

# **SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**

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## **SNAPPER GROUPE AMENDMENT 13C PUBLIC HEARING DRAFT**

### **PREFERRED ALTERNATIVES:**

#### **I. SNOWY GROUPE**

A. Commercial - Reduce the annual commercial snowy grouper quota from 344,508 lbs gutted weight (406,519 lbs whole weight) to 84,000 lbs gutted weight (99,000 lbs whole weight). Prohibit purchase and sale, and prohibit harvest and/or possession of snowy grouper over the bag limit after the quota is taken. Specify a commercial trip limit of ten snowy grouper until the quota is met.

B. Recreational – Limit the possession of snowy grouper to one per person per day within the 5-grouper per person per day aggregate recreational bag limit.

#### ***CCA Position:***

##### ***Snowy Grouper***

##### ***Commercial***

*We support the preferred Alternative 2A - Specify a commercial trip limit of 100 pounds GW (115 lbs WW) until the quota is met.*

##### ***Recreational***

*We support Alternative 3 – Limit the possession of snowy grouper to 1/day within the 5 grouper per person per day aggregate bag limit.*

#### **II. GOLDEN TILEFISH**

A. Commercial - Reduce the annual commercial golden tilefish quota from 1,001,663 lbs gutted weight (1,121,863 lbs whole weight) to 295,000 lbs gutted weight (331,000 lbs whole weight). Prohibit purchase and sale, and prohibit harvest and/or possession of snowy grouper over the bag limit after the quota is taken. Specify a commercial trip limit of 4,000 lbs gutted weight (4,480 lbs whole weight) until 75% of the quota is taken when the trip limit is reduced to 300 lbs gutted weight (335 lbs whole weight). Do not adjust the trip limit downwards unless 75% is captured on or before September 1.

B. Recreational – Limit the possession of golden tilefish to one per person per day within the 5-grouper per person per day aggregate recreational bag limit.

***CCA Position:***  
***Golden Tilefish***  
***Commercial***

*We support Alternative 2, the preferred alternative.*

***Recreational***

*We support Alternative 3 – Limit the possession of golden tilefish to one per person per day within the 5 grouper aggregate bag.*

**III. VERMILION SNAPPER**

A. Commercial - Specify a commercial vermilion snapper quota of 821,000 lbs gutted weight (912,000 lbs whole weight). Prohibit purchase and sale, and prohibit harvest and/or possession of vermilion snapper over the bag limit after the quota is taken.

B. Recreational – Increase the recreational vermilion snapper minimum size limit from 11” total length to 12” total length. Prohibit any recreational harvest and/or possession of vermilion snapper from January through February.

***CCA Position:***  
***Vermillion Snapper***  
***Commercial***

*We support Alternative 2, with a recreational size of 12” and 5 fish/day and a commercial quota of 919,798 pounds whole weight.*

**IV. BLACK SEA BASS**

A. Commercial - Implement the following commercial measures for black sea bass:

- (a) Specify a commercial quota of 347,000 lbs gutted weight (409,000 lbs whole weight) based on an initial Total Allowable Catch (TAC) of 806,000 lbs gutted weight (951,000 lbs whole weight) for both the recreational and commercial fisheries. Prohibit purchase and sale, and prohibit harvest and/or possession of black sea bass over the bag limit after the quota is taken.
- (b) Increase the commercial black sea bass minimum size limit from 10” total length to 11” total length.
- (c) Require use of 2” mesh for the entire back panel of black sea bass pots.
- (d) Change the fishing year from the calendar year to June 1 through May 31.

B. Recreational – Specify a recreational allocation of 459,000 lbs gutted weight (542,000 lbs whole weight) based on an initial Total Allowable Catch (TAC) of 806,000 lbs gutted weight (951,000 lbs whole weight) for both the recreational and commercial fisheries.

Limit recreational landings to approximate this harvest level by increasing the recreational minimum size limit from 10” total length to 12” total length and reducing the recreational bag limit from 20 to 15 black sea bass per person per trip. Change the fishing year from the calendar year to June 1 through May 31.

***CCA Position:***  
***Black Sea Bass***  
***Commercial***

*We support Alternative 2, the preferred alternative, 412,522 pounds gutted weight for black sea bass (486,811 pounds whole weight)*

***Recreational***

*We support alternative 2, the preferred alternative – Increase the size limit from 10” to 12” and reduce the bag to 15.*

**V. RED PORGY**

A. Commercial - Retain the commercial 14” total length minimum size limit and the seasonal closure (retention limited to the bag limit). Increase the commercial trip limit from 50 lbs of red porgy to 120 red porgy (210 lbs gutted weight; 220 lbs whole weight) during May through December. Specify a commercial quota of 127,000 lbs gutted weight (132,000 lbs whole weight). Prohibit purchase and sale, and prohibit harvest and/or possession beyond the bag limit when the quota is taken and/or during January through April.

B. Recreational – Retain the recreational 14” total length minimum size limit and increase the recreational bag limit from 1 to 3 red porgy per person per trip.

**VI. CLARIFICATIONS**

Note #1: Quotas and Total Allowable Catch are rounded to the nearest 1,000 lbs for gutted weight and whole weight. Trip limits are rounded to the nearest 5 lbs for gutted weight and whole weight.

Note #2: Quotas considered for all species, except black sea bass, are based on the calendar year. If harvest exceeds a quota adopted or adjusted in this amendment before the regulations are implemented, then all sale as well as harvest and/or retention over the bag limit of that species would be prohibited upon the effective date of the final rule.

Note #3: The alternative quotas for black sea bass will be based on a new fishing year of June 1 through May 31. Landings beginning on June 1, 2006 will be used to track quotas. It is expected that the amendment will be implemented on or before June 1.

Note #4: In this amendment new fishing mortality (F) values from recent SEDAR assessments are compared with the Council’s existing maximum fishing mortality thresholds (MFMT) that the Council has specified as the fishing mortality rate that produces maximum sustainable yield ( $F_{MSY}$ ). Management measures are being considered to address overfishing as allowed by the framework established in the snapper grouper fishery management plan as modified. Other measures (e.g., stock status determination

criteria, species groupings, rebuilding programs, etc.) are being addressed in Snapper Grouper Amendment 13B.