains the existing ABC buffer (11%) that was established in the 2013 Reef Fish Framework (GMFMC 2013) and is based in part on MRFSS units. There has never been a yellowtail closure in the Gulf based on this buffer. However, the time series used to calculate the ABC buffer is over ten years old. It also was based on landings in MRFSS units, which are not considered to be consistent with the best scientific information available. If selected, this buffer would be used to update the jurisdictionally allocated ABC selected in Action 1. Based on average landings (Table 2.2.2.1.1, Appendix A), a closure is projected approximately two months before the end of the fishing season if the Gulf is allocated 16% of the stock ABC (Action 1, Alternative 4, Table 2.2.2.2). A closure is projected only a few weeks before the end of the fishing year if the Gulf is allocated 19% of the stock ABC (Action 1, Alternative 3).

Like **Alternative 1, Alternative 2** uses the Gulf ACL/ACT Control Rule to calculate the ABC buffer. However, it uses a more recent time series of available landings (2017/2018-2020/2021). It also incorporates the current fishing year, which splits the calendar year. This results in an ABC buffer of 9% (Appendix B). This is a reduction from the current buffer of 11% and is due in part to a more recent time series being used in the ACL/ACT Control Rule. This buffer would be used to update the jurisdictionally allocated ABC selected in Action 1. Similar to **Alternative 1,** a closure is projected approximately two months before the end of the fishing season if the Gulf is allocated 16% of the stock ABC (Action 1, Alternative 4, Table 2.2.2.2). A closure is projected only a few weeks before the end of the fishing year if the Gulf is allocated 19% of the stock ABC (Action 1, Alternative 3). However, unlike **Alternative 1,** the closure for **Alternative 2** under the 19% allocation with a 9% ABC buffer first occurs in the second fishing year presented (2024/2025) vs. the first (2023/2024).

Unlike **Alternatives 1** and **2, Alternative 3** sets the ACL equal to the ABC. Based on average landings (Table 2.2.2.1.1, Appendix A), no closures are expected under the new catch limits if the Gulf is allocated 19% of the stock ABC (Action 1, Alternative 3, Table 2.2.2.2). However, a closure approximately a month before the end of the fishing season is projected if the Gulf is allocated 16% of the stock ABC (Action 1, Alternative 4, Table 2.2.2.2).

No closures are projected under the new catch limits if the Gulf retains an allocation of 25% of the stock ABC (Action 1, Alternative 2, Table 2.2.2.2), whether there is a buffer between the ABC and ACL (**Alternatives 1** and **2**) or no buffer between the ABC and ACL (**Alternative 3**).

Table 2.2.2.1.1. Commercial and recreational landings in pounds (lb) whole weight (ww) of yellowtail snapper in the Gulf of Mexico for fishing years 2012-2021. The recreational portion of the landings are in MRIP-FES units.

Yellowtail Snapper Commercial and Recreational Landings			
Fishing Year	**Rec. Landings (lb ww)**	**Comm. Landings (lb ww)**	**Total Landings (lb ww)**
2012	5,163	630,984	636,147
2013	9,343	734,112	743,455
2014	27,715	466,968	494,683
2015	64,743	504,193	568,936
2016	13,401	209,283	222,684
2016/2017*	249,512	682,875	932,387
2017/2018	206,785	589,868	796,653
2018/2019	104,527	527,112	631,638
2019/2020	12,348	287,940	300,289
2020/2021	79,765	212,630	292,395

* On March 13, 2017, a framework action to the Reef Fish FMP was effective that changed the fishing year for both the recreational and commercial sectors to August 1 through July 31 to be consistent with the fishing year in the South Atlantic, which was implemented in 2016. For this reason, 2016 includes January through July 31, 2016 landings. August 1, 2016 through July 31, 2017 landings are attributed to the 2016/17 fishing year.
Source: SEFSC Commercial ACL Dataset (August 31, 2022) and SEFSC MRIP FES Recreational ACL Dataset (October 25, 2022).

Table 2.2.2.2.2 Predicted closure dates for Gulf of Mexico yellowtail snapper for each proposed acceptable biological catch buffer to set the annual catch limit (**Action 2**) and each proposed jurisdictional allocation (**Action 1**). Gulf of Mexico yellowtail snapper are managed as stock annual catch limits. All projected closure dates are predicted only if future landings are higher than expected (at the upper 95% confidence interval), otherwise no closure is expected for all alternatives and proposed annual catch limits. All ACLs are in lbs ww with the recreational portion being in MRIP-FES.

Action 1, Alternative 2: Gulf 25% / SA 75%					
Action 2	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028+
Alternative 1 (ACL=89% Updated ABC)	ACL not met ACL=864,858	ACL not met ACL=834,153	ACL not met ACL=815,463	ACL not met ACL=803,225	ACL not met ACL=794,770
Alternative 2 (ACL=92% Updated ABC)	ACL not met ACL=894,010	ACL not met ACL=862,270	ACL not met ACL=842,950	ACL not met ACL=830,300	ACL not met ACL=821,560
Alternative 3 (ACL= Updated ABC)	ACL not met ACL=971,750	ACL not met ACL=937,250	ACL not met ACL=916,250	ACL not met ACL=902,500	ACL not met ACL=893,000
Action 1, Alternative 3: Gulf 19% / SA 81%					
Action 2	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028+
Alternative 1 (ACL=89% Updated ABC)	**Upper 95%: Jul 25** ACL=657,292	**Upper 95%: Jul 17** ACL=633,956	**Upper 95%: Jul 12** ACL=619,752	**Upper 95%: Jul 8** ACL=610,451	**Upper 95%: Jul 6** ACL=604,025
Alternative 2 (ACL=92% Updated ABC)	ACL not met ACL=679,448	**Upper 95%: Jul 25** ACL=655,325	**Upper 95%: Jul 19** ACL=640,642	**Upper 95%: Jul 16** ACL=631,028	**Upper 95%: Jul 13** ACL=624,386
Alternative 3 (ACL= Updated ABC)	ACL not met ACL=738,530	ACL not met ACL=712,310	ACL not met ACL=696,350	ACL not met ACL=685,900	ACL not met ACL=678,680
Action 1, Alternative 4: Gulf 16% / SA 84%					
Action 2	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028+
Alternative 1 (ACL=89% Updated ABC)	**Upper 95%: Jun 19** ACL=553,509	**Upper 95%: Jun 12** ACL=533,858	**Upper 95%: Jun 8** ACL=521,896	**Upper 95%: Jun 5** ACL=514,064	**Upper 95%: Jun 3** ACL=508,653
Alternative 2 (ACL=92% Updated ABC)	**Upper 95%: Jun 25** ACL=572,166	**Upper 95%: Jun 18** ACL=551,853	**Upper 95%: Jun 14** ACL=539,488	**Upper 95%: Jun 11** ACL=531,392	**Upper 95%: Jun 9** ACL=525,798
Alternative 3 (ACL= Updated ABC)	**Upper 95%: Jul 12** ACL=621,920	**Upper 95%: Jul 4** ACL=599,840	**Upper 95%: Jun 30** ACL=586,400	**Upper 95%: Jun 27** ACL=577,600	**Upper 95%: Jun 25** ACL=571,520

2.2.2.2 Comparison of Alternatives:

TO BE COMPLETED

2.3 Action 3. Revise the South Atlantic yellowtail snapper sector allocations and sector annual catch limits

2.3.1 Alternatives

Alternative 1 (No Action). Retain the current commercial and recreational sector allocations as 52.56% and 47.44%, respectively, of the revised total annual catch limit for yellowtail snapper.

Alternative 2. Allocate 40.73% of the revised total annual catch limit for yellowtail snapper to the commercial sector and 59.27% of the revised total annual catch limit for yellowtail snapper to the recreational sector.

Discussion:

Alternative 1 (No Action) retains the current allocation percentages and applies them to the updated South Atlantic ACL. The sector allocations proposed under **Alternative 1 (No Action)** result from applying the allocation formula adopted through the Comprehensive ACL Amendment (SAFMC 2011) for unassessed snapper grouper species: Annual catch limit = ((mean landings 2006-2008)*0.5)) + ((mean landings 1986-2008)*0.5). The same formula has also been used to allocate the total ACL for some assessed species (i.e., golden tilefish). When this method was originally applied, the formula used recreational landings estimates from MRFSS.

Alternative 2 uses the bow-tie method to recalculate the allocations percentages, using the same year ranges but incorporating recreational landings estimates from the MRIP-FES. These updated percentages would be applied to the updated South Atlantic ACL.

Table 2.3.1.1. Sector allocation options for Action 3. Allocations are shown for each viable jurisdictional allocation of Action 1 with an ACL=South Atlantic ABC (**Alternative 2** of Sub-Action 2a).

Year	SA Total ACL (lbs ww)	Commercial ACL (lbs ww)	Recreational ACL (lbs ww)
BASED ON 75% SA JURISDICTIONAL ALLOCATION			
Alternative 1 (No Action) Com: 52.56% Rec: 47.44%			
2023/2024	2,915,250	1,532,255	1,382,995
2024/2025	2,811,750	1,477,856	1,333,894
2025/2026	2,748,750	1,444,743	1,304,007
2026/2027	2,707,500	1,423,062	1,284,438
2027/2028	2,679,000	1,408,082	1,270,918
Alternative 2 Com: 40.73% Rec: 59.27%			
2023/2024	2,915,250	1,187,381	1,727,869
2024/2025	2,811,750	1,145,226	1,666,524
2025/2026	2,748,750	1,119,566	1,629,184
2026/2027	2,707,500	1,102,765	1,604,735
2027/2028	2,679,000	1,091,157	1,587,843
BASED ON 81% SA JURISDICTIONAL ALLOCATION			
Alternative 1 (No Action) Com: 52.56% Rec: 47.44%			
2023/2024	3,148,470	1,654,836	1,493,634
2024/2025	3,036,690	1,596,084	1,440,606
2025/2026	2,968,650	1,560,322	1,408,328
2026/2027	2,924,100	1,536,907	1,387,193
2027/2028	2,893,320	1,520,729	1,372,591
Alternative 2 Com: 40.73% Rec: 59.27%			
2023/2024	3,148,470	1,282,372	1,866,098
2024/2025	3,036,690	1,236,844	1,799,846
2025/2026	2,968,650	1,209,131	1,759,519
2026/2027	2,924,100	1,190,986	1,733,114
2027/2028	2,893,320	1,178,449	1,714,871
BASED ON 84% SA JURISDICTIONAL ALLOCATION			
Alternative 1 (No Action) Com: 52.56% Rec: 47.44%			
2023/2024	3,265,080	1,716,126	1,548,954
2024/2025	3,149,160	1,655,198	1,493,962
2025/2026	3,078,600	1,618,112	1,460,488
2026/2027	3,032,400	1,593,829	1,438,571
2027/2028	3,000,480	1,577,052	1,423,428
Alternative 2 Com: 40.73% Rec: 59.27%			
2023/2024	3,265,080	1,329,867	1,935,213
2024/2025	3,149,160	1,282,653	1,866,507
2025/2026	3,078,600	1,253,914	1,824,686
2026/2027	3,032,400	1,235,097	1,797,303
2027/2028	3,000,480	1,222,096	1,778,384

2.3.2 Comparison of Alternatives:

TO BE COMPLETED UPON COMPLETION OF CHAPTER 4.

