

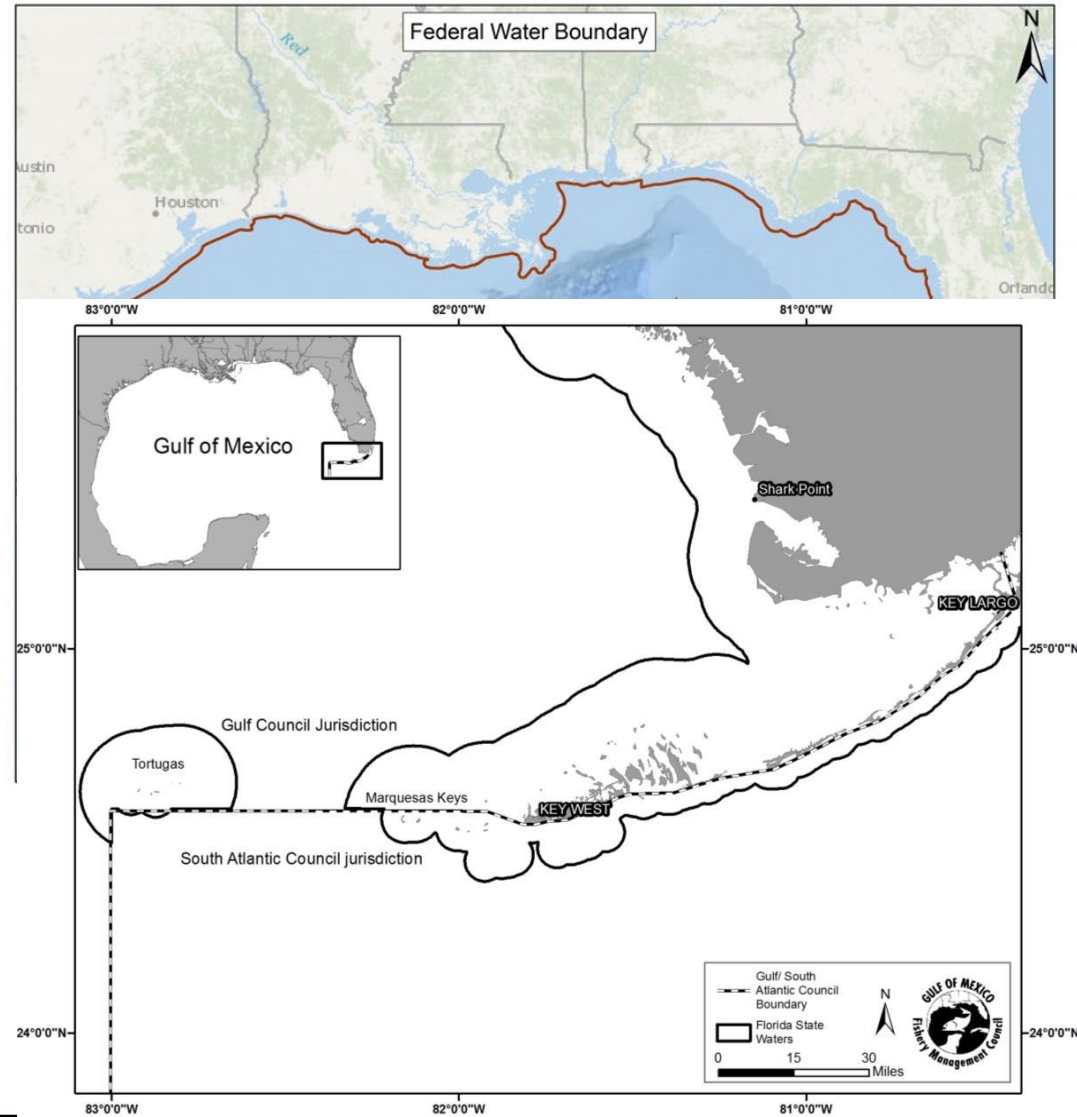
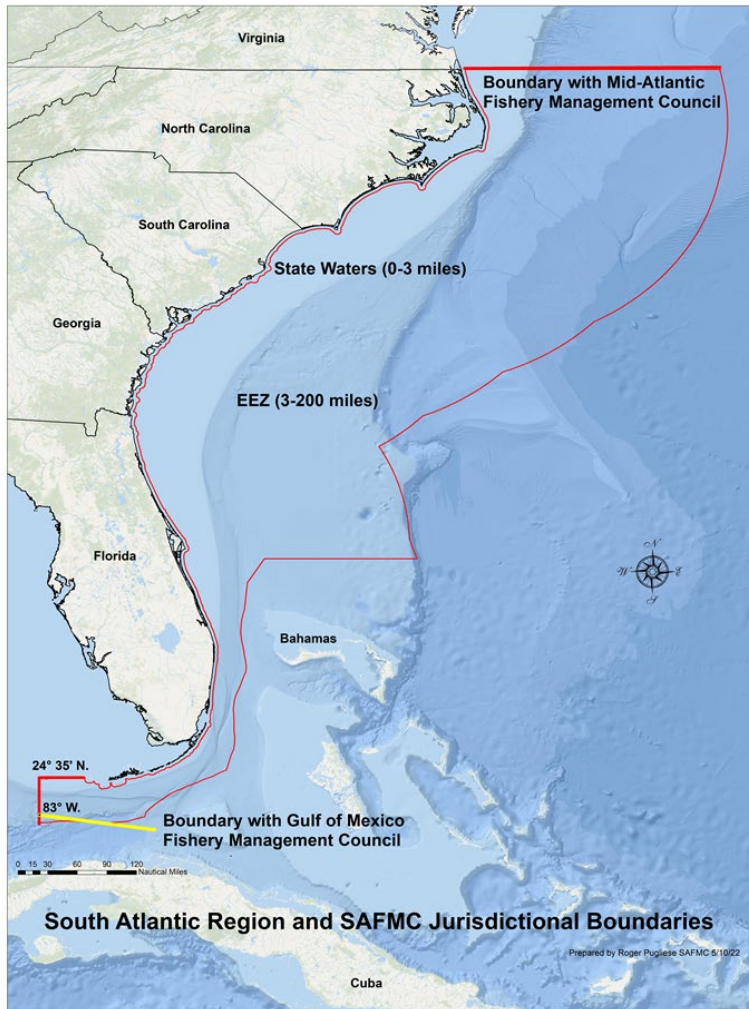


