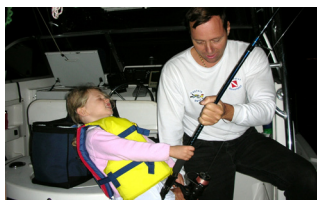




AMENDMENT GUIDE

3/6/12



Generic Annual Catch Limit/ Accountability Measures Amendment

Generic to Red Drum, Reef Fish, Shrimp, Corals and
Coral Reefs, and Stone Crab Fishery Management Plans



*Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and
Management Act requires Councils to establish
annual catch limits and accountability measures
for each fisheries management plan to ensure
that overfishing does not occur*

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[A Guide to this Guide](#)

This generic amendment addressing Annual Catch Limits and Accountability Measures was approved by the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council in August 2011. The following is a summary of the actions contained within the amendment. The Council's selected alternative for each action is highlighted in yellow.

If you have any questions, please contact the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council:

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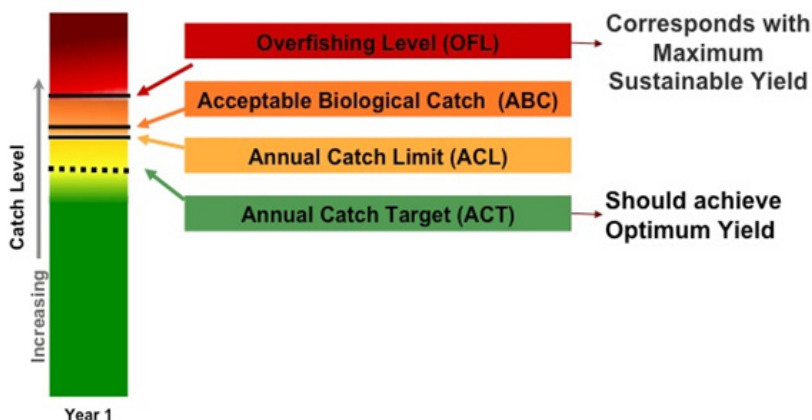
Tampa, Florida 33607

[Introduction to Generic ACL/AM Amendment](#)

The Magnuson-Stevens Reauthorization Act of 2006 contains requirements to end and prevent overfishing through the use of Annual Catch Limits (ACL's), optionally Annual Catch Targets (ACTs), and Accountability Measures (AM's). An Annual Catch Limit is the amount of fish from a stock or stock complex that is allowed to be caught in a year. Accountability Measures are measures taken to prevent fish harvest from exceeding Annual Catch Limits, and if exceeded can mitigate or correct the overage. According to National Standard 1 of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, implementation of Annual Catch Limits and Accountability Measures must begin by 2010 for fish stocks subject to overfishing, and by 2011 for all other stocks (with certain exceptions) under federal management.

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council met the requirement for stocks subject to overfishing through Reef Fish Amendments 30A (greater amberjack and gray triggerfish) and 30B (gag and red grouper). Additionally, the Council established quotas and management measures for the red snapper fishery that are consistent with establishing Annual Catch Limits and Accountability Measures.

This Generic Amendment addresses Annual Catch Limits and Accountability Measures for the remaining stocks that are in need of such measures with the exception of species in joint fishery management plans (Coastal Migratory Pelagic and Spiny Lobster Fishery Management Plans). Those species will be addressed in separate joint amendments with the South Atlantic Council.



GLOSSARY OF TERMS:

Overfishing level - the threshold that allows for the greatest possible harvest of fish without compromising the health of the stock.

Maximum sustainable yield - the largest amount of fish that can be taken from a stock without compromising the stock's ability to reproduce and maintain a healthy biomass into the future.

Acceptable Biological Catch - the amount of fish that can be removed from a stock, as recommended by the Scientific and Statistical Committee is set lower than the over fishing limit to account for scientific uncertainty and natural fluctuations in stock size.

Annual Catch Limit - the amount of fish that can be harvested from the stock each year, must be set less than or equal to the acceptable biological catch determined by the scientific and statistical committee. If annual catch limits are exceeded accountability measures are triggered.

Annual Catch Target - a harvest level set by the Council if they deem it necessary. Set lower than the annual catch limit to account for any management uncertainty that may occur, and it creates a buffer so that harvest does not exceed annual catch limit and trigger accountability measures.

Optimum Yield - based on maximum sustainable yield as modified by economic, social, or ecological factors, is the yield from a fishery that provides the greatest overall benefit to the nation.

The following is a brief synopsis of each action contained within the Generic Amendment for Annual Catch Limits and Accountability Measures.

Generic ACL/AM Amendment - Summary of Actions

Action 1: Management of Species by Other State or Federal Agencies

Action 1.1 Octocorals

Octocorals are a Florida fishery with a majority (78%) of landings coming from state waters off both coasts. This action considers allowing other state or federal management agencies to manage octocorals.

Alternative 1: No action. Retain management of octocorals under the Coral and Coral Reefs Fishery Management Plan.

(Preferred) Alternative 2: Remove octocorals from the Coral and Coral Reefs Fishery Management Plan.

Alternative 3: Remove octocorals from the Coral and Coral Reefs Fishery Management Plan and request the Secretary of Commerce designate the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council as the responsible Council.

Action 1.2 Stone Crab Fishery Management Plan

In October 2010 the Council voted to repeal the Stone Crab Fishery Management Plan. Consequently, all actions dealing with stone crab have been removed from the amendment, and the state fishery management agencies can extend their regulations into federal waters.

Action 1.3 Nassau Grouper

Harvest of Nassau grouper is currently prohibited within the United States. They are found predominately in south Florida and the Caribbean; however, they have been landed in low numbers off Texas and Louisiana. This action considers allowing other state or federal management agencies to manage Nassau grouper.

Alternative 1: No action. Retain management of Nassau grouper under the Reef Fish Fishery Management Plan

Alternative 2: Remove Nassau grouper from the Reef Fish Fishery Management Plan

Preferred Alternative 3: Remove Nassau grouper from the Reef Fish Fishery Management Plan and request the Secretary of Commerce designate the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council as the responsible Council.

