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Subpart I Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region

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Subpart I—Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region

§ 622.170 Permits and endorsements.

(a) *Commercial vessel permits* –

- (1) ***South Atlantic snapper-grouper.*** For a person aboard a vessel to be eligible for exemption from the bag limits for South Atlantic snapper-grouper in or from the South Atlantic EEZ, to sell South Atlantic snapper-grouper in or from the South Atlantic EEZ, to engage in the directed fishery for golden tilefish in the South Atlantic EEZ, to use a longline to fish for South Atlantic snapper-grouper in the South Atlantic EEZ, or to use a sea bass pot in the South Atlantic EEZ between 35°15.19' N. lat. (due east of Cape Hatteras Light, NC) and 28°35.1' N. lat. (due east of the NASA Vehicle Assembly Building, Cape Canaveral, FL), either a commercial vessel permit for South Atlantic Unlimited Snapper-Grouper Permit or a trip-limited permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper must have been issued to the vessel and must be on board. A vessel with a trip-limited commercial permit is limited on any trip to 225 lb (102.1 kg) of snapper-grouper. See § 622.171 for limitations on the use, transfer, and renewal of a commercial vessel permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper.
- (2) ***Wreckfish.*** For a person aboard a vessel to be eligible for exemption from the bag limit for wreckfish in or from the South Atlantic EEZ, to fish under a quota for wreckfish in or from the South Atlantic EEZ, or to sell wreckfish in or from the South Atlantic EEZ, a commercial vessel permit for wreckfish and a commercial permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper must have been issued to the vessel and must be on board. To obtain a commercial vessel permit for wreckfish, the applicant must be a wreckfish shareholder; and either the shareholder must be the vessel owner or the owner or operator must be an employee, contractor, or agent of the shareholder. (See § 622.172 for information on wreckfish shareholders.)

(b) *Charter vessel/headboat permits* –

- (1) ***South Atlantic snapper-grouper.*** For a person aboard a vessel that is operating as a charter vessel or headboat to fish for or possess, in or from the EEZ, South Atlantic snapper-grouper, a valid charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper must have been issued to the vessel and must be on board. A charter vessel or headboat may have both a charter vessel/headboat permit and a commercial vessel permit. However, when a vessel is operating as a charter vessel or headboat, a person aboard must adhere to the bag limits. See the definitions of “Charter vessel” and “Headboat” in § 622.2 for an explanation of when vessels are considered to be operating as a charter vessel or headboat, respectively.

(2) [Reserved]

(c) *Dealer permits and conditions* –

- (1) ***Permits.*** For a dealer to first receive South Atlantic snapper-grouper (including wreckfish) harvested in or from the EEZ, a Gulf and South Atlantic dealer permit must be issued to the dealer.
- (2) ***State license and facility requirements.*** To obtain a dealer permit or endorsement, the applicant must have a valid state wholesaler's license in the state(s) where the dealer operates, if required by such state(s), and must have a physical facility at a fixed location in such state(s).

(d) ***Permit procedures.*** See § 622.4 for information regarding general permit procedures including, but not limited to application, fees, duration, transfer, renewal, display, sanctions and denials, and replacement.

(e) ***South Atlantic black sea bass pot endorsement.*** For a person aboard a vessel, for which a valid commercial vessel permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper unlimited has been issued, to use a black sea bass pot in the South Atlantic EEZ, a valid South Atlantic black sea bass pot endorsement must have

been issued to the vessel and must be on board. A permit or endorsement that has expired is not valid. This endorsement must be renewed annually and may only be renewed if the associated vessel has a valid commercial vessel permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper unlimited or if the endorsement and associated permit are being concurrently renewed. The RA will not reissue this endorsement if the endorsement is revoked or if the RA does not receive a complete application for renewal of the endorsement within 1 year after the endorsement's expiration date.

