

# Red Snapper Allocation



## **Draft Amendment 52** to the Fishery Management Plan for the Reef Fish Resources of the Gulf of Mexico

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# AMENDMENT 52 TO THE FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE REEF FISH FISHERY IN THE GULF OF MEXICO

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## Type of Action

Administrative  Legislative  
 Draft  Final

## ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS DOCUMENT

ACL	annual catch limit
ACT	annual catch target
AP	advisory panel
CCC	Council Coordination Committee
CHTS	Coastal Household Telephone Survey
Council	Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council
EFP	exempted fishing permit
FES	Fishing Effort Survey
FMC	Fishery Management Council
FMP	Fishery Management Plan
Gulf	Gulf of Mexico
IFQ	individual fishing quota
Magnuson-Stevens Act	Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act
mp	million pounds
MRIP	Marine Recreational Information Program
MFRSS	Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey
NMFS	National Marine Fisheries Service
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
OY	optimum yield
RA	Regional Administrator
SEDAR	Southeast Data, Assessment and Review
SEFSC	Southeast Fisheries Science Center
SSBR	spawning stock biomass per recruit
TAC	total allowable catch
ww	whole weight

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# CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

The initial red snapper allocation between the commercial and recreational sectors was established in 1990 through Amendment 1 (GMFMC 1989) to the Fishery Management Plan for the Reef Fish Resources of the Gulf of Mexico (Reef Fish FMP). The amendment specified a framework procedure for setting the total allowable catch (TAC) to allow for annual management changes. A part of that specification was to establish a species' allocation. These were based on the percentage of total landings during the base period of 1979-1987. For red snapper, the commercial sector landed 51% and the recreational sector landed 49% of red snapper over the base period, hence the current 51% commercial:49%: recreational allocation.

Over the years, the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council) has expressed its intent to evaluate and possibly adjust the allocation of reef fish resources between the commercial and recreational sectors. These Council discussions have included consideration of comprehensive changes to the structure of the recreational sector and to sector allocations for red snapper and several grouper species, of which red snapper was addressed in Amendment 28 to the Reef Fish FMP (GMFMC 2015). Implemented in May 2016, Amendment 28 revised the commercial and recreational sector allocations of the red snapper annual catch limits (ACL) based on the effects of revised recreational data used in the update stock assessment that led to a higher stock ACL. The resulting allocation was calculated by 1) adding the increase in the ACL projections attributed to using the calibrated Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) catch estimates to the recreational sector, and 2) averaging the projected increases over the 2015-2017 time period. The resulting sector allocations were 48.5% commercial and 51.5% recreational (a 2.5% shift) and were applied to the 2016 quotas. However, on March 3, 2017, a U.S. district court<sup>1</sup> vacated Amendment 28, and the sector quotas for 2017 were adjusted consistent with the previous sector allocations of 51% commercial and 49% recreational.

At their January 2018 meeting, the Council passed a motion to develop a scoping document to evaluate the allocations of red snapper, taking into account previous deliberations in Amendment 28 and any new information and that considers a broad range of social, economic, data correction, and management factors. The Council's motion was based on a recommendation from the Ad Hoc Red Snapper Private Angler Advisory Panel (AP), which was convened in January 2018 prior to the Council meeting. Initially, the Council intended to re-evaluate not only sector allocations, but also between the federal for-hire and private angling components of the recreational sector. However, the Council decided not to revisit this allocation because the baseline years for the allocation had recently been selected. These component allocations were put in place for 2015-2017 by Amendment 40 (GMFMC 2014), were extended through 2022 by Amendment 45 (GMFMC 2016), and continued indefinitely by Amendment 50A (GMFMC 2019).

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<sup>1</sup> Guindon v. Pritzker, 2017 WL 875775 (D.D.C. March 3, 2017)

## **Current Red Snapper Management**

The commercial and recreational sectors fishing for red snapper are managed differently. For the commercial sector, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) manages the red snapper harvest under an individual fishing quota (IFQ) program and a 13-inch total length (TL) minimum size limit. Under the IFQ program, allocation is annually awarded on January 1 to IFQ shareholders with red snapper shares. NMFS distributes the allocation based on the annual quota and shares possessed by an entity<sup>2</sup>. For more information on the IFQ program, see NMFS's Southeast Regional Office (SERO) webpage on limited access programs at <http://portal.southeast.fisheries.noaa.gov/cs/main.html>.

