



Gulf Fishery News

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

June - July, 2012

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Did you know?

The Gulf Council encourages and accepts public testimony at every stage of the fishery management plan process. Comment opportunities go beyond scoping meetings and public hearings. The Council also takes open public comment during each Council meeting and accepts written comments throughout the process. Written comments can be emailed to: gulfcouncil@gulfcouncil.org, or mailed to:

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council
2203 N. Lois Avenue
Suite 1100
Tampa, Florida 33607

Questions?
Call Charlene or Emily at
813-348-1630



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Gray Triggerfish

In June, the Council reviewed and revised an options paper for Reef Fish Amendment 37 that now considers:

- Modifying the rebuilding plan - the current preferred alternative is to rebuild the stock within 5 years, or by the end of 2016.
- Modifying the sector Annual Catch Limit and Annual Catch Target - the current preferred alternative establishes a commercial ACL of 64,100 pounds and a commercial ACT of 60,900 pounds. This preferred alternative also establishes a recreational ACL of 241,200 pounds and an ACT of 217,100 pounds. Note measurements are in whole weight.
- Establishing a commercial closed season.
- Establishing a commercial trip limit - the current preferred alternative is a trip limit of 50 pounds whole weight.
- Establishing a recreational closed season - the current preferred alternative is a fixed closed season during peak harvest (May-June).
- Establishing a gray triggerfish-specific recreational bag limit - the current preferred alternative is a 4-fish bag limit within the 20-reef fish aggregate bag limit.
- Modifying recreational Accountability Measures by allowing NOAA Fisheries to close the fishery if the Annual Catch Target is reached - the current preferred alternative is to add an in-season closure authority based on the recreational Annual Catch Target, which is 217,100 pounds whole weight.



Photo by Steven Cone

The Council will review a public hearing draft of the amendment in August, and public hearings will be scheduled in the fall.

For more information, or to submit comments on the proposed changes, visit the Council web site - http://gulfcouncil.org/fishery_management_plans/scoping-thru-implementation.php. Scroll to the bottom of the page where you will find links to the proposed amendment, and an online comment form.





Bob Gill,
Council Chair

From the Helm

Reflections. Typically, this word makes you think of what you see in a mirror or a still pond, but for me, right now, it conjures my thoughts on the fishery management process - thoughts that I would like to share.

In my six years on the Council, one of my most common messages has centered on involvement. Believe it or not, fishery management works best when the players are many and from a broad base of regions, experiences, knowledge, and expertise. In fact, involvement is the only effective way for the average person to achieve a desired goal for a fishery or fisheries. In order for change to occur, it must be actively, aggressively, and continuously pursued to have a reasonable chance of success. Even then, it should be recognized that change may not necessarily be accepted or implemented; but without the effort, it's a guarantee the result will be status quo. Despite what you might hear to the contrary, the Council wants your input and involvement. Your ideas might not always fall on fertile ground, but persistence is a virtue. Involvement requires a lot of time and effort, and the more time you invest, the greater the likelihood of making a difference.

Involvement also encourages discussions that result in varied viewpoints about the same issue. While these different viewpoints can be controversial, passionate, or upsetting, they also provide constructive ways to fully explore problems and seek a common solution.

Finally, we should keep in mind that all that is associated with fisheries management is both imprecise and with large and usually many assumptions about things for which we have little or no information. This says that the science, the management plans, and the outcomes have very high levels of uncertainty and will have for the foreseeable future.

We all share a common concern for the fisheries - we all want to ensure that not only is the resource available for public consumption and for recreation today, but that the same or better opportunities exist in the future. Where we differ is in how to achieve that goal. By understanding the problems, we improve our chances of solving them. In addition, the solutions will sometimes require adapting the course of action to reach the goal. Moreover, we should recognize the uncertainties and assumptions that are integral to our present knowledge are a prerequisite to achieving good management goals. This is a part we all play in the process.

In the end, it is all of us, individually and collectively, who make the difference. If we all act in a positive manner, we can achieve great goals and improved fisheries. I believe we can do just that.



Update on Cobia and Mackerel - Amendments 19 and 20



The Council will continue selecting preferred alternatives for Amendments 19 and 20 to the Coastal Migratory Pelagic Fishery Management Plan. Amendment 19 considers limiting the sale of recreational-caught fish and making changes to the permit requirements for Coastal Migratory Pelagic fisheries. Amendment 20 considers modifying commercial zone boundaries, changing the commercial opening date for the western zone, and establishing a transit provision.

