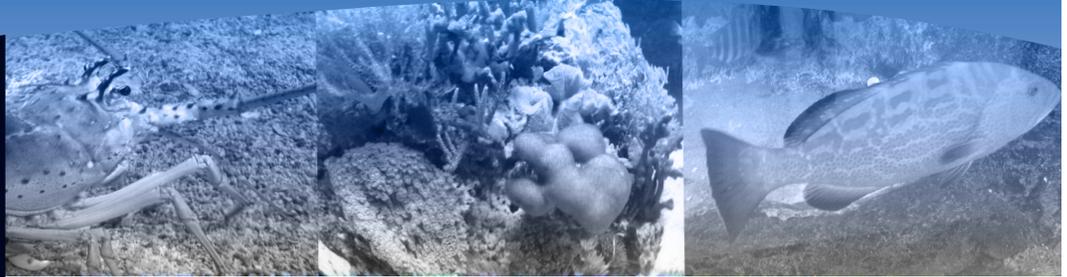




Gulf Fishery News

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

August - September, 2009



Volume 31, Issue 4

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Members Appointed to the new Ad Hoc Limited Access Privilege Program Advisory Panel

Congratulations to the following individuals:

- Bill Bird
- Elizabeth Fetherston
- Martin Fischer
- Troy Frady
- Chris Harbuck
- Gary Jarvis
- David Krebs
- Edwin Lamberth
- Donald Leal
- Dave McKinney
- Mike Nugent
- Hal Osburn
- TJ Tate
- Bill Tucker
- Richard Wallace
- Troy Williamson

New Council Chair Elected

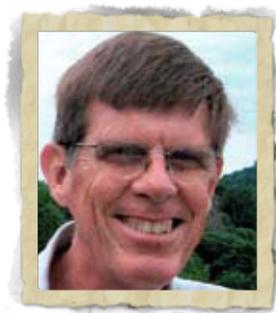
Longtime Council member, **Dr. Bob Shipp** was recently elected Council Chair for the 2009/2010 Council year. Shipp is a fishery scientist who teaches at the University of Alabama,

"I'm grateful for the opportunity to chair the Council. It's a cliché to say these are challenging times, especially in fisheries management, but these truly are. I will make every effort to help the Council balance the concern for the health of the resource with the interests of our stakeholders."

Shipp first served on the Council from 1991 to 2000. He was reappointed in 2005, and he is currently serving his second three-year term.



Dr. Robert Shipp



Bob Gill

Bob Gill, co-owner of Shrimp Landing, a seafood dealership in Crystal River, Florida, was elected Vice Chair of the Council.

Gill has served on the Council since 2006 and was reappointed this past August. He is serving his second three-year term.

Update on Annual Catch Limits & Accountability Measures

New requirements in the Magnuson-Stevens Reauthorization Act of 2006 require regional councils to develop annual catch limits and accountability measures by 2010 for managed species subject to overfishing, and by 2011 for all remaining managed species, to ensure that overfishing does not occur.

Annual catch limits are based on the

scientifically determined annual biological catch, but may be set lower to allow for uncertainties associated with actions and activities related to management. Uncertainties include things like variation in adherence to fishing regulations and the inability of surveys to always detect the actual catch and discard levels of fish in any given fishery.

See *New Requirements*, page 7

Louisiana Chef Tory McPhail Crowned “King of American Seafood”

America’s finest chefs showed their skills in seafood preparation at the 2009 Great American Seafood Cook-Off, held July 18 in New Orleans.

The event, which has featured both up-and-coming and celebrity chefs over the years, underscored the importance of cooking with domestic seafood and encouraged the use of products from sustainable fisheries.

Tory McPhail, executive chef of Commander’s Palace in New Orleans, took home first place at the contest and was crowned “King of American Seafood.”

New Jersey’s Peter Fischbach, executive chef for Gourmet Dining Services at New Jersey Institute of Technology in Newark, captured second place, and Alaska’s Patrick Hoogerhyde, executive chef of WildFin Seagrill in Anchorage took home third.

Sig Hansen, the commercial fishing captain who stars in the popular documentary television show *Deadliest Catch* and Chef John Folse, who is often recognized as Louisiana’s Culinary Ambassador to the World, co-hosted the event. Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal participated in the opening ceremonies.