For the recreational sector, NMFS manages the red snapper harvest with a minimum size limit, a bag limit, and season closures. Both the for-hire and private angling components have the same 16-inch TL minimum size limit and 2-fish bag limit for fish caught in federal waters. Under Amendments 40 and 45 (GMFMC 2014, 2016), 57.7% of the recreational quota is allocated to the private angling component and 42.3% of the recreational quota is allocated to the federal for-hire component. For the 2018 and 2019 fishing years, the private angling component was being managed by the different Gulf state marine resource agencies through an exempted fishing permit (EFP) issued by NMFS. Each state got a portion of the private angling component sub-quota and, with certain conditions, allowed red snapper caught in federal waters to be landed in a state. Each state was able to set its own season based on how quickly the state's allocation was projected to be caught. The federal for-hire component season begins on June 1 and the season length is determined by NMFS. NMFS has projected a 62 day season for 2019, which allows the federal for-hire season to continue through August 1.

The Council transmitted Reef Fish Amendments 50A-F to the Secretary of Commerce for implementation on May 23, 2019. These amendments would divide the private angling red snapper ACL among the five Gulf states, delegate management authority to each of the five Gulf states, and account for post-season quota adjustment. Implementation of these amendments would also remove the sunset provision ending the separate management of the private angling and federal for-hire ACLs (currently 2022).

## **Red Snapper Data and Recalibration**

Commercial harvest of red snapper is managed under an IFQ program. IFQ dealers electronically report landings by commercial fishermen to the Southeast Regional Office (SERO). Landings are updated in real-time on the Catch Shares Website (<https://portal.southeast.fisheries.noaa.gov/cs/main.html#>). Prior to the IFQ program, commercial dealers were required to submit trip tickets for commercial fishing trips to the Southeast Fisheries Science Center (SEFSC), who tallied the landings.

Recreational red snapper landings in the Gulf are obtained through multiple sources. The Southeast Region Headboat Survey covers headboats in the Gulf and South Atlantic. MRIP currently provides private angling and charter vessel landings and effort data for Gulf states other than Texas and Louisiana. Texas operates its own sampling program (Marine Sport-Harvest

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<sup>2</sup> An individual, business, or association participating in the IFQ program. Each IFQ account is owned by a unique entity.

Monitoring Program), which began in 1974, was updated in 1983 and provides recreational landings (except headboats) in Texas. Louisiana's sampling program (LA Creel) has been used since 2013 to estimate landings. The other Gulf states have developed sampling programs that were certified by NMFS in 2018 or 2019. These are Mississippi's Tails n' Scales, Alabama's Snapper Check, and Florida's Gulf Reef Fish Survey. All of the Gulf state sampling programs track red snapper landings.

### MRIP transition

The Marine Recreational Information Program completed a three-year transition in 2018 (NOAA Fisheries 2018). Estimates of fishing effort for the private and shore modes are now obtained from a Fishing Effort Survey (FES) conducted via mail, which uses angler license and registration information to identify and contact anglers as well as supplemental data from the U.S. Postal Service that includes nearly all U.S. households. Effort estimates for charter and party boats are still obtained from the For-Hire Telephone Survey and are not affected by the new FES. Previously, estimates of private and shore fishing effort came from the legacy Coastal Household Telephone Survey (CHTS), which used random-digit dialing of homes in coastal counties to contact anglers. Concerns over low response rates, the gatekeeper effect (i.e., speaking to someone other than the angler), the tendency to ignore unknown callers, and coverage limited to only coastal counties in the CHTS were motivation for the new survey, which is considered to provide more accurate estimates of trips. By design, the FES is reaching more anglers, getting into the right hands, providing a higher response rate, and extracting more information from anglers with an improved survey questionnaire. Benchmarking of the FES alongside the CHTS for three years allowed for apples-to-apples comparisons between data from the two different surveys and the creation of a peer-reviewed calibration model. The calibration model was peer reviewed by reviewers appointed by the Center for Independent Experts (see Rago et al. (2017)). Additional details can be found at:

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/event/fishing-effort-survey-calibration-model-peer-review>.