Public hearings on both amendments will be held later this year. To review the current documents or to submit comments, visit the Council web site:

http://gulfcouncil.org/fishery_management_plans/scoping-thru-implementation.php



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Marine Recreational Information Program Update

New online project listing allows for easier searching

Curious about what MRIP is working on? MRIP now has a searchable online database of all MRIP-funded pilot projects. This allows users to search project titles and view project descriptions and objectives, monthly project updates, and final project reports. Access to current projects makes it easier to follow MRIP's research into new program improvements as they occur, and access to past projects gives you details behind improvements that MRIP has already implemented. This in-depth information allows users to better understand the changes MRIP has made and to learn about changes we are exploring for the future. View projects online at <https://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/mdms/public/public.jsp>.

Catch estimates from March-April now available

Preliminary catch estimates from Wave 2 (March-April) are now available on the MRIP query tool. Preliminary estimates are typically available a month and a half after the end of the preceding wave.

NOAA Fisheries meets with states to conduct data review & quality checks

Data collection partners from NOAA Fisheries, the Atlantic Coast states, and our contractors recently met in Baltimore, Maryland to review survey performance, survey data, and preliminary statistical estimates arising from the first 4 months of 2012 data collection. The Wave Meeting is a regular feature of MRIP's quality assurance program. For more information about upcoming wave meetings, contact Tom Sminkey at tom.sminkey@noaa.gov.

Custom MRIP estimates now available

Data customers can now produce catch statistics for smaller geographic areas within states. This capability was designed to better meet the needs of those customers interested in monitoring the catches of separate stocks of fish species, like black sea bass, that are separated by sub-state boundaries (e.g., north and south of Hatteras in North Carolina).

The newly available downloads will also allow customers to access MRIP catch and effort statistics and survey design variables for the 2004-2011 Atlantic and Gulf catch data collected by the Access Point Angler Intercept Survey. These data sets contain the sampling weights used in the recent re-estimation of catches for 2004-2011, which customers can use to conduct additional analyses. Downloads are available at <http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/st1/recreational/downloads.html>. For more information, contact Lauren Dolinger Few at lauren.dolinger.few@noaa.gov.

Final Angler Registry Rule Published in Federal Register

Based on its experience with administering the National Saltwater Angler Registry (NSAR) and State Exemption Program and input from states and the National Saltwater Angler Registry Team, NOAA Fisheries has made minor revisions to the NSAR regulations. These revisions are needed to clarify and update certain provisions as follows: 1) Eliminate duplicative permitting and registration requirements for holders of Main Hawaiian Islands non-commercial bottomfish permits; 2) Provide that states that exempt minors under the age of 17 from the state license or registration requirements will be eligible for Exempted State designation; 3) Allow for the designation of the U.S. Virgin Islands as an Exempted State under the qualifying regional survey option of the rule; and 4) Clarify and update various provisions of the rule. These revisions have undergone public comment and the final version of the rule was recently published in the Federal Register. [View the final rule at http://www.countmyfish.noaa.gov/](http://www.countmyfish.noaa.gov/).



Sector Allocation

After reviewing an options paper for Reef Fish Amendment 29 that explores setting allocations for gag, red grouper, and black grouper, the Council agreed to combine this amendment with one that considers sector separation. The new document will be reviewed by the Council during its August meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana. It will also include allocation considerations for red snapper.

Current allocations are:

	<i>Commercial</i>	<i>Recreational</i>
Gag	39%	61%
Red Grouper	76%	24%
Black Grouper	73%	27%
Red Snapper	51%	49%



Doug Gregory

In other red snapper news, the Council has directed staff to develop a plan amendment with alternatives for regional management of the recreational harvest of red snapper. Further discussion on this issue will occur later this year.



Photo by Mike Jennings



Photo by Kathy Hoak



Photo by Troy Frady



Proposed Changes to 2013 Recreational Gag Season

The Council is scheduled to review a draft framework action that considers a split recreational gag season for 2013. Some fishermen have asked for a split season to allow for two or three fishing seasons during the year. Changing the season could reduce the total number of fishing days but would allow for fishing at more desirable times of the year.

The framework action also includes alternatives to modify or eliminate the annual February-March recreational shallow-water grouper closure. The closure was originally put in place primarily to protect gag spawning aggregations. The closure was eventually applied to all shallow-water grouper to protect other groupers that may be spawning and to prevent bycatch of gag by anglers targeting other groupers. The commercial shallow-water grouper closure was later replaced with a seasonal closed area known as *The Edges* to protect gag spawning aggregations over part of their primary spawning grounds.