Chapter 9. References

TO BE COMPLETED

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Appendix A. Data Analyses

DRAFT

1. Expected Closure Dates of the Commercial and Recreational Yellowtail Snapper Fisheries in the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic Under Proposed Regional and Sector Allocations

March 2023, Updated May 2023
LAPP/DM Branch
Southeast Regional Office

Yellowtail snapper is considered a single stock in the Gulf of Mexico (Gulf) and the South Atlantic. The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (GMFMC) manages yellowtail snapper in Gulf federal waters under the Fishery Management Plan for the Reef Fish Resources of the Gulf of Mexico (Reef Fish FMP). In 2012, the Generic Annual Catch Limits/Accountability Measures Amendment to the Reef Fish FMP established a stock (combined recreational and commercial) annual catch limit (ACL) for yellowtail snapper. The amendment also established an apportionment of acceptable biological catch (ABC), with 75% apportioned to the South Atlantic jurisdiction and 25% to the Gulf jurisdiction. The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (SAFMC) manages yellowtail snapper from federal waters at the Virginia/North Carolina border through the Atlantic side of the Florida Keys under the Snapper-Grouper Fishery Management Plan (FMP). In 2016, Regulatory Amendment 25 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region changed the commercial season to August 1 through July 31 for both the recreational and commercial sectors. In 2017, a framework action to the Gulf Reef Fish FMP changed the fishing season for both the recreational and commercial sectors to August 1 through July 31 to be consistent with the fishing season in the South Atlantic.

This analysis investigates when the commercial and recreational sectors will be expected to close under the proposed jurisdictional allocation options (**Tables A.1.1 and A.1.2)** and sector allocation options **(Table A.1.3)** for both the Gulf and the South Atlantic using observed landings in pounds (lb) whole weight (ww) between 2019 and 2021 (**Tables A.1.4 and A.1.5)**. Projected closure dates are described in **Tables A.1.2.1 through A.1.2.7**.

Table A.1.1. Gulf of Mexico yellowtail snapper proposed annual catch limits (**Action 2**) for each proposed jurisdictional allocation (**Action 1**). Gulf of Mexico yellowtail snapper are managed as stock annual catch limits.

Action 1, Alternative 1 (No Action): GOM 25% / SA 75% Current Gulf of Mexico ACL (lb ww)					
Action 2 Alternative 1	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028+
Current GOM ACL= 89% ABC	901,125				
Action 1, Alternative 2: GOM 25% / SA 75%					
Action 2	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028+
Alternative 1 (ACL=89% Updated ABC)	864,858	834,153	815,463	803,225	794,770
Alternative 2 (ACL=92% Updated ABC)	894,010	862,270	842,950	830,300	821,560
Alternative 3 (ACL= Updated ABC)	971,750	937,250	916,250	902,500	893,000
Action 1, Alternative 3: GOM 19% / SA 81%					
Action 2	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028+
Alternative 1 (ACL=89% Updated ABC)	657,292	633,956	619,752	610,451	604,025
Alternative 2 (ACL=92% Updated ABC)	679,448	655,325	640,642	631,028	624,386
Alternative 3 (ACL= Updated ABC)	738,530	712,310	696,350	685,900	678,680
Action 1, Alternative 4: GOM 16% / SA 84%					
Action 2	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028+
Alternative 1 (ACL=89% Updated ABC)	553,509	533,858	521,896	514,064	508,653
Alternative 2 (ACL=92% Updated ABC)	572,166	551,853	539,488	531,392	525,798
Alternative 3 (ACL= Updated ABC)	621,920	599,840	586,400	577,600	571,520

Table A.1.2. South Atlantic yellowtail snapper proposed annual catch limits (**Action 2**) for each proposed jurisdictional allocation (**Action 1**).

Action 1, Alternative 1 (No Action): Current South Atlantic ACL (lb ww)					
Action 2 Alternative 1	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028+
Current SA ABC=ACL=OY	3,037,500				
Action 1, Alternative 2: GOM 25% / SA 75%					
Action 2	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028+
Alternative 2 (ACL=updated ABC)	2,915,250	2,811,750	2,748,750	2,707,500	2,679,000
Alternative 3 (ACL=90% Updated ABC)	2,623,725	2,530,575	2,473,875	2,436,750	2,411,100
Alternative 4 (ACL=95% Updated ABC)	2,769,488	2,671,163	2,611,313	2,572,125	2,545,050
Alternative 5 (ACL/OY=Lowest ABC)	2,679,000				
Alternative 6 (F30%SPR at equilibrium)	2,555,728				
Action 1, Alternative 3: GOM 19% / SA 81%					
Action 2	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028+
Alternative 2 (ACL=updated ABC)	3,148,470	3,036,690	2,968,650	2,924,100	2,893,320
Alternative 3 (ACL=90% Updated ABC)	2,833,623	2,733,021	2,671,785	2,631,690	2,603,988
Alternative 4 (ACL=95% Updated ABC)	2,991,047	2,884,856	2,820,218	2,777,895	2,748,654
Alternative 5 (ACL/OY=Lowest ABC)	2,907,251				
Alternative 6 (F30%SPR at equilibrium)	2,760,186				
Action 1, Alternative 4: GOM 16% / SA 84%					
Action 2	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028+
Alternative 2 (ACL=updated ABC)	3,265,080	3,149,160	3,078,600	3,032,400	3,000,480
Alternative 3	2,938,572	2,834,244	2,770,740	2,729,160	2,700,432

Action 1, Alternative 1 (No Action): Current South Atlantic ACL (lb ww)					
Action 2 Alternative 1	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028+
(ACL=90% Updated ABC)					
Alternative 4 (ACL=95% Updated ABC)	3,101,826	2,991,702	2,924,670	2,880,780	2,850,456
Alternative 5 (ACL/OY=Lowest ABC)	2,907,251				
Alternative 6 (F30%SPR at equilibrium)	2,862,415				

Table A.1.3. South Atlantic yellowtail snapper proposed annual catch limits for each proposed sector allocations (Action 3). Allocations are based on **Sub-Option 2a** from **Action 2** (75% SA jurisdictional allocation, ACL = OY = updated SA ABC).

Option 1 (No Action): 52.56% commercial and 47.44% recreational			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial ACL (lb ww)	Recreational ACL (lb ww)
2023/2024	2,915,250	1,532,255	1,382,995
2024/2025	2,811,750	1,477,856	1,333,894
2025/2026	2,748,750	1,444,743	1,304,007
2026/2027	2,707,500	1,423,062	1,284,438
2027/2028+	2,679,000	1,408,082	1,270,918
Option 2: 41% commercial and 59% recreational			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial (mp ww)	Recreational (mp ww)
2023/2024	2,915,250	1,195,253	1,719,998
2024/2025	2,811,750	1,152,818	1,658,933
2025/2026	2,748,750	1,126,988	1,621,763
2026/2027	2,707,500	1,110,075	1,597,425
2027/2028+	2,679,000	1,098,390	1,580,610

Table A.1.4. Commercial and recreational landings in pounds (lb) ww of yellowtail snapper in the Gulf of Mexico for fishing years 2012-2021.

Yellowtail Snapper Commercial and Recreational Landings			
Fishing Year	**Rec. Landings (lb ww)**	**Comm. Landings (lb ww)**	**Total Landings (lb ww)**
2012	5,163	630,984	636,147
2013	9,343	734,112	743,455
2014	27,715	466,968	494,683
2015	64,743	504,193	568,936
2016	13,401	209,283	222,684
2017*	249,512	682,875	932,387
2017/2018	206,784.83	589,868	796,653
2018/2019	104,527	527,112	631,638
2019/2020	12,348	287,940	300,289

Yellowtail Snapper Commercial and Recreational Landings			
Fishing Year	**Rec. Landings (lb ww)**	**Comm. Landings (lb ww)**	**Total Landings (lb ww)**
2020/2021	79,765	212,630	292,395

* In 2017, a framework action to the Reef Fish FMP changed the fishing season for both the recreational and commercial sectors to August 1 through July 31 to be consistent with the fishing season in the South Atlantic. For this reason, 2016 includes January through July 31, 2016 landings and 2016/17 fishing season landings are provided separately.
Source: SEFSC Commercial ACL Dataset (August 31, 2022) and SEFSC MRIP FES Recreational ACL Dataset (October 25, 2022).

Table A.1.5. Commercial and recreational landings in pounds (lb) ww of yellowtail snapper in the South Atlantic for fishing years 2012-2021.

