

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

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**Agenda Item IV:** Reef Fish Amendment 58B: Modifications to Deep-water Grouper Management Measures

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

**Council Input and Next Steps:** Council staff will present updated management alternatives for modifying the deep-water grouper (DWG) complex, in light of recent stock assessment advice. Management alternatives for DWG include specifying status determination criteria, catch limits, sector allocations, and accountability measures. Additional alternatives were added by the Council to actions covering sector allocations and accountability measures at the November 2024 meeting. The Committee should discuss the range of actions and alternatives presented and suggest revisions. Council staff plans to bring a public hearing draft for Council approval to the April 2025 Council meeting.

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**Agenda Item V:** Draft Framework: Other Shallow-water Grouper Catch Limits

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

**Council input and next steps:** Council staff will present a draft framework action to modify the catch limits and recreational fishing season for the Other Shallow-water Grouper complex (SWG). This document is being considered to reduce fishing mortality on SWG species ahead of the development and implementation of Draft Amendment 58A, which considers Modifications to Other Shallow-water Grouper Management Measures. The Committee should discuss the range of actions and alternatives presented, suggest revisions to (or removal of) any presented management alternatives, and discuss timing of the action as it relates to the development and implementation of Draft Amendment 58A.

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**Agenda Item VI:** Presentation: Modifications to Lane Snapper Minimum Size and Recreational Bag Limits

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

**Council input and next steps:** Council staff will present management alternatives for modifying lane snapper minimum size and recreational daily bag limits. In recent years, landings have exceeded the ACL, and resulted in early season closures. Modifications to the lane snapper size limits and recreational bag limits are being considered in an effort to stop exceeding the stock ACL and overfishing of lane snapper and manage the stock to optimum yield (OY). The Committee should evaluate the management options and the accompanying analyses presented, ask questions, and provide feedback to staff on the range of management actions and alternatives.

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**Agenda Item VIII:** Draft Options: Reef Fish Amendment 59: Requirements for Participation in Individual Fishing Quota Programs

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

**Council input and next steps:** Staff will provide an overview of Draft Reef Fish Amendment 59, an amendment addressing participation requirements in the red snapper and grouper/tilefish IFQ programs. Participation requirements include the ownership of valid or renewable commercial reef fish permits and requirements to land predetermined percentages of their annual allocations. The potential consequences of selecting various combinations of permit and activity requirements will be discussed. The Committee should review the information presented, review the range of actions and alternatives presented, make recommendations, and discuss next steps, as needed.

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**Agenda Item VIII:** Summary: December 2024 Gulf SSC Webinar

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

**Council input and next steps:** Dr. Mike Allen (SSC Chair) will review remaining SSC recommendations from the SSC's December 5, 2024, webinar meeting, including a management strategy evaluation for black grouper commissioned by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, and a progress update on the SEDAR 88 stock assessment of Gulf red grouper. The Committee should evaluate the information presented and ask questions of Dr. Allen as appropriate.

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**Agenda Item IX:** Summary of Reef Fish Advisory Panel Discussions and Recommendations

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

**Council input and next steps:** Capt. Dylan Hubbard (Reef Fish Advisory Panel [RFAP] Chair) and Council staff will review recommendations from the RFAP meeting held on December 3, 2024. These items will be those not covered under other Reef Fish Committee Agenda items. Topics reviewed by the RFAP include draft Reef Fish Amendment 58A, a framework action for the Removal of the Recreational 20-fathom Shallow-water Grouper Closure, a framework action for Modifications to Federal For-hire Red Snapper Fishing Season, future lane snapper interim analyses, the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council's Release App, and red snapper sizes. The Committee should review and discuss the recommendations presented and recommend next steps to the Council as appropriate.

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**Agenda Item X:** Recreational Initiative

**Action:** Presentations, discussion, and recommendations

**Council Input and Next Steps:** Drs. Willy Goldsmith and Andrew Loftus will review the progress made thus far on the Council’s Recreational Initiative. To date, the Recreational Initiative has held two working group meetings: the first in October 2024 in Tampa, Florida; and the second in January 2025 in New Orleans, Louisiana. Following the summary of the working group meetings, Council staff will provide a summary of two separate public engagement sessions held to date. Lastly, Mr. Robert Hilliard (Recreational Working Group member) will give an overview of the group’s progress. The Committee should review the information presented, ask questions, and provide any feedback prior to the last meeting scheduled for February 19-20<sup>th</sup> in Tampa, Florida.

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**Agenda Item XI:** Recreational Red Snapper Accountability Measures

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

**Council Input and Next Steps:** In April 2024, the Council directed staff to begin work on a document to reconsider recreational accountability measures (AMs) for the private angling component. Discussions at that Council meeting focused on the state-specific landings compared to their respective annual catch limits (ACL), with particular consideration of the payback provisions implemented under Reef Fish Amendment 50A. Therein, it is specified that a state’s ACL in a fishing year will be reduced pound for pound by any overage of that state’s ACL in the previous fishing year. The Council requested a document exploring additional flexibility within the AM that may allow for minor state-specific ACL overages, while remaining under the overall private recreational ACL. Council staff will present state landings against their ACLs, and how paybacks have been applied in the past. The Committee should review the information presented ask questions and provide feedback on timing and next steps.

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**Agenda Item XII:** 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.

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