

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

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

Timeline Status: Information only

Council input and next steps: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Southeast Regional Office (SERO) staff will review the status of reef fish and individual fishing quota (IFQ) program landings relative to catch limits, which is provided for the Committee's information only. In addition, Council staff will review recent gray triggerfish commercial landings and provide a review of related commercial management measures. The landings data presented are part of an ongoing report to the Council that requires no action by the Committee.

Agenda Item V: **Final Action:** Framework Action: Modification of Gulf of Mexico Vermilion Snapper Catch Limits

Timeline Status: Presentation, discussion, and recommendations

Council input and next steps: Council Staff will review the management alternatives considered in the framework action. This draft framework action follows the SSC's recommendations for updated catch advice for Gulf vermilion snapper. Council staff will summarize comments and recommendations made by the Reef Fish Advisory Panel and written public comments received. NMFS SERO staff will review the codified text. The Committee should review the information presented and, if deemed appropriate, recommend that the Council take final action on the draft framework action.

Agenda Item VI: Presentation on SEDAR 70: Greater Amberjack Revised Projections

Timeline Status: Presentation, discussion, and recommendations

Council input and next steps: The SSC Representative will summarize the SSC's deliberations about the revised projections for the SEDAR 70 stock assessment for greater amberjack. The SEDAR 70 assessment was presented at the SSC's January 2021 meeting, and estimated that greater amberjack was overfished and experiencing overfishing as of 2018. The assessment used updated recreational catch and effort data from the Marine Recreational Information Program's Fishing Effort Survey (MRIP-FES). New projections code was reviewed at the SSC's August and September 2021 meetings. During its November 2021 meeting, the SSC determined that greater amberjack was overfished and undergoing overfishing, and certified the various allocation scenarios and corresponding overfishing limit and acceptable biological catch yield stream projections for greater amberjack as in keeping with the best scientific information available. Staff will also review the recommendations from the Council's Reef Fish Advisory Panel (RFAP). The Committee should consider the information presented and ask questions as

appropriate. Council staff will plan to bring draft options for Council consideration in April 2022.

Agenda Item VII: Presentation on SEDAR 72: Gag Grouper Stock Assessment Report

Timeline Status: Presentation and discussion

Council input and next steps: The SSC Representative will briefly summarize the SSC's deliberations about the SEDAR 72 stock assessment for gag grouper. The SEDAR 72 assessment was presented at the SSC's September 2021 meeting, and used updated recreational catch and effort data from the Marine Recreational Information Program's Fishing Effort Survey (MRIP-FES), and an ecosystem-informed model for incorporating episodic mortality from red tide. New projection code was also reviewed at the SSC's September 2021 meeting. 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. Based on that recommendation, the SSC also determined corresponding overfishing and acceptable biological catch yield stream projections for gag grouper. Staff will also review the recommendations from the Council's Reef Fish Advisory Panel (RFAP). The Committee should consider the information presented and ask questions as appropriate. The Committee should also consider if it wants to request alternative allocation scenarios and provide direction to staff so that a memo can be sent to the Southeast Fisheries Science Center (SEFSC) with the request for the March 2022 SSC meeting. The Council has already requested that the SEFSC complete an alternative model run using the State of Florida's State Reef Fish Survey to inform private angling landings; the Council Chair and Executive Director will work with the SEFSC to coordinate this effort.

Agenda Item VIII: Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Programs

Timeline Status: Presentation, discussion, and recommendations

Council input and next steps: Staff will review the process for soliciting and organizing applicants for the IFQ Focus Group, and review the next steps for convening the focus group. The Committee should provide direction as to its intent for the timing of the meeting and process for delivering the resulting recommendations. A revised public hearing draft of Amendment 36B is provided as background material. The full Council will review all IFQ Focus Group applicants and select the members later today in closed session.

Agenda Item IX: Discussion: Draft Snapper Grouper Amendment 44 and Reef Fish Amendment 55: Modifications to Southeastern U.S. Yellowtail Snapper Jurisdictional Allocations, Catch Limits, and South Atlantic Sector Annual Catch Limits

Timeline Status: Presentation, discussion, and recommendations

Council input and next steps: Council staff will review the status of Snapper Grouper Amendment 44 / Reef Fish Amendment 55, which will be a joint amendment to both fishery management plans for the Councils' management of southeastern U.S. yellowtail snapper. The yellowtail snapper stock was found to be healthy during the Councils' SSC review of the SEDAR 64 stock assessment, which used data through 2017 and incorporated recreational catch and effort data from MRIP-FES. At its December 2021 meeting, the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (South Atlantic Council) discussed the age of the projections, acknowledging that the proposed catch limits would likely not take effect until 2023, or when the projections were six years old. The SSCs of both Councils routinely recommend against using projections beyond five years. Considerate of this, the South Atlantic Council requested that the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission update the SEDAR 64 stock assessment with data through 2020. The Committee should consider this recommendation and its rationale, and make a recommendation to the Gulf Council as appropriate.

Agenda Item X: Discussion: Wenchman in the Gulf of Mexico

Timeline Status: Presentation, discussion, and recommendations

Council Input and Next Steps: SERO staff will present the landings history of wenchman in the Gulf for the last 20 years, and Council staff will review the management history for the stock from the Council's Generic Annual Catch Limits (ACL) and Accountability Measures Amendment (2011). This information is being presented in response to public comment received by the Council in October 2021, during which the Council learned of substantial landings of wenchman from the northern Gulf, which may have contributed to the mid-water snapper ACL being met. The Committee should discuss the information presented and make any recommendations to the Council as appropriate. Also, at its October 2021 meeting, the Council requested that Council and SERO staff begin work on an amendment to update the catch limits for data-poor species; work is expected to begin on this amendment as Council priorities allow.

Agenda Item XI: Review of Revised Great Red Snapper Count Estimates and SSC Recommendations for Red Snapper Catch Analysis

Timeline Status: Presentation, discussion and recommendations

Council Input and Next Steps: The SSC Representative will discuss the SSC's deliberations on revised estimates of absolute abundance from the Great Red Snapper Count (GRSC), informed by modifications requested by the SEFSC and reviewed at the SSC's January 2022 meeting. Also reviewed at that SSC meeting were estimates of fleet use of uncharacterized bottom habitat, post-stratification of estimates on the West Florida Shelf, and evaluation of other long-term fishery-independent surveys. The SSC Representative will review the SSC's recommendations for an interim catch analysis for red snapper based on the information presented; this updated catch analysis will be reviewed by the SSC at its March 2022 meeting in

Tampa, Florida. The Committee should consider the information presented and ask questions as appropriate.

Agenda Item XII: Discussion of remaining SSC Recommendations from past SSC meetings

Timeline Status: Presentation, discussion, and recommendations

Council Input and Next Steps: The SSC Representative will review any remaining items discussed by the SSC for Council consideration. The Committee should consider the information presented, ask questions, and make any recommendations to the Council as appropriate.

Agenda Item XIII: Discussion of remaining Reef Fish AP Recommendations from the January 2022 Reef Fish AP Meeting

Timeline Status: Presentation, discussion, and recommendations

Council Input and Next Steps: Staff will review any remaining items discussed by the RFAP for Council consideration. The Committee should consider the information presented, ask questions, and make any recommendations to the Council as appropriate.

Agenda Item XIV: Other Business

Timeline Status: 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.