Yellowtail Snapper Commercial and Recreational Landings			
Fishing Year	**Rec. Landings (lb ww)**	**Comm. Landings (lb ww)**	**Total Landings (lb ww)**
2012	1,129,915	1,439,586	2,569,501
2013	1,695,188	1,328,974	3,024,162
2014	2,122,485	1,544,038	3,666,523
2015[a]	1,495,150	1,652,438[a]	3,147,588
2016*	1,184,513	1,393,495	2,578,008
2016/2017[b]	1,491,509	2,336,970[b]	3,828,479
2017/2018[c]	1,481,290	1,703,541[c]	3,184,830
2018/2019[d]	1,405,783	1,662,102[d]	3,067,885
2019/2020	1,330,659	1,435,167	2,766,566
2020/2021	1,131,075	1,204,637	2,335,712

*The fishing season for yellowtail snapper was modified in Regulatory Amendment 25, which took effect on August 12, 2016. For this reason, 2016 includes January through August 12, 2016 landings and 2016/17 fishing season landings are provided separately.
[a]In-season closure for commercial sector from October 31, 2015 to December 31, 2015.
[b]In-season closure for commercial sector from June 3, 2017 to July 31, 2017.

[c]In-season closure for commercial sector from June 5, 2018 to July 31, 2018.
[d]In-season closure for commercial sector from June 7, 2019 to July 31, 2019.
Source: SEFSC Commercial ACL Dataset (August 31, 2022) and SEFSC MRIP FES Recreational ACL Dataset (October 25, 2022).

1.1 Commercial Sector

Final commercial landings for 2012 through 2021 were provided from the Southeast Fisheries Science Center (SEFSC) on August 31, 2022. Monthly Gulf commercial yellowtail snapper landings were averaged from 2019 through 2021 to project future landings. Due to commercial closures in the South Atlantic, landings from different time periods were used to predict future landings. Monthly South Atlantic commercial yellowtail snapper landings were averaged from 2019 through 2021 to project future landings for January through May and August through December months, and June and July months were projected using 2016 and 2020-2021. Landings in 2016 were used to project future landings for June and July due to in-season closures in 2017 through 2019 (**Figures A.1.1.1 and A.1.1.2**). The changes to the commercial fishing year in response to South Atlantic Regulatory Amendment 25 and the Gulf Framework Action to the Reef Fish FMP are assumed to have minimal impact on monthly fishing behavior, and no adjustments were made to monthly landings. Monthly predicted landings were cumulatively summed for the fishing year (August 1 through July 31) until the landings met the ACL.

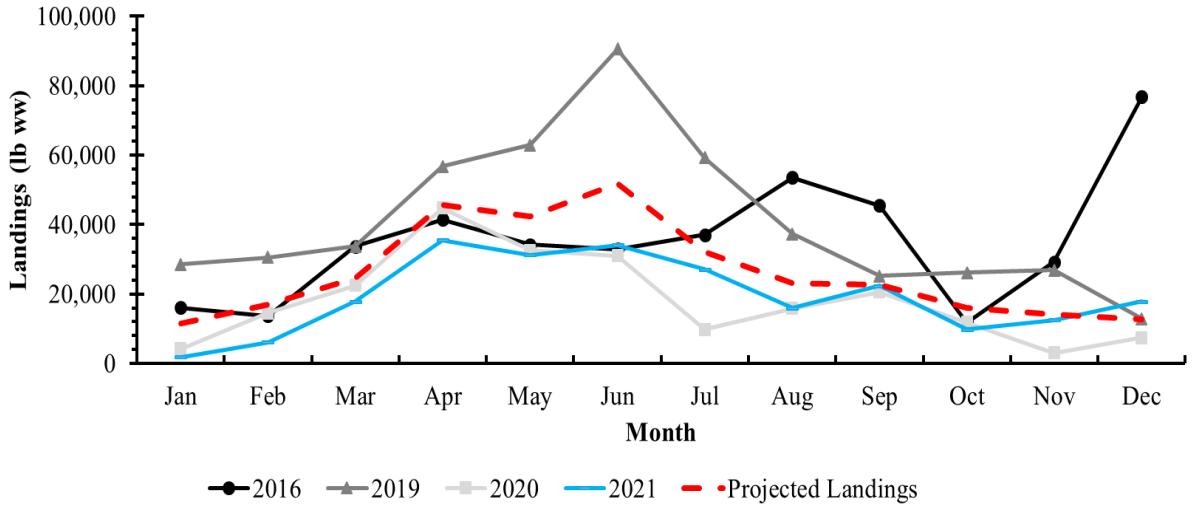

Figure A.1.1.1. Gulf of Mexico yellowtail snapper monthly commercial landings (lb ww) for 2016-2021, and projected future landings. Source: SEFSC Commercial ACL Dataset (August 31, 2022).

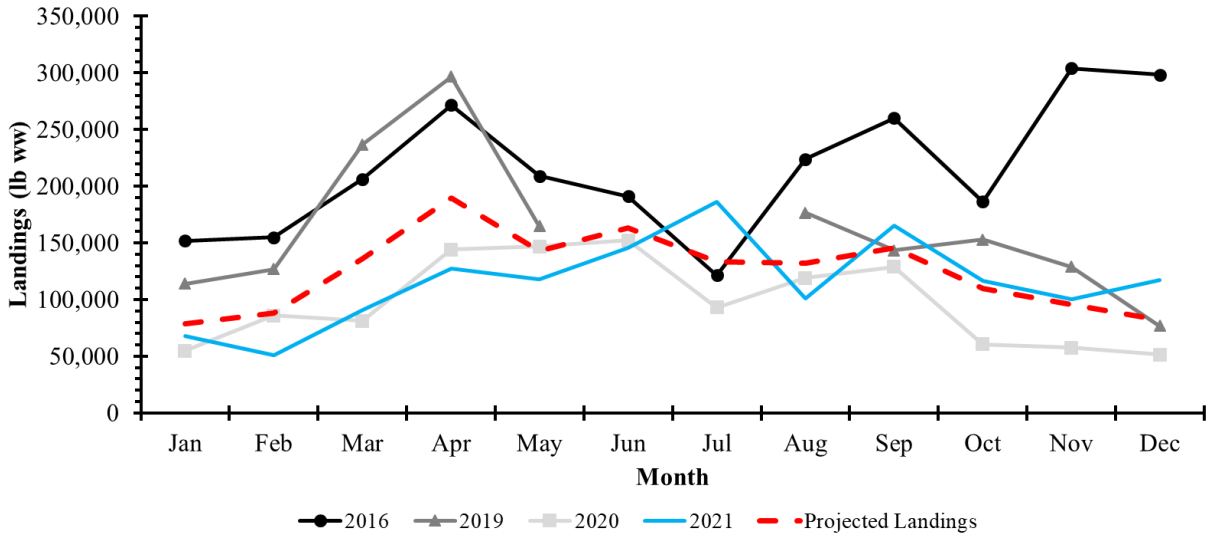

Figure A.1.1.2. South Atlantic yellowtail snapper monthly commercial landings (lb ww) for 2016-2021, and projected future landings. No landings are shown for months June and July in 2019 due to an in-season closure. Source: SEFSC Commercial ACL Dataset (August 31, 2022).

1.2 Recreational Sector

A recreational landings dataset was provided from the SEFSC on October 25, 2022. This dataset includes landings from the Texas Parks and Wildlife recreational creel survey (TPWD), Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries creel survey (LA Creel), Southeast Region Headboat Survey (SRHS) and Marine Recreational Information Program Fishing Effort Survey (MRIP FES). TPWD and SRHS data provide monthly landings estimates whereas MRIP and LACreel data are provided in two month waves (e.g., January and February = wave 1, March and April = wave 2, etc.). To estimate monthly landings, MRIP waves were used to estimate to monthly landings by assuming equal daily catch rates for months within a wave, and then SRHS and TPWD landings were added back in. Average monthly landings from 2019-2021 were used to project future landings for most months, with the exception of March and April when 2018-2019 and 2021 data were used due to atypical landings in response to the 2020 pandemic (**Figures A.1.2.1 and A.1.2.2**). The changes to the recreational fishing year in response to South Atlantic Regulatory Amendment 25 and the Gulf Framework Action to the Reef Fish FMP are assumed to have minimal impact on monthly fishing behavior, particularly since the recreational sector has never reached their ACL, and consequently no adjustments were made to monthly landings.

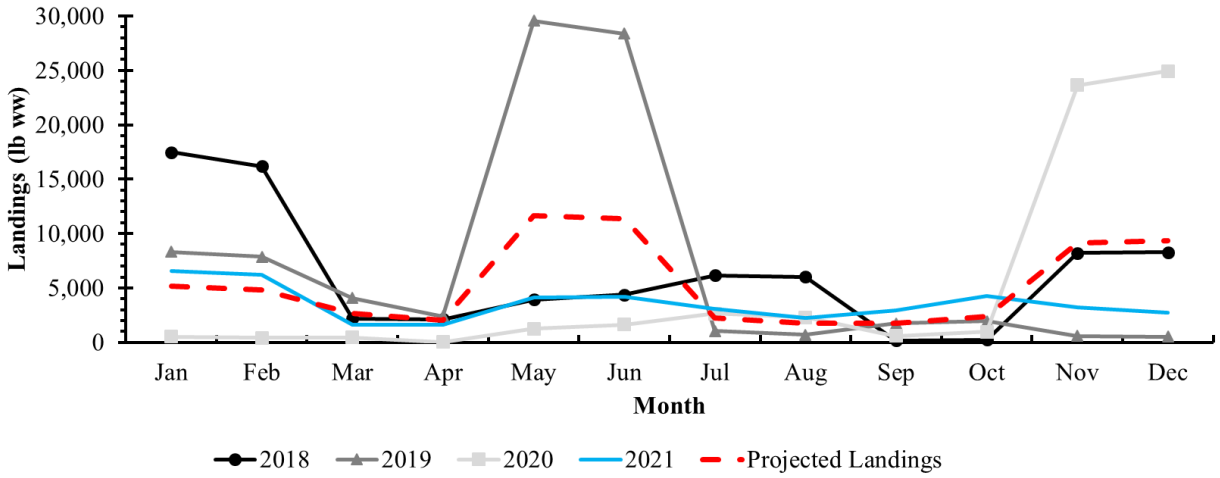

Figure A.1.2.1. Gulf of Mexico yellowtail snapper monthly recreational landings (lb ww) for 2018-2021, and projected future landings. Source: SEFSC Recreational ACL Dataset (October 25, 2022).

