Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

Managing Fishery Resources in the U.S. Federal Waters of the Gulf of Mexico

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April 9, 2019

Dr. Clay Porch, Director
Southeast Fisheries Science Center
National Marine Fisheries Service
75 Virginia Beach Dr.
Miami, Florida 33149

Dear Dr. Porch:

At its April 2019 meeting in Biloxi, Mississippi, the Gulf of Mexico (Gulf) Fishery Management Council (Council) discussed an amendment to the Reef Fish and Coastal Migratory Pelagics Fishery Management Plans (FMP) for Carryover Provisions and Framework Modifications, which would permit the carryover of the uncaught portion of the annual catch limit (ACL) to the following fishing year, given certain predefined conditions. To investigate the effect of such a measure, the Southeast Fisheries Science Center (SEFSC) has performed several simulations of carryover for Gulf red snapper and Gulf migratory group king mackerel for the Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC). The simulations demonstrated that carryover occurrences would not jeopardize the rebuilding timeline for red snapper, and had no deleterious effect on king mackerel. However, the SSC has requested that the SEFSC's simulations be modified to include instances of overharvest (exceeding the ABC) for both species, as well as greater amberjack, to examine the combined effects of having both carryover to and overharvest of the ABC on the stocks.

Generally:

- If the ACL is not caught, then the species **is** eligible for carryover in the following year. This would qualify as an "underage."
- If the ACL is exceeded, but the ABC is not, then the species **is not** eligible for carryover in the following year. This would qualify as an "overage."
- If the ACL and ABC are exceeded, then the species **is not** eligible for carryover in the following year. This would qualify as an "overage."

The Council requests that the SEFSC perform additional simulations under these conditions:

- Species: greater amberjack (overfished and in a rebuilding plan), red snapper (in a rebuilding plan), and king mackerel (healthy, but with complex management).
- The amount of the uncaught portion of the ACL to be carried over will be added to the ABC in the following fishing year, and the difference between the new ABC and the overfishing limit (OFL) cannot be reduced by more than 50% (current percent differences between the OFL and the ABC are 18.89% for greater amberjack, 2.58% for red snapper, and 4.47% for Gulf king mackerel). Quota to be carried over will be distributed to the smallest divisible fishing sector component from whence it came.

- Simulate at least two instances of carryover adding to, and at least two instances of overharvest of, the ABC over a minimum 10-year period for each species.

Please notify the Council of when it can expect these new simulations to be completed and available for review by the SSC, with the understanding that the SEFSC will complete this work in as timely a manner as is practicable. Note that the next SSC meeting is scheduled for May 8th or 9th, 2019, and will be held via webinar. If the analysis cannot be completed by the May SSC meeting, the next SSC meeting is scheduled for July 17-18th. Please contact Mr. Ryan Rindone on Council staff if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Thomas K. Frazer, Ph.D.
Gulf Council Chair

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cc: Council Members
Council Staff
Jack McGovern, Ph.D.
Sue Gerhart
Shannon Cass-Calay, Ph.D.
Joe Powers, Ph.D.

Enclosed: 2017-01-08a. Theoretical Carryover Proj_Final.pdf