

**Reef Fish Committee  
Action Guide and Next Steps for Tab B**

---

**Agenda Item IV:** Review of Reef Fish and IFQ Program Landings

**Action:** Information only

**Council input and next steps:** National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Southeast Regional Office (SERO) staff will review the status of reef fish, CMP, and individual fishing quota (IFQ) program landings relative to catch limits, which is provided for the Committee's information only. In addition, Dr. Cody with the NOAA Office of Science and Technology will brief the Committee on the progress made thus far by the MRIP Transition Team on its work related to the calibration of private vessel landings collected by the Gulf state surveys. These data are part of an ongoing report to the Council that requires no action by the Committee.

---

**Agenda Item V:** Gulf and South Atlantic SSC Review and Recommendations for Southeastern U.S. Yellowtail Snapper

**Action:** Presentation, discussion, and recommendations

**Council input and next steps:** Dr. Jim Nance (Chair, Scientific and Statistical Committee [SSC]), will summarize the joint review of the SEDAR 64 interim analysis for southeastern U.S. yellowtail snapper by the Gulf and South Atlantic SSCs. The SSCs met on August 4, 2022, and found yellowtail snapper to be healthy and not experiencing overfishing. The SSCs made catch limit recommendations, and provided guidance on the next stock assessment for yellowtail snapper, which is not likely to start until 2027. The Committee should review the information presented and make recommendations as appropriate. The Council previously tabled work on Reef Fish Amendment 54, which would modify the yellowtail snapper jurisdictional allocation and Gulf-specific catch limits. The Committee may consider whether to resume work on this amendment in light of the new SSC recommendations.

---

**Agenda Item VI:** Review of State-Specific Private Angling Red Snapper Landings and Reef Fish Directed Effort

**Action:** Presentation, discussion, and recommendations

**Council input and next steps:** Council representatives from the five Gulf States will review their 2022 private angling seasons for red snapper and offer projections for the rest of the 2022 fishing season. These data are part of an ongoing report to the Council that requires no action by the Committee. The states will also characterize the fishing effort in their states specific to reef fish or offshore angling effort, including any available data on compliance with that state's licensing requirements. These data are expected to be included in future state-specific reports to the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission on state licensing data.

---

**Agenda Item VII:** Public Hearing Draft Amendment 54: Modifications to the Greater Amberjack Catch Limits and Sector Allocations, and other Rebuilding Plan Modifications

**Action:** Presentation, discussion, and recommendations

**Council input and next steps:** Council Staff will review management alternatives considered in Public Hearing Draft Amendment 54 to the Reef Fish fishery management plan, which considers modifications to sector allocations and catch limits in response to the results of the SEDAR 70 stock assessment. SEDAR 70 determined that greater amberjack was overfished and experiencing overfishing as of the end of the 2018 fishing year, and that reductions in harvest would be necessary to immediately end overfishing and rebuild the stock by 2027 as required by the current rebuilding plan. SEDAR 70 incorporated new recreational catch and effort data calibrated to the Marine Recreational Information Program's Fishing Effort Survey (MRIP-FES). These alternatives follow the SSC's recommendations for updated catch advice. The Committee should review the information presented, make recommendations on preferred alternatives, and other recommendations as appropriate. Staff will also provide a comparison of Amendment 54 and the contents of an allocation review based on the Allocation Review Guidelines. If appropriate, the Committee should approve the document for public hearings.

---

**Agenda Item VIII:** **FINAL ACTION:** Modification of Catch Limits for Gulf of Mexico Red Snapper

**Action:** Presentation, discussions, and recommendations

**Council input and next steps:** Council staff will review the options in the draft framework action to modify catch limits for red snapper, following the review of an updated catch analysis by the Council's SSC. At its March 2022 meeting, the SSC reviewed updated estimates of absolute abundance of red snapper derived from the Great Red Snapper Count (Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, and Texas) and by LGL Ecological Associates, Inc (Louisiana). The resulting catch analysis conducted by the Southeast Fisheries Science Center (SEFSC) used the combined estimate of 85.6 million age-2 and older red snapper to estimate a revised overfishing limit (OFL; 18.91 million lbs whole weight [mp ww]) and acceptable biological catch (ABC; 16.31 mp ww). The Council transmitted two previous framework actions: one to revise red snapper catch limits and one to calibrate catch limits for Gulf state survey quota monitoring; these framework actions are currently in the comment period prior to rulemaking. If this draft framework action is ultimately implemented, its proposed regulations would take the place of those previously submitted by the Council but not yet implemented. The Committee should evaluate its preferred alternative under Action 1, and if it finds the proposed regulations to be necessary and appropriate. Staff will provide a summary of written comments received and the Committee should consider recommending that the Council take final action on the framework action and submit it to the Secretary of Commerce for implementation.

