Tab B, No. 7(b)

Draft Reef Fish Amendment 58: Modifications to the Shallow-water Grouper Complex

April 9, 2024

Background of SWG Complex

- Amendment 1 (1990) created the shallow-water grouper (SWG) complex
  - 10 species were included: black grouper, gag, red grouper, Nassau grouper, yellowfin grouper, yellowmouth grouper, rock hind, red hind, speckled hind, and scamp

- Amendment 3 (1991) transferred speckled hind from the SWG to the deep-water grouper complex.

Background of SWG Complex

- Amendment 14 (1997) prohibited the harvest of Nassau grouper
- Amendment 29 (2010) created IFQ Program, SWG share category
- Generic ACL/AM Amendment (2012):
  - Removed rock hind and red hind from the FMP
  - Established separate ACLs for gag and red grouper
  - Set ACLs for all other species without prior ACLs

Background of SWG Complex

- Currently, 4 species are included in the shallow-water grouper complex
  - Black grouper, yellowfin grouper, scamp, and yellowmouth grouper
  - All 4 species are contained within the “Other Shallow-water Grouper” share category in the Grouper-Tilefish IFQ program (Amendment 29)
  - Species in SWG share the same quota and allocation, even though they are landed by species

Background: SSC Motions

- March 2023 SSC Meeting: Scamp and YMG

- The SSC accepted updated projections SEDAR 68, and recommended that the OFL be set at $F_{40\%SPR}$ and ABC as the yield (mp gw) at $0.75*F_{40\%SPR}$

Year	OFL (mp gw)	ABC (mp gw)
2024	0.271	0.203
2025	0.263	0.203
2026+	0.257	0.203

In FES

Background: Council Motions

- June 2023 Council Meeting:

- To direct staff to modify the amendment for scamp and yellowmouth grouper OFLs, ABCs, and ACLs to include black grouper and yellowfin grouper SSC catch recommendations. In the amendment, consideration should be given also to implications to the IFQ fishery involving the shallow-water grouper complex.

- Update: Also adding in consideration of deep-water grouper catch limits

Possible Management Actions: Modify SWG Complex

- **This action modifies the SWG complex in the Reef Fish FMP**

- **Alternative 1**: No Action – Maintain the current composition of the SWG complex: scamp, yellowmouth grouper, black grouper, and yellowfin grouper.

- *Scamp and YMG now have a distinct catch limit and cannot be combined with BG and YFG because of differences in data units. Alternative 1 is not viable.*

Possible Management Actions: Modify SWG Complex

- **Alternative 2**: Modify the composition of the SWG complex to form two sub-complexes. Sub-complex A is comprised of scamp and yellowmouth grouper; sub-complex B is comprised of black grouper and yellowfin grouper. Create two new share categories: one for scamp and yellowmouth grouper; and one for black grouper and yellowfin grouper.
  - Option 2a: Current shares are applied to the new share categories.
  - Option 2b: Current shares are applied based on landings history by species.
    - Sub-Option 1: Use landings history from 2010 – 2023
    - Sub-Option 2: Use landings history from 2011 – 2019, and 2021 – 2023
    - Sub-Option 3: Use landings history from 2016 – 2019, and 2021 – 2023

Possible Management Actions: Modify SDC for SWG Complex

If SWG complex is split into sub-complexes…

- **Alternative 1**: No Action – Maintain the current SDC for maximum sustainable yield (MSY), maximum fishing mortality threshold (MFMT), minimum stock size threshold (MSST), and optimum yield (OY) for shallow-water grouper complex as defined in Reef Fish Amendment 48 for the new SWG sub-complexes (A and B).