Early studies indicated, and subsequent follow-up has confirmed, that, on average, fishing effort estimates for the FES are higher — and in some cases substantially higher — than the CHTS estimates. This is because the FES does a better job of measuring fishing activity than the CHTS, not because there was a sudden rise in fishing effort. The calibration model will enable NMFS to adjust historic effort estimates to accurately compare them with new estimates from the FES. Higher effort does not necessarily mean there are fewer fish to catch.

The MRIP transition also accounted for the 2013 design change in the Access Point Angler Intercept Survey (APAIS) (Foster et al. 2018). Improved survey procedures were incorporated that better account for all types of completed trips and remove potential sources of bias from the survey design. For example, the new sampling design provides more complete coverage of angler fishing trips ending throughout the day and night, whereas the old design often missed nighttime trips or off-peak daytime trips. In addition, conversion factors were developed to account for any consistent effects of the redesign on catch rate estimates produced by the APAIS. The new APAIS design uses a sample weight adjustment method and is more statistically sound because it more strictly adheres to formal probability sampling protocols. The APAIS calibration model developed by MRIP and the statistical approach proposed for the conversion of catch

estimates by MRIP were peer reviewed by reviewers appointed by the Center for Independent Experts. Additional details can be found at: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/event/access-point-angler-intercept-survey-calibration-workshop>.

### Charter calibration

The MRIP transition resulted in the release of new recreational catch estimates for all species and all modes, including charter mode estimates. As a result, the SEFSC conducted a calibration analysis using the newly released data to correct for this change from the CHTS to the FHS (Dettloff and Matter 2018). The analysis uses a statistically sound, consistent methodology to provide improved calibrations for estimating FHS charterboat effort and landings with associated uncertainties from CHTS estimates. Additional details are provided in Dettloff and Matter (2018).

### **Guidance for making Allocation decisions**

Allocation decisions are controversial and difficult because of competing interests by different sectors of the fishery. In response, the Council established an Ad Hoc Allocation Committee composed of Council members to assist in drafting an allocation policy that would streamline future allocation decisions. The Council's allocation policy was adopted in early 2009 and provides principles, guidelines, and suggested methods for allocating fisheries resources between or within sectors (Appendix A). In February 2012, NMFS released a technical memorandum on the principles and practice of allocating fishery harvests, which provides additional guidance to the Council (Plummer et al. 2012). Additionally, NMFS and the Council Coordination Committee (CCC) released further guidance through an Allocation Review Policy<sup>3</sup> (01-119) and two procedural directives (01-119-01, and 01-119-02) in 2016. These documents were developed to provide relevant information for allocation decision-making as well as what factors should be considered. In April 2019, the Council selected time-based criteria as its primary allocation review trigger bolstered by general monitoring of indicators for reallocation justification through the Council's general deliberative process including public input channels as a secondary trigger. The review of the recreational and commercial allocations of red snapper has a time interval of 7 years, with the next scheduled review beginning in April 2026. In addition to the allocation reviews scheduled based on the review triggers selected above, the Council may initiate supplementary allocation reviews at any time.

### **Reef Fish Fishery Management Plan (FMP) Objectives**

Any allocation or reallocation must be consistent with the Reef Fish FMP objectives. In Reef Fish Amendment 1 (GMFMC 1989), the Council determined that the overall goal of the FMP is:

*To manage the reef fish fishery of the United States within the waters of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council jurisdiction to attain the greatest overall benefit to the nation with*

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<sup>3</sup> The Allocation Review Policy and two procedural directives may be accessed at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/laws-and-policies/fisheries-management-policy-directives>.

*particular reference to food production and recreational opportunities on the basis of the maximum sustainable yield as reduced by relevant ecological, economic, or social factors.*

At the August 2018 meeting, the Council’s Reef Fish Committee requested that Council staff provide an analysis of the Reef Fish FMP objectives in terms of background information, context, and relevant amendments, as well as the extent to which the Council has achieved those objectives. At the October 2018 meeting, the Council reviewed the objectives and then combined, as well as removed certain objectives, reducing the total number of objectives to eleven. At the January 2019 meeting, the Council further modified the objectives resulting in a total of 12 objectives. At the August 2019 meeting, based on a recommendation by the Standing Scientific and Statistical Committee, the Council modified Objective #2 (Table 1.1).

