

# Reef Fish Amendment 55

## Snapper Grouper Amendment 44

### Yellowtail and Mutton Snapper Management Measures



# Background

- Southeastern U.S. yellowtail and mutton snapper are jointly managed by the Gulf and South Atlantic Councils
  - Each stock considered a single unit
  - Management split at Council jurisdictional boundary
- Majority of each stock is allocated to the SA based on historical landings
  - In Gulf, landings primarily from the commercial sector, but recreational landings are increasing
  - Majority of discards are from the rec sector



# Background – Gulf Regulations

## Fishing Season

- **Mutton:** Jan 1 – Dec 31
- **Yellowtail:** August 1 – July 31

## Possession Limit

- Commercial: none
- Recreational: **Mutton:** 5 fish per person/day within 10 snapper aggregate limit
- Recreational: **Yellowtail:** 10 fish per person/day within 10 snapper aggregate limit

## Minimum Size Limit

- **Mutton:** 18 inches TL
- **Yellowtail:** 12 inches TL

# Background – Mutton Snapper



## Gulf Council Jurisdiction

- Apportioned 18% of the ABC
  - Used 50% of landings history from 1990 – 2008 and 50% from 2006 – 2008
- Managed with stock ACL
- 0% buffer between Gulf ABC and Gulf ACL
- Post-Season Accountability Measure: If the ACL is exceeded, then in the following year, the season will be closed when the ACL is expected to be met

## South Atlantic Council Jurisdiction

- Apportioned 82% of the ABC
- 17.02% Commercial / 82.98% Recreational
- Commercial Accountability Measures
  - In-Season: When the ACL is reached, the sale of mutton snapper is prohibited
  - Post-Season: If mutton snapper is *overfished* and the total ACL is exceeded, the following year's ACL is reduced by the amount of the overage
- Recreational Accountability Measures
  - In-Season: If mutton snapper is *overfished*, the rec sector fishing season will close when its ACL is projected to be met.
  - Post-Season: If total ACL is exceeded, the following year's season is reduced to achieve the ACL.
- General Accountably Measure: If mutton snapper is *overfished* and the ACL is exceeded, the following year's ACL are reduced by the amount of the overage

# Background – Yellowtail Snapper



## Gulf Council Jurisdiction

- Apportioned 25% of the ABC
  - Used 50% of landings history from 1993 – 2008 and 50% from 2006 – 2008
- Managed with stock ACL
- 11% buffer between Gulf ABC and Gulf ACL
- Post-Season Accountability Measure: If the ACL is exceeded, then in the following year, the season will be closed when the ACL is expected to be met

## South Atlantic Council Jurisdiction

- Apportioned 75% of the ABC
- 52.56% Commercial / 47.44% Recreational
- Commercial Accountability Measures
  - In-Season: When the ACL is reached, the sale of yellowtail snapper is prohibited.
  - Post-Season: If yellowtail snapper is *overfished* and the total ACL is exceeded, the following year's ACL is reduced by the amount of the overage
- Recreational Accountability Measures
  - In-Season: If yellowtail snapper is *overfished*, the rec sector fishing season will close when its ACL is projected to be met.
  - Post-Season: If the total ACL is exceeded, the following year's season is reduced to achieve the ACL.
- General Accountably Measure: If yellowtail snapper is *overfished* and the ACL is exceeded, the following year's ACL are reduced by the amount of the overage

# Why are we here?

- New stock assessments for both species
- Both stocks are healthy (terminal year 2023)
  - SEDAR 75 for Mutton Snapper
  - SEDAR 96 for Yellowtail Snapper
- Stock assessments used Florida's State Reef Fish Survey (SRFS) to inform landings from recreational private vessels
  - Replaces legacy Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey (MRFSS)
  - MRIP-FES still used for shore-mode landings



# Why are we here – Mutton Snapper

- Stock ABC: 798,300 lb whole weight (ww)
  - Current OFL and ABC Based on SEDAR 15A Update (2015) in MRFSS units
- South Atlantic ABC = 654,257 lb ww (82% of stock ABC)
- Gulf ABC = 143,694 lb ww (18% of stock ABC)
- Gulf and SA SSCs met February 2025, and revised the Mutton Snapper OFL and ABC (in lb ww) based on SEDAR 79, using SRFS:

	OFL ( $F_{30\%SPR}$ )	ABC (75% of $F_{30\%SPR}$ )
2026	3,363,706	2,725,359
2027	3,313,030	2,752,377
2028	3,270,355	2,772,615

# Why are we here – Yellowtail Snapper

- Stock ABC: 4.05 million lb ww
  - Current OFL and ABC Based on SEDAR 27A (2012) in MRFSS units
- South Atlantic ABC = 3,037,500 lb ww (75% of stock ABC)
- Gulf ABC = 1,012,500 lb ww (25% of stock ABC)
- Gulf and SA SSCs met February 2025, and revised the Yellowtail Snapper OFL and ABC (in lb ww) based on SEDAR 96, using SRFS :

	OFL ( $F_{30\%SPR}$ )	ABC (75% of $F_{30\%SPR}$ )
2026	4,495,187	3,925,031
2027	4,364,600	3,913,426
2028	4,307,856	3,918,634

# Worth Noting

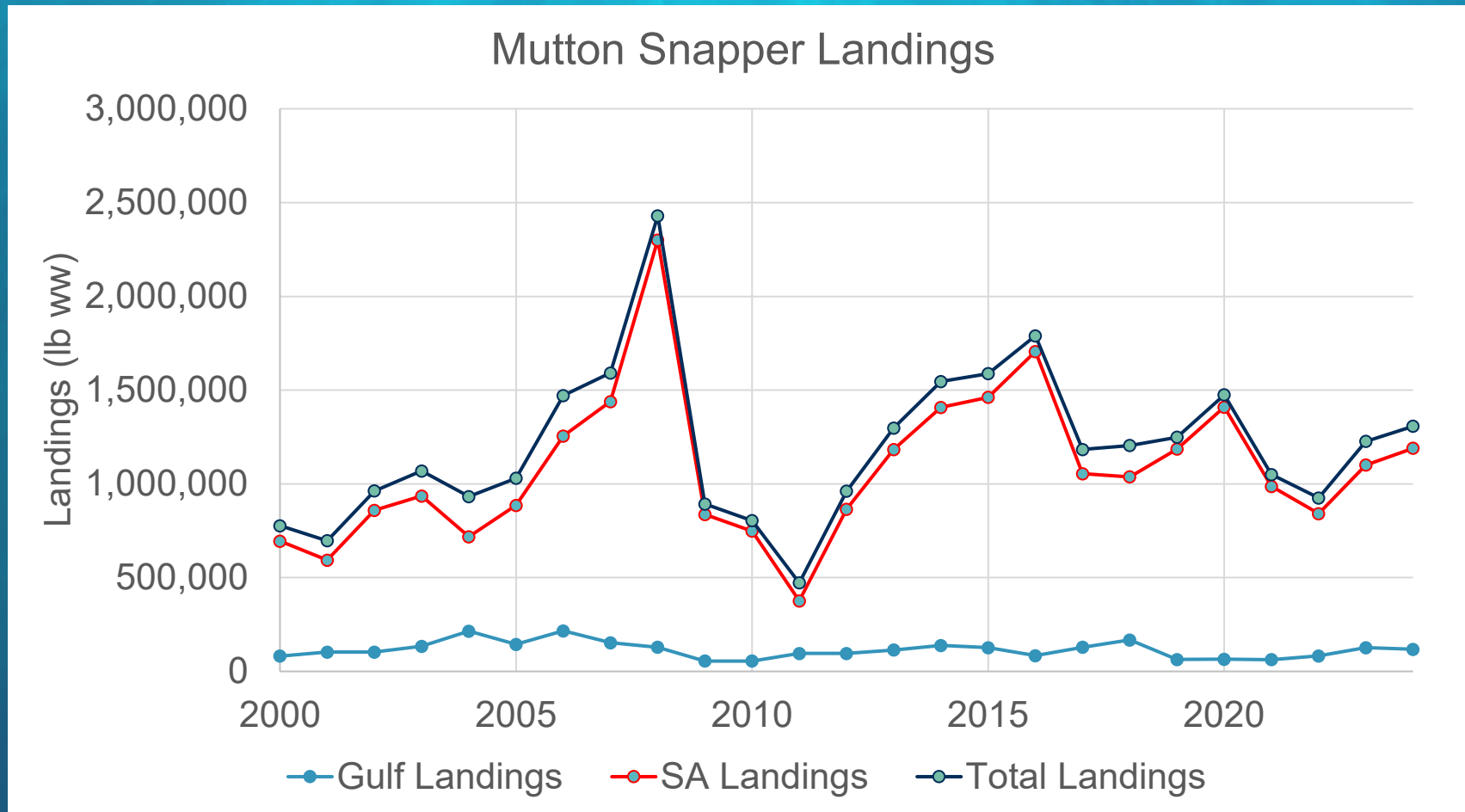
- Generally:
  - Mutton snapper observed to be healthy and growing
  - Yellowtail snapper observed to be healthy and stable
- Both species demonstrating northward range expansion in Gulf
- Maximum Sustainable Yield =  $F_{30\%SPR}$ 
  - Consistent for both species, per the Gulf and SA SSCs
- No other status determination criteria recommended for change by SSCs
- Recruitment based on 2019 - 2023
- Gulf does not use sector allocations; SA does