The cook-off featured 15 teams, each preparing a domestic-seafood dish reflecting the cuisine of their home state. Judges representing the top echelon of the culinary arts crowned the King of American Seafood 2009. Last year’s winner, executive chef John Currence of City Grocery in Oxford, Miss. was there to pass on the crown to McPhail’s, whose winning dish was a “Creole Seafood Mixed Grill,” which combined Louisiana sheepshead, shrimp and crab meat.

Earning second place was Fischbach’s pan-seared Viking Village day-boat sea scallops with creamy chili-herb grits, warm “pickled” root vegetables, smokey apple wood bacon, micro greens and corn volute. Alaska’s Hoogerhyde placed third with Wild Alaska King Salmon with cranberry-infused birch syrup molasses and Susitna Valley hash of potatoes nested in Alaska summer greens.

NOAA Fisheries Service, the event’s chief sponsor, uses the cook-off to highlight the agency’s management of the Nation’s marine ecosystems.

“Rebuilding U.S. marine fisheries so they can support the highest sustainable harvest for future generations of Americans is a significant challenge,” said Jim Balsiger, acting NOAA Fisheries Service Assistant Administrator.

“We are on target to end overfishing and set annual catch limits as required by U.S. law.”

Ewell Smith, executive director of the Louisiana Seafood Promotion and Marketing Board and executive producer of the Cook Off said, “The Great American Seafood Cook-Off is a showcase for both the chefs and American seafood, and is an exciting way to educate consumers about the importance of sustainable seafood at the market and in restaurants. Each year it is a treat to see and taste the amazing dishes that originated in American waters.”

Fifteen contenders for the title flew in from across the nation to represent their home states: Alabama, Zack Compton; Alaska, Patrick Hoogerhyde; California, Ian MacBride; Idaho, Randy King; Illinois, G. Michael Taylor; Kentucky, John Varanese; Louisiana, Tory McPhail; Maine, Margaret Salt McLellan; Maryland, Vaishali P. Chitnis; Mississippi, Rob Stinson; New Jersey, Peter J. Fischbach; Oregon, Philippe Boulot; Rhode Island, Nick Rabar; Texas, Chuck Harris; West Virginia, Ed Fischer.



Harlon Pearce and Tory McPhail, this year's winner



Tory McPhail puts the finishing touches on his winning recipe



At left, McPhail’s winning entry.

Cook-off sponsors included:

- NOAA and FishWatch
- Michelob Brewing Company
- Whole Foods Market
- Loubat Food Service
- Louisiana Restaurant Assoc.
- Royal Sonesta New Orleans hotel

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

Steve Bortone
Executive Director

Richard Leard
Deputy Director

Appointed Voting Members

Ed Sapp
Gainesville, FL
352-377-2715

Michael Ray
Austin, TX
512-389-4649

Robert Gill
Vice Chair
Crystal River, FL
352-795-1916

Robert Shipp
Chair
Mobile, AL
251-460-6351

Joseph Hendrix
Houston, TX
281-597-1620

Damon McKnight
Slidell, LA
985-960-1900

Thomas McIlwain
Ocean Springs, MS
228-818-8866

John Greene
Daphne, AL
251-747-2872

Julie Morris
Sarasota, FL
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Kay Williams
Vanceleave, MS
228-826-2160

Harlon Pearce
Kenner, LA
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Robin Riechers
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Bill Teehan
Tallahassee, FL
850-487-0554

Myron Fischer
Cutt Off, LA
985-632-4525

Vernon Minton
Gulf Shores, AL
251-968-7576

Roy Crabtree
NMFS SERO
727-824-5301

Non-voting Members

Sam Hamilton
USF&WS
404-679-4000

Larry Simpson
GSMFC
228-875-5912

Radm Mary Landry
Eighth USCG District
504-589-6223

David Hogan
Foreign Affairs
202-647-2335

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

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Fax: 813-348-1711

Council Takes Final Action on Reef Fish Amendment 31

Reef Fish Amendment 31, which addresses sea turtle interactions with bottom longline fishing gear in the reef fish fishery of the Gulf of Mexico, received Council approval in August. The amendment will be reviewed and implemented by NOAA Fisheries Service.