- MSY = $F_{30\%SPR}$
- MFMT = F_{MSY}
- MSST = 75% of B_{MSY}
- OY = 90% of MSY

Possible Management Actions: Modify SDC for SWG Complex

If SWG complex is split into sub-complexes…

- **Alternative 2**: Modify the MSY proxy for shallow-water sub-complex A (scamp and yellowmouth grouper) to be $F_{40\%SPR}$. Maintain the MSY proxy for shallow-water sub-complex B (black and yellowfin grouper) as $F_{30\%SPR}$. Maintain the current SDC for MFMT, MSST, and OY for SWG as defined in Reef Fish Amendment 48 for SWG sub-complexes (A and B).

- MFMT = F_{MSY}
- MSST = 75% of B_{MSY}
- OY = 90% of MSY

Possible Management Actions: Sector Allocations

- **Motion: The Gulf Council will delay any changes in allocation between the commercial and recreational sectors of any Gulf fishery resources that are subject to MRIP-FES until such time as the 2024 pilot study has been completed and deemed consistent with BSIA by the Gulf SSC.**

- Allocation decision **required** here for SWG
  - Additional recreational effort and associated removals using MRIP-FES affect proposed catch limits
  - If the Council does nothing, then it serves as an automatic reallocation to the commercial sector
  - So, doing nothing is still doing something
  - Recreational sector is managed to the overall ACL, which may exceed 19.9% unless the commercial sector has already harvested their entire quota.

Possible Management Actions: Sector Allocations

- *This action assumes the Other SWG share category is divided into:*
  - *Sub-complex A: Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper*
  - *Sub-complex B: Black and Yellowfin Grouper*

Possible Management Actions: Sector Allocations

- **Alternative 1**: No Action – Maintain the current allocation. Other shallow-water grouper ACLs assume a black grouper allocation of 73% commercial, 27% recreational, and an allocation of 80.1% commercial, 19.9% recreational for scamp, yellowfin and yellowmouth grouper combined, based on the ACL/AM Amendment (2012).

Possible Management Actions: Sector Allocations

- **Alternative 2**: Modify the sector allocation for the SWG sub-complexes. Sub-complex A (scamp and YMG) will be split XX.X% for the commercial sector and XX.X% for the recreational sector. The allocation will be based on THIS. Sub-complex B will use the allocation of 73% commercial, 27% recreational for black grouper; and, 80.1% commercial, 19.9% recreational for yellowfin grouper from the Generic ACL/AM Amendment.

- **For Alternative 2:**
- Use recent time series?
- Should Exclude 2020 and exclude 2010 with DWH oil spill.

Possible Management Actions: Scamp and YMG Catch Limits

- **Alternative 1**: No Action – Maintain the current catch limits for the SWG complex. The ABC = 0.710 mp gw. The commercial ACL = 0.547 mp gw, and the commercial ACT = 0.526 mp gw. The recreational ACL and ACT are undefined.

- *Alternative 1 is not viable because it uses MRFSS data units, and because the SSC has established a separate OFL and ABC for scamp/YMG. Black and yellowfin grouper remain in MRFSS under the criteria for the ACL/AM Amendment. Alternative 1 is not consistent with BSIA.*

