Snapper Grouper Amendment 44 / Reef Fish Amendment 55:

Modifications to the Southeastern U.S. Yellowtail Snapper Catch Limits, Jurisdictional Allocation, South Atlantic Sector Allocation, and South Atlantic Commercial Management Measures

Background

- Southeastern U.S. yellowtail snapper is jointly managed by the Gulf and South Atlantic Fishery Management Councils
  - Management split at Council jurisdictional boundary
- Over 99% of landings come from waters adjacent to FL

Yellowtail Snapper Management

Fishing Season

- August 1 – July 31

Possession Limit

- Commercial: none
- Recreational: 10 fish per person/day

Minimum Size Limit

- 12 inches TL

Yellowtail Snapper Management

Gulf Council Jurisdiction

- Apportioned 25% of the ABC
- Managed with stock ACL
- 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 cobia 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
  - Post-Season: If the total ACL is exceeded, the following year's season is reduced to achieve the ACT.
- Overall Accountably Measure: If yellowtail snapper is *Overfished* and the ACL is exceeded, the following year's ACL and ACT are reduced by the amount of the overage

Why Are We Here?

Stock Assessment - SEDAR 64: 2020

- Terminal data year: 2017
- Updated recreational catch data (MRIP-FES)
  - Adjusts estimates back in time
  - Recreational landings are greater than previously thought
  - Impacts allocation between Gulf and South Atlantic Councils

- Stock Status: Not overfished and not undergoing overfishing

Current Allocations and Catch Limits

- Stock ABC: 4.05 million lbs whole weight
  - 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 pounds whole weight**
- **Gulf of Mexico ABC = 1,012,500 pounds whole weight**

Why Are We Here?

Scientific and Statistical Committees Recommendations:

- Resulting catch limits from SEDAR 64 begin higher than current MRFSS catch limits, but use the MRIP-FES data currency

Year	ABC (mp ww)
2021 (Current, MRFSS)	4.05
2021 (Proposed, MRIP-FES)	4.655
2022	4.242
2023	3.991
2024	3.836
2025+	3.736

Possible Actions

- Modify jurisdictional allocation of yellowtail snapper between the Councils
- Modify OFL, ABC, ACLs, and South Atlantic ACTs
- Modify South Atlantic sector allocation
- Modify South Atlantic commercial trip limits

Modify Council Jurisdictional Allocation for Yellowtail Snapper

- 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.
- If MRIP-FES is used with the same formula:
  - 81% South Atlantic, 19% Gulf
  - Recognizes more recreational fishing effort in South Atlantic waters
  - Gulf landings historically mostly commercial
  - *Note: Monroe County = South Atlantic*

Modify Council Jurisdictional Allocation for Yellowtail Snapper

- Proposed MRIP-FES Catch limits under the current 75% / 25% split:

Year	Total OFL	Total ABC	South Atlantic ABC (75%)	Gulf ABC (25%)
2021	4.754	4.655	3.491	1.164
2022	4.301	4.242	3.182	1.061
2023	4.028	3.991	2.993	0.998
2024	3.863	3.836	2.877	0.959
2025	3.756	3.736	2.802	0.934