Action 1.4 Yellowtail Snapper

The majority of commercial and recreational landings of yellowtail snapper occur in the Florida Keys and in the South Atlantic. This species is currently managed as one stock throughout its range. This action considers allowing other state or federal management agencies to manage yellowtail snapper throughout its range.

(Preferred) Alternative 1: No action. Retain management of yellowtail snapper under the Reef Fish Fishery Management Plan.

Alternative 2: Remove yellowtail snapper from the Reef Fish Fishery Management Plan.

Alternative 3: Remove yellowtail snapper from the Reef Fish Fishery Management Plan and request the Secretary of Commerce designate the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council as the responsible Council.

Alternative 4: Add yellowtail snapper to a joint plan with the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council.

Action 1.5 Mutton Snapper

Close to 100% of the mutton snapper landings in the Gulf of Mexico originate off the state of Florida. This action considers allowing another management agency to manage mutton snapper.

(Preferred) Alternative 1: No action. Retain management of mutton snapper under the Reef Fish Fishery Management Plan.

Alternative 2: Remove mutton snapper from the Reef Fish Fishery Management Plan.

Alternative 3: Remove mutton snapper from the Reef Fish Fishery Management Plan and request the Secretary of Commerce designate the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council as the responsible Council.

Alternative 4: Add mutton snapper to a joint plan with the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council.

Action 2: Removal of Stocks From Reef Fish Fishery Management Plan

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council currently manages 42 reef fish species. Twenty of these species have average landings near or less than 100,000 pounds, and thirteen species have average landings less than 15,000 pounds. With the exception of sand perches, these species are landed mainly from federal waters. This action considers removing some, or all of the less frequently landed species from the Reef Fish Fishery Management Plan.

Removal from management is considered because: species are not common in the Gulf, do not appear to be targeted for harvest, and/or have fairly stable landings in recent years. In some cases there may be considerations that indicate that, despite low landings, a species should be kept under management. Examples of such considerations include: long-lived species that may be more vulnerable to overfishing, misidentification with other species within the fishery management plan, and/or trends in landings history that could indicate a change in stock status.

Note: More than one preferred alternative may be selected.

Alternative 1: No action. Do not remove any species from the Reef Fish Fishery Management Plan.

Alternative 2: Remove species in the list below with 100,000 lbs. average landings or less except for those with prohibited harvest that:

Option a: Are long-lived (defined as maximum age greater than 30 years).

Option b: May be misidentified as another species in the Reef Fish Fishery Management Plan.

Option c: Have a trend in landings that may indicate a change in status.

(Preferred) Alternative 3: Remove species that have average annual landings of 15,000 pounds or less except for those with prohibited harvest that:

Option a: Are long lived (defined as greater than 30 years).

(Preferred) Option b: May be misidentified as another species in the reef fish fishery management plan.

(Preferred) Option c: Have a trend in landings that may indicate a change in status.

Species selected for removal under the alternative and options are:

Anchor tilefish, blackline tilefish, red hind, rock hind, misty grouper, schoolmaster, dog snapper, mahogany snapper

Alternative 4: Remove species from the Reef Fish Fishery Management Plan if the Gulf of Mexico is the edge of the species distribution, even if other criteria for retention exist.

(Preferred) Alternative 5: Remove sand perch and dwarf sand perch from the Reef Fish Fishery Management Plan.

Table 2.2.1. Species that qualify for removal under Alternative 3, 4 or 5. (Source: Nick Farmer, NMFS Southeast Regional Office, personal communication) A black bar indicates species that do not qualify for removal under Alternative 3. k = the species would be kept based on the respective option. A yellow k = the species chosen to be kept by the Council due to mis-identification issues. Edge = those species for which the Gulf of Mexico is at the edge of their range.

Species	Max Age	Average Lbs. Landed 2000-2009	Percent state waters	Alt 2			excluded lbs.	Alt 3			Alt 4
				a	b	c		a	b	c	
Anchor tilefish	unk	No record	0%								edge
Goldface tilefish	unk	33,435	0%								
Blackline tilefish	unk	25	0%					K			
Red hind	19	4,862	23%								edge
Rock hind	16	4,478	37%								edge
Yellowfin grouper	15	7,316	1%								edge
Yellowmouth grouper	41	1,268	1%	K	K			K	K		
Misty grouper	41	365	21%	K				K			
Speckled hind	25	75,342	0%			K	K				
Schoolmaster	12	2,438	46%								edge
Dog snapper	12	3,649	12%								edge
Mahogany snapper	29	22	0%								edge
Cubera snapper	22	10,780	4%		K				K		
Lesser amberjack	10	55,753	1%		K	K	K				
Blackfin snapper	8	3,899	2%								edge
Silk snapper	29	47,179	7%			K	K				
Queen snapper	30	12,475	4%								
Wenchman	11	55,328	3%			K	K				
Sand perch	2	104,793	57%	See Alternative 5							
Dwarf sand perch	7	No record	unk								

Action 3. Species Groupings

The National Standard 1 guidelines require that the Gulf Council develop Annual Catch Limits and (optionally) Annual Catch Targets for each of its managed species. However, only 13 of the 42 species managed by the Gulf Council Reef Fish Fishery Management Plan will have been assessed by 2011. For the purposes of setting Annual Catch Limits, the guidelines allow stocks in a fishery to be grouped into stock complexes when appropriate. Reasons for grouping stocks include: situations where stocks in a multispecies fishery cannot be targeted independent of one another and maximum sustainable yield cannot be defined on a stock-by-stock basis; where there is insufficient data to measure their status; or when it is not feasible for fishermen to distinguish individual stocks among their catch. This action considers establishing stock groupings in order to meet the requirements set by the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

Alternative 1: No Action (Status Quo). Maintain existing species groups. Annual Catch Limits will be established for each group. In addition, where sufficient information exists, individual Annual Catch Limits may be established for species within each group.

