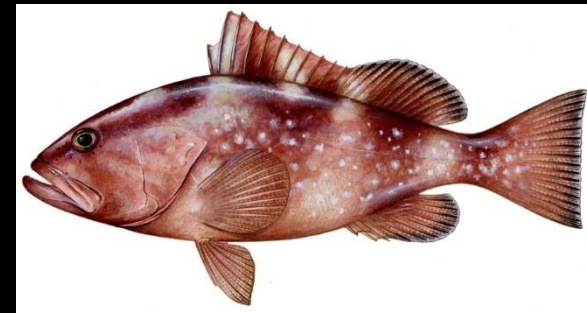


Draft Framework Action: Modification of Gulf of Mexico Red Grouper Catch Limits



August 24, 2021

Background

- The SEFSC conducted an IA for Gulf red grouper and presented this to the SSC at its August 2021 meeting.
- The IA was based on an OFL that included an adjustment to the recreational landings in weight projected by the SEDAR 61 assessment model.
- Recreational landings in weight projected by the SEDAR 61 assessment model from 2020 through 2024 were multiplied by a mean weight scalar, which was defined as the ratio of mean weight of recreationally harvested red grouper from the ACL monitoring dataset to the assessment predicted mean weight of retained red grouper for 2019.



Background

- Actions taken in this framework are contingent upon approval of Amendment 53 by the Secretary of Commerce and implementation by NMFS.
- Status of RF 53: DEIS responses are being finalized, and the SEFSC will need to certify RF 53 is based on BSIA before the Council transmits the document.
- The analyses conducted by the SEFSC (Analysis 1: weight adjustment to recreational landings in SEDAR61 projections; Analysis 2: Interim Analysis using results of Analysis 1) are reliant upon the new sector allocations (59.3% commercial: 40.7% recreational) in Amendment 53.



Background

- At its August 2021 meeting, the SSC accepted the new mean weight estimation methodology for recreationally caught grouper.
- The SSC also accepted the updated methodology and interim analysis results for red grouper.
- The SSC recommended an OFL of 5.99 mp gw and an ABC of 4.96 mp gw.



Purpose and Need Statements

- The purpose is to modify the OFL, ABC, ACLs, and ACTs for Gulf red grouper based on the results of the new stock analyses for Gulf red grouper.
- The need is to revise the OFL, ABC, ACLs, and ACTs consistent with the best available science for Gulf red grouper, and to continue to achieve optimum yield (OY) consistent with the requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act).



Action 1

Modify the Gulf Red Grouper OFL, ABC, ACLs, and ACTs

- **Alternative 1:** No Action. Retain the red grouper OFL, ABC, ACLs, and ACTs established in Reef Fish Amendment 53, as shown in the table below. The commercial and recreational sector allocations are, respectively, 59.3% and 40.7%. The commercial buffer between the ACL and ACT is 5%; the recreational buffer is 9%.
- **Alternative 2:** Modify the red grouper OFL, ABC, ACLs, and ACTs based on the recommendation of the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC), as determined from the 2021 red grouper stock analyses provided by the Southeast Fisheries Science Center and using the sector allocations as well as the ACL and ACT buffers for red grouper set forth in Reef Fish Amendment 53.



Action 1

Modify the Gulf Red Grouper OFL, ABC, ACLs, and ACTs

Alts	OFL	ABC	Total ACL	Comm ACL	Rec ACL	Comm ACT/Quota	Rec ACT
Alt 1	4.66	4.26	4.26	2.53	1.73	2.40	1.57
Alt 2	5.99	4.96	4.96	2.94	2.02	2.79	1.84

* Values are in millions of pounds, gutted weight.



Action 1

Discussion of **Alternative 2**

- The ABC was based on the 3-year moving average relative to the OFL.
- The SSC chose to use the 3-year moving index average because it was slightly more conservative and thought to be more representative of recent population trends than the 5-year index average and because of uncertainty regarding the impacts of the 2021 red tide event in Florida.



Questions?