**Table 1.1.** Objectives of the Fishery Management Plan for Reef Fish Resources in the Gulf of Mexico, Post-August 2019 Council Meeting.

Number	Objective
1	To prevent overfishing and rebuild overfished stocks.
2	To achieve robust fishery reporting and data collection systems across all sectors for monitoring the reef fish fishery which minimizes scientific, management, and risk uncertainty.
3	To conserve and protect reef fish habitat.
4	To minimize conflicts between user groups.
5	To minimize and reduce dead discards.
6	To manage Gulf stocks at OY as defined in MSA.
7	To revise the definitions of the fishery management unit and fishery to reflect the current species composition of the reef fish fishery.
8	To encourage and periodically review research on the efficacy of artificial reefs for management purposes.
9	To promote stability in the fishery by allowing for enhanced fisher flexibility and increasing fishing opportunities to the extent practicable.
10	To avoid to the extent practicable the "derby" type fishing season.
11	To provide for cost-effective and enforceable management of the fishery.
12	To promote and maintain accountability in the reef fish fishery.

## 1.2 Purpose and Need

The purpose of this action is to review, evaluate, and modify, as appropriate, the sector allocations of red snapper, taking into account previous deliberations and any new information, along with a broad range of social, economic, data correction, and management factors.

The need for this action is to base sector allocations of red snapper on the best scientific information available, while achieving optimum yield, particularly with respect to food production and recreational opportunities.

# CHAPTER 2. DRAFT MANAGEMENT ALTERNATIVES

## 2.1 Action 1 – Allocation of Red Snapper between the Commercial and Recreational Sectors

**Alternative 1:** No Action. The commercial and recreational sector allocations will remain at 51% and 49% of the red snapper quota, respectively.

**Alternative 2:** Modify commercial and recreational sector allocations based on historical landings between 1981 and 2006.

**Alternative 3:** Modify commercial and recreational sector allocations based on historical landings between 1986 and 2006.

**Alternative 4:** Modify commercial and recreational sector allocations based on historical landings between 2002 and 2006.

**Alternative 5:** If the red snapper quota is less than or equal to the selected threshold (**Alternatives 5a-5b**), maintain the commercial and recreational red snapper allocations at 51% and 49% of the red snapper quota, respectively. If the red snapper quota is greater than the selected threshold, allocate the amount in excess between the two sectors using one of the methods (**Alternatives 5c-5g**).

Select one from 5a-5b:	Alternative	Threshold of red snapper quota:
	<b>5a</b>	9.12 million pounds (mp) whole weight (ww)
	<b>5b</b>	13.74 mp ww
Select one from 5c-5g:	Alternative	Allocation method when quota is greater than the threshold:
	<b>5c</b>	75% to the commercial sector and 25% to the recreational sector.
	<b>5d</b>	25% to the commercial sector and 75% to the recreational sector.
	<b>5e</b>	Based on historical landings between 1981 and 2006.
	<b>5f</b>	Based on historical landings between 1986 and 2006.
	<b>5g</b>	Based on historical landings between 2002 and 2006.

### **Discussion:**

**Alternative 1** (No Action) would maintain the allocation set in Reef Fish Amendment 1 (GMFMC 1989), with commercial and recreational allocations of the red snapper quota at 51% and 49%, respectively, which were based on each sector’s percentage of total landings during the base period of 1979-1987.