Snapper Grouper Amendment 44 / Reef Fish Amendment 55:
**Catch Level Adjustments and Allocations for
Southeastern U.S. Yellowtail Snapper**

Reef Fish Advisory Panel



Background



Background: Assessment

- Jointly managed by the South Atlantic and Gulf Councils, considered a single stock
- Last stock assessment: SEDAR 64 (data through 2017)
- Interim Analysis: finalized in 2022 (data through 2020)
 - Requested by both Councils after determination that too much time had passed after SEDAR 64
 - The IA applied updated landings and discards data for each fleet from 2018 through 2020.
 - Updated recreational catch estimates from MRFSS to MRIP-FES
 - Impacts catch limits and allocation between Councils
- Stock Status: Not overfished and not experiencing overfishing



Background: Landings

- Majority of yellowtail stock is allocated to the SA based on historical landings
 - In Gulf, yellowtail landings primarily from the commercial sector

Gulf Yellowtail Snapper Commercial and Recreational Landings				SA Yellowtail Snapper Commercial and Recreational Landings			
Fishing Year	Rec. Landings (lb ww)	Comm. Landings (lb ww)	Total Landings (lb ww)	Fishing Year	Rec. Landings (lb ww)	Comm. Landings (lb ww)	Total Landings (lb ww)
2012	5,163	630,984	636,147	2012	1,129,915	1,439,586	2,569,501
2013	9,343	734,112	743,455	2013	1,695,188	1,328,974	3,024,162
2014	27,715	466,968	494,683	2014	2,122,485	1,544,038	3,666,523
2015	64,743	504,193	568,936	2015 ^a	1,495,150	1,652,438 ^a	3,147,588
2016	13,401	209,283	222,684	2016 [*]	1,184,513	1,393,495	2,578,008
2016/2017 [*]	249,512	682,875	932,387	2016/2017 ^b	1,491,509	2,336,970 ^b	3,828,479
2017/2018	206,785	589,868	796,653	2017/2018 ^c	1,481,290	1,703,541 ^c	3,184,830
2018/2019	104,527	527,112	631,638	2018/2019 ^d	1,405,783	1,662,102 ^d	3,067,885
2019/2020	12,348	287,940	300,289	2019/2020	1,330,659	1,435,167	2,766,566
2020/2021	79,765	212,630	292,395	2020/2021	1,131,075	1,204,637	2,335,712

Current Management

Fishing Season

- Open year-round
- August 1 – July 31

Possession Limit

- Commercial: none
- Recreational: 10 fish per person/day within 10 snapper aggregate limit

Minimum Size Limit

- Recreational and commercial: 12 inches TL



Current Management

Gulf Council Jurisdiction

- Apportioned 25% of the ABC
- Managed with stock ACL, no sector allocations in the Gulf
- 11% buffer between Gulf ABC and Gulf ACL
- Post-Season Accountability Measure: If the ACL is exceeded, then in the following year, the season will be closed when the ACL is expected to be met

South Atlantic Council Jurisdiction

- Apportioned 75% of the ABC
- 52.56% Commercial / 47.44% Recreational
- Commercial Accountability Measures
 - In-Season: When the ACL is reached, the sale of yellowtail snapper is prohibited
 - Post-Season: If yellowtail snapper is *Overfished* and the total ACL is exceeded, the following year's ACL is reduced by the amount of the overage
- Recreational Accountability Measure
 - In-Season: Season will close if landings reach or are projected to reach the ACL
 - Post-Season: If the total ACL is exceeded, then during the following fishing year recreational landings will be monitored for increased landings, and if necessary, the length of the season will be reduced along with the ACL by the amount of the recreational ACL overage, if the species is overfished...