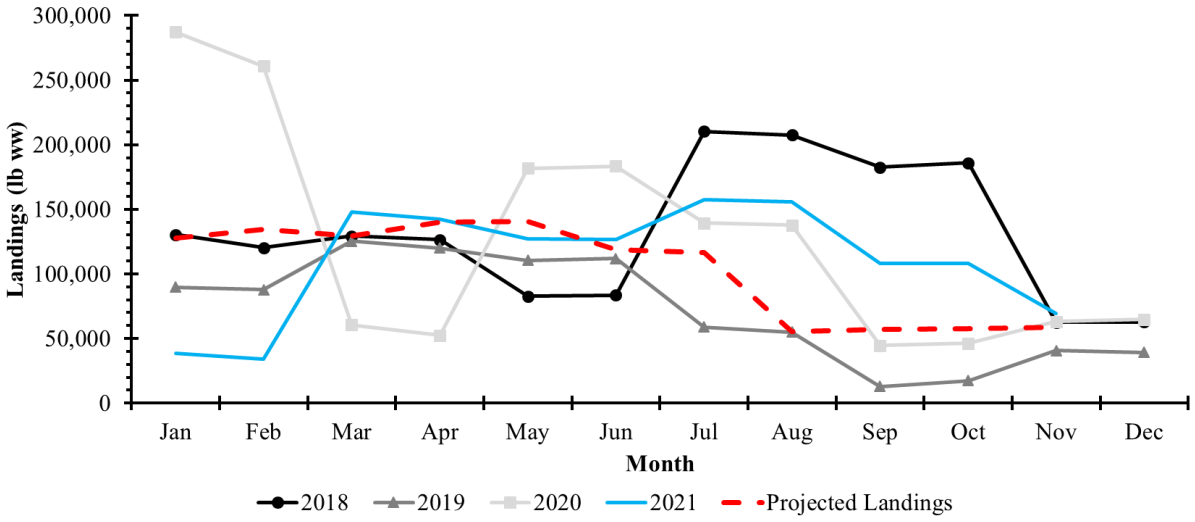

Figure A.1.2.2. South Atlantic yellowtail snapper monthly recreational landings (lb ww) for 2018-2021, and projected future landings. Source: SEFSC Recreational ACL Dataset (October 25, 2022).

Table A.1.2.1. Predicted closure dates for Gulf of Mexico yellowtail snapper for each proposed annual catch limits (**Action 2**) and each proposed jurisdictional allocation (**Action 1**). Gulf of Mexico yellowtail snapper are managed as stock annual catch limits. All projected closure dates are predicted only if future landings are higher than expected (at the upper 95% confidence interval), otherwise no closure is expected for all alternatives and proposed annual catch limits.

Action 1, Alternative 1 (No Action): GOM 25% / SA 75% Current Gulf of Mexico ACL (lb ww)					
Action 2 Alternative	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028+
Current GOM ABC=ACL	No Closure ACL=901,125				
Action 1, Alternative 2: GOM 25% / SA 75%					
Action 2	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028+
Alternative 1 (ACL=89% Updated ABC)	No Closure ACL=864,858	No Closure ACL=834,153	No Closure ACL=815,463	No Closure ACL=803,225	No Closure ACL=794,770
Alternative 2 (ACL=92% Updated ABC)	No Closure ACL=894,010	No Closure ACL=862,270	No Closure ACL=842,950	No Closure ACL=830,300	No Closure ACL=821,560
Alternative 3 (ACL= Updated ABC)	No Closure ACL=971,750	No Closure ACL=937,250	No Closure ACL=916,250	No Closure ACL=902,500	No Closure ACL=893,000
Action 1, Alternative 3: GOM 19% / SA 81%					
Action 2	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028+
Alternative 1 (ACL=89% Updated ABC)	**Upper 95%: Jul 25** ACL=657,292	**Upper 95%: Jul 17** ACL=633,956	**Upper 95%: Jul 12** ACL=619,752	**Upper 95%: Jul 8** ACL=610,451	**Upper 95%: Jul 6** ACL=604,025
Alternative 2 (ACL=92% Updated ABC)	No Closure ACL=679,448	**Upper 95%: Jul 25** ACL=655,325	**Upper 95%: Jul 19** ACL=640,642	**Upper 95%: Jul 16** ACL=631,028	**Upper 95%: Jul 13** ACL=624,386
Alternative 3 (ACL= Updated ABC)	No Closure ACL=738,530	No Closure ACL=712,310	No Closure ACL=696,350	No Closure ACL=685,900	No Closure ACL=678,680
Action 1, Alternative 4: GOM 16% / SA 84%					
Action 2	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028+
Alternative 1 (ACL=89% Updated ABC)	**Upper 95%: Jun 19** ACL=553,509	**Upper 95%: Jun 12** ACL=533,858	**Upper 95%: Jun 8** ACL=521,896	**Upper 95%: Jun 5** ACL=514,064	**Upper 95%: Jun 3** ACL=508,653
Alternative 2 (ACL=92% Updated ABC)	**Upper 95%: Jun 25** ACL=572,166	**Upper 95%: Jun 18** ACL=551,853	**Upper 95%: Jun 14** ACL=539,488	**Upper 95%: Jun 11** ACL=531,392	**Upper 95%: Jun 9** ACL=525,798
Alternative 3 (ACL= Updated ABC)	**Upper 95%: Jul 12** ACL=621,920	**Upper 95%: Jul 4** ACL=599,840	**Upper 95%: Jun 30** ACL=586,400	**Upper 95%: Jun 27** ACL=577,600	**Upper 95%: Jun 25** ACL=571,520

Table A.1.2.2. Predicted closure dates for South Atlantic yellowtail snapper for each proposed annual catch limits (**Action 2**) based on current jurisdictional allocations (**Action 1, Alternative 2: GOM 25% and SA 75%**) and current sector allocations (**Action 3, Alternative 1: 52.56% commercial and 47.44% recreational**).

Action 2, Alternative 1 (No Action): Current South Atlantic ACL (lb ww)			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
2023/2024+	3,037,500	No Closure ACL=1,596,510	No Closure ACL=1,440,990
Action 2, Alternative 2: ACL = Updated ABC			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
2023/2024	2,915,250	No Closure **Upper 95%: Apr 30** ACL=1,532,255	No Closure **Upper 95%: Apr 17** ACL=1,382,995
2024/2025	2,811,750	**Jul 27** **Upper 95%: Apr 25** ACL=1,477,856	No Closure **Upper 95%: Apr 9** ACL=1,333,894
2025/2026	2,748,750	**Jul 19** **Upper 95%: Apr 21** ACL=1,444,743	No Closure **Upper 95%: Apr 4** ACL=1,304,007
2026/2027	2,707,500	**Jul 14** **Upper 95%: Apr 19** ACL=1,423,062	No Closure **Upper 95%: Mar 31** ACL=1,284,438
2027/2028+	2,679,000	**Jul 11** **Upper 95%: Apr 18** ACL=1,408,082	No Closure **Upper 95%: Mar 29** ACL=1,270,918
Action 2, Alternative 3: ACL = 90% Updated ABC			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
2023/2024	2,623,725	**Jul 4** **Upper 95%: Apr 15** ACL=1,379,030	No Closure **Upper 95%: Mar 25** ACL=1,244,695
2024/2025	2,530,575	**Jun 24** **Upper 95%: Apr 10** ACL=1,330,070	**Jul 28** **Upper 95%: Mar 17** ACL=1,200,505
2025/2026	2,473,875	**Jun 19** **Upper 95%: Apr 7** ACL=1,300,269	**Jul 22** **Upper 95%: Mar 13** ACL=1,173,606
2026/2027	2,436,750	**Jun 15** **Upper 95%: Apr 5** ACL=1,280,756	**Jul 18** **Upper 95%: Mar 10** ACL=1,155,994
2027/2028+	2,411,100	**Jun 13** **Upper 95%: Apr 3** ACL=1,267,274	**Jul 16** **Upper 95%: Mar 8** ACL=1,143,826
Action 2, Alternative 4: ACL = 95% Updated ABC			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
2023/2024	2,769,488	**Jul 22** **Upper 95%: Apr 22** ACL= 1,455,643	No Closure **Upper 95%: Apr 5** ACL= 1,313,845
2024/2025	2,671,163	**Jul 10** **Upper 95%: Apr 17** ACL= 1,403,963	No Closure **Upper 95%: Mar 29** ACL= 1,267,200

Action 2, Alternative 1 (No Action): Current South Atlantic ACL (lb ww)			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
2025/2026	2,611,313	**Jul 3** **Upper 95%: Apr 14** ACL= 1,372,506	No Closure **Upper 95%: Mar 24** ACL= 1,238,807
2026/2027	2,572,125	**Jun 28** **Upper 95%: Apr 12** ACL= 1,351,909	No Closure **Upper 95%: Mar 21** ACL= 1,220,216
2027/2028+	2,545,050	**Jun 26** **Upper 95%: Apr 10** ACL= 1,337,678	**Jul 30** **Upper 95%: Mar 19** ACL= 1,207,372
Action 2, Alternative 5: ACL/OY = Lowest ABC			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
2023/2024+	2,679,000	**Jul 11** **Upper 95%: Apr 18** ACL=1,408,082	No Closure **Upper 95%: Mar 29** ACL=1,270,918
Action 2, Alternative 6: F30%SPR at equilibrium			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
2023/2024+	2,555,728	**Jun 27** **Upper 95%: Apr 11** ACL= 1,343,291	**Jul 31** **Upper 95%: Mar 19** ACL= 1,212,437

Table A.1.2.3. Predicted closure dates for South Atlantic yellowtail snapper for each proposed annual catch limits (**Action 2**) based on proposed jurisdictional allocation (**Action 1, Alternative 3: GOM 19% and SA 81%**) and current sector allocations (**Action 3, Alternative 1: 52.56% commercial and 47.44% recreational**).