Modify Council Jurisdictional Allocation for Yellowtail Snapper

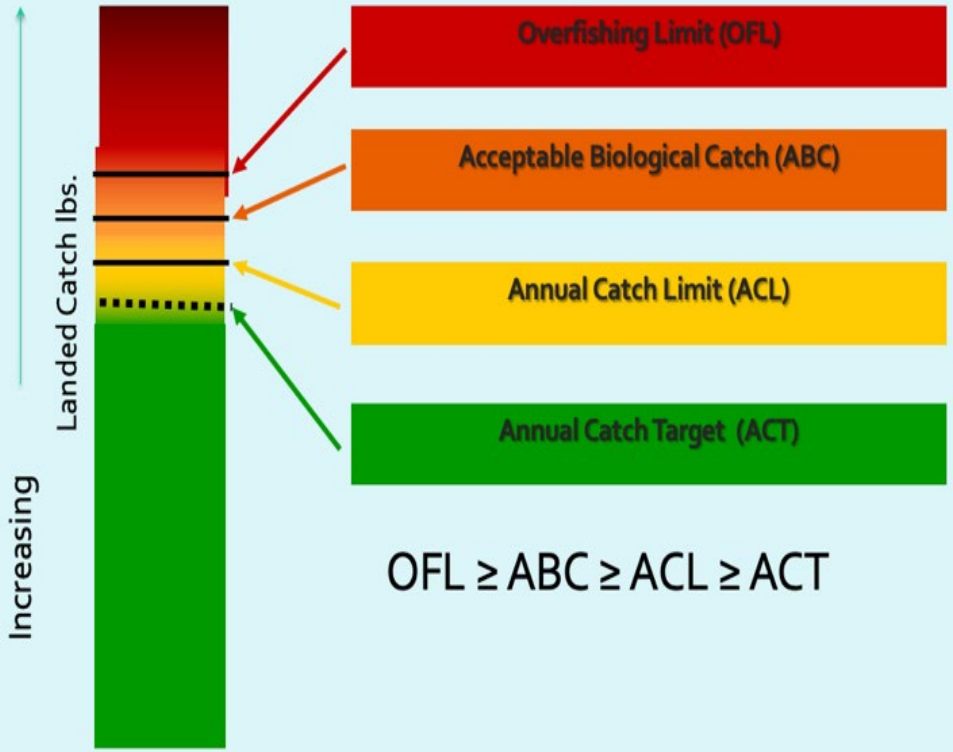
- Proposed MRIP-FES Catch limits under the updated MRIP-FES split (81% / 19%):

Year	Total OFL	Total ABC	South Atlantic ABC (81%)	Gulf ABC (19%)
2021	4.754	4.655	3.789	0.866
2022	4.301	4.242	3.453	0.789
2023	4.028	3.991	3.248	0.743
2024	3.863	3.836	3.122	0.714
2025	3.756	3.736	3.041	0.695

Modify Yellowtail Snapper Stock OFL, Gulf ABC, and Gulf ACL

The Councils must consider adjusting the OFLs and ABCs to be consistent with SSC recommendations.

The current annual yields decrease towards the equilibrium yield. The Councils can use these, or a constant catch to fix catch limits over time.



Modify Yellowtail Snapper Stock OFL, Gulf ABC, and Gulf ACL

- Comparison of Gulf ABC to recent landings:
  - Current fishing year (August 1 – July 31) used
  - Recent landings are in MRFSS
  - *Note: Gulf landings are predominantly commercial*

Year	Gulf ABC (25%)	Gulf ABC (19%)	Gulf Average Landings (2016/17 – 2019/20)
2021	1.164	0.866	0.543
2022	1.061	0.789	0.543
2023	0.998	0.743	0.543
2024	0.959	0.714	0.543
2025	0.934	0.695	0.543

Modify Yellowtail Snapper Stock OFL, Gulf ABC, and Gulf ACL

- Yellowtail snapper not overfished, not undergoing overfishing
- Current buffer between ACL and ABC = 11%
- Using 2016/17 – 2019/20 fishing years, buffer = 8%

- Options:
  - Use current 11% buffer
  - Use revised 8% buffer
  - Set ACL = ABC for Gulf allocation

Modify Yellowtail Snapper Stock OFL, Gulf ABC, and Gulf ACL

- Note: Average Gulf landings for 2016/17 – 2019/20 fishing seasons: 0.543 mp ww (MRFSS)
- Gulf landings are predominantly commercial

Year	Gulf ABC (25%)	Gulf ACL (11%)	Gulf ACL (8%)	Gulf ABC (19%)	Gulf ACL (11%)	Gulf ACL (8%)
2021	1.164	1.036	1.071	0.866	0.771	0.797
2022	1.061	0.944	0.976	0.789	0.702	0.726
2023	0.998	0.888	0.918	0.743	0.661	0.684
2024	0.959	0.854	0.882	0.714	0.635	0.657
2025	0.934	0.831	0.859	0.695	0.619	0.639

South Atlantic Actions:

- Modify the South Atlantic ABC, OY, and ACL
- Modify the South Atlantic sector allocations
- Modify the South Atlantic sector ACLs and ACTs
- Modify the South Atlantic commercial trip limits