Current Allocations and Catch Limits

- Stock ABC: 4.05 million lb ww
 - Current OFL and ABC Based on SEDAR 27A (2012)
 - Catch limits set in MRFSS
- The ABC is split 75% to the South Atlantic and 25% to the Gulf of Mexico.
 - Based on 50% of average landings from 1993-2008 + 50% of average landings from 2006-2008.
 - Data from the Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey
- **South Atlantic ABC = 3,037,500 lb ww**
- **Gulf of Mexico ABC = 1,012,500 lb ww**



SSC Recommendations

Scientific and Statistical Committees Recommendations:

- The OFL, ABC, and all subsequent catch level recommendations are based on the 2022 SEDAR 64 IA
- **Projections are in FES units**
- Decreasing yield stream allows for fishing to the stock's equilibrium SSB_{MSY}

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



Amendment Actions

Councils are using the updated IA information to consider the jurisdictional allocation, catch limits, and sector allocations (South Atlantic only).

Action 1: Modify the yellowtail snapper stock OFL, ABC and jurisdictional allocation of the stock ABC between the South Atlantic and Gulf Councils' jurisdictions

Action 2: Revise the total ACL and annual OY for yellowtail snapper in the South Atlantic and revise the total ACL for yellowtail snapper in the Gulf

Action 3: Revise the South Atlantic yellowtail snapper sector allocations and sector ACLs



Action 1: Modify the stock OFL, ABC and Jurisdictional Allocation Between the South Atlantic and Gulf

- Current allocation: 75% South Atlantic, 25% Gulf
 - Based on **MRFSS**, using 50% of average landings from 1993-2008 + 50% of average landings from 2006-2008. **Not viable alternative**
- Using updated MRIP-FES landings:
 - Retain the same allocation percentage and distribute the updated ABC based on this allocation
 - Allocate 80% of the updated stock ABC to the South Atlantic and 20% to the Gulf
 - Allocate 84% to the SA and 16% to the Gulf:
 - Use landings estimates from 2012 – 2021 fishing years to determine the stock ABC
 - Use 50% of average landings from 1993-2008 + 50% of average landings from 2006-2008.
 - *Note: Monroe County = South Atlantic*



Overview of Actions

- Action 2 alternatives are all dependent on the jurisdictional allocation chosen in Action 1.
 - Current Stock ABC: 75% SA / 25% Gulf (MRFSS)
 - Updated Stock ABC: 75% SA / 25% Gulf (MRIP-FES)
 - Updated stock ABC: 80% SA / 20% Gulf (MRIP-FES)
 - Updated stock ABC: 84% SA / 16% Gulf (MRIP-FES)
- Retain current Gulf ABC and ACL buffer of 11% (MRFSS 2008-11)
- Modify Gulf ABC and ACL buffer to 8% (MRIP-FES 2017/18 – 2020-21)
- Eliminate the buffer between the ABC and ACL (MRIP-FES)



Action 1: Modify the Stock OFL, ABC and Council Jurisdictional Allocation for Yellowtail Snapper

- Alternative 1 (No Action).** Retain the **current** yellowtail snapper OFL and stock ABC, and allocation of the stock ABC for yellowtail snapper between the SA and Gulf jurisdictions. **The current jurisdictional allocation between the South Atlantic and the Gulf is 75% and 25% of the stock ABC, respectively, and is in MRFSS data units.** This allocation is based 50% on the average landings from 1993-2008, plus 50% on the average landings from 2006-2008.
- NOTE: Not a viable alternative because not consistent with SSC recommendation of best scientific information available**

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

Action 1: Modify the Stock OFL, ABC and Council Jurisdictional Allocation for Yellowtail Snapper

- Alternative 2.** Update the OFL and stock ABC based on the IA and the SSC's recommendations. Retain the current jurisdictional allocation of yellowtail snapper (75% SA / 25% Gulf) and use the **updated stock ABC** between the South Atlantic and Gulf Councils' jurisdictions to update the allocation. The updated stock ABC is in MRIP-FES units.