**Table 2.1.** Recreational and commercial red snapper landings and quota (millions of pounds whole weight [mp ww]).

Year	Commercial Sector		Recreational Sector		
	Commercial Landings <sup>1</sup> (million pounds)	Commercial Quota <sup>2</sup> (million pounds)	Recreational Landings – MRFSS <sup>3</sup> (million pounds)	Recreational Landings – MRIP CHTS <sup>4</sup> (million pounds)	Recreational Quota (ACL) (million pounds)
1981	4.189	N/A	4.301	5.311	N/A
1982	5.670	N/A	2.631	4.026	N/A
1983	6.752	N/A	4.473	5.517	N/A
1984	6.252	N/A	2.251	3.386	N/A
1985	4.189	N/A	3.672	3.355	N/A
1986	3.747	N/A	2.77	3.482	N/A
1987	3.067	N/A	1.815	2.074	N/A
1988	3.984	N/A	2.568	3.135	N/A
1989	3.102	N/A	2.658	2.937	N/A
1990	2.660	3.10	1.614	1.619	N/A
1991	2.240	2.04	2.358	2.89	1.96
1992	3.118	2.04	3.899	4.548	1.96
1993	3.423	3.06	5.687	7.045	2.94
1994	3.251	3.06	5.299	6.028	2.94
1995	2.946	3.06	4.814	5.409	2.94
1996	4.334	4.65	4.346	5.286	4.47
1997	4.814	4.65	6.008	6.69	4.47
1998	4.689	4.65	4.258	4.827	4.47
1999	4.884	4.65	3.999	4.905	4.47
2000	4.839	4.65	3.932	4.71	4.47
2001	4.638	4.65	4.468	5.245	4.47
2002	4.797	4.65	5.383	6.522	4.47
2003	4.432	4.65	4.847	6.094	4.47
2004	4.671	4.65	4.996	6.46	4.47
2005	4.106	4.65	4.074	4.676	4.47
2006	4.680	4.65	4.02	4.131	4.47
2007	3.183	3.315	4.44	5.809	3.19
2008	2.484	2.550	3.716	4.056	2.45
2009	2.484	2.550	4.625	5.597	2.45
2010	3.392	3.542	2.239	2.647	3.403
2011	3.595	3.664	4.603	6.734	3.87
2012	4.036	4.121	5.802	7.524	3.959
2013	5.449	5.610	-	9.703	5.39
2014	5.568	5.610	-	3.835	5.39
2015	7.184	7.293	-	5.96	7.007
2016	6.724	6.768	-	7.436	7.192
2017	6.979	7.007	-	8.863	6.603

Note: The 2016 recreational quota is based on the reallocation implemented through Amendment 28, which was vacated on March 3, 2017. The 2017 recreational quota is based on the previous sector allocation of 49% recreational and a quota payback from an overage in 2016. Recreational landings are highlighted to identify which units of landings were used in conjunction with the recreational quota.

Sources: <sup>1</sup>SEFSC commercial ACL dataset (October 23, 2018), IFQ database (accessed February 11, 2019) and SEFSC SEDAR 52 (2018) Stock Assessment Report.

<sup>2</sup>SERO Catch Shares Program database.

<https://portal.southeast.fisheries.noaa.gov/reports/cs/CommercialQuotasCatchAllowanceTable.pdf>

Since the commercial IFQ program began in 2007 and the program records in gutted weight (whole weight divided by 1.11), quotas are displayed to the thousandth decimal place to ensure accurate conversion.

<sup>3</sup>SEFSC MRFSS Recreational ACL dataset (March 5, 2019).

<sup>4</sup>SEFSC MRIP recreational ACL data (June 2018), with SEFSC SEDAR 31 Update (2014) Access Point Angler Intercept Survey adjustments.

**Alternative 2** would utilize 1981 as its starting year. 1981 is the earliest year under consideration for use in reallocation, as data from 1979-1980 were not recalculated since telephone data by county were not kept in those years (NMFS 1997). Therefore, county level Coastal Household Telephone Survey data could not be properly weighted in the new effort estimation process. Commercial sector and recreational sector landings from 1981-2018 are shown in Table 2.1. The commercial and recreational quotas and landings from 1981-2014 are plotted in graphs in Appendix B, with red snapper management changes noted. **Alternative 2** utilizes 2006 as its terminal year. Reef Fish Amendment 26 (GMFMC 2006), which developed the Gulf of Mexico (Gulf) commercial red snapper individual fishing quota (IFQ) program, was approved in 2006, and the IFQ program was implemented in 2007. The commercial sector was constrained from overages beginning in 2007. The commercial season was extended year-round with the IFQ program, as seen in Table 2.2. As noted in Section 1.1, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), in coordination with the Gulf states, is developing a calibration model for recreational effort that may be used to adjust historic effort estimates to accurately compare them with new estimates from the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) Fishing Effort Survey (FES), and this may lead to modifications to the landings currently displayed in Table 2.1. In addition, further analysis must be conducted to determine the best available science, to account for the certification of a majority of the Gulf states' surveys for red snapper recreational landings and effort.