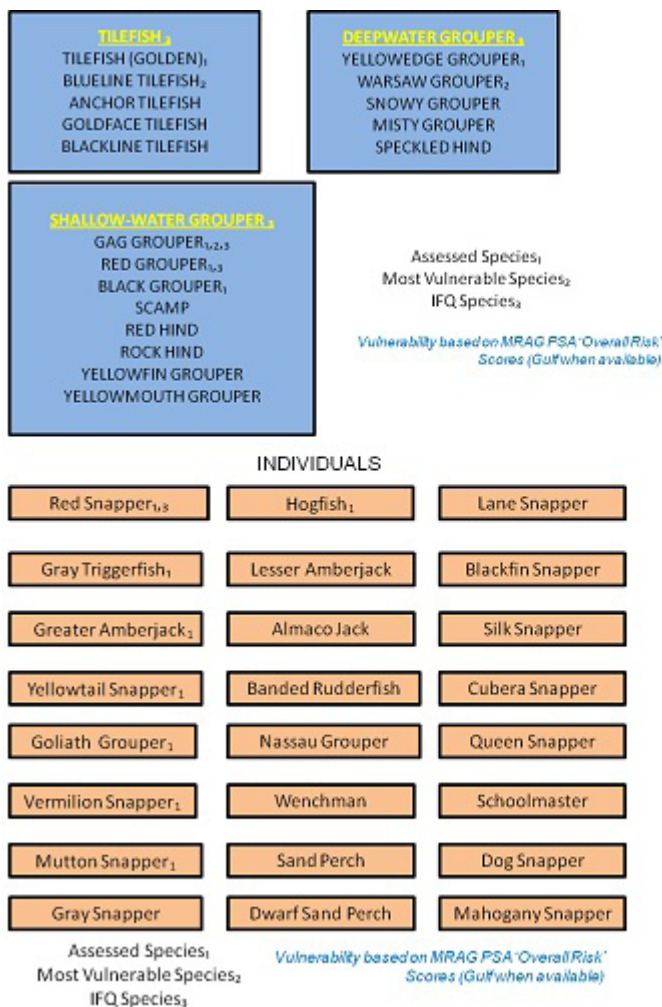


Figure 2.3.1. Alternative 1 Status Quo & Individuals, maintains the existing species groups as developed and established by the Council.

Alternative 2: Species groups are revised from existing groups as shown in Figure 2.3.2. Annual Catch Limits will be established for each group. In addition, where sufficient information exists, individual Annual Catch Limits may be established for species within each group.

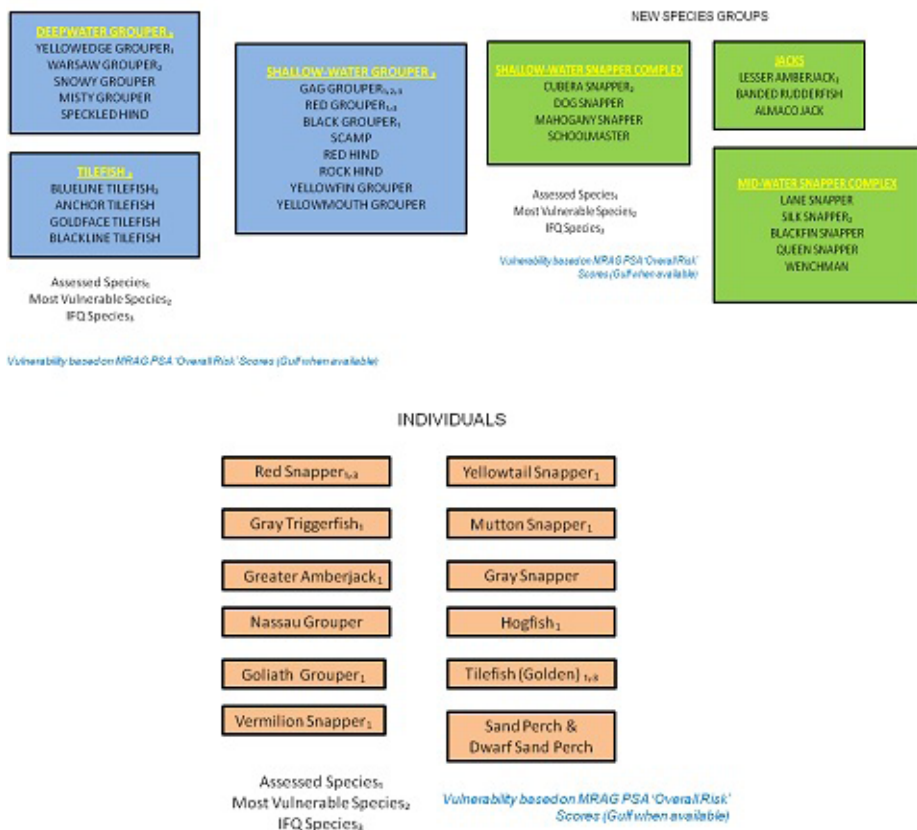


Figure 2.3.2. Alternative 2 Based on Status Quo With New Groups & Individuals, maintains the existing groups, and develops three new groups. The three new groups; Jacks, Mid/Deep-Water Complex, and Shallow-Water Complex, are based upon NMFS scientific review, but also maintain consistency with existing IFQ groupings. In addition, the golden tilefish is split off from the other tilefishes based on public comment.

Alternative 3: Species groups are based on NMFS stock group analysis as shown in Figure 2.3.3. There are two levels of species groups. Annual Catch Limits will be established for each upper level group. In addition, individual Annual Catch Limits will be established for single-species sub-groups and multi-species sub-groups within each upper level group.