Year	OFL (lb ww)	ABC (lb ww)	Gulf Stock ABC (lb ww)	South Atlantic Stock ABC (lb ww)
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

Action 1: Modify the Stock OFL, ABC and Council Jurisdictional Allocation for Yellowtail Snapper

- Alternative 3.** Update the OFL and ABC based on the results of the 2022 SEDAR 64 IA and the SSCs' recommendations. Allocate 80% of the **updated stock ABC** to the South Atlantic and 20% to the Gulf of Mexico. The updated stock ABC is in MRIP-FES.

Year	OFL (lb ww)	ABC (lb ww)	Gulf Stock ABC (lb ww)	South Atlantic Stock ABC (lb ww)
Alternative 3 Gulf 20%/SA 80% - Updated Stock ABC				
2023/2024	3,922,000	3,887,000	777,400	3,109,600
2024/2025	3,774,000	3,749,000	749,800	2,999,200
2025/2026	3,684,000	3,665,000	733,000	2,932,000
2026/2027	3,625,000	3,610,000	722,000	2,888,000
2027/2028+	3,584,000	3,572,000	714,400	2,857,600

Action 1: Modify the Stock OFL, ABC and Council Jurisdictional Allocation for Yellowtail Snapper

- Alternative 4.** Update the OFL and stock ABC based on the IA and the SSC's recommendations. Applying MRIP-FES to the 2012 – 2021 fishing years, the average landings from that period yield a jurisdictional allocation of 84% of the **updated stock ABC** to the South Atlantic and 16% to the Gulf.

Year	OFL (lb ww)	ABC (lb ww)	Gulf Stock ABC (lb ww)	South Atlantic Stock ABC (lb ww)
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

Action 1: Modify the Stock OFL, ABC and Council Jurisdictional Allocation for Yellowtail Snapper

- Alternative 5.** Update the OFL and ABC based on the results of the 2022 SEDAR 64 IA and the SSCs' recommendations. Allocate 84% of the **updated stock ABC** to the SA and 16% to the Gulf based on 50% of the average landings from 1993-2008, plus 50% of the average landings from 2006-2008 using recreational landings from MRIP-FES.

Year	OFL (lb ww)	ABC (lb ww)	Gulf Stock ABC (lb ww)	South Atlantic Stock ABC (lb ww)
Draft Alternative 5 Gulf 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

Action 2: Modify Yellowtail Snapper ABC Buffer to Set Gulf ACL

Action 2, Sub-action 2b: Revise the buffer between the Gulf ABC and Gulf ACL for yellowtail snapper

NOTE: ACL totals for alternatives under Action 2 will be dependent on the jurisdictional allocation from Action 1

- Yellowtail snapper not overfished, not undergoing overfishing
- Current buffer between ABC and ACL = 11%
- Using 2017/18 – 2020/21 fishing years, buffer = 8%
- Eliminate the buffer?



Action 2: Modify Yellowtail Snapper ABC Buffer to Set Gulf ACL

- **Alternative 1 (No Action).** Retain the current 11% buffer between the Gulf's apportionment of the ABC and ACL. Use this buffer to update the Gulf's ACL based on the jurisdictional allocation selected in Action 1.
- **Alternative 2.** Modify the buffer to 8% using the Gulf's ACL/ACT Control Rule and MRIP-FES landings from 2017/2018 – 2020/2021.
- **Alternative 3. Eliminate the buffer** between the Gulf's apportionment of the total ABC and ACL. The Gulf's ACL would be equal to the updated Gulf's jurisdictional allocation of the stock ABC in MRIP-FES.



Discussion and Recommendations

Gulf Council (August 2023):

- Noted concerns over altering allocations in light of the MRIP-FES pilot study results.
- Discussed placing an additional buffer to account for management uncertainty since the stock ABC and stock OFL values are fairly close.
- **MOTION:** IN ACTION 1, TO SUGGEST THE SAFMC MOVE ALTERNATIVE 5 TO CONSIDERED BUT REJECTED.

South Atlantic Council (September 2023):

- Ask the South Atlantic SSC to consider withdrawing the yellowtail snapper stock ABC and prioritize a new assessment for the stock in light of the MRIP-FES pilot study and Florida State Reef Fish Survey.
- Because this is a joint amendment, ask the Gulf Council to consider consulting the Gulf SSC to take the same action.



Feedback on Next Steps

- Recommend that Council move forward with amendment with current range of alternatives and select preferreds?
- Recommend the Council move forward with a reduced number of actions, such as only implementing new catch advice? Other?
- Pause work on the amendment until:
 - More information on the MRIP-FES pilot study is provided?
 - Prioritize a new assessment with calibrated recreational landings for review by the SSC? Can FWC do this without going through SEDAR assessment schedule process?
 - If it goes through SEDAR could take years to complete (2-years out on assessment schedule).