There is concern that allowing harvest of other shallow-water grouper while the gag season is closed could result in increased bycatch and bycatch mortality of gag; however, some fishermen have reported that when all shallow-water grouper are closed, they target other species that are often found in areas of high gag abundance. One suggestion made by Council members is to eliminate the February-March shallow-water grouper closure inshore of 20 fathoms, but leave it in place in waters deeper than 20 fathoms.

Visit the Council web site - www.gulfcouncil.org - to review the amendment or to comment on the proposed changes.



Photo by Troy Frady



August Council Meeting Reminder

The next Council meeting is scheduled for the week of August 20 - 23, 2012, at the Astor Crowne Plaza, New Orleans, Louisiana. Please make your reservation under the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council room block to receive the special discounted room rate.

Note that all written comments will be posted on the Council's web site for viewing by Council members and the public. **To help ensure that Council members have sufficient time to consider your written testimony for a specific Council meeting, please submit your comments at least seven business days prior to the start of the Council meeting.** Materials submitted to Council members or staff for distribution prior to or during a Council meeting will be treated as all other written comments and will be posted to the web site.

Oral 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 will be maintained by the Council as part of the permanent record. Further, knowingly and willfully submitting false information to the Council is a violation of Federal Law.

A draft agenda will be posted on the Gulf Council web site at www.gulfcouncil.org.

Federal Fishery Closures

Recreational Closures:

Red Snapper

The 2012 recreational red snapper season closed effective July 16, 2012.

Gray Triggerfish

The recreational gray triggerfish season closed June 11, 2012, and will reopen January 1, 2013.

Commercial Closures:

Gray Triggerfish

The commercial harvest of gray triggerfish in the Gulf of Mexico closed July 1, 2012. NOAA Fisheries Service determined that the 2012 commercial quota of 60,900 pounds whole weight was harvested.

During the closure:

- Commercial harvest or possession of gray triggerfish is prohibited
- The closure applies in both state and federal waters for vessels that have a valid Gulf of Mexico commercial reef fish permit.

King Mackerel

The king mackerel commercial run-around gill net component of the coastal migratory pelagic fishery in the southern Florida west coast subzone closed January 21, 2012, and will reopen 6 a.m. January 21, 2013.

Send us Your Fishing Photos

We want to see your favorite fishing and fishery-related photos! Whether they are from a spear fishing 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 publications.

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, and phone number, along with a description and proper photo credit, then simply attach 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 (no more than 200 ppi).

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



Photos by Troy Frady



Dealer Permit & Electronic Reporting Public Hearings Scheduled



Photo by Bryan Fluech

Can't make the public hearings?

Don't worry, you can watch the virtual presentation on Gulf Council TV. Simply visit <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7wLwR4yr8GI&feature=channel&list=UL>.

Then submit your comments online at http://gulfcouncil.org/council_meetings/comment_forms/Dealer%20Reporting.php.



Photo by Louisiana Seafood

The Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic Fishery Management Councils are considering changing federal seafood dealer permit and reporting requirements. Improving the accuracy, consistency, and timeliness of data reported by seafood dealers will reduce the likelihood that Annual Catch Limits will be exceeded. Making improvements to dealer reported data would help decrease the amount of uncertainty built into management decisions that aim to balance the largest annual harvest with the future success of the fish stock.

The Councils are considering three actions:

1. What dealer permits would be required, and for which species?
2. How frequently and by what method would dealers be required to report?
3. Are there penalties for non-reporting or late reporting?

Public Hearings are scheduled as follows:

Monday, August 6, 2012

Hilton Tampa Airport
2225 N. Lois Avenue
Tampa, Florida 33607
(813) 877-6688

Monday, August 6, 2012

Lady Anderson/Captain Anderson Marina
5550 N. Lagoon Drive
Panama City Beach, FL 32408
(850) 234-3435

Tuesday, August 7, 2012

Courtyard Marriott
3955 N. Expressway 77/83
Brownsville, Texas 78520
(956) 350-4600

Tuesday, August 7, 2012

Courtyard Marriott
1000 W. I-65 Service Road South
Mobile, Alabama 36609
(251) 344-5200

Wednesday, August 8, 2012

Harvey Government Center
1200 Truman Avenue
Key West, Florida 33040
(305) 295-5000