Action 2, Alternative 1 (No Action): Current South Atlantic ACL (lb ww)			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
2023/2024+	3,037,500	No Closure ACL=1,596,510	No Closure ACL=1,440,990
Action 2, Alternative 2: ACL = Updated ABC			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
2023/2024	3,148,470	No Closure **Upper 95%: May 22** ACL=1,654,836	No Closure **Upper 95%: May 5** ACL=1,493,634
2024/2025	3,036,690	No Closure **Upper 95%: May 12** ACL=1,596,084	No Closure **Upper 95%: Apr 26** ACL=1,440,606
2025/2026	2,968,650	No Closure **Upper 95%: May 5** ACL=1,560,322	No Closure **Upper 95%: Apr 21** ACL=1,408,328
2026/2027	2,924,100	No Closure **Upper 95%: May 1** ACL=1,536,907	No Closure **Upper 95%: Apr 17** ACL=1,387,193
2027/2028+	2,893,320	No Closure **Upper 95%: Apr 29** ACL=1,520,729	No Closure **Upper 95%: Apr 15** ACL=1,372,591
Action 2, Alternative 3: ACL = 90% Updated ABC			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational

Action 2, Alternative 1 (No Action): Current South Atlantic ACL (lb ww)			
2023/2024	2,833,623	**Jul 30** **Upper 95%: Apr 26** ACL=1,489,352	No Closure **Upper 95%: Apr 10** ACL=1,344,271
2024/2025	2,733,021	**Jul 17** **Upper 95%: Apr 20** ACL=1,436,476	No Closure **Upper 95%: Apr 2** ACL=1,296,545
2025/2026	2,671,785	**Jul 10** **Upper 95%: Apr 17** ACL=1,404,290	No Closure **Upper 95%: Mar 29** ACL=1,267,495
2026/2027	2,631,690	**Jul 5** **Upper 95%: Apr 15** ACL=1,383,216	No Closure **Upper 95%: Mar 25** ACL=1,248,474
2027/2028+	2,603,988	**Jul 2** **Upper 95%: Apr 14** ACL=1,368,656	No Closure **Upper 95%: Mar 23** ACL=1,235,332
Action 2, Alternative 4: ACL = 95% Updated ABC			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
2023/2024	2,991,047	No Closure **Upper 95%: May 7** ACL= 1,572,094	No Closure **Upper 95%: Apr 23** ACL= 1,418,953
2024/2025	2,884,856	No Closure **Upper 95%: Apr 29** ACL= 1,516,280	No Closure **Upper 95%: Apr 14** ACL= 1,368,576
2025/2026	2,820,218	**Jul 28** **Upper 95%: Apr 25** ACL= 1,482,307	No Closure **Upper 95%: Apr 9** ACL= 1,337,911
2026/2027	2,777,895	**Jul 23** **Upper 95%: Apr 23** ACL= 1,460,062	No Closure **Upper 95%: Apr 6** ACL= 1,317,833
2027/2028+	2,748,654	**Jul 19** **Upper 95%: Apr 21** ACL= 1,444,693	No Closure **Upper 95%: Apr 4** ACL= 1,303,961
Action 2, Alternative 5: ACL/OY = Lowest ABC			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
2023/2024+	2,907,251	No Closure **Upper 95%: Apr 30** ACL= 1,528,051	No Closure **Upper 95%: Apr 16** ACL= 1,379,200
Action 2, Alternative 6: F30%SPR at equilibrium			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
2023/2024+	2,760,186	**Jul 21** **Upper 95%: Apr 22** ACL= 1,450,754	No Closure **Upper 95%: Apr 5** ACL= 1,309,432

Table A.1.2.4. Predicted closure dates for South Atlantic yellowtail snapper for each proposed annual catch limits (**Action 2**) based on proposed jurisdictional allocation (**Action 1, Alternative 4: GOM 16% and SA 84%**) and current sector allocations (**Action 3, Alternative 1: 52.56% commercial and 47.44% recreational**).

Action 2, Alternative 1 (No Action): Current South Atlantic ACL (lb ww)			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
2023/2024+	3,037,500	No Closure ACL=1,596,510	No Closure ACL=1,440,990
Action 2, Alternative 2: ACL = Updated ABC			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
2023/2024	3,265,080	No Closure **Upper 95%: Jun 2** ACL=1,716,126	No Closure **Upper 95%: May 14** ACL=1,548,954
2024/2025	3,149,160	No Closure **Upper 95%: May 22** ACL=1,655,198	No Closure **Upper 95%: May 5** ACL=1,493,962
2025/2026	3,078,600	No Closure **Upper 95%: May 16** ACL=1,618,112	No Closure **Upper 95%: Apr 29** ACL=1,460,488
2026/2027	3,032,400	No Closure **Upper 95%: May 11** ACL=1,593,829	No Closure **Upper 95%: Apr 26** ACL=1,438,571
2027/2028+	3,000,480	No Closure **Upper 95%: May 8** ACL=1,577,052	No Closure **Upper 95%: Apr 23** ACL=1,423,428
Action 2, Alternative 3: ACL = 90% Updated ABC			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
2023/2024	2,938,572	**Jul 30** **Upper 95%: Apr 26** ACL=1,489,352	No Closure **Upper 95%: Apr 10** ACL=1,344,271
2024/2025	2,834,244	**Jul 17** **Upper 95%: Apr 20** ACL=1,436,476	No Closure **Upper 95%: Apr 2** ACL=1,296,545
2025/2026	2,770,740	**Jul 10** **Upper 95%: Apr 17** ACL=1,404,290	No Closure **Upper 95%: Mar 29** ACL=1,267,495
2026/2027	2,729,160	**Jul 5** **Upper 95%: Apr 15** ACL=1,383,216	No Closure **Upper 95%: Mar 25** ACL=1,248,474
2027/2028+	2,700,432	**Jul 2** **Upper 95%: Apr 14** ACL=1,368,656	No Closure **Upper 95%: Mar 23** ACL=1,235,332
Action 2, Alternative 4: ACL = 95% Updated ABC			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
2023/2024	3,101,826	No Closure **Upper 95%: May 18** ACL= 1,630,320	No Closure **Upper 95%: May 1** ACL= 1,471,506
2024/2025	2,991,702	No Closure **Upper 95%: May 7** ACL= 1,572,439	No Closure **Upper 95%: Apr 23** ACL= 1,419,263
2025/2026	2,924,670	No Closure **Upper 95%: May 1** ACL= 1,537,207	No Closure **Upper 95%: Apr 17** ACL= 1,387,463
2026/2027	2,880,780	No Closure	No Closure

Action 2, Alternative 1 (No Action): Current South Atlantic ACL (lb ww)			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
		Upper 95%: Apr 28 ACL= 1,514,138	**Upper 95%: Apr 14** ACL= 1,366,642
2027/2028+	2,850,456	No Closure **Upper 95%: Apr 27** ACL= 1,498,200	No Closure **Upper 95%: Apr 12** ACL= 1,352,256
Action 2, Alternative 5: ACL/OY = Lowest ABC			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
2023/2024+	2,907,251	No Closure **Upper 95%: Apr 30** ACL= 1,528,051	No Closure **Upper 95%: Apr 16** ACL= 1,379,200
Action 2, Alternative 6: F30%SPR at equilibrium			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
2023/2024+	2,862,415	No Closure **Upper 95%: Apr 27** ACL= 1,504,485	No Closure **Upper 95%: Apr 12** ACL= 1,357,930

Table A.1.2.5. Predicted closure dates for South Atlantic yellowtail snapper for each proposed annual catch limits (**Action 2**) based on current jurisdictional allocations (**Action 1, Alternative 2: GOM 25% and SA 75%**) and proposed sector allocations (**Action 3, Alternative 2: 40.73% commercial and 59.27% recreational**).

Action 2, Alternative 1 (No Action): Current South Atlantic ACL (lb ww)			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
2023/2024+	3,037,500	No Closure ACL=1,596,510	No Closure ACL=1,440,990
Action 2, Alternative 2: ACL = Updated ABC			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
2023/2024	2,915,250	**May 29** **Upper 95%: Mar 24** ACL=1,187,381	No Closure **Upper 95%: Jun 13** ACL=1,727,869
2024/2025	2,811,750	**May 19** **Upper 95%: Mar 19** ACL=1,145,226	No Closure **Upper 95%: Jun 3** ACL=1,666,524
2025/2026	2,748,750	**May 14** **Upper 95%: Mar 16** ACL=1,119,566	No Closure **Upper 95%: May 28** ACL=1,629,184
2026/2027	2,707,500	**May 10** **Upper 95%: Mar 13** ACL=1,102,765	No Closure **Upper 95%: May 24** ACL=1,604,735
2027/2028+	2,679,000	**May 8** **Upper 95%: Mar 12** ACL=1,091,157	No Closure **Upper 95%: May 21** ACL=1,587,843
Action 2, Alternative 3: ACL = 90% Updated ABC			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
2023/2024	2,623,725	**May 3** **Upper 95%: Mar 9** ACL= 1,068,643	No Closure **Upper 95%: Jun 15** ACL= 1,555,082
2024/2025	2,530,575	**Apr 26**	No Closure

Action 2, Alternative 1 (No Action): Current South Atlantic ACL (lb ww)			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
		Upper 95%: Mar 4 ACL= 1,030,703	**Upper 95%: May 6** ACL= 1,499,872
2025/2026	2,473,875	**Apr 23** **Upper 95%: Mar 1** ACL= 1,007,609	No Closure **Upper 95%: Apr 30** ACL= 1,466,266
2026/2027	2,436,750	**Apr 20** **Upper 95%: Feb 26** ACL= 992,488	No Closure **Upper 95%: Apr 27** ACL= 1,444,262
2027/2028+	2,411,100	**Apr 19** **Upper 95%: Feb 23** ACL= 982,041	No Closure **Upper 95%: Apr 24** ACL= 1,429,059
Action 2, Alternative 4: ACL = 95% Updated ABC			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
2023/2024	2,769,488	**May 16** **Upper 95%: Mar 17** ACL= 1,128,012	No Closure **Upper 95%: May 30** ACL= 1,641,476
2024/2025	2,671,163	**May 7** **Upper 95%: Mar 11** ACL= 1,087,965	No Closure **Upper 95%: May 20** ACL= 1,583,198
2025/2026	2,611,313	**May 2** **Upper 95%: Mar 8** ACL= 1,063,588	No Closure **Upper 95%: May 14** ACL= 1,547,725
2026/2027	2,572,125	**Apr 29** **Upper 95%: Mar 6** ACL= 1,047,627	No Closure **Upper 95%: May 10** ACL= 1,524,498
2027/2028+	2,545,050	**Apr 27** **Upper 95%: Mar 5** ACL= 1,036,599	No Closure **Upper 95%: May 7** ACL= 1,508,451
Action 2, Alternative 5: ACL/OY = Lowest ABC			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
2023/2024+	2,679,000	**May 8** **Upper 95%: Mar 12** ACL= 1,091,157	No Closure **Upper 95%: May 21** ACL= 1,587,843
Action 2, Alternative 6: F30%SPR at equilibrium			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
2023/2024+	2,555,728	**Apr 28** **Upper 95%: Mar 5** ACL= 1,040,948	No Closure **Upper 95%: May 9** ACL= 1,514,780

Table A.1.2.6. Predicted closure dates for South Atlantic yellowtail snapper for each proposed annual catch limits (**Action 2**) based on proposed jurisdictional allocation (**Action 1, Alternative 3: GOM 19% and SA 81%**) and proposed sector allocations (**Action 3, Alternative 2: 40.73% commercial and 59.27% recreational**).