---

**Agenda Item IX:** Presentation on Framework Action for Vermilion Snapper Recreational Bag Limit and Gray Triggerfish Commercial Trip Limit and Recreational Closed Seasons

**Action:** Presentation, discussions, and recommendations

**Council Input and Next Steps:** Council staff will provide a presentation on potential management measure changes for vermilion snapper and gray triggerfish. Previously, the Council requested modifying the recreational bag limit for vermilion snapper, the recreational fixed closed season for gray triggerfish, and adjusting commercial gray triggerfish trip limits. Recently, the Council decided to increase the gray triggerfish annual catch limits (ACLs), which was implemented in July of 2021, and modified the vermilion snapper ACLs, but selected a lower, more conservative ACL than the other options with a goal to provide more protection to the stock, if needed. The vermilion snapper ACLs have not yet been implemented. The Committee should consider the information presented, ask questions, and make recommendations as appropriate.

---

**Agenda Item X:** SSC Recommendations from the July 2022 SSC Meeting

**Action:** Presentation, discussions, and recommendations

**Council input and next steps:** Dr. Nance will summarize Gulf SSC discussions on its review of wenchman landings and catch limits, and on discards data for gag grouper, red grouper, greater amberjack, and red snapper. Discards data were determined from the most recent stock assessments for each species. The Committee should consider the information presented and make recommendations as appropriate.

---

**Agenda Item XI:** Draft Options for Amendment 56: Modifications to the Gag Grouper Catch Limits, Sector Allocations, Fishing Seasons, and other Rebuilding Plan Measures

**Action:** Presentation, discussion, and recommendations

**Council Input and Next Steps:** The SEDAR 72 assessment was presented at the SSC's September 2021 meeting, and used updated recreational catch and effort data from MRIP-FES, and an ecosystem-informed model for incorporating episodic mortality from red tide. During its November 2021 meeting, the SSC determined that gag grouper is overfished and undergoing overfishing, and recommended revising the proxy for determining fishing mortality at maximum sustainable yield. In June 2022, SERO staff presented options to the Council for a proposed interim rule for gag grouper, which is intended to reduce fishing mortality ahead of the development and implementation of Amendment 56, which will be a rebuilding plan for gag grouper. SERO staff will provide a brief update on the development of this interim rule. Dr. Nance will review the alternative run using the SEDAR 72 base model, but supplanting the previously used RIP-FES recreational catch and effort data with the same from the State of

Florida's State Reef Fish Survey (SRFS Run). The SRFS Run also found gag grouper to be overfished and undergoing overfishing, and was determined by the SSC to be consistent with the best scientific information available at its July 2022 meeting. Council staff will present options to the Committee to consider prior to developing an options draft for the October 2022 Council meeting. The Committee should consider the information presented, ask questions, and make recommendations as appropriate.

---

**Agenda Item XII:** IFQ Focus Group

**Action:** Presentation, discussion, and recommendations

**Council Input and Next Steps:** Staff will present the summary report from the August 2-3, 2022, meeting of the IFQ Focus Group in Tampa. One of the meeting's facilitators will be available virtually to answer questions from the Committee. The Committee should discuss the report and provide direction to staff regarding next steps for the IFQ Focus Group and the Committee's intent to address modifications to the commercial IFQ programs.

---

**Agenda Item XIII:** Other Business

**Action:** Additional items that can be brought up for discussion

**Council Input and Next Steps:** Additional items may be brought up for discussion by Committee members during the adoption of the agenda, time permitting. If the Committee wishes to pursue action, then action can be scheduled at a future Council meeting.

---