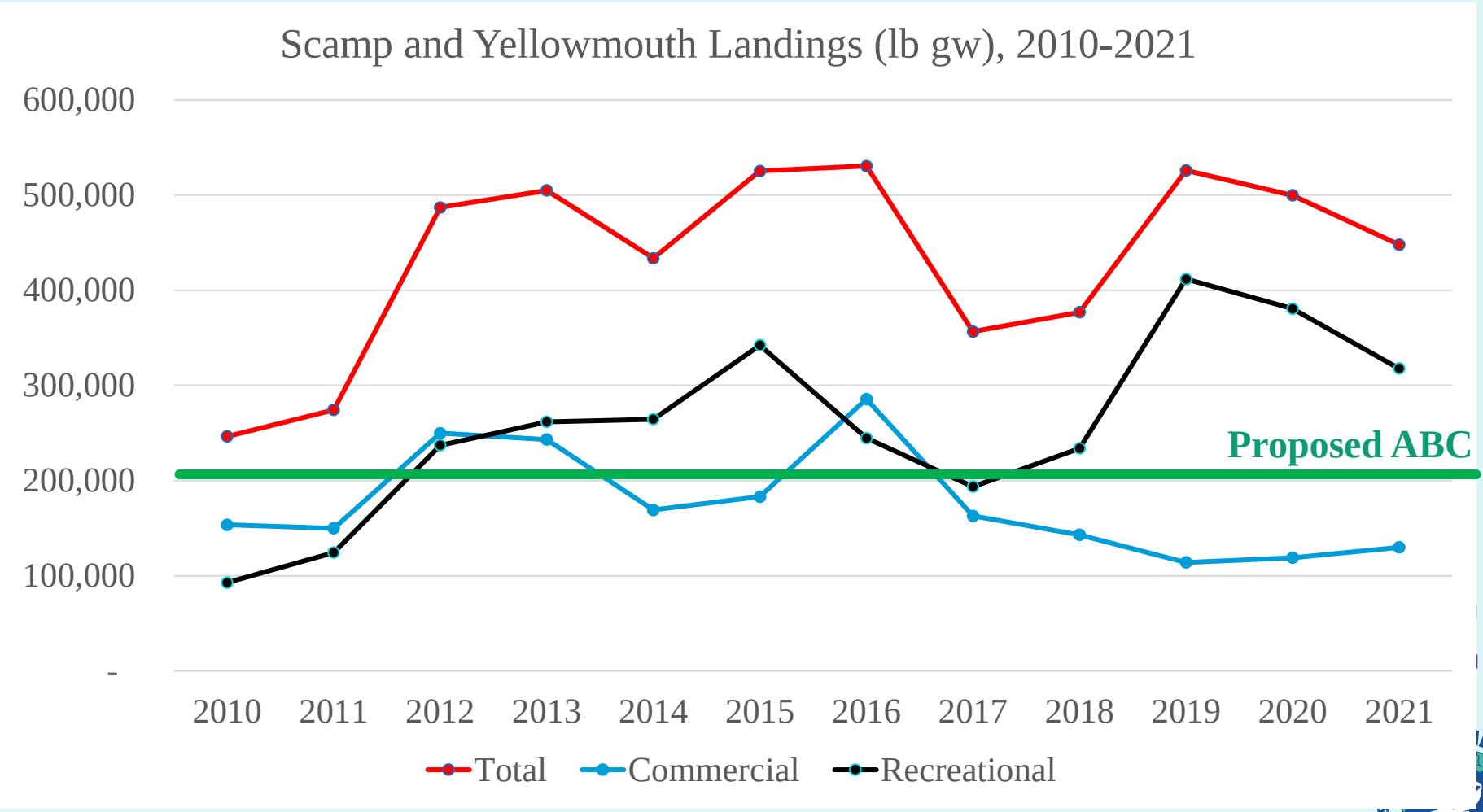
Possible Management Actions: Scamp and YMG Catch Limits

- **Alternative 2**: Establish catch limits for scamp and YMG based on the SSC's recommendations from SEDAR 68 (2022) for 2024 – 2026 and subsequent years. Catch limits are expressed and will be monitored in MRIP-FES data units, and in mp gw.

Year	OFL	ABC	Com ACL	Rec ACL
2024	0.271	0.203	*Depends on sector allocation*	
2025	0.263	0.203		
2026+	0.257	0.203		

- Note: Commercial IFQ managed to ACT/Quota
- 2024 unlikely to be implemented; 2025?

Possible Management Actions: Scamp and YMG Catch Limits



Possible Management Actions: Black and Yellowfin Catch Limits

- **Current Black Grouper Management:**
  - Based on average landings from 2004-2008: Recreational = 27% and Commercial = 73% of ACL.
  - Apportionment based on jurisdictional boundary between the Gulf and South Atlantic Councils: South Atlantic = 47% of ABC and Gulf = 53% of ABC (Established by using 50% of catch history from 1986-2008 + 50% of catch history from 2006-2008).