# Purpose and Need

- **Purpose:** The purpose of this fishery management plan amendment is to revise the southeastern U.S. mutton snapper and yellowtail snapper overfishing limit, acceptable biological catch, and the regional annual catch limits based on the jurisdictional allocation between the South Atlantic and Gulf Fishery Management Councils, using the results of the SEDAR 79 and SEDAR 96 stock assessments, respectively.
- **Need:** The need for this fishery management plan amendment is to update existing catch limits and jurisdictional allocations for southeastern U.S. mutton snapper and yellowtail snapper to be consistent with the best scientific information available, and achieve optimum yield while minimizing, to the extent practicable, adverse social and economic effects.

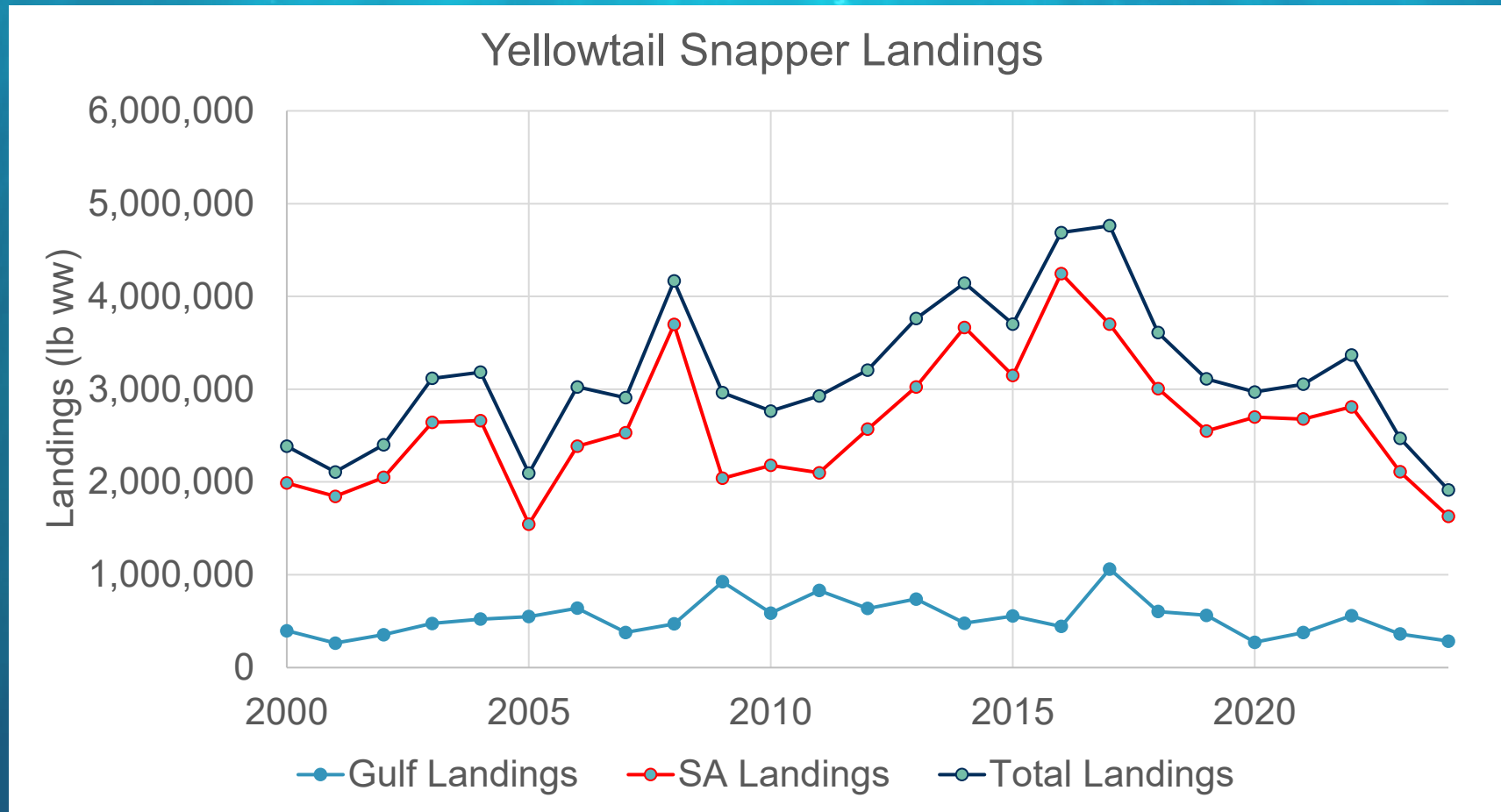
# Expected Action – Action 1

- Recent landings of mutton snapper (using SRFS):



# Expected Action – Action 1

- Recent landings of yellowtail snapper (using SRFS):



# Expected Action – Action 1

- **Modification of OFL, Stock ABC, and Jurisdictional Apportionment of Stock ABC**
- Current apportionment uses bowtie approach, in MRFSS units
  - Bowtie over-weights recent years compared to rest of time series
  - May be appropriate to consider given evolving fishery dynamics in Gulf
  - Relies on identifying reference period
  - Currently, total stock ACLs set equal to their respective stock ABCs
  - Regional ACLs set equal to Council apportionment of stock ABCs