Alternative 3: NMFS 'COMPLEX|SUB-COMPLEX'

Tilefish	Sub-Complexes
Golden Tilefish ₁	Golden Tilefish
Blueline Tilefish ₂	Blueline Tilefish
Anchor Tilefish	Anchor Tilefish
Goldface Tilefish	Goldface Tilefish
Blackline Tilefish	Blackline Tilefish

SWG	Sub-Complexes
Gag Grouper _{1,2}	Gag Grouper
Red Grouper ₁	Red Grouper
Black Grouper ₁	Black Grouper
Scamp	Scamp
Red Hind	Red Hind
Rock Hind	Rock Hind
Yellowfin Grouper	Yellowfin Grouper
Yellowmouth Grouper	Yellowmouth Grouper

Deep-Water Grouper	Sub-Complexes
Yellowedge Grouper ₁	Yellowedge Grouper
Warsaw Grouper ₂	Warsaw Grouper
Snowy Grouper	Snowy Grouper
Misty Grouper	Misty Grouper
Speckled Hind	Speckled Hind

Jacks	Sub-Complexes
Greater Amberjack ₁	Greater Amberjack
Lesser Amberjack ₂	Lesser Amberjack
Almaco Jack	Almaco Jack
Banded Rudderfish	Banded Rudderfish

Shallow-Water Snapper	Sub-Complexes
Mutton Snapper ₁	Mutton Snapper
Schoolmaster	Schoolmaster
Dog Snapper	Dog Snapper
Mahogany Snapper	Mahogany Snapper
Cubera Snapper ₂	Cubera Snapper

Mid-Water Snapper	Sub-Complexes
Red Snapper ₁	Red Snapper
Gray Triggerfish ₁	Gray Triggerfish
Vermilion Snapper ₁	Vermilion Snapper
Lane Snapper	Lane Snapper
Blackfin Snapper	Blackfin Snapper
Silk Snapper ₂	Silk Snapper
Queen Snapper	Queen Snapper
Wenchman	Wenchman

Individual ACLs
Yellowtail Snapper
Goliath Grouper
Gray Snapper
Hogfish
Nassau Grouper
Sand Perch & Dwarf Sand Perch

30 ACLs/sector

1 = Assessed

2 = Most Vulnerable (PSA)⁸

Figure 2.3.3. Alternative 3 Two-Level Groups Based upon NMFS scientific review that included multiple statistical techniques that were used to identify species assemblages: (1) hierarchical cluster analysis based on life history characteristics; abundance; and presence-absence, (2) co-occurrence matrices, and (3) nodal analysis.

(Preferred) Alternative 4: Species groups are based on NMFS stock groups analysis as shown in Figure 2.3.4. There is a single level of species groupings equal to the subgroups in Alternative 3. Annual Catch Limits will be established for each single species and for each multi-species group.

Alternative 4: NMFS 'SUB-COMPLEX ONLY' & IFQ – SPECIES WITH < 15,000 LBS OF LANDINGS REMOVED (ACTION 2 PREFERRED)

<u>Tilefish</u>	<u>Jacks</u>	<u>Individual ACLs</u>
Golden Tilefish ₁	Lesser Amberjack ₂	Gag Grouper _{1, 2}
Blueline Tilefish ₂	Almaco Jack	Red Grouper ₁
Goldface Tilefish	Banded Rudderfish	Mutton Snapper ₁
<u>SWG</u>	<u>Mid-Water 'Snapper'</u>	Greater Amberjack ₁
Black Grouper ₁	Silk Snapper ₂	Red Snapper ₁
Scamp	Wenchman	Gray Triggerfish ₁
Yellowmouth Grouper		Vermilion Snapper ₁
<u>Deep-Water Grouper</u>		Cubera Snapper
Warsaw Grouper ₂		Lane Snapper
Snowy Grouper		Yellowtail Snapper ₁
Speckled Hind		Goliath Grouper ₁
Yellowedge Grouper ₁		Gray Snapper
		Hogfish ₁

18 ACLs/sector

1 = Assessed

2 = Most Vulnerable (PSA)

Figure 2.3.4. Preferred Alternative 4 Single Level Groups Based upon NMFS scientific review and grouper and tilefish IFQ groupings. This is similar to Alternative 3 except that only the sub-complexes and individual stocks are used. There is no upper level group.

(Preferred) Alternative 5: Within each group (or sub-group for Alternative 3), an indicator species will be selected based on:

Option a. The most vulnerable stock in the group based on productivity-susceptibility analyses. Species in the group (or sub-group for Alternative 3) will be subject to Accountability Measures as a group when the indicator species Annual Catch Limit is exceeded.

Preferred Option b. For groups with an assessed species, use the assessed species as the indicator species. Species in the group will be subject to Accountability Measures when the indicator species Annual Catch Limit is exceeded. For groups without an assessed species, do not use an indicator species. Species in the group (or sub-group for Alternative 3) will be subject to Accountability Measures when the group Annual Catch Limit is exceeded.

Option c. Do not use an indicator species. The Annual Catch Limit is based on the sum of catch limits of all species in the group regardless of whether there is an assessed species.

Action 4. Acceptable Biological Catch Control Rule

The National Standard 1 guidelines require that each Council establish an Acceptable Biological Catch control rule. This control rule will provide a built-in buffer that accounts for scientific uncertainty between the overfishing limit and the Acceptable Biological Catch levels for each managed stock. These levels are set by the Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee using stock assessments or other available biological information, and the Acceptable Biological Catch control rule for determining the appropriate level of risk. The 3-tiered Acceptable Biological Catch control rule would provide a systematic method for calculating Acceptable Biological Catch levels based on the amount of information for each stock. Lower tiers are used where there is limited assessment information available or where the assessment information is deemed by the Scientific and Statistical Committee to be inadequate for management.

Alternative 1: No action. Do not specify an Acceptable Biological Catch control rule. The overfishing limit and acceptable biological catch will be set by the Scientific and Statistical Committee on an ad hoc basis for each stock or stock assemblage individually.

(Preferred) Alternative 2: Adopt the Acceptable Biological Catch control rule described in Table 2.4.1. The indicated default risk of exceeding overfishing limit for Tier 2, or default Acceptable Biological Catch buffer levels for Tier 3a and 3b, are to be used unless specified otherwise by the Council on a stock by stock basis.

Alternative 3: Adopt an Acceptable Biological Catch control rule where the buffer between the overfishing limit and Acceptable Biological Catch will be a fixed level consisting of:

- a. Acceptable Biological Catch = 75% (or other percentage) of the overfishing limit
- b. Acceptable Biological Catch = the yield at 75% (or other percentage) of FMSY

Table 2.4.1. Acceptable Biological Catch Control Rule.

