

**Reef Fish Committee
Action Guide and Next Steps for Tab B**

Agenda Item IV: Review of IFQ Objectives

Action: Presentation, discussion, and recommendations

Council input and next steps: Dr. Jessica Stephen (SERO) will review exiting goals and objectives of the red snapper and grouper-tilefish IFQ programs and present a list of suggested goals and objectives to assist the Council with revising the programs' goals and objectives. The Committee should discuss the goals and objectives presented, ask questions, suggest revisions, and propose additional goals as needed. The Committee should consider how it envisions the future of the IFQ programs and provide explicit as possible its recommendations relative to goals and objectives to maintain, revise or introduce. The Committee could consider prioritizing multiple goals and objectives identified during this discussion, and should recommend next steps as needed to the Council.

Agenda Item V: Review of State Survey Private Angling Landings and Discards for Red Snapper

Action: Presentations and discussion

Council input and next steps: Council representatives from the five Gulf States will review their 2022 private angling seasons for red snapper and offer projections for the 2023 fishing season. These data are part of an ongoing report to the Council that requires no action by the Committee.

Agenda Item VI: FINAL ACTION: Recalibration of Red Snapper Recreational Catch Limits and Modification of Gray Snapper Catch Limits

Action: Presentation, discussion, and recommendations

Council input and next steps: Council staff will present a final draft document considering changes to red snapper state private recreational calibrations and modifying gray snapper catch limits. For red snapper, the states of Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida used more contemporary private recreational catch data to update their private recreational calibration ratios. The methods used to update the ratios have been reviewed and approved by the SSC. The updates to the calibration ratios would adjust the red snapper private recreational annual catch limits (ACLs) for each of those states.

For gray snapper, results from the most recent stock assessment (SEDAR 75) provided projections and updated catch advice, including updating private recreational data to FES. The SSC has reviewed and approved the assessment results, and recommended catch limit options to

the Council. The Committee should review the document and its preferred alternatives, written public comments received, the proposed codified text, and ask questions of staff as appropriate. If the Committee finds the proposed regulations to be necessary and appropriate, it should recommend that the Council request the proposed regulations be adopted and implemented by the Secretary of Commerce.

Agenda Item VII: Draft Framework Action: Modifications to Recreational and Commercial Greater Amberjack Management Measures

Action: Presentation, discussions, and recommendations

Council input and next steps: Council staff will review a presentation considering modifications to recreational (fixed closed seasons) and commercial management measures (trip limits) for greater amberjack. A draft of Chapter 1 and 2 have been developed for the Committee's consideration. The presentation will also include Interdisciplinary Planning Team recommendations for alternatives in Action 1 (modifications to recreational fixed closed seasons). These measures are being considered to reduce the exploitation rate of greater amberjack while continuing to allow access to the stock. The Committee should evaluate the measures proposed and recommend modifications as appropriate.

Agenda Item VIII: SSC Summary Report from the May 2023 Meeting

Action: Presentation, discussion, and recommendations

Council Input and Next Steps: Mr. John Mareska (Reef Fish Scientific and Statistical Committee [SSC]) will present the SSC's deliberations and recommendations on several items from its May 2023 meeting in Tampa, FL. Mr. Mareska will review recent landings and recommended catch limits for black grouper and yellowfin grouper, which together with scamp and yellowmouth grouper, comprise the shallow-water grouper complex. The latter two species were assessed in SEDAR 68, and the SSC has provided overfishing limit (OFL) and acceptable biological catch (ABC) recommendations for those species at its March 2023 meeting. Mr. Mareska will also discuss the SSC's evaluation of historical landings and catch limit recommendations of blackfin snapper, queen snapper, and silk snapper, which together with wenchman, comprise the mid-water snapper complex. The SSC recommended in March 2023, and the Council concurred in April 2023, to consider removing wenchman from the mid-water snapper complex, necessitating setting an OFL and ABC for the three remaining species in the complex. The Committee should evaluate the information presented and make recommendations to the Council as appropriate. Specifically, to the shallow-water grouper complex, the Committee should consider how best to manage the shallow-water grouper complex in the future.

Agenda Item IX: FINAL ACTION: Draft Amendment 56: Modifications to the Gag Grouper Catch Limits, Sector Allocations, and Fishing Seasons

Action: Presentation, discussion, and recommendations

Council Input and Next Steps: SERO staff will review the timeline for implementation for the Council’s requested interim rule for gag grouper, which is intended to reduce fishing mortality ahead of the development and implementation of Amendment 56, which will be a rebuilding plan for gag grouper. The Council is developing Amendment 56 in response to the results of the alternative run of SEDAR 72 using the State of Florida’s State Reef Fish Survey landings data for private recreational vessels. This assessment determined that Gulf gag is overfished and undergoing overfishing as of 2020. Council staff conducted public hearings for Amendment 56 twice virtually, and in four in-person locations in west Florida, in May 2023. The Committee will receive a summary of the public hearing comments, and review the proposed codified text. The Committee should evaluate its preferred alternatives and determine if any modifications are necessary. If the Committee finds the proposed regulations to be necessary and appropriate, it should recommend that the Council request the proposed regulations be adopted and implemented by the Secretary of Commerce.

Agenda Item X: Draft: Snapper Grouper Amendment 44 / Reef Fish Amendment 55: Catch Level Adjustments and Allocations for Southeast U.S. Yellowtail Snapper

Action: Presentation, discussion, and recommendations

Council Input and Next Steps: Council staff will review a presentation detailing the proposed management alternatives for Snapper Grouper Amendment 44 / Reef Fish Amendment 55, which evaluates modifications to southeastern U.S. yellowtail snapper management. The last yellowtail snapper interim analysis was performed as an update to SEDAR 64, and found the stock to be healthy. SEDAR 64 and the subsequent interim analysis both used updated recreational landings data calibrated to the Marine Recreational Information Program’s (MRIP) Fishing Effort Survey. This change in data units necessitates evaluation of the jurisdictional allocation between the Gulf and South Atlantic Councils, and of the stock OFL and ABC, which were last set in the Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey. The South Atlantic Council will also be evaluating sector allocations and other management measures to be applicable within its jurisdiction; the Gulf does not currently have a sector allocation for yellowtail snapper. The Committee should review the proposed management options, ask questions, and provide feedback to staff as appropriate. Staff will plan to bring revised options back to the Council in October 2023.

Agenda Item XI: Other Business

Action: Additional items that can be brought up for discussion

Council Input and Next Steps: 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.