Action 2, Alternative 1 (No Action): Current South Atlantic ACL (lb ww)			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
2023/2024+	3,037,500	No Closure ACL=1,596,510	No Closure ACL=1,440,990

Action 2, Alternative 1 (No Action): Current South Atlantic ACL (lb ww)			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
Action 2, Alternative 2: ACL = Updated ABC			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
2023/2024	3,148,470	**Jun 16** **Upper 95%: Apr 5** ACL=1,282,372	No Closure **Upper 95%: Jul 6** ACL=1,866,098
2024/2025	3,036,690	**Jun 7** **Upper 95%: Mar 31** ACL=1,236,844	No Closure **Upper 95%: Jun 25** ACL=1,799,846
2025/2026	2,968,650	**Jun 2** **Upper 95%: Mar 27** ACL=1,209,131	No Closure **Upper 95%: Jun 19** ACL=1,759,519
2026/2027	2,924,100	**May 29** **Upper 95%: Mar 25** ACL=1,190,986	No Closure **Upper 95%: Jun 14** ACL=1,733,114
2027/2028+	2,893,320	**May 27** **Upper 95%: Mar 23** ACL=1,178,449	No Closure **Upper 95%: Jun 11** ACL=1,714,871
Action 2, Alternative 3: ACL = 90% Updated ABC			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
2023/2024	2,833,623	**May 21** **Upper 95%: Mar 20** ACL= 1,154,135	No Closure **Upper 95%: Jun 5** ACL= 1,679,488
2024/2025	2,733,021	**May 13** **Upper 95%: Mar 15** ACL= 1,113,159	No Closure **Upper 95%: May 26** ACL= 1,619,862
2025/2026	2,671,785	**May 7** **Upper 95%: Mar 11** ACL= 1,088,218	No Closure **Upper 95%: May 20** ACL= 1,583,567
2026/2027	2,631,690	**May 4** **Upper 95%: Mar 9** ACL= 1,071,887	No Closure **Upper 95%: May 16** ACL= 1,559,803
2027/2028+	2,603,988	**May 1** **Upper 95%: Mar 8** ACL= 1,060,604	No Closure **Upper 95%: May 13** ACL= 1,543,384
Action 2, Alternative 4: ACL = 95% Updated ABC			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
2023/2024	2,991,047	**Jun 6** **Upper 95%: Mar 29** ACL= 1,218,253	No Closure **Upper 95%: Jun 21** ACL= 1,772,794
2024/2025	2,884,856	**May 26** **Upper 95%: Mar 23** ACL= 1,175,002	No Closure **Upper 95%: Jun 10** ACL= 1,709,854
2025/2026	2,820,218	**May 20** **Upper 95%: Mar 19** ACL= 1,148,675	No Closure **Upper 95%: Jun 4** ACL= 1,671,543
2026/2027	2,777,895	**May 16** **Upper 95%: Mar 17** ACL= 1,131,437	No Closure **Upper 95%: May 31** ACL= 1,646,458

Action 2, Alternative 1 (No Action): Current South Atlantic ACL (lb ww)			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
2027/2028+	2,748,654	**May 14** **Upper 95%: Mar 16** ACL= 1,119,527	No Closure **Upper 95%: May 28** ACL= 1,629,127
Action 2, Alternative 5: ACL/OY = Lowest ABC			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
2023/2024+	2,907,251	**May 28** **Upper 95%: Mar 24** ACL= 1,184,123	No Closure **Upper 95%: Jun 13** ACL= 1,723,128
Action 2, Alternative 6: F30%SPR at equilibrium			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
2023/2024+	2,760,186	**May 15** **Upper 95%: Mar 16** ACL= 1,124,224	No Closure **Upper 95%: May 29** ACL= 1,635,962

Table A.1.2.7. Predicted closure dates for South Atlantic yellowtail snapper for each proposed annual catch limits (**Action 2**) based on proposed jurisdictional allocation (**Action 1, Alternative 4: GOM 16% and SA 84%**) and proposed sector allocations (**Action 3, Alternative 2: 40.73% commercial and 59.27% recreational**).

Action 2, Alternative 1 (No Action): Current South Atlantic ACL (lb ww)			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
2023/2024+	3,037,500	No Closure ACL=1,596,510	No Closure ACL=1,440,990
Action 2, Alternative 2: ACL = Updated ABC			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
2023/2024	3,265,080	**Jun 24** **Upper 95%: Apr 10** ACL=1,329,867	No Closure **Upper 95%: Jul 18** ACL=1,935,213
2024/2025	3,149,160	**Jun 16** **Upper 95%: Apr 5** ACL=1,282,653	No Closure **Upper 95%: Jul 6** ACL=1,866,507
2025/2026	3,078,600	**Jun 10** **Upper 95%: Apr 2** ACL=1,253,914	No Closure **Upper 95%: Jun 29** ACL=1,824,686
2026/2027	3,032,400	**Jun 7** **Upper 95%: Mar 31** ACL=1,235,097	No Closure **Upper 95%: Jun 25** ACL=1,797,303
2027/2028+	3,000,480	**Jun 4** **Upper 95%: Mar 29** ACL=1,222,096	No Closure **Upper 95%: Jun 22** ACL=1,778,384
Action 2, Alternative 3: ACL = 90% Updated ABC			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
2023/2024	2,938,572	**May 31** **Upper 95%: Mar 26** ACL= 1,196,880	No Closure **Upper 95%: Jun 16** ACL= 1,741,692
2024/2025	2,834,244	**May 21** **Upper 95%: Mar 20** ACL= 1,154,388	No Closure **Upper 95%: Jun 5** ACL= 1,679,856

Action 2, Alternative 1 (No Action): Current South Atlantic ACL (lb ww)			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
2025/2026	2,770,740	**May 16** **Upper 95%: Mar 17** ACL= 1,128,522	No Closure **Upper 95%: May 30** ACL= 1,642,218
2026/2027	2,729,160	**May 12** **Upper 95%: Mar 14** ACL= 1,111,587	No Closure **Upper 95%: May 26** ACL= 1,617,573
2027/2028+	2,700,432	**May 10** **Upper 95%: Mar 13** ACL= 1,099,886	No Closure **Upper 95%: May 23** ACL= 1,600,546
Action 2, Alternative 4: ACL = 95% Updated ABC			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
2023/2024	3,101,826	**Jun 12** **Upper 95%: Apr 3** ACL= 1,263,374	No Closure **Upper 95%: Jul 1** ACL= 1,838,452
2024/2025	2,991,702	**Jun 4** **Upper 95%: Mar 29** ACL= 1,218,520	No Closure **Upper 95%: Jun 21** ACL= 1,773,182
2025/2026	2,924,670	**May 29** **Upper 95%: Mar 25** ACL= 1,191,218	No Closure **Upper 95%: Jun 14** ACL= 1,733,452
2026/2027	2,880,780	**May 26** **Upper 95%: Mar 23** ACL= 1,173,342	No Closure **Upper 95%: Jun 10** ACL= 1,707,438
2027/2028+	2,850,456	**May 23** **Upper 95%: Mar 21** ACL= 1,160,991	No Closure **Upper 95%: Jun 7** ACL= 1,689,465
Action 2, Alternative 5: ACL/OY = Lowest ABC			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
2023/2024+	2,907,251	**May 28** **Upper 95%: Mar 24** ACL= 1,184,123	No Closure **Upper 95%: Jun 13** ACL= 1,723,128
Action 2, Alternative 6: F30%SPR at equilibrium			
Year	SA Total ACL (lb ww)	Commercial	Recreational
2023/2024+	2,862,415	**May 24** **Upper 95%: Mar 22** ACL= 1,165,862	No Closure **Upper 95%: Jun 8** ACL= 1,696,553

The reliability of these results is dependent upon the accuracy of the underlying data and input assumptions. We have attempted to create a realistic baseline as a foundation for comparisons, under the assumption that projected future landings will accurately reflect actual future landings. These closure dates are our best estimate, but uncertainty still exists as economic conditions, weather events, changes in catch-per-unit effort, fisher response to management regulations, and a variety of other factors may cause departures from any assumption.

Appendix B. Gulf of Mexico Annual Catch Limit/Annual Catch Target Control Rule

Figure B.1 shows the method of implementing the Gulf of Mexico's ACL/ACT Control Rule, which was developed through the Generic Annual Catch Limits/Accountability Measures Amendment (GMFMC 2011a). Figure B.2 shows the application of the control rule for the Gulf of Mexico's portion of the yellowtail snapper for the fishing years 2017/2018 through 2020/2021. Table B.1 shows the recreational reference years used in Figure B.1.