Possible Management Actions: Black and Yellowfin Catch Limits

- **Current Yellowfin Grouper Management:**
  - Commercial = 80.1%, Recreational = 19.9%, of yellowfin grouper, based on landings during 2001-2004.

  - Black Grouper and Yellowfin Grouper Catch Limits (lb gw):

	Gulf ABC	Gulf Com ACL	Gulf Com ACT	Gulf Rec ACL
2015+	310,844	227,735	218,626	83,109

  - In MRFSS data units

Possible Management Actions: Black and Yellowfin Catch Limits

- **For June 2024:**
  - *Cannot modify these catch limits without cooperation from the SAFMC*
  - *SSC recommendations cannot be applied in its current form*
  - *For now, black grouper jurisdictional apportionment, sector allocation and catch limit remains on the books*
  - *Yellowfin grouper catch limit is added to black grouper*

Possible Management Actions: Deep-water Grouper Catch Limits

- DWG species share IFQ program flexibility considerations with SWG
- IPT thought it best to consider DWG in the same document to address those flexibility considerations
- Ultimately a Council decision on how to address DWG

Possible Management Actions: Deep-water Grouper Catch Limits

- SSC met February 2024
  - Reviewed SEDAR 85 for yellowedge grouper
  - Reviewed landings for other DWG
    - Snowy grouper, warsaw grouper, speckled hind
- SSC recommended:
  - OFLs and ABCs for YEG, and for rest of DWG
  - Combine OFLs and ABC for all 4 DWG species
    - Same data units, so this is mathematically acceptable

Possible Management Actions: Deep-water Grouper Catch Limits

- **Alternative 1**: Maintain the current ABC for the DWG complex. The ABC for the DWG complex is 1.024 mp gw.

- *Alternative 1 is not viable because it uses MRFSS data units, and because the SSC has established OFLs and ABCs for DWG species using MRIP-FES. Alternative 1 is not consistent with BSIA.*

Possible Management Actions: Deep-water Grouper Catch Limits

- **Alternative 2**: Establish an OFL and modify the ABC for the DWG complex for 2025 – 2029 and subsequent years. The OFL is 731,035 lb gw, and the ABC is 555,026 lb gw. Catch limits are established using, and will be monitored in, MRIP-FES data units.