- (1) **Initial eligibility.** To be eligible for an initial South Atlantic black sea bass pot endorsement, a person must have been issued and must possess a valid or renewable commercial vessel permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper that has black sea bass landings using black sea bass pot gear averaging at least 2,500 lb (1,134 kg), round weight, annually during the period January 1, 1999 through December 31, 2010. Excluded from this eligibility, are trip-limited permits (South Atlantic snapper-grouper permits that have a 225-lb (102.1-kg) limit of snapper-grouper) and valid or renewable commercial vessel permits for South Atlantic snapper-grouper unlimited that have no reported landings of black sea bass using black sea bass pots from January 1, 2008, through December 31, 2010. NMFS will attribute all applicable black sea bass landings associated with a current snapper-grouper permit for the applicable landings history, including those reported by a person(s) who held the permit prior to the current permit owner, to the current permit owner. Only legal landings reported in compliance with applicable state and Federal regulations are acceptable.
- (2) **Initial issuance.** On or about June 1, 2012, the RA will mail each eligible permittee a black sea bass pot endorsement via certified mail, return receipt requested, to the permittee's address of record as listed in NMFS' permit files. An eligible permittee who does not receive an endorsement from the RA, must contact the RA no later than July 1, 2012, to clarify his/her endorsement status. A permittee denied an endorsement based on the RA's initial determination of eligibility and who disagrees with that determination may appeal to the RA.
- (3) **Procedure for appealing black sea bass pot endorsement eligibility and/or landings information.** The only items subject to appeal are initial eligibility for a black sea bass pot endorsement based on ownership of a qualifying snapper-grouper permit, the accuracy of the amount of landings, and correct assignment of landings to the permittee. Appeals based on hardship factors will not be considered. Appeals must be submitted to the RA postmarked no later than October 1, 2012, and must contain documentation supporting the basis for the appeal. The RA will review all appeals, render final decisions on the appeals, and advise the appellant of the final NMFS decision.
 - (i) **Eligibility appeals.** NMFS' records of snapper-grouper permits are the sole basis for determining ownership of such permits. A person who believes he/she meets the permit eligibility criteria based on ownership of a vessel under a different name, for example, as a result of ownership changes from individual to corporate or vice versa, must document his/her continuity of ownership.
 - (ii) **Landings appeals.** Determinations of appeals regarding landings data for 1999 through 2010 will be based on NMFS' logbook records. If NMFS' logbooks are not available, the RA may use state landings records or data for the period 1999 through 2010 that were submitted in compliance with applicable Federal and state regulations on or before December 31, 2011.
- (4) **Transferability.** A valid or renewable black sea bass pot endorsement may be transferred between any two entities that hold, or simultaneously obtain, a valid South Atlantic snapper-grouper unlimited permit. Endorsements may be transferred independently from the South Atlantic snapper-grouper unlimited permit. NMFS will attribute black sea bass landings to the associated South Atlantic

snapper-grouper unlimited permit regardless of whether the landings occurred before or after the endorsement was issued. Only legal landings reported in compliance with applicable state and Federal regulations are acceptable.

(5) **Fees.** No fee applies to initial issuance of a black sea bass pot endorsement. NMFS charges a fee for each renewal or replacement of such endorsement and calculates the amount of each fee in accordance with the procedures of the NOAA Finance Handbook for determining the administrative costs of each special product or service. The fee may not exceed such costs and is specified with each application form. The handbook is available from the RA. The appropriate fee must accompany each application for renewal or replacement.

(f) **South Atlantic golden tilefish longline endorsement.** For a person aboard a vessel, for which a valid commercial vessel permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper unlimited has been issued, to fish for or possess golden tilefish in the South Atlantic EEZ using longline gear, a South Atlantic golden tilefish longline endorsement must have been issued to the vessel and must be on board. A permit or endorsement that has expired is not valid. This endorsement must be renewed annually and may only be renewed if the associated vessel has a valid commercial vessel permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper unlimited or if the endorsement and associated permit are being concurrently renewed. The RA will not reissue this endorsement if the endorsement is revoked or if the RA does not receive a complete application for renewal of the endorsement within 1 year after the endorsement's expiration date.

(1) **Initial eligibility.** To be eligible for an initial South Atlantic golden tilefish longline endorsement, a person must have been issued and must possess a valid or renewable commercial vessel permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper that has golden tilefish landings using longline gear averaging at least 5,000 lb (2,268 kg), gutted weight, over the best 3 years within the period 2006-2011. NMFS will attribute all applicable golden tilefish landings associated with a current South Atlantic snapper-grouper permit for the applicable landings history, to the current permit owner, including golden tilefish landings reported by a person(s) who held the permit prior to the current permit owner. Only legal landings reported in compliance with applicable state and Federal regulations are acceptable.