Wednesday, August 8, 2012

Courtyard Marriott D'Iberville
11471 Cinema Drive
D'Iberville, Mississippi 39540
(228) 392-1200

Wednesday, August 8, 2012

Omni Corpus Christi
900 N. Shoreline Boulevard
Corpus Christi, Texas 78401
(361) 887-1600

Thursday, August 9, 2012

Hilton Galveston
5400 Seawall Boulevard
Galveston Island, Texas 77551
(409) 744-5000

Thursday, August 9, 2012

Courtyard Marriott
142 Library Drive
Houma, Louisiana 70360
(985) 223-8996



Photo by Louisiana Seafood

Stay in the loop with *Gulf Currents*

Stay up to date on Gulf of Mexico Fishery issues - visit our blog - Gulf Currents.

Gulf Currents will keep you in the loop. It will prepare you to participate effectively in the creation of fisheries management measures by educating you about current events, possible management considerations, regulatory changes, the fisheries management process, and more.

Check it out at: <http://gulfcouncil.blogspot.com/>



Recipe Rewind

Here's another blast from the past. This recipe was taken from "Cooking with Cold" published by the Kelvinator Sales Corp., 1932.

Frozen Crabmeat Cocktail

Ingredients

1 cup flaked crab meat or other seafood	1 tablespoon lemon juice
1 teaspoon gelatin	1 teaspoon Worcestershire Sauce
2 tablespoons cold water	4 teaspoons French dressing
4 tablespoons tomato catsup	Salt
	Paprika

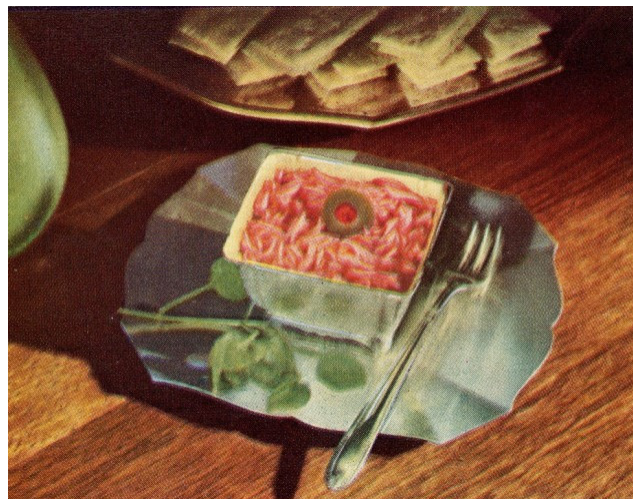
Soak gelatin in cold water and dissolve over hot water. Add catsup, lemon juice, other seasonings, and fish. Turn into Kelvinator freezing trays, or place in paper or silver individual freezing dishes in trays and freeze. Garnish with sliced green pimento olives.

Serves four to six.

Not fond of frozen gelatin?

Try using fresh crab mixed with sauteed onion, green peppers, and red peppers. Add a little light mayonnaise and some hot sauce to taste. Serve with flat bread.

Take the retro recipe challenge! Send us your favorite retro recipe and have it published in the next edition of Gulf Fishery News.



Find us on
Facebook

Find us on Facebook!

Become a fan by clicking **Like** on our page. Just log on to Facebook and search for Gulf Council!

Download the Free Federal Fishing Regulations App for Droid and iPhone

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council offers a fishing regulations App for the Android and the iPhone - both are available for download.

The Apps are free and provide immediate access to the most up-to-date commercial and recreational federal fishing regulations for species managed by the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council. The Apps also provide information on fish identification, measurement guidelines, sanctuaries and closures, and important telephone numbers.

Visit the App Store or Android Market to download the App - or simply scan the appropriate QR code on the left with your iPhone or Droid to begin downloading the Gulf Council's free regulations App!



Droid



iPhone

Free QR Code Reader Apps are available in both the App Store and Android Market.

For more information on federal fishing regulations, visit www.gulfcouncil.org.

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council Committee Schedule

Astor Crowne Plaza
New Orleans, Louisiana
August 20 - 22, 2012

Monday August 20, 2012

- 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm
Ad Hoc Restoration Committee (Tab H)
• Presentations
- 2:30 pm – 4:30 pm
Data Collection Committee (Tab E)
• Final Generic Amendment – Dealer Permits & Reporting
• Discussion of Electronic Reporting for Headboats
• Discussion of Electronic Reporting for the For-hire Industry
- 4:30 pm – 5:00 pm
Shrimp Management Committee (Tab D)
• White Paper - Funding Options for Electronic Logbook Program
• Discussion on Exempted Fishing Permits Related to Shrimp (if any)
- 5:00 pm – 5:30 pm
Law Enforcement Committee (Tab G)
• Report from the Law Enforcement Advisory Panel Meeting
- 5:30 pm – 6:00 pm
Budget/Personnel Committee (Tab I)
• Discussion on Executive Director Selection Process

Immediately following committee recess, NOAA Fisheries will hold a workshop considering administrative changes to the Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Program. This workshop will be held in the Council's meeting room.