Management actions contained in the amendment include:

- Longline endorsement requirement - Vessels must have average annual reef fish landings of 40,000 pounds gutted weight or more from 1999 through 2007;
- Reef fish bottom longline fishing restricted to outside the 35-fathom depth contour from June - August;
- Vessels are limited to 1000 hooks of which no more than 750 of which can be rigged for fishing or fished.

[See Sea Turtles, page 5](#)

Greenwise Newsletter Delivery Option

If you currently receive a hard copy of the *Gulf Fishery News* and would like to opt for a greener way of keeping apprised of fishery issues currently under consideration, you can sign up to receive the newsletter by e-mail. Simply send a blank e-mail with "Subscribe" in the subject line to: pressreleases@gulfcouncil.org and you will automatically be added to the e-mail list. Besides receiving a link to the newsletter, you will also receive updates on fishery issues, as well as meeting notices and other pertinent information.

To discontinue receipt of the newsletter (hard copy), please send an e-mail to charlene.ponce@gulfcouncil.org with "newsletter unsubscribe" in the subject line.

From the Deck of the Shipp



"Catch shares" seem to be among the new buzz words - not just around the Gulf Council, but all the Councils. NOAA chief, Dr. Jane Lubchenco, in her May address to Council Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Executive Directors, made it abundantly clear that moving to management via catch shares was one of her top priorities. She specifically cited the Gulf

individual fishing quota (IFQ) program as an example of how a catch share program can work. And, of course, the Gulf Council recently adopted a similar plan for grouper and tilefish.

But exactly what are "catch shares"? Basically they are a pre-determined quota for entities engaged in fishing. In the case of the red snapper IFQ, this quota was based on historical commercial landings of red snapper. Grouper and tilefish shares will be allocated in a similar fashion.

So, establishing catch shares for the commercial sector has precedent. One can also foresee the possibility of catch shares for the for-hire (charterboat) sector. But developing a catch share system for the recreational sector will be quite a different challenge. One may ask how would a private angler acquire a share? And how would these shares be monitored? Would the

[See Deck, page 5](#)

Corky Perret receives Lifetime Achievement Award

Longtime Council member Corky Perret, former Deputy Director of the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, was awarded the America's WETLAND Foundation Lifetime Achievement Award. Mayor Randy Roach of Lake Charles, Louisiana, presented Perret with the award during the third annual America's Energy Coast Leadership Forum in Biloxi, Mississippi.

Perret's career has spanned over four decades. After receiving both a Bachelor of Science and Masters degrees from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, he went to work for Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries at its marine laboratory on Grand Terre.



Corky Perret, Gulf Council Member

He continued to advance under several Louisiana Governors. After 30 years of service, Perret went to work for the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources as Director of Marine Fisheries. He held that position until about two years ago when he advanced to Deputy Director of the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources.

Send us Your Fishing Photos

We want to see your favorite fishing and fishery related photos! Whether they are from a spear diving adventure, a charter trip, or a commercial effort, we'd like to see your photos and possibly use them on our web site or in our newsletter.

Send us your photos and help us build a photo library! To submit your photos, please send an e-mail with "Photo Library" in the subject line to gulfcouncil@gulfcouncil.org. Be sure to include your name, address, phone number, along with a description and proper photo credit, then simply attached the image and send. Photo descriptions may be edited for grammar, clarity, and/or length. Photos must be in jpeg format and should not exceed 1.5 MB (up to 150dpi).

NOTE: By submitting photos, you understand that if we decide to use your photo, it can be used anywhere on the web site, in our newsletter or other publications. We will display a brief description of the photo and your name, unless requested otherwise.

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Closures

Recreational Closures:

Red Snapper

Recreational red snapper season closed at 12:01 a.m. local time August 15, 2009. The season will reopen June 1, 2010, the beginning of the 2010 federal recreational red snapper fishing season.

Commercial Closures:

Deep-Water Grouper

The commercial fishery for deepwater grouper in the Gulf of Mexico closed June 27, 2009 and will reopen January 1, 2010.

During the closure, vessels with commercial quantities of reef fish on board are prohibited from retaining a recreational bag limit. Thus, a vessel may only have a commercial quantity of reef fish or a recreational bag limit of reef fish.