Tier 1 Acceptable Biological Catch Control Rule	
Condition for Use	A quantitative assessment provides both an estimate of overfishing limit based on maximum sustainable yield or its proxy and a probability density function of overfishing limit that reflects scientific uncertainty. Specific components of scientific uncertainty can be evaluated through a risk determination table.
OFL	OFL = yield resulting from applying F_{MSY} or its proxy to estimated biomass.
ABC	The Council with advice from the SSC will set an appropriate level of risk (P^*) using a risk determination table that calculates a P^* based on the level of information and uncertainty in the stock assessment. $ABC = \text{yield at } P^*$.
Tier 2 Acceptable Biological Catch Control Rule	
Condition for Use*	An assessment exists but does not provide an estimate of MSY or its proxy. Instead, the assessment provides a measure of overfishing limit based on alternative methodology. Additionally, a probability density function can be calculated to estimate scientific uncertainty in the model-derived overfishing limit measure. This density function can be used to approximate the probability of exceeding the overfishing limit, thus providing a buffer between the overfishing limit and acceptable biological catch.
OFL	An overfishing limit measure is available from alternative methodology.
ABC	Calculate a probability density function around the overfishing limit measure that accounts for scientific uncertainty. The buffer between the overfishing limit and acceptable biological catch will be based on that probability density function and the level of risk of exceeding the overfishing limit selected by the Council. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Risk of exceeding OFL = 50% Risk of exceeding OFL = 40% Risk of exceeding OFL = 30% (default level for unassigned stocks) Set $ABC = \text{OFL} - \text{buffer at risk of exceeding OFL}$
Tier 3a Acceptable Biological Catch Control Rule	
Condition for Use*	No assessment is available, but landings data exist. The probability of exceeding the overfishing limit in a given year can be approximated from the variance about the mean of recent landings to produce a buffer between the overfishing limit and acceptable biological catch. Based on expert evaluation of the best scientific information available, recent historical landings are without trend, landings are small relative to stock biomass, or the stock is unlikely to undergo overfishing if future landings are equal to or moderately higher than the mean of recent landings. For stock complexes, the determination of whether a stock complex is in Tier 3a or 3b will be made using all the information available, including stock specific catch trends.
OFL	Set the overfishing limit equal to the mean of recent landings plus two standard deviations. A time series of at least ten years is recommended to compute the mean of recent landings, but a different number of years may be used to attain a representative level of variance in the landings.
ABC	Set acceptable biological catch using a buffer from the overfishing limit that represents an acceptable level of risk due to scientific uncertainty. The buffer will be predetermined for each stock or stock complex by the Council with advice from the SSC as: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> $ABC = \text{mean of the landings plus } 1.5 \times \text{standard deviation}$ (risk of exceeding OFL = 31%) $ABC = \text{mean of the landings plus } 1.0 \times \text{standard deviation}$ (default) (risk of exceeding OFL = 16%) $ABC = \text{mean of the landings plus } 0.5 \times \text{standard deviation}$ (risk of exceeding OFL = 7%) $ABC = \text{mean of the landings}$ (risk of exceeding OFL = 2.3%)
Tier 3b Acceptable Biological Catch Control Rule	
Condition for Use ¹	No assessment is available, but landings data exist. Based on expert evaluation of the best scientific information available, recent landings may be unsustainable.
OFL	Set the overfishing limit equal to the mean of landings. A time series of at least ten years is recommended to compute the mean of recent landings, but a different number of years may be used to attain a representative level of variance in the landings.

Action 5. Annual Catch Limit/Annual Catch Target Control Rule

If an Annual Catch Target is used by the Council, the Annual Catch Limit will be set equal to the Acceptable Biological Catch and the Annual Catch Target will be set lower to account for management uncertainty. This will reduce the probability of exceeding the Annual Catch Limit and triggering Accountability Measures. If an Annual Catch Target is not used, the Annual Catch Limit will be set below the Acceptable Biological Catch to account for management uncertainty. In both cases, the catch level for management will be the same. The functional difference is that, if the Annual Catch Target is used, annual catches are allowed to fluctuate above the management level without triggering Accountability Measures. If the Annual Catch Target is not used, the Annual Catch Limit is set to the management level, and if catch exceeds it, Accountability Measures are triggered. This action considers several control rule methods to establish an Annual Catch Limit and/or Annual Catch Target.

Alternative 1: No action. Do not have an Annual Catch Limit/Annual Catch Target control rule. The Council will establish an Annual Catch Limit for each fishery and sector individually.

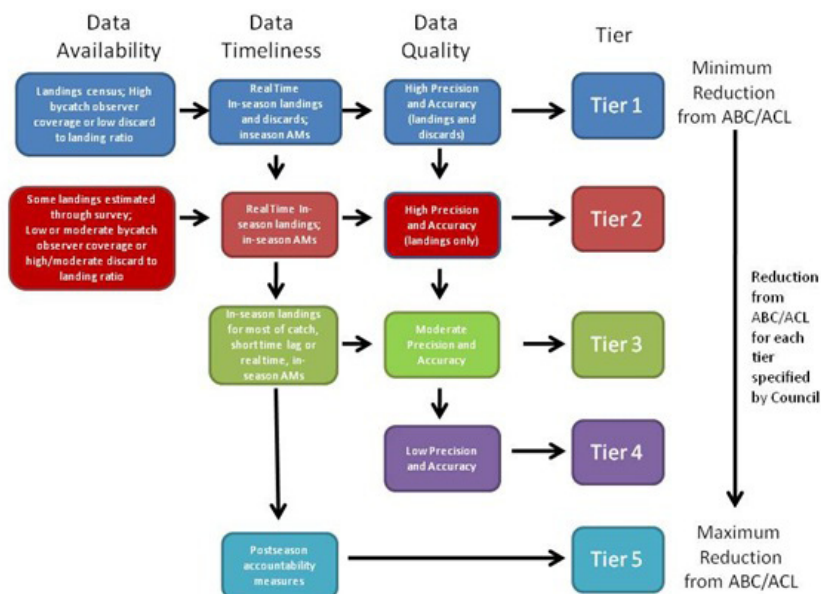
(Preferred) Alternative 2: Establish an initial estimate of Annual Catch Limit/Annual Catch Target based on the spreadsheet method, followed by a review by the Socioeconomic Scientific and Statistical Committee.

Figure 2.5.1. Alternative 2 – Spreadsheet based ACL/ACT control rule.