Tuesday August 21, 2012

- 8:30 am – 11:30 am & 12:30 pm – 5:30 pm
Reef Fish Management Committee (Tab B)
• Discussion with LDWF State Boundary Extension & Pilot Program
• Scoping Document for Amendment 28 – Sector Allocations
• Options Paper - Framework Action on Vermilion Snapper ACL
• Comments on Amendment 33 – Reef Fish LAPP
• Public Hearing Draft Amendment 37 – Gray Triggerfish
• Final Amendment 38 – Revise Post-Season Recreational Accountability Measures for Shallow-Water Grouper & Revision to the Generic Framework Procedure
• Public Hearing Draft of a Framework Action for 2013 Gag Season, Split Season, & Elimination of February-March Shallow-Water Grouper Closure
• Concerns about Amendment 35 Rebuilding Plan for Greater Amberjack
• Other Reef Fish Advisory Panel Comments (if any)
• Status of Actions Submitted Under Abbreviated Document Process
• Discussion on Exempted Fishing Permits Related to Reef Fish (if any)

Immediately following committee recess will be the Informal Question & Answer Session on Gulf of Mexico fishery management issues.

Wednesday August 22, 2012

- 8:30 am – 9:30 am
FULL COUNCIL – CLOSED SESSION
• Personnel Matters
- 9:30 am – 10:30 am
Joint Artificial Reef/Habitat Committees (Tab F)
• Scoping Document for Essential Fish Habitat Amendment 4 Designating Petroleum Platforms and Artificial Reefs as Essential Fish Habitat

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

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council Meeting Agenda

Astor Crowne Plaza
New Orleans, Louisiana
August 22 - 23, 2012

Wednesday August 22, 2012

- 10:30 am - 11:00 am
I. Call to Order and Introductions – Boyd
- II. Introduction of New Council Members - Crabtree
- III. Adoption of Agenda ¹ (Tab A, No. 4) – Boyd
- IV. Approval of Minutes (Tab A, No. 5) – Boyd
- V. Review of Action Schedule (Tab A, No. 6) – Boyd
- 11:00 am - 11:45 am
VI. Committee Reports
a. Ad Hoc Restoration (Tab H) - Simpson
b. Shrimp (Tab D) - Perret
c. Law Enforcement (Tab G) - Williams
d. Budget/Personnel (Tab I) - Riechers
- 1:00 pm - 1:15 pm
VII. Review of Exempted Fishing Permits (if any) (Tab J) - Crabtree/Boyd
- 1:15 – 5:30 pm
VIII. Public Comment ^{2, 3, 4, 5} - Boyd
a. Agenda Testimony
b. Open Testimony on any Fishery Issues or Concerns

Thursday August 23, 2012

- 8:30 am - 8:45 am
IX.. Vote on Exempted Fishing Permits (if any) (Tab J) - Crabtree/Boyd
- 8:45 am - 3:45 pm
X. Committee Reports
e. Reef Fish (Tab B) - Shipp
f. Data Collection (Tab E) - Pearce
g. Mackerel (Deferred from June Meeting) (Tab C) - Fischer
h. Joint Artificial Reef/Habitat (Tab F) - Anson/Boyd
- 4:00 pm - 4:15 pm
XI. Other Business (Tab K) – Boyd
- 4:15 pm - 4:30 pm
XII. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair - Simpson

-Adjourn

¹The established times for addressing items on the Council and committee agendas, except for those setting times for 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 give public testimony must turn in a registration card before the beginning of the public comment period. During public comment, the Council will first hear testimony related to final actions of the Council and pertinent agenda items, and then allow for open public testimony regarding any fishery issue or concern. During public comment, time constraints may limit individual speaking time as determined by the presiding officer. If your sentiments are reflected in comments made by others, please avoid duplication and allow the next speaker to address the Council.

³Persons wishing Council members to have copies of written testimony or information should provide 30 copies to staff before public comment begins for distribution to members. 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.

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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