Tilefish

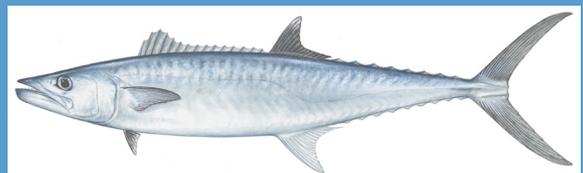
The commercial fishery for Gulf of Mexico tilefish closed May 15, 2009 and will reopen January 1, 2010. The commercial quota has been reached and the closure is necessary to protect the tilefish resource.

NOTE: The tilefish fishery was closed on May 15, 2009, with the closure of deepwater grouper, both quotas will have been filled and the the use of bottom longline gear to harvest reef fish in water of all depths east of 85°30'W longitude is prohibited as of June 27, 2009.

King Mackerel

The commercial run-around gillnet fishery for Gulf group king mackerel in the southern Florida west coast subzone is closed January 30, 2009, through January 19, 2010.

The commercial fishery for Gulf group king mackerel in the western zone closed September 12, 2009 and will reopen July 1, 2010.



October Council Meeting Reminder

The Council will be meeting the week of October 19 - 22, 2009 at the Holiday Inn - Emerald Beach in Corpus Christi, Texas. Please make your reservation under the GMFMC room block to receive the special discounted room rate.

When the Council travels, the deadline for comments is moved up a day in order to accommodate packing and shipping of materials to our meeting location.

Submission of written comments and materials to be included as part of the briefing book materials for this meeting **MUST BE RECEIVED** by 5:00 p.m. EDT October 13, 2009

If you miss the deadline and bring your own copies to the meeting, please bring at least 30 copies for the Council. If you wish for your materials to be made available to the public, please bring additional copies.

A draft agenda can be found on page 6.



Deck *continued from page 3*

states administer the shares, perhaps based on license sales? Or might there be a regional auction or lottery? Would it be possible to buy or exchange shares between the sectors?

These are the questions that have been the subject of many Council member discussions as well as public testimony. The implications to management are far reaching, and there are likely to be some unintended consequences as the Councils travel down this road. In my view, we must start thinking "outside the box."

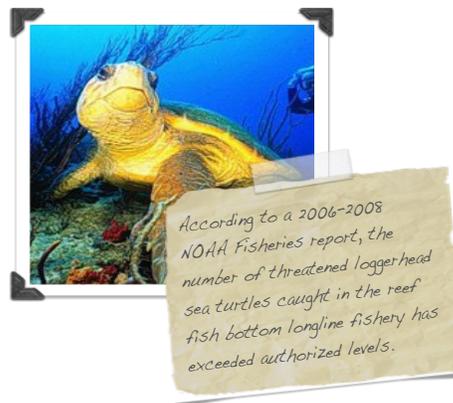
This new initiative presents some opportunities to revisit some of our traditional management measures like bag limits and closed seasons which, inevitably, contribute to wasted resource. There may be a better way.

Sea Turtles *continued from page 3*

Amendment 31 was initiated earlier this year after the Council received information that the number of threatened loggerhead sea turtles that have been caught in the bottom longline fishery has exceeded authorized levels.

The Council is required by the Endangered Species Act to take action to provide protection for threatened loggerhead sea turtles from interactions with fishing gear. Similarly, National Standard 9 of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act requires the Council to reduce bycatch to the extent practicable, and where it cannot be reduced, to reduce bycatch mortality.

Amendment 31, if approved by NOAA Fisheries, will likely become effective in early 2010.



Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Program to Begin January, 2010

NOAA Fisheries Service has approved Amendment 29 to the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council's Reef Fish Fishery Management Plan, which addresses new commercial regulations for Gulf of Mexico reef fish.

The final rule implementing these regulations published in the *Federal Register* August 31, 2009. The rule establishes a grouper and tilefish IFQ program for commercial fishermen in the Gulf of Mexico; establishes design elements of the IFQ program; makes changes to the red snapper IFQ program to align that program with the grouper and tilefish IFQ program; allows consolidation of reef fish commercial vessel permits; and establishes dual classifications for speckled hind and warsaw grouper.

Most provisions of the rule are effective January 1, 2010; however, some provisions will become effective earlier to allow for operations required prior to implementation (see table, page 9).