ACL/ACT Buffer Spreadsheet v. 4.1			Gulf Yellowtail Snapper	Sector: both	
sum of points	3			Years: 2017/18-2020/21	
max points	7.0		Buffer between ACL and ACT (or ABC and ACL)	Unweighted	8
Min. Buffer	**0**	**min. buffer**	User adjustable	Weighted	**8**
Max Unw.Buff	19	max unwt. Buff			
Max Wtd Buff	**25**	**max wtd. buffer**	User adjustable		
	Component	**Element score**	**Element**	**Selection**	**Element result**
	Stock assemblage	0	This ACL/ACT is for a single stock.	x	0
		1	This ACL/ACT is for a stock assemblage, or an indicator species for a stock assemblage		
	Ability to	0	Catch limit has been exceeded 0 or 1 times in last 4 years	x	0
	Constrain Catch	1	Catch limit has been exceeded 2 or more times in last 4 years		
			For the year with max. overage, add 0.5 pts. For every 10 percentage points (rounded up) above ACL	0.0	
			Not applicable (there is no catch limit)		
			Apply this component to recreational fisheries, not commercial or IFQ fisheries		
		0	Method of absolute counting		2
	Precision of	1	MRIP proportional standard error (PSE) <= 20		
	Landings Data	2	MRIP proportional standard error (PSE) > 20	x	
			Apply this component to commercial fisheries or any fishery under an IFQ program		
	Precision of	0	Landings from IFQ program		1
	Landings Data	1	Landings based on dealer reporting	x	
		2	Landings based on other		
	Timeliness	0	In-season accountability measures used or fishery is under an IFQ	x	0
		1	In-season accountability measures not used		
	Weighting factor				
		Element weight	Element	Selection	Weighting
	Overfished status	0	1. Stock biomass is at or above B_{OY}.	x	0
		0.1	2. Stock biomass is below B_{OY} but at or above B_{MSY}.		
		0.2	3. Stock biomass is below B_{MSY} but at or above MSST.		
		0.3	4. Stock is overfished, below MSST.		
		0.3	5. Status criterion is unknown.		

Figure B.1. Application of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council's (Gulf Council) Annual Catch Limit/Annual Catch Target (ACL/ACT) Control Rule (GMFMC 2012) for southeastern U.S. yellowtail snapper landed in the Gulf Council's jurisdiction from the 2017/2018 – 2020/2021 fishing years

Table B.1. Recreational reference years used for the Gulf of Mexico ACT/ACL Control Rule.

Fishing Year	Comm	Rec	Total
2017/18	589,868	206,785	796,653
2018/19	527,112	104,527	631,638
2019/20	287,940	12,348	300,289
2020/21	212,630	79,765	292,395

Source: SERO ACL Monitoring Database 8/9/2022

Appendix C. South Atlantic Allocations Review Trigger Policy

In a letter to the NOAA Assistant Administrator dated July 16, 2019, the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) responded to NOAA's Fisheries Allocation Review Policy (NMFS Policy Directive 01-119) and the associated Procedural Directive on allocation review triggers (NMFS Procedural Directive 01-119-01). The Policy established the responsibility for the Regional Fishery Management Councils to set allocation review triggers and consider three types of trigger criteria: indicator, public interest, and time. Councils were directed to establish triggers for consideration of allocation reviews by August 2019. The Council's response follows:

The Council has reviewed species allocations on numerous occasions in the past. However, these reviews may not have been formally documented in a fishery management plan amendment if a decision was made not to modify sector allocations. This new policy will ensure all species currently having sector allocations will be reviewed on a regular basis and will formalize the allocation review process so the Council's consideration of allocations will be documented.

The Council reviewed their current sector allocations and began discussions on the Policy and Procedural Directives and criteria for considering fishery allocation reviews at their December 2018 meeting. At their June 2019 meeting, the Council adopted two types of criteria for triggering consideration of an allocation review: indicator and time.

The Council chose several indicator-based criteria as triggers:

- Either sector exceeds its ACL or closes prior to the end of its fishing year three out of five consecutive years,
- Either sector under harvests its ACL or OY by at least 50% three out of five consecutive years,
- After a stock assessment is approved by the SSC and presented to the Council, and
- After the Council reviews a species Fishery Performance Report.

The Council chose a time-based trigger to ensure allocation reviews are regularly considered. Each species will have its sector allocations reviewed not less than every seven years. Table I.1.1 shows by species when the next sector allocation review will be considered by the Council should an indicator-based criterion not be triggered. Regardless of whether consideration of an allocation review is triggered by an indicator or time criterion once it occurs the next one will automatically be scheduled for consideration seven years later. For species which are jointly managed with the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, the timing for consideration of allocation reviews was coordinated with that council.

A public interest-based criterion was not selected because the Council currently receives substantial and regular comment from the public through scoping and public hearing sessions, general public comment periods held at every Council meeting, the public comment form on the Council's website, and through other more informal channels. Thus, the Council decided the existing Council process provides sufficient opportunity for public input on allocation.

Table C.1.. Next year for allocation reviews (as of 2019) for Council managed species.

Assessed Species	Review Year	Unassessed Species	Review Year	Grunts Complex	Review Year
Black grouper	2026	Atlantic spadefish	2022	White grunt	2024
Black sea bass	2023	Bar jack	2022	Sailor's choice grunt	2024
Blueline Tilefish	2020	Scamp	2022	Tomtate	2024
Gag	2022	Speckled hind	*	Margate	2024
Golden tilefish	2021	Warsaw grouper	*	**Shallow-Water Groupers Complex**	**Review Year**
Gray triggerfish	2023	**Deepwater Species**	**Review Year**	Red hind	2026
Greater amberjack	2021	Yellowedge grouper	2024	Rock hind	2026
GA-NC Hogfish	2023	Silk snapper	2024	Yellowmouth grouper	2026
FLK/EFL Hogfish	2023	Misty grouper	2024	Yellowfin grouper	2026
Mutton napper	2023	Sand tilefish	2024	Coney	2026
Red grouper	2023	Queen Snapper	2024	Graysby	2026
Red porgy	2021	Blackfin snapper	2024	**Porgy Complex**	**Review Year**
Red snapper	2024	**Jacks Complex**	**Review Year**	Jolthead porgy	2027
Snowy grouper	2021	Almaco jack	2025	Knobbed porgy	2027
Vermilion snapper	2021	Banded rudderfish	2025	Saucereye porgy	2027
Wreckfish	2019	Lesser amberjack	2025	Scup	2027
Yellowtail snapper	2021	**Snappers Complex**	**Review Year**	Whitebone porgy	2027
Atlantic Group King mackerel	2021	Gray snapper	2025	**Dolphin/Wahoo**	**Review Year**
Atlantic Group Spanish mackerel	2022	Lane snapper	2025	Dolphin	2019
Gulf Group Cobia FL East Coast zone	2021	Cubera snapper	2025	Wahoo	2019

*ACL=0 for this species. If ACL>0 in the future, allocations will be reviewed when the ACL is increased.

Appendix D. Gulf Council's Allocation Review Guidelines

I. Background

In conjunction with the Council Coordination Committee (CCC), the National Marine Fisheries Services (NMFS) developed a Fisheries Allocation Review Policy (NMFS Policy Directive 01-119)[3] and an associated procedural directive addressing criteria for initiating allocation reviews (NMFS Procedural Directive 01-119-01)[4]. In a subsequent policy directive, NMFS recommended practices and factors to consider when reviewing and making allocation decisions (NMFS Procedural Directive 01-119-02)[5]. These allocation review policies and procedural directives required regional fisheries management develop allocation review triggers that would be considered to initiate allocation reviews. The Gulf Council's selected review triggers are included in its allocation review policy (Appendix A).

In NMFS Allocation Review Policy, a fishery allocation (or "allocation" or "assignment" of fishing privileges) is defined by NMFS as a "direct and deliberate distribution of the opportunity to participate in a fishery among identifiable, discrete user groups or individuals." 50 CFR 600.10. The Allocation Review Policy makes a clear distinction between an allocation review and an evaluation of fisheries allocation options for an FMP amendment. A fisheries allocation review is the evaluation that leads to the decision of whether or not the development and evaluation of allocation options is warranted, but is not, in and of itself, an implicit trigger to consider alternative allocations. An evaluation of fisheries allocation options for an FMP amendment is the full analysis and evaluation of allocation options that is initiated if the allocation review determines a reallocation may be warranted. The goal will be an FMP amendment (or framework adjustment if applicable) that either updates the allocation or retains the status quo.

Allocation review guidelines in this document detail the process that the Gulf Council would follow to conduct its allocation reviews mandated by NMFS Allocation Review Policy. In some instances, e.g., following a stock assessment, the Council may elect to skip a formal allocation review and directly proceed with the development of an FMP amendment. In these cases, these guidelines would not apply.

[3] NMFS Policy Directive 01-119
[4] NMFS Procedural Directive 01-119-01
[5] https://media.fisheries.noaa.gov/dam-migration/01-119-02.pdf

II. Terms of Reference

Prior to each allocation review, the Council will formally adopt terms of reference (TORs) for the review. TORs will either be developed by the SEFSC or by Council staff in conjunction with the SEFSC and SERO. The SSC will review draft TORs and provide recommendations to the Council. Draft TORs have to be reviewed and possibly amended by the Council prior to approval. A Council motion would be required to formally approve the TORs.

III. Membership of the Review Panel

Prior to each allocation review, the Council will appoint an allocation review panel or specify the method by which the panel will be appointed. During the selection of a review panel, the Council will pay special attention to potential conflicts of interest by avoiding the appointment of individuals with affiliation to a particular sector. For example, individuals who belong to (or represent) a particular sector should not be appointed to serve on allocation review panels. To determine the composition of the review panel the Council could:

- Allow the Council staff, SERO and the SEFSC to select members of an Interdisciplinary Planning Team (IPT) to conduct the review. The IPT typically includes SERO, SEFSC and, Council staff. Members would be selected by the Council Office, SERO, and the SEFSC following the usual IPT selection process.

- Select SSC members (with NMFS and Council staff support).

- Appoint independent experts.

If deemed necessary, the Council may select members of the review panel by relying on a combination between the alternative approaches listed. The Council will determine the size of the review panel based on the specifics of the species or species group allocation to be reviewed.