ACL/ACT Buffer Spreadsheet			version 4.1 - April 2011		
sum of points	4				
max points	7.0			Buffer between ACL and ACT (or ABC and ACL) (unweighted)	11
Min. Buffer	0 min. buffer	users adjustable		weighted	1.0
Max Min. Buff	10 max min. buff				
Max Wtd Buff	20 max wtd. buffer	users adjustable			
Component	Element score	Element		Selection	Element result
Stock assembly		0 This ACL/ACT is for a single stock 1 This ACL/ACT is for a stock assembly, or an indicator species for a stock assembly		x	0
Ability to Constrain Catch		0 Catch limit has been exceeded 0 or 1 times in last 4 years 1 Catch limit has been exceeded 2 or more times in last 4 years For the year with max. average, add 0.5 pts. For every 10 percentage points (rounded) Not applicable (there is no catch limit)			not applicable
Precision of Landings Data Recreational		0 Method of absolute counting 1 MMRP proportional standard error (PSE) <= 20 2 MMRP proportional standard error (PSE) > 20 Not applicable (will not be included in buffer calculation)			1
Precision of Landings Data Commercial		0 Apply this component to commercial fisheries or any fishery under an IPQ program 1 Landings from IPQ program 2 Landings based on dealer reporting 3 Landings based on other Not applicable (will not be included in buffer calculation)			1
Timeliness		0 In-season accountability measures used or fishery is under an IPQ 1 In-season accountability measures not used			1
				Sum	4
Weighting factor					
	Element weight	Element		Selection	Weighting
Overfished stat.		0 1. Stock biomass is at or above B_{MSY} (or proxy). 0 1 2. Stock biomass is below B_{MSY} (or proxy) but at or above B_{MSY} (or proxy). 0 2 3. Stock biomass is below B_{MSY} (or proxy) but at or above minimum stock size threshold (MSST). 0 3 4. Stock is overfished, below MSST. 0 3 5. Status criterion is unknown.			0.5
				x	

Alternative 3. Establish an initial estimate of Annual Catch Limit/Annual Catch Target based on the flow chart method, followed by a review by the Socioeconomic Scientific and Statistical Committee.

Figure 2.5.2. Alternative 3 – Flow chart based ACL/ACT control rule.



Alternative 4: Use the Annual Catch Target calculated in ABC Control Rule Tier 3a (if used), or establish a fixed buffer between Annual Catch Limit and Annual Catch Target (or between Acceptable Biological Catch and Annual Catch Limit if Annual Catch Target is not used) as follows, followed by a review by the Socioeconomic Scientific and Statistical Committee:

- 25% (or other single buffer) for all sectors
- 0% buffer for IFQ fisheries, 25% (or other buffer) for all other sectors
- 2% buffer for IFQ fisheries, 25% (or other buffer) for all other sectors

Note: For fisheries that are allocated into sectors (commercial, recreational, and for-hire if implemented), the Annual Catch Limit/Annual Catch Target control rule will be applied separately to each sector.

Alternative 5: For each of the following species/species groupings, establish a fixed buffer between the Annual Catch Limit and Annual Catch Target (or between the Acceptable Biological Catch and Annual Catch Limit if Annual Catch Target is not used), with the buffer to be selected as one of the following percentages of Acceptable Biological Catch:

- a. 0%
- b. 10%
- c. 15%
- d. 25%

Action 6. Generic Framework Procedure

Currently, each fishery management plan has its own framework procedure that defines how management changes are implemented, but does not reflect changes that have been mandated by the recent reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Act. The “base” procedure contains a list of actions that can be implemented under the framework procedure, including a list of more minor actions that can be implemented through an accelerated procedure. The “broad” procedure can be used for any change deemed appropriate by the Council. The “narrow” procedure has a more restricted list of actions, and it eliminates the accelerated procedure option. This action considers the adoption of a generic framework procedure that would standardize procedures for the implementation of changes in all fishery management plans.

Alternative 1: No action. Do not modify the existing framework procedures for implementing management measures.

Alternative 2: Adopt the base Generic Framework Procedure as provided below.

(Preferred) Alternative 3: Adopt the more broad Framework Procedure as specified below.

Alternative 4: Adopt the more narrow Framework Procedure as specified below.

Table 2.6.1 Comparison of alternative framework procedures. Alternative 1 is not included because each Fishery Management Plan has its own framework procedure.

	Alternative 2 (base)	Alternative 3 (broad)	Alternative 4 (narrow)
Types of framework processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Open abbreviated - Open standard - Closed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Open - Closed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Open - Closed
When can open framework be used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New stock assessment - New information or circumstances - When changes are required to comply with applicable law or a court order. <p>Abbreviated framework can be used for minor or insignificant changes. Standard framework for all other allowed changes.</p>	In response to any additional information or changed circumstances.	Only when there is a new stock assessment.
Actions that can be taken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Abbreviated Open framework can be used for actions that are considered minor and insignificant. - Standard Open framework used for all others. Representative lists of actions that can be taken under Abbreviated and Standard Open framework are given, but are not exclusive. - Closed framework can be used for a specific list of actions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Open framework can be used for a representative list of actions, plus other measures deemed appropriate by the Council. - Closed framework can be used for a specific list of actions, plus any other immediate action specified in the regulations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Open framework can only be used for specific listed actions. - Closed framework can be used for a specific list of actions.
Public input	Requires public discussion at one Council meeting.	Requires public discussion at one Council meeting.	Requires public discussion during at least three Council meetings, and discussion at separate public hearings within the areas most affected by the proposed measures.
AP/SSC participation	The Council may convene its SSC, SEP, or AP, as appropriate.	Convening the SSC, SEP, or AP, prior to final action is not required.	The Council shall convene its SSC, SEP, and AP.
How is a request of action made	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Abbreviated requires a letter or memo from the Council with supporting analyses. - Standard requires a completed framework document with supporting analyses. 	Via letter, memo, or the completed framework document with supporting analyses.	Via letter, memo, or the completed framework document with supporting analyses.