[See Sea IFQ, page 9](#)

Committee Agenda Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

Holiday Inn - Ballroom
Corpus Christi, TX
October 19 - 21, 2009

Monday October 19, 2009

9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

Administrative Policy Committee (Full Council - Closed Session)

- * Administrative Matters

10:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

SEDAR Selection Committee (Full Council - Closed Session)

- * Approval of Participants for SEDAR 19 (Black Grouper) Review Workshop
- * Selection of Participants for SEDAR 22 (Yellowedge Grouper & Tilefish) Data
- * Selection of Participants for SEDAR Procedural Workshop IV - Characterizing Uncertainty

10:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

AP Selection Committee (Full Council - Closed Session)

- * Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair for Ad Hoc LAPP AP
- * Appoint Ad Hoc Datta Collection AP
- * Report on Status of Fishery Violations

12:30 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Data Collection Committee

- * Report of Logbook Workshop

1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Shrimp Management Committee

- * Review of the "Status and Health of Shrimp Stocks for 2008"
- * Review of the "Stock Assessment Report 2008 - Gulf of Mexico Shrimp Fishery"
- * Review of "A Biological Review of the Tortugas Pink Shrimp Fishery through December 2008"
- * Preliminary Report of Shrimp Effort in 2009

2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Spiny Lobster/Stone Crab Committee

- * Scoping Hearing Summaries for Spiny Lobster Amendment 10
- * Suggestions for Spiny Lobster Amendment 10 Options

3:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Sustainable Fisheries/Ecosystem Committees

- * Report of ABC Control Workgroup
- * Scoping Hearing Summaries for Generic ACL/AM Amendment
- * Five-year Research Plan

Tuesday October 20, 2009

8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Reef Fish Management Committee

- * Gag/Red Grouper Amendment Scoping Document (RF 32)
+ Select Scoping Hearing Locations
- * Presentation on "New ESA Biological Opinion Analyzing the Gulf Reef Fish Fishery and its Effects on Listed Species"
- * Alternative Options for Red Snapper Recreational Season
- * Modifications to regulations in Amendment 29
- * Terms of Reference for Greater Amberjack, Yellowedge Grouper, and Tilefish Assessments
- * Hook Limit Analysis for Amendment 31
- * Develop LAPP Charge
- * Discussion on Sector Separation

4:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Administrative Policy Committee

- * Modifications to SOPPS and Handbook Development

Immediately Following Committee Recess will be an informal Question & Answer Session on Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Issues

Wednesday October 21, 2009

8:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

Coastal Migratory Pelagics (Mackerel) Management Committee

- * CMP Scoping Meeting Summaries
- * CMP Amendment 18 Options
- * CMP Amendment 20 Options

Council Agenda Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

Holiday Inn - Ballroom
Corpus Christi, TX
October 21 - 22, 2009

Wednesday October 21, 2009

- I. Call to Order and Introductions - Shipp
- II. Adoption of Agenda¹ - Shipp
- III. Approval of Minutes - Shipp
- IV. Approval of Committee Appointments - Shipp
(10:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.)
- V. Catch Shares Task Force Presentation - Medina
- VI. Public Testimony^{2,3,4,5} - Shipp
 - a. Exempted Fishing Permits (EFP) (if any)
 - b. Modifications to Reef Fish Amendment 29
 - c. Open Public Comment Period^{2,6}
(2:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.)

Thursday October 21, 2009

- VIII. Committee Reports
 - a. Reef Fish Management - Minton
 - b. Administrative Policy - Morris
 - c. Data Collection - Riechers
 - d. Spiny Lobster/Stone Crab Management - Teehan
 - e. Sustainable Fisheries/Ecosystem Management - Gill
 - f. Coastal Migratory Pelagics - Teehan
 - g. Shrimp Management - Perret
 - h. AP Selection Committee - Perret
 - i. SEDAR Selection - Shipp
(8:30 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.)
- IX. Other Business - Shipp
(12:45 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.)

¹The established times for addressing items on the Council and committee agendas, except for those setting times for public testimony or open public comment, may be adjusted as necessary to accommodate the timely completion of discussion relevant to the agenda items. Such adjustments may result in the meeting being extended from, or completed prior to the date established by these agendas.