- Considerations:
  - Use same formula for both species?
  - Use different formulas for each species?

# Expected Action – Action 1

- **Alternative 1: No Action.**

- The jurisdictional apportionment for mutton snapper is based on the formula established in the Generic ACL/AM Amendment, whereby 82% of the stock ABC is apportioned to the SA, and 18% is apportioned to the Gulf. The apportionment for mutton snapper used MRFSS recreational data units and is based on 50% of the mean landings from 1990 – 2008 and 50% from 2006 – 2008. Each region's ACL will equal its apportionment of the stock ABC.
- The mutton snapper stock OFL is 912,500 lb ww, and the stock ABC is 797,874 lb ww. The Gulf apportionment of the stock ABC is 143,617 lb ww, and the SA apportionment is 654,257 lb ww.

# Expected Action – Action 1

- **Alternative 1: No Action.**

- The jurisdictional apportionment for yellowtail snapper is based on the formula established in the Generic ACL/AM Amendment, whereby 75% of the stock ABC is apportioned to the SA, and 25% is apportioned to the Gulf. The apportionment for yellowtail snapper used MRFSS recreational data units and is based on 50% of the mean landings from 1993 – 2008 and 50% from 2006 – 2008. Each region's ACL will equal its apportionment of the stock ABC.
- The yellowtail snapper stock OFL is 4,510,000 lb ww, and the stock ABC is 4,050,000 lb ww. The Gulf apportionment of the stock ABC is 1,012,500 lb ww, and the SA apportionment is 3,037,500 lb ww.