**Table 2.2.** Number of days open for red snapper fishing in federal waters for the recreational and commercial sectors.

<b>Number of Days Open in Federal Waters</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Recreational Sector</b>	<b>Commercial Sector</b>
1981	365	365
1982	365	365
1983	365	365
1984	366	366
1985	365	365
1986	365	365
1987	365	365
1988	366	366
1989	365	365
1990	365	365
1991	365	236
1992	366	95
1993	365	94
1994	365	77
1995	365	52
1996	365	86
1997	330	71
1998	272	67
1999	240	64
2000	194	59
2001	194	70
2002	194	81
2003	194	84
2004	194	95
2005	194	120
2006	194	115
2007	194	365
2008	65	366
2009	75	365
2010	77	365
2011	48	365
2012	46	366
2013	42	365
2014	9	365
2015	10 (private angling) 44 (federal for-hire)	365
2016	11 (private angling) 46 (federal for-hire)	366
2017	42 (private angling) 49 (federal for-hire)	365
2018	*Western FL 40, AL 28, MS 76, LA 60, TX 82 (private angling) 51 (federal for-hire)	365

\*NOAA Fisheries has issued exempted fishing permits, which allow each Gulf state to set their own season for the

red snapper private angling component in state and federal waters during 2018 and 2019. Information on state EFPs is available at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/southeast/recreational-fishing/state-recreational-red-snapper-management-exempted-fishing-permits>.

Note: Beginning in 2014, the season length(s) was estimated based on an ACT, reduced from the recreational sector ACL (quota) or component ACL (quota) by 20%.

**Alternative 3** would utilize 1986 as its starting year and 2006 as its terminal year. Commercial landings were assigned between the Gulf and South Atlantic at the Miami-Dade/Monroe County line prior to 1985, but starting in 1986, NMFS was able to assign landings to the Gulf and South Atlantic at US1 in the Florida Keys (the Council jurisdictional boundary) as a result of changes to the Florida trip ticket data (D. Gloeckner, Southeast Fisheries Science Center, pers. comm. 2019). Thus, Florida commercial landings data prior to 1986 are not completely consistent with those in 1986 to the present.

**Alternative 4** would average the 5 years of landings history (2002-2006) before the red snapper commercial IFQ program was implemented in 2007.

**Alternative 5** would establish a red snapper quota threshold that would need to be exceeded for reallocation to occur. **Alternative 5a** would set the threshold at 9.12 mp ww, which was the quota in 2006 when the commercial red snapper IFQ program was approved. **Alternative 5b** would set the threshold at 13.74 mp ww, which was the quota in both 2017 and 2018.

**Alternatives 5c-5g** would be selected as the allocation method to be used when the threshold set by selection of Alternative 5a or 5b is exceeded. **Alternative 5c** would allocate 75% of the additional quota to the commercial sector and 25% of the additional quota to the recreational sector. **Alternative 5d** would allocate 25% of the additional quota to the commercial sector and 75% of the additional quota to the recreational sector. **Alternatives 5e-5g** would allocate percentages of the additional quota to the commercial and recreational sectors based on historical landings consistent with the years in **Alternatives 2-4**. Any increases to the recreational quota from **Alternative 5** would be allocated between the federal for-hire and private angling components based on the current allocations.

## CHAPTER 3. REFERENCES

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# APPENDIX A. GULF OF MEXICO FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL – ALLOCATION POLICY

## Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council Fishery Allocation Policy

(<http://gulfcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/GMFMC-SOPPs-Fishery-Allocation-Policy.pdf>)

The allocation policy presented herein was developed by the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council to provide principles, guidelines, and suggested methods for allocation that would facilitate future allocation and reallocation of fisheries resources between or within fishery sectors.