²Persons wishing to testify for either public testimony or open public comment must submit a registration card before the beginning of public testimony; otherwise persons wishing to testify may be denied. One card must be completed for each issue on which persons wish to testify.

³Persons wishing Council members to have copies of written testimony or information should provide 30 copies to staff for distribution. All written information shall include a statement of the source and date of such information. Any oral or written statement shall include a brief description of the background and interests of the person testifying.

⁴Oral or written communications provided to the Council, its members or its staff that relate to matters within the Council's purview are public in nature. These communications will be made available to the public in their entirety and maintained by the Council as part of its permanent record. Further, knowingly and willfully submitting false information to the Council is a violation of Federal law.

⁵Anyone wishing to use electronic visual aids during public testimony must provide staff with a copy of the material at least one hour before testimony begins to allow for a virus scan of said material.

⁶The Council has set aside this time for open public comment regarding any fishery issue or concern. People wishing to speak before the Council should complete a public comment card, making sure to check the box marked Open Public Comment. In the interest of giving everyone an opportunity to speak, speakers are asked to limit comments to three minutes. If your sentiments are reflected in comments made by others, please state so and allow the next speaker to address the Council. Individuals may be asked to reduce speaking time in order to accommodate all who wish to speak. The open public comment period will end no later than the time scheduled on the agenda regardless of the number of persons wishing to comment.

New Requirements *(continued from page 1)*

In the event that catch limits are exceeded, accountability measures will kick in. Accountability measures are predetermined actions to either prevent further catches in the current fishing year, or return catches to the specified levels in the following year.

A draft scoping document is available for review at www.gulfcouncil.org, and scoping meetings were held around the Gulf coast in September.

For more information see page frequently asked questions on this page.

Annual Catch Limits & Accountability Measures - Frequently Asked Questions

What is an Annual Catch Limit (ACL)?

An Annual Catch Limit is the level of annual catch of a population or population complex that if met or exceeded triggers accountability measures, such as a seasonal closure or quota closure.

What are Accountability Measure (AM)?

Accountability Measures are management controls to prevent annual catch limits from being exceeded and to correct or mitigate overages of the annual catch limit if they occur.

What is an Annual Catch Target?

An annual catch target is an amount of annual catch that serves as the management target, set below the annual catch limit to account for management uncertainty. The use of ACTs is recommended in the system of AMs so that ACLs are not exceeded, but ACTs are optional.

Why do we need Annual Catch Limits and Accountability Measures?

The reauthorized Magnuson-Stevens Act of 2006 included these changes to improve conservation of managed fishery resources. Regional Fishery Management Councils are required to both develop annual catch limits for each of the fisheries managed, and establish a mechanism for specifying a harvest level that prevents overfishing, which includes measures to ensure accountability.

The Magnuson-Stevens Act provides limited exceptions to annual catch limit requirements; species not subject to overfishing with annual cycles and species managed under international agreements are not required to have annual catch limits or accountability measures.

When are ACLs and AMs required for Gulf of Mexico Species?

Fishery Management Plans or Amendments must establish ACLs and AMs in 2010 for species subject to overfishing. For all other federally managed fisheries ACLs and AMs must be established in 2011.

How are Annual Catch Limits developed?

ACLs may be set for the fishery as a whole, or for various fishery sectors (e.g., commercial or recreational). State-federal ACLs may be set for populations that are targeted in state waters as well as federal waters.

The setting of an ACL begins with specifying an overfishing limit.

An overfishing limit is an annual estimate of the maximum yield a stock can withstand without being put in jeopardy of overfishing.

Once an overfishing level is specified, an acceptable biological catch (ABC) level is recommended by the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee.

The acceptable biological catch is based on the overfishing level and should take into account scientific uncertainty, which includes the uncertainty around the estimate of a stock's biomass as its maximum overfishing level.

The Council must then set an annual catch limit, which cannot exceed the acceptable biological catch.

Annual catch limits are set by managers and should take into account management and scientific uncertainty. Management uncertainty occurs because of lack of sufficient information about catch and may include late catch reporting, misreporting, and underreporting of catch.

How are Accountability Measures (AMs) developed?

NOAA Fisheries Service has identified two categories of accountability measures: in-season accountability measures that can be implemented during a fishing season, and post-season accountability measures that take effect in the following season.