# Expected Action – Action 1

- **Alternative 1: No Action.**
  - **Considerations:**
    - Alternative 1 uses MRFSS units, and those are no longer consistent with BSIA
      - Makes Alternative 1 not a viable alternative
    - Alternative 1 uses an outdated reference period
      - A more current reference period will better represent current fishery dynamics

# Expected Action – Action 1

- **Alternative 2:** Retain the jurisdictional apportionments and establish catch limits based on the formula(s) established in the Generic ACL/AM Amendment. Each region's ACL will equal its apportionment of the stock ABC
  - **Option 2a:** For mutton snapper, 82% of the stock ABC is apportioned to the SA, and 18% is apportioned to the Gulf. Landings and quota monitoring for mutton snapper will use State Reef Fish Survey (SRFS) units for recreational private vessel landings, Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) units for federal for-hire and recreational shore landings, and Southeast Region Headboat Survey (SRHS) units for headboat landings.
  - **Option 2b:** For yellowtail snapper, 75% of the stock ABC is apportioned to the SA, and 25% is apportioned to the Gulf. Landings and quota monitoring for yellowtail snapper will use SRFS) units for recreational private vessel landings, MRIP units for federal for-hire and recreational shore landings, and SRHS units for headboat landings.

# Expected Action – Action 1

- **Alternative 2:** Retain the jurisdictional apportionments and establish catch limits based on the formula(s) established in the Generic ACL/AM Amendment. Each region's ACL will equal its apportionment of the stock ABC
- Short version:
  - Uses old jurisdictional allocation on new SSCs-recommended catch limits
  - Manages using SRFS/MRIP-FES data based on recent stock assessments.
- Note:
  - Cells in **GREEN** in the following tables indicate a catch limit ABOVE the recent 5-year average for that region

# Expected Action – Action 1

- Alternative 2:

Alt 2	Stock ABC:			ABC/ACL		
Mutton	Gulf	SA	Year	Gulf	SA	
	18%	82%	2024	449,653	2,048,420	
			2025	479,218	2,183,102	
			2026	490,565	2,234,794	
			2027	495,428	2,256,949	
			2028	499,071	2,273,544	
YTS	Gulf	SA	Year	Gulf	SA	
	25%	75%	2024	988,825	2,966,475	
			2025	993,272	2,979,816	
			2026	981,258	2,943,773	
			2027	978,357	2,935,070	
			2028	979,659	2,938,976	

# Expected Action – Action 1

- **Alternative 3:** Modify the jurisdictional apportionment and catch limits using the “bowtie” approach, and the following reference period. Each region’s ACL will equal its apportionment of the stock ABC.

## Mutton Snapper:

- **Option 3a:** For mutton snapper, use 50% of the average landings from 2004 – 2023 and 50% of the average landings from 2021 – 2023
- **Option 3b:** For mutton snapper, use 50% of the average landings from 2014 – 2023 and 50% of the average landings from 2021 – 2023

## Yellowtail Snapper:

- **Option 3c:** For yellowtail snapper, use 50% of the average landings from 2004 – 2023 and 50% of the average landings from 2021 – 2023
- **Option 3d:** For yellowtail snapper, use 50% of the average landings from 2014 – 2023 and 50% of the average landings from 2021 – 2023

# Expected Action – Action 1

- **Alternative 3:** Modify the jurisdictional apportionment and catch limits using the “bowtie” approach, and the following reference period. Each region’s ACL will equal its apportionment of the stock ABC.
- Mutton Snapper:

Catch Limits: Options 3a		Stock ABC	Gulf ABC	SA ABC
	2024	2,498,073	224,827	2,273,246
Gulf: 9%	2025	2,662,320	239,609	2,422,711
SA: 91%	2026	2,725,359	245,282	2,480,077
	2027	2,752,377	247,714	2,504,663
	2028	2,772,615	249,535	2,523,080
Catch Limits: Options 3b		Stock ABC	Gulf ABC	SA ABC
	2024	2,498,073	199,846	2,298,227
Gulf: 8%	2025	2,662,320	212,986	2,449,334
SA: 92%	2026	2,725,359	218,029	2,507,330
	2027	2,752,377	220,190	2,532,187
	2028	2,772,615	221,809	2,550,806

# Expected Action – Action 1

- **Alternative 3:** Modify the jurisdictional apportionment and catch limits using the “bowtie” approach, and the following reference period. Each region’s ACL will equal its apportionment of the stock ABC.
- Yellowtail Snapper:

