



Tab B, No. 8(a)  
January 2022

# IFQ Programs: Focus Group Formation



# IFQ Focus Group

To form a small facilitated Focus Group of knowledgeable individuals, selected by a process approved by the Regional Administrator and Council and Reef Fish Committee Chairs, to provide a detailed plan for the following:

- Review the current IFQ programs' goals and objectives and recommend their replacement/retention. These revised goals and objectives shall serve as the basis for the Focus Group recommendations.
- Define the changes needed for an improved IFQ program for RS, G-TF to specifically address minimizing discards, fairness and equity, and new entrants issues.
- Report their findings to the SSC and appropriate APs for review and advice to the Council.



# Overview

- Member positions & application process
- Closed session selection of Focus Group members
  - A little about focus groups
- Next steps:
  - Returning results to the Council
  - Timeline
  - Facilitators



# Member Positions

- Dealer
- Crew with no shares
- Permit holder who leases allocation
- Eastern Gulf longliner who leases red snapper allocation
- 3 Shareholder positions (small, medium, large)
- Public participant
- New entrant
- Knowledgeable person, not financially invested (non-participant)



# Position Descriptions

Dealer – Must have a Gulf and South Atlantic Dealer Permit and have received IFQ landings through their account.

Crew with no shares – Not required to have shares or a permit, but serves as captain or crew of a vessel that participates in the IFQ program.

Permit holder who leases allocation – Must have a commercial reef fish permit associated with the same account used to transfer and land allocation. Does not have shares.

Eastern Gulf longliner who leases red snapper allocation – Must have an Eastern Gulf Reef Fish Bottom Longline Endorsement and a Commercial Reef Fish Permit associated with the same account used to transfer and land red snapper allocation. Does not have red snapper shares.



# Position Descriptions

Small shareholder – Holds a small amount of shares of red snapper and/or red grouper and a commercial reef fish permit. Among shareholder accounts that hold shares in these two categories, applicant is approximately among the bottom third of shareholders by shareholding volume for one or both share categories. Applicant's shareholdings are approximately within the bottom third across all share categories.

Medium shareholder – Holds an intermediate amount of shares of red snapper and/or red grouper and a commercial reef fish permit. Among shareholder accounts that hold shares in these two categories, applicant is approximately among the middle third of shareholders by shareholding volume for one or both share categories.

Large shareholder – Holds a large amount of shares of red snapper and/or red grouper and a commercial reef fish permit. Among shareholder accounts that hold shares in these two categories, shareholdings place applicant approximately among the top third of shareholdings by volume in one or both share categories.



# Position Descriptions

Public participant – Holds red snapper and/or red grouper shares, but does not have a commercial reef fish permit.

New entrant – Holds a commercial reef fish permit and purchased shares and/or allocation for the first time within the last 3-5 years.

Knowledgeable person, not financially invested (i.e., non-participant) – Has a solid understanding of the Gulf IFQ programs, or catch shares more broadly, but is not a permit holder or shareholder.



# Application Process

- Noticed on Council website and press release.
- Open from November 19 - December 17, 2021.
- 57 applicants for 10 positions.



# What does a successful Focus Group look like?

- Diverse membership
- Members are able to listen to others and consider perspectives different from their own
- Comfort to speak freely
- May produce Consensus-like Statements rather than Motions.



# IFQ Focus Group is an Advisory Panel (AP)

- Members selected to provide broad geographic representation.
- Open to the public, so non-members have a role.
- Unlike AP meetings around a U-shaped table, members may be broken into small groups for discussions, which then report back to the group.
- In AP meetings, members elect a Chair who then runs the meeting; a focus group is run by one or more facilitators.



# Next Steps

Council motion specified that the IFQ Focus Group would “report their findings to the SSC and appropriate APs for review and advice to the Council.”

- What is the Council’s intent for the focus group recommendations?



# Proposed Timeline

## January Council meeting:

- Select participants; fishing violation check completed

## Before April Council meeting:

- Notify applicants of appointments and select dates for meeting.
- Facilitators meet with each focus group member.
- Provide background materials to focus group members.
- Plan the meeting.

April Council meeting: Review plan for initial IFQ Focus Group meeting

Week of April 25-29 or May 9-13: Potential dates to convene IFQ Focus Group



# Facilitators & Pre-Meeting Tasks

Proposing a Dual Moderator Focus Group with facilitators from the Natural Resources Leadership Institute

- Joy Hazell
- Wendy-Lin Bartels
- <https://nrli.ifas.ufl.edu/whoweare.shtml>

Pre-meeting – Facilitators will meet with each focus group member

Staff to send “homework” to include background materials, rather than use meeting time for background presentations, such as:

- NAS LAPP report recommendations
- Joint IFQ Programs Review conclusions and recommendations
- IFQ AP and RF AP meeting summaries and recommendations



# How it will work

- Initial meeting: 1 ½ days in Tampa
- Ideal to hold in-person meeting. If not possible, meeting will be held by webinar.
- May use breakout groups that report back to whole group, similar to SEDAR Data Workshops.
- Open to public, like an AP meeting.
- How many meetings?



# Questions?

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# Background: Amendment 36B

The purpose is to limit IFQ share ownership in shareholder accounts without a valid or renewable commercial reef fish permit, thereby promoting share ownership by fishermen who have the ability to land reef fish within the IFQ programs.

Action 1 – Require [some or all] shareholder accounts to have a commercial reef fish permit.

Action 2 – Share Divestment for Permit-Required accounts that do not have a permit.

Action 3 – Permit-Exempt Accounts



# NAS LAPPs report recommendation

“Because of perceptions that “investors” or “armchair captains” should not control quota shares, the Councils ... should address this question up front ... and research whether and how such shareholding would affect the market for quota and its availability to active fishers. To assist the Councils in addressing this question, the NMFS should sponsor a study of the direct and indirect consequences of moving from LAPPs that require holding active fishing permits or other measures of active participation in fishing, to the “public” scope of eligibility to own quota shares. Such a study, likely focused on the experience of the two Gulf of Mexico LAPPs but informed by other programs, should offer a stronger basis for decision making about eligibility.”



# Action 1: Effect on Account Structure

## **Alternative 1:** Shareholder Accounts

- Shares and Permit
- Shares and No Permit
- No Shares and Permit
- No Shares and No Permit

## **Alternative 2:** Shareholder Accounts

- Shares and Permit
- ~~-Shares and No Permit~~
- No Shares and Permit
- No Shares and No Permit

## **Alternatives 3-5:**

### Permit-Exempt Shareholder Accounts

- Shares and Permit
- Shares and No Permit
- No Shares and Permit
- No Shares and No Permit

### Permit-Required Shareholder Accounts

- Shares and Permit
- ~~-Shares and No Permit~~
- No Shares and Permit
- No Shares and No Permit

# Structure of Actions

Action 1: Permit Requirement for Shareholder Accounts		
Alternative 2 All Accounts Permit-Required		Alternatives 3-5 Permit-Exempt Accounts Permit-Required Accounts
Action 2: Share Divestment for Permit-Required Accounts		
Applies to all accounts		Only applies to Permit-Required Accounts
Action 3: Permit-Exempt Shareholder Accounts		
N/A		Only applies to Permit-Exempt Accounts