Action 7. Initial Specification of Annual Catch Limits

This action considers specifying Annual Catch Limits and Annual Catch Targets for stocks that are managed, but for which Annual Catch Limits and Annual Catch Targets have not been set. The action also considers apportionment of some stocks that cross the boundary between the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic Regional Councils so that Annual Catch Limits can be set. This action also considers establishing a recreational and commercial sector allocation for black grouper.

Action 7.1. Specify Annual Catch Limit for Commercial Stone Crab Species

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council repealed the Stone Crab Fishery Management Plan, so stone crabs are no longer subject specified Annual Catch Limits.

Action 7.2. Specify Annual Catch Limit for Commercial Royal Red Shrimp

In Shrimp Amendment 13, the Scientific and Statistical Committee approved a range for maximum sustainable yield of 392,000 to 650,000 pounds. Subsequently, the Acceptable Biological Catch and the Annual Catch Target levels were set at the bottom of that range. However, the new National Standard 1 guidelines only allow the Overfishing Limit and Acceptable Biological Catch to be in terms of a single value. Therefore, the Scientific and Statistical Committee reviewed updated landings and made recommendations for an Overfishing Limit and Acceptable Biological Catch for commercial royal red shrimp. This action reconsiders the current Annual Catch Limit for royal red shrimp.

Alternative 1: No action. Do not set an Annual Catch Limit for commercial royal red shrimp.

(Preferred) Alternative 2: The Scientific and Statistical Committee recommended an Overfishing Limit of 392,000 lbs of tails annually, and an Acceptable Biological Catch of 334,000 lbs of tails annually for the commercial sector. Based on these recommendations, the commercial royal red shrimp Annual Catch Limit will be set at:

(Preferred) Option a. Set ACL = 334,000 pounds of tails, annually (100% of the Acceptable Biological Catch)

Option b: Set ACL = 250,500 pounds of tails, annually (75% of Acceptable Biological Catch)

Option c: Set an Annual Catch Limit corresponding to the Annual Catch Limit/Annual Catch Target control rule

Alternative 3: Set an Annual Catch Limit based on average landings

Option a: ACL = 141,379 pounds of tails, annually (average landings from all available years 1962-2008)

Option b: ACL = 191,860 pounds of tails, annually (average landings from last 5 years)

Option c: ACL = 233,182 pound of tails, annually (average landings from the last 10 years)

7.3 Jurisdictional Apportionment of Stocks between Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic

The stock assessments for black grouper, yellowtail snapper, and mutton snapper are treated in the Gulf and South Atlantic management unit as single stocks rather than providing separate assessments. In this action, the Gulf and South Atlantic Councils consider splitting the stock Acceptable Biological Catch so that each jurisdiction can set individual Annual Catch Limits. Otherwise, the Councils will manage each species jointly.

Action 7.3.1. Establish Jurisdictional Apportionment for Black Grouper

Alternative 1: No action. Do not establish jurisdictional apportionment of the black grouper Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) between the Gulf and South Atlantic Councils.

(Gulf and South Atlantic Preferred) Alternative 2: Establish a jurisdictional apportionment based on the Florida Keys (Monroe County) jurisdictional boundary between the Gulf and South Atlantic Councils for black grouper Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) based on the following method: 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).

Alternative 3: Establish a jurisdictional apportionment based on the Florida Keys (Monroe County) jurisdictional boundary between the Gulf and South Atlantic Councils for black grouper Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) based on one of the following method: South Atlantic = 50% of ABC and Gulf = 50% of ABC (divide the Acceptable Biological Catch evenly between the two Councils).

Action 7.3.2. Establish Jurisdictional Apportionment for Yellowtail Snapper

Alternative 1: No action. Do not establish jurisdictional apportionment of the yellowtail snapper Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) between the Gulf and South Atlantic Councils.

Alternative 2: Establish a jurisdictional apportionment based on the Florida Keys (Monroe County) jurisdictional boundary between the Gulf and South Atlantic Councils for yellowtail snapper Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) based on the following method: South Atlantic = 73% of ABC and Gulf = 27% of ABC (established by using 50% of catch history from 1993-2009 + 50% of catch history from 2007-2009).

Preferred Alternative 3: Establish a jurisdictional apportionment based on the Florida Keys (Monroe County) jurisdictional boundary between the Gulf and South Atlantic Councils for yellowtail snapper Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) based on the following method: South Atlantic = 75% of ABC and Gulf = 25% of Acceptable Biological Catch (established by using 50% of catch history from 1993-2008 + 50% of catch history from 2006-2008).

Alternative 4: Establish a jurisdictional apportionment based on the Florida Keys (Monroe County) jurisdictional boundary between the Gulf and South Atlantic Councils for yellowtail snapper Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) based on the following method: South Atlantic = 77% of ABC and Gulf = 23% of ABC (established by using catch history from 1999-2008).

Action 7.3.3. Establish Jurisdictional Apportionment for Mutton Snapper

Alternative 1: No action. Do not establish jurisdictional apportionment of the mutton snapper Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) between the Gulf and South Atlantic Councils.

Preferred Alternative 2: Establish a jurisdictional apportionment based on the Florida Keys (Monroe County) jurisdictional boundary between the Gulf and South Atlantic Councils for mutton snapper Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) based on the following method: South Atlantic = 82% of ABC and Gulf = 18% of ABC (established by using 50% of catch history from 1990- 2006 + 50% of catch history from 2004-2006).

Alternative 3: Establish a jurisdictional apportionment based on the Florida Keys (Monroe County) jurisdictional boundary between the Gulf and South Atlantic Councils for mutton snapper Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) based on the following method: South Atlantic = 81% of ABC and Gulf = 19% of ABC (Established by using catch history from 2002-2006).

Action 7.4. Establish Recreational and Commercial Sector Allocations for Black Grouper in the Gulf of Mexico

Currently the black grouper stock is not divided into sector specific allocations. In the Gulf of Mexico black grouper are primarily landed by the commercial sector with low recreational landings. The recreational harvest of black grouper is managed under an aggregate bag limit, and the commercial grouper fishery is managed under an Individual Fishing Quota program (IFQ). Under this Individual Fishing Quota program, shares are issued for deep-water grouper, red grouper, gag, and shallow-water grouper. Black grouper, which is currently grouped with the shallow-water grouper complex, has its own stock assessment and could be expected to have its own sector allocation.