Catch Limits: Options 3c		Stock ABC	Gulf ABC	SA ABC
	2024	3,955,300	632,848	3,322,452
Gulf: 16%	2025	3,973,088	635,694	3,337,394
SA: 84%	2026	3,925,031	628,005	3,297,026
	2027	3,913,426	626,148	3,287,278
	2028	3,918,634	626,981	3,291,653
Catch Limits: Options 3d		Stock ABC	Gulf ABC	SA ABC
	2024	3,955,300	593,295	3,362,005
Gulf: 15%	2025	3,973,088	595,963	3,377,125
SA: 85%	2026	3,925,031	588,755	3,336,276
	2027	3,913,426	587,014	3,326,412
	2028	3,918,634	587,795	3,330,839

# Expected Action – Action 1

- **Alternative 4:** Modify the jurisdictional apportionment and catch limits using the following reference period. Each region's ACL will equal its apportionment of the stock ABC.

## Mutton Snapper:

- **Option 4a:** For mutton snapper, use the average landings from 2004 – 2023
- **Option 4b:** For mutton snapper, use the average landings from 2014 – 2023
- **Option 4c:** For mutton snapper, use the average landings from 2019 – 2023

## Yellowtail Snapper:

- **Option 4d:** For yellowtail snapper, use the average landings from 2004 – 2023
- **Option 4e:** For yellowtail snapper, use the average landings from 2014 – 2023
- **Option 4f:** For yellowtail snapper, use the average landings from 2019 – 2023

# Expected Action – Action 1

- **Alternative 4:** Modify the jurisdictional apportionment and catch limits using the following reference period. Each region's ACL will equal its apportionment of the stock ABC. For Mutton Snapper:

Catch Limits: Options 4a	Stock ABC	Gulf ABC	SA ABC
2024	2,498,073	224,827	2,273,246
Gulf: 9%	2025	2,662,320	239,609
SA: 91%	2026	2,725,359	245,282
	2027	2,752,377	247,714
	2028	2,772,615	249,535
Catch Limits: Options 4b	Stock ABC	Gulf ABC	SA ABC
2024	2,498,073	199,846	2,298,227
Gulf: 8%	2025	2,662,320	212,986
SA: 92%	2026	2,725,359	218,029
	2027	2,752,377	220,190
	2028	2,772,615	221,809
Catch Limits: Options 4c	Stock ABC	Gulf ABC	SA ABC
2024	2,498,073	174,865	2,323,208
Gulf: 7%	2025	2,662,320	186,362
SA: 93%	2026	2,725,359	190,775
	2027	2,752,377	192,666
	2028	2,772,615	194,083

# Expected Action – Action 1

- **Alternative 4:** Modify the jurisdictional apportionment and catch limits using the following reference period. Each region's ACL will equal its apportionment of the stock ABC. For Yellowtail Snapper:

Catch Limits: Options 4d	Stock ABC	Gulf ABC	SA ABC
2024	3,955,300	672,401	3,282,899
Gulf: 17%	2025	3,973,088	675,425
SA: 83%	2026	3,925,031	667,255
	2027	3,913,426	665,282
	2028	3,918,634	666,168
Catch Limits: Options 4e	Stock ABC	Gulf ABC	SA ABC
2024	3,955,300	593,295	3,362,005
Gulf: 15%	2025	3,973,088	595,963
SA: 85%	2026	3,925,031	588,755
	2027	3,913,426	587,014
	2028	3,918,634	587,795
Catch Limits: Options 4f	Stock ABC	Gulf ABC	SA ABC
2024	3,955,300	553,742	3,401,558
Gulf: 14%	2025	3,973,088	556,232
SA: 86%	2026	3,925,031	549,504
	2027	3,913,426	547,880
	2028	3,918,634	548,609

# Timeline:

- August 2025 – Gulf Council reviews options presentation
- September 2025 – SA Council reviews options presentation
- November 2025 – Gulf Council reviews options draft document
- December 2025 – SA Council reviews options draft document
- January 2026 – Gulf Council reviews public hearing draft
- March 2026 – SA Council reviews public hearing draft
- April/May 2026 – Public hearings held in both regions
- June 2026 – Gulf Council considers final action
- June 2026 – SA Council considers final action
- July 2026 – Final draft transmitted for implementation

# Questions?

