

**Reef Fish Advisory Panel  
Action Guide and Next Steps**

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**Agenda Item V:** Review of Reef Fish and Individual Fishing Quota Program Landings

**Action:** Presentation and discussion

**Council input and next steps:** Staff will review the status of reef fish, for-hire red snapper, and individual fishing quota (IFQ) program landings relative to catch limits. Following, Staff will brief the AP on the respective Gulf States' 2023 fishing seasons for the private recreational component of the red snapper fishery. These landings data are provided for the AP's information only and require no action.

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**Agenda Item VI:** Review: SEDAR 74 Research Track Review of Gulf of Mexico Red Snapper

**Action:** Presentation, discussion, and recommendations

**Council input and next steps:** Staff will review the proceedings from the SEDAR 74 review of the red snapper research track assessment, including reviewer comments and responses from the Southeast Fisheries Science Center (SEFSC). Independent reviewer reports, and the Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee's (SSC) review, are provided as background material. The AP should consider the information presented, ask questions, and make any recommendations to the Council as appropriate.

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**Agenda Item VII:** Review: SEDAR 85 Gulf of Mexico Yellowedge Grouper and SSC Recommendations for the Deep-water Grouper Complex

**Action:** Presentation, discussion, and recommendations

**Council input and next steps:** Staff will review the proceedings from the SSC's review of SEDAR 85, which assessed yellowedge grouper. The stock assessment determined that under a revised proxy for the fishing mortality at maximum sustainable yield, the stock is not overfished but is undergoing overfishing. The SSC also provided catch limit recommendations for the other three species in the Council's deep-water grouper complex (DWG: snowy grouper, warsaw grouper, and speckled hind), using Marine Recreational Information Program's Fishing Effort Survey (MRIP-FES) data units. The SSC recommended combining the overfishing limit and acceptable biological catch recommendations for yellowedge grouper and the other three DWG species, managing them together. The AP should consider the information presented, ask questions, and make any recommendations to the Council as appropriate. The AP should also specifically discuss the current flexibility considerations in the Grouper-Tilefish IFQ program, and their effects on the DWG and shallow-water grouper complexes.

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**Agenda Item VIII:** Discussion: 2023 Recreational Red Grouper and Gag Grouper Landings and 2024 Season Projections

**Action:** Presentation, discussion, and recommendations

**Council input and next steps:** Staff will review updated red and gag grouper recreational landings for 2023 and fishing season projections for 2024. The 2023 fishing year landings for both species were estimated using MRIP-FES for private recreational vessels and resulted in significantly high landings estimates compared to previous fishing years. The Southeast Regional Office (SERO) collaborated with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) and the NOAA Office of Science and Technology to review these landings. At the April 2024 Council meeting, updated landings and season projections for red grouper were presented, and FWC’s State Reef Fish Survey was used to inform the 2024 red grouper fishing season projection. SERO is still working with FWC on the 2024 fishing season projection for gag grouper. The AP should consider the information presented, ask questions, and make any recommendations to the Council as appropriate.

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**Agenda Item IX:** Draft Options: Reef Fish Amendment 58: Modifications to Shallow Water Grouper Complex Catch Limits and Management Measures

**Action:** Presentation, discussion, and recommendations

**Council input and next steps:** At its April 2024 meeting, the Council worked on the actions and alternatives to be considered in Amendment 58; however, more development is needed before the Council settles on a path forward and requests AP recommendations.

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**Agenda Item X:** Discussion of Conservation and Management of Wenchman in the Mid-water Snapper Complex

**Action:** Presentation, discussion, and recommendations

**Council input and next steps:** At its April 2024 meeting, the Council chose to discontinue work on this amendment. The stakeholders who requested the action no longer fish in the Gulf.

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**Agenda Item XI:** Discussion: Ad Hoc Charter For-Hire Data Collection Advisory Panel’s January 2024 Meeting

**Action:** Presentation, discussion, and recommendations

**Council input and next steps:** In April 2023, the Council passed a motion to begin work on a federal charter for-hire data collection program to replace the Southeast For-hire Integrated Electronic Reporting (SEHFIER) program which was set aside by a court ruling in February

## Item No. 4

04/17/2024

2023. To aid in this effort, the Council created an Ad hoc Charter For-hire Data Collection Advisory Panel (Ad hoc AP). The Ad hoc AP met January 10-11, 2024, and provided several suggestions to the Council for a new program based on lessons learned from SEFHIER. Informed by the Ad hoc AP's recommendations, the Council has begun development of an amendment and reviewed the initial version at its April 2024 meeting. The Council has directed Staff to incorporate some considerations for economic data collection in the new program and those additions will be presented at the June Council meeting. The AP should review the Ad hoc AP's meeting summary and presentations, the draft amendment, and ask questions of Staff.

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### **Agenda Item XII:** Public Comment

**Action:** Discussion

**Council Input and Next Steps:** Members of the public may address the AP in-person or via webinar, as time allows. AP members may ask questions relevant to public testimony heard.

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### **Agenda Item XIII:** Other Business

**Action:** Additional items that can be brought up for discussion

**Council Input and Next Steps:** The following items have been requested to be discussed under Other Business:

- Discussion of Removing the 20-Fathom Closure for Red Grouper
- Discussion of the Charter For-hire buffer and Fishing Season for Red Snapper
- Discussion of NMFS Letter to the Gulf Council about Lane Snapper Overfishing

Additional items may be brought up for discussion by Committee members during the adoption of the agenda, time permitting. If the Committee wishes to pursue action, then action can be scheduled at a future Council meeting.

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