Examples of in-season accountability measures include: quota closure, trip or bag limit changes, gear restrictions, individual fishing quotas, or catch shares.

Frequently Asked Questions *Continued from page 7*

Examples of post-season accountability measures include: seasonal closures, reduced trip or bag limits, or shortening of the fishing season implemented in the subsequent year.

Which Gulf of Mexico species have ACLs and AMs?

Red Snapper (IFQ Program/Amendment 27)
 Greater Amberjack (Amendment 30A)
 Gray Triggerfish (Amendment 30A)
 Gag (Amendment 30B)
 Red Grouper (Amendment 30B)
 Shallow-Water Grouper (Amendment 30B)

Which Gulf of Mexico species still need ACLs and AMs?

Stone Crab, Red Drum, Other Reef Fish Resources, Coastal Migratory Pelagics (king mackerel, Spanish mackerel, cobia), Spiny Lobster.

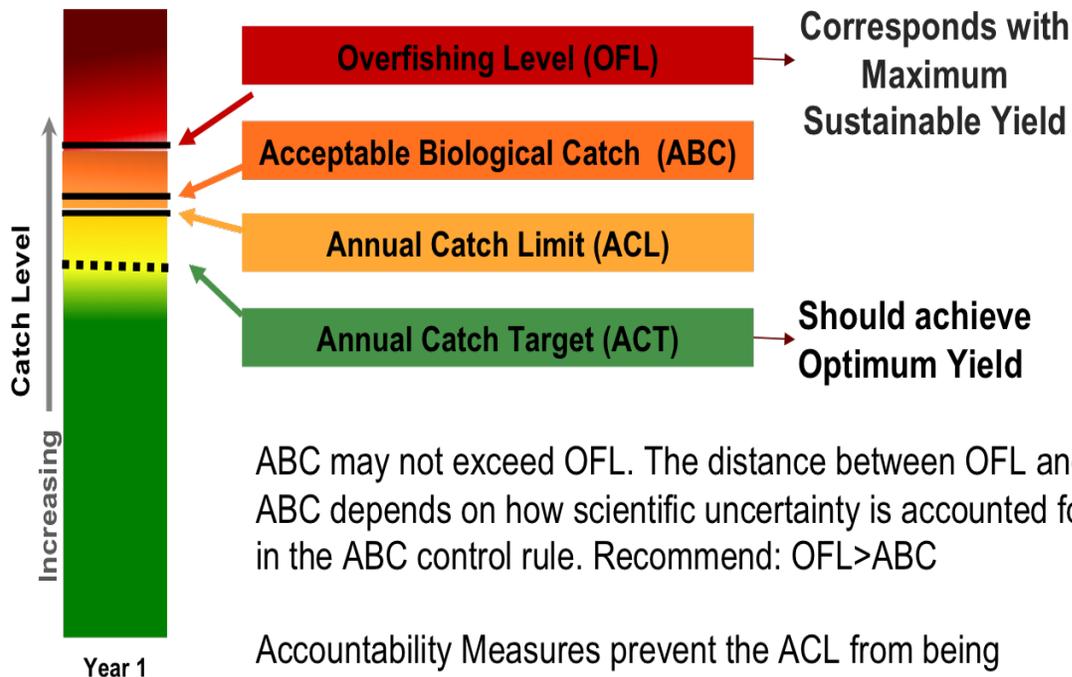
Which Gulf of Mexico species do not need ACLs and AMs?

- Ecosystem component species, which are non-target species, not overfished or likely to become subject to overfishing, and not generally retained for sale or personal use (e.g., sand perches)
- Species that have an annual life cycle with only one reproductive cycle (e.g., shrimp)
- Species managed under an international agreement to which the U.S. is a party (e.g., bluefin tuna)

How can I participate in ACL/AM management?

For more information about current regulations and opportunities to become involved in the Gulf Council process, visit www.gulfcouncil.org, or call 888-833-1844.

Overview of Annual Catch Limits & Accountability Measures



Accountability Measures prevent the ACL from being exceeded and correct or mitigate overages of the ACL if they occur. ACTs are recommended in the system of accountability measures so that ACL is not exceeded.

Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Program to Begin January, 2010

Grouper and Tilefish IFQ Program

The grouper and tilefish IFQ program was created to address overcapitalization of the grouper and tilefish fleet. The IFQ program divides grouper and tilefish quotas among commercial fishermen. IFQ shares are the percent of the quotas assigned to each fisherman. Allocation is the pounds of fish each fisherman has the opportunity to harvest each year. If a quota changes, a fisherman's shares will not change, but allocation will. Fishermen can choose when to fish for allocation, taking into consideration market and safety issues.

Design Elements of the IFQ Program

The administrative functions associated with this program are designed to be accomplished online; therefore, a participant must have access to a computer and the Internet.

Initial IFQ shares will be distributed to commercial reef fish permit holders on record October 1, 2009. **Individuals acquiring a permit after September 30 will not receive shares associated with that permit.**

Shares will be distributed proportionately among eligible participants based on landings during 1999-2004, with an allowance for dropping one year.

Five species-specific share types will be set: red grouper, gag, other shallow water grouper, deepwater grouper, and tilefish shares.

Four percent of red grouper allocation and eight percent of gag grouper allocation will be converted into multiuse allocation valid for harvesting red or gag grouper, with restrictions.

Transfer of shares and allocation will be restricted to commercial reef fish permit holders during the first five years, but not thereafter.

Separate share caps will be set for each type of IFQ share equal to the maximum share initially assigned to an IFQ participant. A cap on total annual allocation will be set equivalent to the share caps.

A proportional adjustment strategy will be used to distribute commercial quota adjustments and reallocation among IFQ shareholders.

The Regional Administrator will establish a formal appeals process and reserve three percent of the total available IFQ shares during the first year of the program for use in resolving disputes.

IFQ share or allocation holders will be responsible for cost recovery fees and IFQ dealers will be responsible for fee collection and submission on a quarterly basis.

Fishermen can select landing sites for IFQ programs, but the sites will require pre-approval by NOAA Fisheries Service Office for Law Enforcement.

Changes to the Red Snapper IFQ Program

Changes include requiring a separate vessel account for each vessel, requiring the estimated gutted weight of fish to be stated on the landing notification, requiring pre-approval of landing locations, allowing online share transfers, and eliminating vessel endorsements and annual ex-vessel value reports.

Permit Consolidation

Consolidation allows a commercial reef fish permit owner to consolidate several permits into one. The consolidation permit will have a catch history equal to the sum of the catch histories associated with the individual permits.

Speckled Hind and Warsaw Grouper

Dual classification provides more flexibility in the IFQ program because these species are caught in both shallow and deep water. Warsaw grouper and speckled hind are currently considered deep water grouper species. For the purposes of the IFQ program, once a participant's deep water grouper allocation has been landed and sold, or transferred, or if participant has no deepwater grouper allocation, then other shallow water grouper allocation could be used to land and sell warsaw grouper and speckled hind.

Important Dates

Date	Event
Oct 1	Permit holders on record as of this date will receive IFQ shares
Early Oct	Permit holders will receive a notification letter of estimated shares and allocation they will receive, along with instructions for participating in the IFQ program
Nov 1	Deadline for contacting NOAA Fisheries Service if notification letter is not received
Nov 15	Last day to submit landing locations for per-approval by Jan 1
Dec 1	Deadline for contacting NOAA Fisheries Service to change years used for initial qualification
Dec 1	Deadline for corporations with permits to submit corporate shareholder information
Jan 1	IFQ program begins
April 1	Last day to submit appeals

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

Protecting our marine resources

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The Gulf Council would like to hear from you! Please contact us regarding fishery questions, comments, or concerns you would like to see covered in the ***Gulf Fishery News***. Anyone interested in submitting information, such as articles, editorials, or photographs pertaining to fishing or fisheries management is encouraged to do so. Submissions may be mailed to Charlene Ponce, Public Information Officer, Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, 2203 N. Lois Avenue, Suite 1100, Tampa, FL 33607. Materials can also be sent via fax to 813-348-1711, or by e-mail to charlene.ponce@gulfcouncil.org.

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council is one of eight regional fishery management councils established by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. The Council is responsible for the development and modification of fishery management plans (FMPs) that are designed to manage fishery resources in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of the Gulf of Mexico from state boundaries to the 200-mile limit.

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