

Gulf Council
Scientific and Statistical Committee
Scope of Work
January 22, 2026
Tampa, Florida

Agenda Item 4: Gulf Lane Snapper Interim Analysis and Catch Advice

Action: Presentation, discussions, and recommendations

Committee input and next steps: Dr. Francesca Forrestal (Southeast Fisheries Science Center [SEFSC]) will present an updated interim analysis (IA) for Gulf of America (Gulf) lane snapper. This IA is based off the ITarget model used initially in SEDAR 49 (2016) and has been updated to use the Gulf Fishery-Independent Survey of Habitat and Ecosystem Resources (G-FISHER) composite video index as the representative index of relative abundance. The last IA conducted for lane snapper used the recreational headboat catch-per-unit-effort data, and is provided as background along with the SSC's evaluation of that IA. The SSC should consider the information presented, ask questions of SEFSC staff, and make a recommendation regarding the overfishing limit (OFL) and acceptable biological catch (ABC) for Gulf lane snapper to the Council as appropriate.

Motion/recommendation to Council expected

Agenda Item 5: Gulf Red Grouper Interim Analysis Health Check

Action: Presentation, discussions, and recommendations

Committee input and next steps: Dr. Forrestal will present an IA for Gulf red grouper. This IA uses the G-FISHER composite video index as the representative index of relative abundance. The last stock assessment conducted for red grouper also used the G-FISHER index (SEDAR 88 2025). That stock assessment report and the SSC's review are both included as background. Because the Council is currently considering an amendment to the Fishery Management Plan for Reef Fish Resources in the Gulf (Reef Fish Amendment 62) to incorporate the SSC's catch advice from SEDAR 88, this IA is presented as a health check, meaning that new catch advice is not presently being considered. The SSC should consider the information presented, ask questions of SEFSC staff, and make any recommendations to the Council as appropriate.

Agenda Item 6: Gulf Gag Grouper Interim Analysis and Catch Advice

Action: Presentations, discussions, and recommendations

Committee input and next steps: Dr. Lisa Ailloud (SEFSC) will present an IA for Gulf gag grouper. This IA uses the G-FISHER composite video index as the representative index of

relative abundance. The last stock assessment conducted for gag grouper separately considered the three video surveys which make up the G-FISHER index (SEDAR 72 2022). That stock assessment report and the SSC's review are both included as background. Because the rebuilding plan for gag started recently (Reef Fish Amendment 56; implemented in June 2024), and because catch limits for gag are projected to increase annually, this interim analysis is provided as a health check only. The SSC should consider the information presented, ask questions of SEFSC staff, and make recommendations to the SEFSC and Council as appropriate.

Agenda Item 7: Public Comment

Action: Information

Committee input and next steps: Members of the public will be able to address the SSC directly with respect to the topics discussed during this meeting, and other matters, as time allows.

Agenda Item 8: Other Business

Action: Discussion

Committee Input and Next Steps: Additional items may be brought up for discussion by SSC members, time permitting. If the SSC wishes to pursue action, then action can be scheduled at a future SSC meeting.