IV. Review Notice

A *Federal Register* notice (FRN) must be published prior to the initiation of each allocation review. At a minimum, the FRN notice will indicate the species and allocation(s) to be reviewed, list the membership of the review panel, and provide the starting date of the review and anticipated locations and dates of the review panel meetings as applicable. However, allocation reviews that would be entirely conducted by an IPT are exempt from meeting notice requirements.

V. Allocation Review Criteria

Allocation reviews will typically be conducted based on information and data that are routinely available. Reviews are expected to utilize existing ecological, biological, and socio-economic studies relevant to the species (or group of species) and user groups under consideration. Prior to each allocation review, the Council will determine the suite of ecological, biological, economic,

and social factors consistent with the NMFS Allocation Review Policy to be included in the review. It is expected that a subset of the list provided in this section would be used for a particular allocation review, depending on their relevance to the species under review, sectors, user groups, or states concerned, and data availability.

FMP Objectives

Re-evaluate goals and objectives to determine whether they are current, clear, and measurable. As directed by NMFS Allocation Review Policy, allocation reviews must include an evaluation of the relevant FMP objectives. Specifically, the review should assess whether the allocation is consistent with the FMP objectives.

Regulatory Structure

- Mainly discuss relevant current management measures
- However, if warranted consider changes over time (bag limit changes)
- Several elements could be gathered from history of management sections included in Council's regulatory actions

Status of the Stock(s)

- Discuss findings of the latest stock assessment

Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC), Quotas, Annual Catch Limits and Targets (ACLs and ACTs)

- List allowable biological catch (ABC), annual catch limits and targets (ACLs and ACTs); Discuss buffers between the catch limits and targets.
- If warranted, include changes to these variables over time and to the metrics used (e.g., MRIP-CHTS to FES)

Accountability Measures

- Season closures and quota paybacks
- Include comparison across user groups

Landings history

- Provide detailed landings history by sector, within sector (gear, components of a particular sector), by region or by state. Discuss relevant changes in units of measurement used (e.g., conversion of recreational landings from MRIP-CHTS to MRIP-FES)
- Provide aggregate landings including other species in the FMP. Discuss the relative dependence of a given user group on the species under review (for example, include red snapper landings and total reef fish landings)

ACL/Quota Utilization Rates

- Trends for each user group
- Include comparison across user groups

Participation and Effort Measures

- Provide numbers of participants, as measured by permits or licenses, vessels, and anglers where available. Include total numbers as well as active (non-latent) participation based on the allocation(s) being reviewed
- Provide effort measures including number of trips (e.g., catch and target trips for private recreational anglers and for-hire operators)
- Include evaluation of participation and effort trends

Discards and Discard Mortality Rates

- Include comparison across user groups

Protected Species Bycatch Numbers and Rates

- Include comparison across user groups

Habitat Impacts

- Include comparison across user groups
- Discuss impacts of relevant environmental events. For example, discuss spatial considerations in allocation between Gulf states such as red tide, oil spills, etc.

Economic Factors

An allocation review should provide, to the extent practicable, metrics to evaluate economic factors relevant to the species and allocation under review.

- Consumer surplus commercial
- Consumer surplus rec anglers
- Producer surplus for-hire vessels, revenues, variable and fixed costs
- Producer surplus commercial vessels, revenues, variable and fixed costs
- Share and allocation transfer price (catch share managed species only)
- Economic impacts by sector as measured by employment, output, income and value-added.

Social Factors

Allocation reviews should include, to the extent practicable, metrics to evaluate social considerations of allocation. However, available human dimensions data are limited and data are typically not available to make comparisons across sectors or for recreational fishing among states.

- Demographics (e.g., race/ethnicity, age) – These data are not currently available, but have recently been collected among federal permitholders for a single year, only. It remains unknown whether these data would become available in the future.

- Community Regional and Local Quotients – These analyses are available for the commercial sector, only. Data are not currently available to associate recreational landings with a particular community.
- Community engagement and reliance indicators – Measurements of fishing activity specific to a particular stock (commercial sector) or for fishing in general (recreational fishing).
- Community social vulnerability indicators – Measure of social vulnerability for the community in general and not specific to the fishing aspects of a community, and not distinguished by sector.

VI. Allocation Review Stages

Allocation reviews will include a minimum of three steps:

- **Stage One** will be the data review phase. During this phase, potential data sources are identified and available data are gathered. Data collected should be consistent with the evaluations/requirements detailed in the TORs.

- **Stage Two** will include the core of the allocation review. During this phase, data collected are interpreted, trends are identified and discussed. The evaluation of trends performed should be consistent with the requirements detailed in the TORs.

- **Stage Three** will focus on producing the allocation review report. A preliminary report is drafted during this phase. The draft report will include the deliverables specified in the TORs. The report should include: a section discussing historical allocations and how they were established; a discussion of the types of data collected and sources, data trends, and data gaps. If requested by the Council, the report would include potential re-allocation scenarios. The draft report should also discuss research that could improve future allocation reviews and present recommendations provided by the review panel. In addition, all datasets used during the review must be attached to the report.

VII. Advisory Panels and SSC Recommendations

A draft allocation review prepared by the review panel must be discussed by the Standing and Socioeconomic SSCs and relevant advisory panel(s) (APs) to garner their recommendations. The draft report, along with recommendations provided by the SSCs and APs will be presented to the Council. Stakeholder engagement throughout the allocation review process is a key component of reviews. In addition to the formal presentation of the draft allocation review report to the relevant APs, stakeholders will have several opportunities to provide input and discuss the different phases of an allocation review by either attending review proceedings or by providing public comments. Electronic comments pertaining to an ongoing allocation review can be submitted to the Council's website at any time. Furthermore, stakeholders may provide comments during public testimony sessions scheduled during each Council meeting.

VIII. Council Decisions

Upon completion, designated members of the allocation review panel will present the draft report to the Council. Council staff will present recommendations provided by the SSCs and relevant APs. Council staff will also provide a summary of public comments received. The Council may ask the allocation review panel to amend the report and provide additional information as needed. Following the submission of a final allocation review report, including revisions suggested by the Council, the Council will formally approve the report and make recommendations to either direct staff to initiate an amendment to the relevant FMP to consider alternative reallocations or elect to conclude the review without considering revisions to the existing allocation.

IX. Resetting the Allocation Review Clock

Following the completion of an allocation review, the Council may maintain the existing allocation until its future review or elect to initiate an allocation FMP amendment. If the Council determines that an amendment to the relevant FMP to consider alternative reallocation scenarios is not warranted, then the clock resets immediately and the next allocation review will be scheduled based on the time interval set by the corresponding time-based trigger. If the Council determines that a reallocation amendment to the relevant FMP is warranted, then the clock resets on the effective date of the final rule that implements the allocation FMP amendment.

Gulf Council's Allocation Review Policy

The Fisheries Allocation Review Policy (NMFS Policy Directive 01-119) and the associated Procedural Directive on allocation review triggers (NMFS Procedural Directive 01-119-01) present three types of triggers (indicator-based, public interest-based, and time-based criteria) and request that Regional Fishery Management Councils establish review triggers.

The Gulf Council initially reviewed a discussion paper introducing the allocation review policy and procedural directive during its August 2018 meeting. Follow-up discussions during the October 2018 meeting included an evaluation of the types of triggers considered in the policy and procedural directives and a preliminary identification of Gulf allocations that would be subject to the policy. Additional discussions, including the formal selection of triggers for relevant Gulf of Mexico allocations and the adoption of the policy on allocation reviews detailed below were held in January 2019 and finalized during the April 2019 Council meeting. The Gulf Council adopted the following policy on allocation reviews:

The Council selects time-based criteria as primary allocation review triggers bolstered by general monitoring of indicators for reallocation justification through the Council's general deliberative process including public input channels as a secondary trigger. Consistent with the adaptive management process suggested in the Allocation Review Policy (referenced above), the incorporation of the Council's public input process as secondary public interest-based review triggers will include the consideration of relevant social, economic, and ecological indicators as an intermediate step before determining whether an allocation review is triggered. For example, economic tools that might contribute to the development of indicator-based review triggers could include cost-benefit analysis, economic impact analysis, economic efficiency, and others. Social indicators could include a range of social metrics such as community resilience, vulnerability and well-being. Examples of ecological criteria include changes in fishery status resulting from a stock assessment, undocumented sources of mortality, increases in discards, or changes in species distribution and food web dynamics. Allocations included are:

- red snapper allocations within the recreational sector, i.e., between the federal for-hire and private angling components (with a 4-year timeframe);
- red snapper allocations between the five Gulf states (with a 5-year timeframe);
- gray triggerfish and greater amberjack allocations between the commercial and recreational sectors (with a 6-year timeframe);
- Gulf of Mexico group king mackerel allocations between the recreational and commercial sectors, zones, and gear types (with a 6-year timeframe);
- recreational and commercial allocations of red snapper, gag, red grouper, shallow water grouper IFQ aggregate, deep water grouper IFQ aggregate, and tilefish IFQ aggregate (with a 7-year timeframe);
- black grouper, mutton snapper, yellowtail snapper allocations between the Gulf and South Atlantic Councils (with a 7-year timeframe).

The table below lists the time intervals to be used with the time-based allocation review triggers and provides anticipated start dates for the initial allocation reviews. In addition to the allocation reviews scheduled based on the review triggers selected above, the Council may initiate

supplementary allocation reviews at any time. For example, the Council could initiate an allocation review should relevant new information, e.g., data recalibration, be made available.

Timeframes for the time-based allocation review triggers and expected starts of initial reviews

Allocations	**Time Intervals**	**Expected start of the first review**
Recreational red snapper ACL allocation between the private angling and federal for-hire components	4 years	April 2023
Red snapper allocations between the Gulf states	5 years	April 2024
Gray triggerfish and greater amberjack allocations between the recreational and commercial sectors	6 years	April 2025
Gulf of Mexico group king mackerel allocations between the recreational and commercial sectors, zones, and gear types	6 years	April 2025
Recreational and commercial allocations of red snapper, gag, red grouper, shallow water grouper IFQ aggregate, deep water grouper IFQ aggregate, and tilefish IFQ aggregate	7 years	April 2026
Black grouper, mutton snapper, yellowtail snapper allocations between the Gulf and South Atlantic Councils	7 years	April 2026