Issues considered in this allocation policy include principles based on existing regulatory provisions, procedures to request and initiate (re)allocation, (re)allocation review frequency, tools and methods suggested for evaluating alternative (re)allocations.

### 1. Principles for Allocation

- a. Conservation and management measures shall not discriminate between residents of different states.
- b. Allocation shall:
  - (1) be fair and equitable to fishermen and fishing sectors;
    - fairness should be considered for indirect changes in allocation
    - any harvest restrictions or recovery benefits be allocated fairly and equitably among sectors
  - (2) promote conservation
    - connected to the achievement of OY
    - furtherance of a legitimate FMP objective
    - promotes a rational, more easily managed use
  - (3) ensure that no particular individual, corporation, or other entity may acquire an excessive share.
- c. Shall consider efficient utilization of fishery resources but:
  - (1) should not just redistribute gains and burdens without an increase in efficiency
  - (2) prohibit measures that have economic allocation as its sole purpose.
- d. Shall take into account: the importance of fishery resources to fishing communities by utilizing economic and social data in order to:

- (1) provide for the sustained participation of fishing communities
  - (2) minimize adverse economic impacts on fishing communities.
- e. Any fishery management plan, plan amendment, or regulation submitted by the Gulf Council for the red snapper fishery shall contain conservation and management measures that:
- (1) establish separate quotas for recreational fishing (including charter fishing) and commercial fishing
  - (2) prohibit a sector (i.e., recreational or commercial) from retaining red snapper for the remainder of the season, when it reaches its quota
  - (3) ensure that the recreational and commercial quotas reflect allocation among sectors and do not reflect harvests in excess of allocations.

## 2. Guidelines for Allocation

- a. All allocations and reallocations must be consistent with the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council's principles for allocation.
- b. An approved Council motion constitutes the only appropriate means for requesting the initiation of allocation or reallocation of a fishery resource. The motion should clearly specify the basis for, purpose and objectives of the request for (re)allocation.
- c. The Council should conduct a comprehensive review of allocations within the individual FMPs at intervals of no less than five years.
- d. Following an approved Council motion to initiate an allocation or reallocation, the Council will suggest methods to be used for determining the new allocation. Methods suggested must be consistent with the purpose and objectives included in the motion requesting the initiation of allocation or reallocation.
- e. Changes in allocation of a fishery resource may, to the extent practicable, account for projected future socio-economic and demographic trends that are expected to impact the fishery.
- f. Indirect changes in allocation, i.e., shifts in allocation resulting from management measures, should be avoided or minimized to the extent possible.

## 3. Suggested Methods for Determining (Re)Allocation

- a. Market-based Allocation
  - (1) Auction of quota

- (2) Quota purchases between commercial and recreational sectors
  - determine prerequisites and conditions;
    - quota or tags or some other mechanism required in one or both sectors
    - mechanism to broker or bank the purchases and exchanges
    - annual, multi-year, or permanent
    - accountability for purchased or exchanged quota in the receiving sector.
  
- b. Catch-Based (and mortality) Allocation
  - (1) historical landings data
    - averages based on longest period of credible records
    - averages based on a period of recent years
    - averages based on total fisheries mortality (landings plus discard mortality) by sector
    - allocations set in a previous FMP
    - accountability (a sector’s ability to keep within allocation)
  
- c. Socioeconomic-based Allocation
  - (1) socio-economic analyses
    - net benefits to the nation
    - economic analysis limited to direct participants
    - economic impact analysis (direct expenditures and multiplier impacts)
    - social impact analysis
    - fishing communities
    - participation trends
    - “efficiency” analysis
      - lowest possible cost for a particular level of catch;
      - harvest OY with the minimum use of economic inputs
  
- d. Negotiation-Based Allocation
  - (1) Mechanism for sectors to agree to negotiation and select representatives
  - (2) Mechanism to choose a facilitator
  - (3) Negotiated agreement brought to Council for normal FMP process of adoption and implementation.

## APPENDIX B. RED SNAPPER MANAGEMENT TIMELINE GRAPHS

**Figure 1.** Commercial Red Snapper Management Timeline for 1981-2017.



**Figure 2.** Recreational Red Snapper Management Timeline for 1981-2017.