Alternative 1: No action. Do not establish sector allocations for black grouper based on the Gulf Council's allocated Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC).

Alternative 2: Using the Gulf Council's allocated Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) and divide the Annual Catch Limit (ACL) between the commercial and recreational sector based on average landings from 1986-2008: Recreational = 18% of ACL and Commercial = 82% of ACL.

Alternative 3: Using the Gulf Council's allocated Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) and divide the Annual Catch Limit between the commercial and recreational sector based on average landings from 2001-2008: Recreational = 24% of ACL and Commercial = 76% of ACL.

(Preferred) Alternative 4: Using the Gulf Council's allocated Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) and divide the Annual Catch Limit between the commercial and recreational sector based on average landings from 2004-2008: Recreational = 27% of ACL and Commercial = 73% of ACL.

Action 7.5. Specify ACL and ACT for Stocks and Stock Groupings

Under the National Standard 1 guidelines, the use of Annual Catch Targets is optional. This action considers whether or not to use Annual Catch Targets. The management target, or harvest limit, would be set at the same level regardless of which option is chosen. The major difference would be that without Annual Catch Targets in place, an overage of the management target (Annual Catch Level) would trigger Accountability Measures. If Annual Catch Targets were in place as the management target, then an overage would not necessarily trigger Accountability Measures because the Annual Catch Target serves as a built-in buffer.

Comparison of Action Triggers When ACT Is or Is Not Used

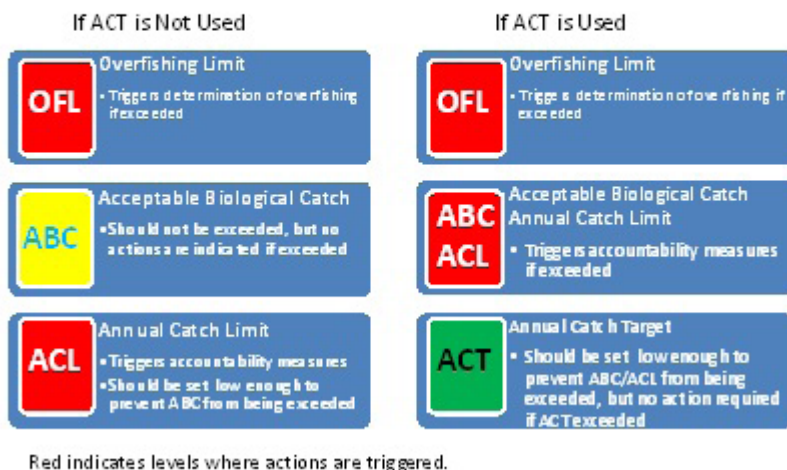


Figure 2.7.5.1.1. Comparison of effective action when ACT is or is not used.

Alternative 1: No action. Do not set Annual Catch Limits or Annual Catch Targets for stocks or stock groups. The limits set in previous or concurrent actions will apply where applicable.

(Preferred) Alternative 2: Set Annual Catch Limits and optionally Annual Catch Targets as indicated by the Annual Catch Limit control rule selected in Section 2.5 or as specified in Table 2.7.5.1.1.

Alternative 3: Set Annual Catch Limits, and optionally Annual Catch Targets, at a fixed 10 % (other percentage) buffer between the Acceptable Biological Catch and Annual Catch Limit, or if Annual Catch Limit is set equal to Acceptable Biological Catch, between the Annual Catch Limit and Annual Catch Target.

The following options apply to either Alternative 2 or 3:

(Preferred) Option a: The value specified in the Annual Catch Limit/Annual Catch Target control rule will be the Annual Catch Target (ACT) and the Annual Catch Limit (ACL) equals Acceptable Biological Catch, unless otherwise specified by the Council on a case by case basis.

Option b: The value specified in the Annual Catch Limit/Annual Catch Target control rule will be the Annual Catch Limit and Annual Catch Target will not be used, unless otherwise specified by the Council on a case-by-case basis.

Action 8. Accountability Measures

Accountability Measures are designed to prevent Annual Catch Limits from being exceeded and, if exceeded, correct or mitigate any overages. To achieve these objectives, National Standard 1 defines two types of Accountability Measures:

In-season measures are designed to reduce the likelihood Annual Catch Limits will be exceeded within a fishing year, and **post-season measures** that address overages after they have occurred.

Alternative 1: No action. Do not create new Accountability Measures for reef fish and royal red shrimp sectors and stocks.

Alternative 2: Implement only post-season Accountability Measures. For stocks and sectors with Annual Catch Limits that do not currently have Accountability Measures, if the Annual Catch Limit for a year is exceeded, the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries shall file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to implement temporary regulations for the following year to close the stock or appropriate sector(s) at a date when the appropriate stock or sector(s) is projected to meet its Annual Catch Target (or minimize exceeding the Annual Catch Limit if Annual Catch Targets are not selected).

Preferred Alternative 3 (apply to vermilion snapper): Implement in-season Accountability Measures. If the Annual Catch Limit is reached or projected to be reached within a fishing year, the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries shall file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the appropriate sector(s) for the remainder of the fishing year.

Preferred Alternative 4 (apply to other reef fish and royal red shrimp): Implement in-season Accountability Measures if the Annual Catch Limit is exceeded in the previous year. For stocks and sectors with Annual Catch Limits that do not currently have Accountability Measures, if the Annual Catch Limit for a given year is exceeded, implement in-season Accountability Measures in the following year as described in Alternative 3.

Accountability measure options:

Post-season Accountability Measures would be triggered:

Preferred Option a: If the annual landings exceed the Annual Catch Limit.

Option b: If the average landings for the past three years exceed the Annual Catch Limit.

Option c: If after smoothing average landings over the past five-years, the average of three years of landings exceeds the Annual Catch Limit.

Overage adjustments:

Preferred Option d: Do not apply an overage adjustment to the following year's Annual Catch Limit.

Option e: If a stock is under a rebuilding plan, the overage adjustment incurred by the sector or stock exceeding its Annual Catch Limit will be equal to the full amount of the overage, unless the best scientific information available shows a lesser overage adjustment is needed to mitigate the effects of exceeding the Annual Catch Limit.



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