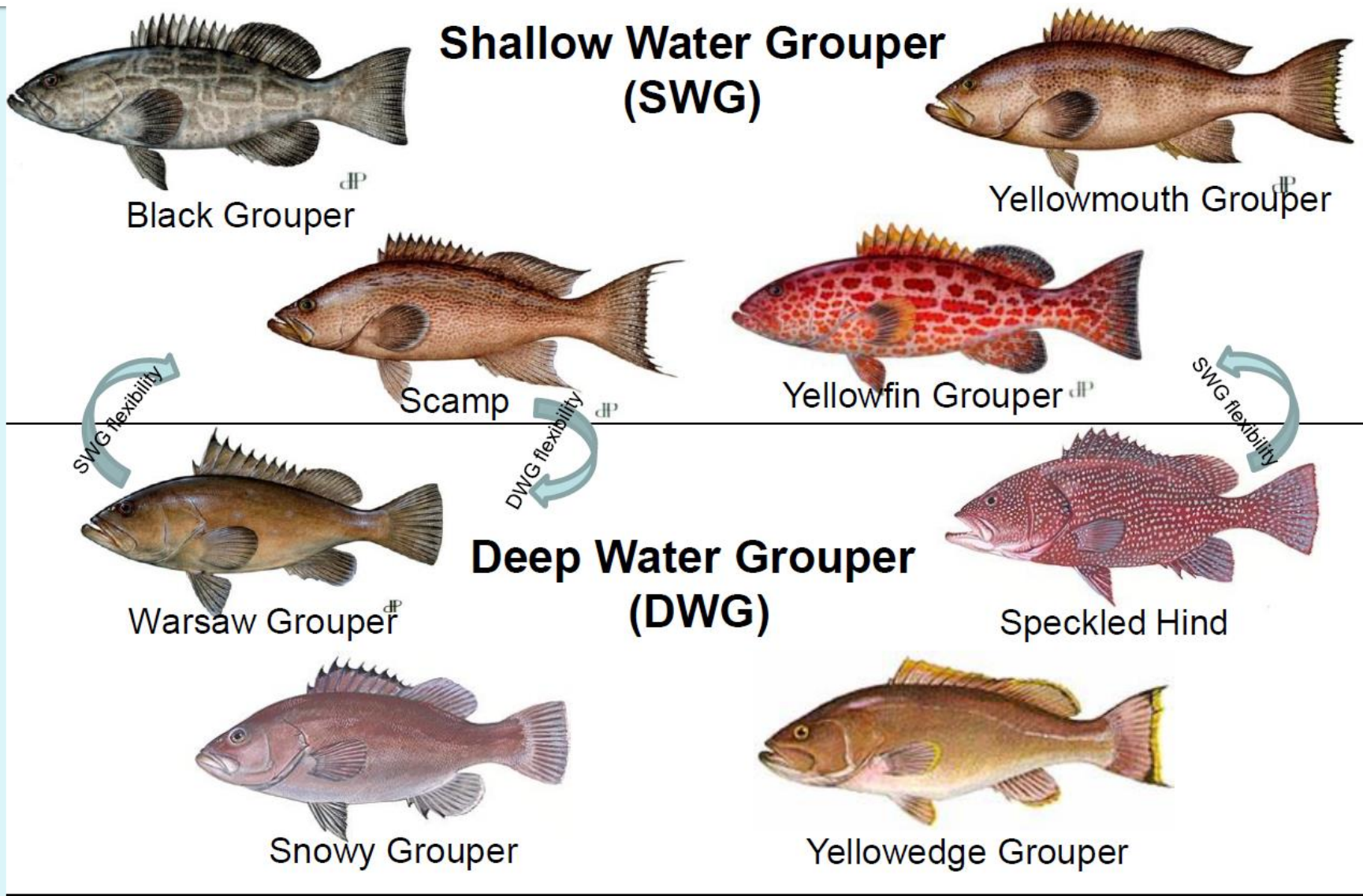
Possible Management Actions:
Modify IFQ Program Flexibility Considerations

- **Alternative 1**: No Action – Maintain the Grouper-Tilefish IFQ program flexibility considerations for the sub-complexes within the SWG complex. Scamp may be landed under a shareholder's DWG allocation if that shareholder does not have any remaining SWG allocation. Warsaw and speckled hind may be landed under SWG if all DWG allocation in a shareholder's account is depleted.

Alternative 1 is not viable because the SSC has established a separate OFL and ABC for scamp/YMG. Without modification, allowing for scamp to be landed under DWG allocation could result in overfishing of scamp/YMG. Alternative 1 is not consistent with BSIA.

Possible Management Actions:

Modify IFQ Program Flexibility Considerations



Possible Management Actions:
Modify IFQ Program Flexibility Considerations

- **Alternative 2**: Eliminate all flexibility considerations for the current SWG and DWG share categories within the Grouper-Tilefish IFQ program.

- **Alternative 3:** Modify the flexibility considerations in the Grouper-Tilefish IFQ program for the SWG and DWG complex.
  - Eliminate all current flexibility considerations in Alternative 1.
  - Speckled hind, and warsaw grouper may be landed under a shareholder's black grouper and yellowfin grouper allocation, but only after that shareholder's deep-water grouper allocation has been landed in a fishing year.

Questions?

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Fishery Management Council