(2) **Initial issuance.** On or about April 23, 2013, the RA will mail each eligible permittee a golden tilefish longline endorsement via certified mail, return receipt requested, to the permittee's address of record as listed in NMFS' permit files. An eligible permittee who does not receive an endorsement from the RA, must contact the RA no later than May 23, 2013, to clarify his/her endorsement status. A permittee who is denied an endorsement based on the RA's initial determination of eligibility and who disagrees with that determination may appeal to the RA.

(3) **Procedure for appealing golden tilefish longline endorsement eligibility and/or landings information.** The only items subject to appeal are initial eligibility for a golden tilefish longline endorsement based on ownership of a qualifying snapper-grouper permit, the accuracy of the amount of landings, and the correct assignment of landings to the permittee. Appeals based on hardship factors will not be considered. Appeals must be submitted to the RA postmarked no later than August 21, 2013, and must contain documentation supporting the basis for the appeal. The National Appeals Office will review, evaluate, and render recommendations on appeals to the RA. The RA will then review each appeal, render a final decision on each appeal, and advise the appellant of the final NMFS decision.

(i) **Eligibility appeals.** NMFS' records of snapper-grouper permits are the sole basis for determining ownership of such permits. A person who believes he/she meets the permit eligibility criteria based on ownership of a vessel under a different name, for example, as a result of ownership changes from individual to corporate or vice versa, must document his or her continuity of ownership and must submit that information with their appeal.

- (ii) **Landings appeals.** Determinations of appeals regarding landings data for 2006 through 2011 will be based on NMFS' logbook records, submitted on or before October 31, 2012. If NMFS' logbooks are not available, the RA may use state landings records or data for the period 2006 through 2011 that were submitted in compliance with applicable Federal and state regulations on or before October 31, 2012.
- (4) **Transferability.** A valid or renewable golden tilefish endorsement may be transferred between any two entities that hold, or simultaneously obtain, a valid South Atlantic snapper-grouper unlimited permit. An endorsement may be transferred independently from the South Atlantic snapper-grouper unlimited permit. NMFS will attribute golden tilefish landings to the associated South Atlantic Unlimited Snapper-Grouper Permit regardless of whether the landings occurred before or after the endorsement was issued. Only legal landings reported in compliance with applicable state and Federal regulations are acceptable.
- (5) **Fees.** No fee applies to the initial issuance of a golden tilefish longline endorsement. NMFS charges a fee for each renewal or replacement or transfer of such endorsement and calculates the amount of each fee in accordance with the procedures of the NOAA Finance Handbook for determining the administrative costs of each special product or service. The handbook is available from the RA. The appropriate fee must accompany each application for renewal or replacement or transfer.

[78 FR 22952, Apr. 17, 2013, as amended at 78 FR 23862, Apr. 23, 2013; 79 FR 19495, Apr. 9, 2014]

§ 622.171 South Atlantic snapper-grouper limited access.

- (a) **General.** The only valid commercial vessel permits for South Atlantic snapper-grouper are those that have been issued under the limited access criteria specified in the Fishery Management Plan for the Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region. A commercial vessel permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper is either a transferable commercial permit or a trip-limited commercial permit.
- (b) **Transfers of permits.** A snapper-grouper limited access permit is valid only for the vessel and owner named on the permit. To change either the vessel or the owner, an application for transfer must be submitted to the RA.
 - (1) **Transferable permits.**
 - (i) An owner of a vessel with a transferable permit may request that the RA transfer the permit to another vessel owned by the same entity.
 - (ii) A transferable permit may be transferred upon a change of ownership of a permitted vessel with such permit—
 - (A) From one to another of the following: husband, wife, son, daughter, brother, sister, mother, or father; or
 - (B) From an individual to a corporation whose shares are all held by the individual or by the individual and one or more of the following: husband, wife, son, daughter, brother, sister, mother, or father. The application for transfer of a permit under this paragraph (b)(1)(ii)(B) and each application for renewal of such permit must be accompanied by a current annual report of the corporation that specifies all shareholders of the corporation. A permit will not be renewed if the annual report shows a new shareholder other than a husband, wife, son, daughter, brother, sister, mother, or father.

- (iii) Except as provided in paragraphs (b)(1)(i) and (ii) of this section, a person desiring to acquire a limited access, transferable permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper must obtain and exchange two such permits for one new permit.
 - (iv) A transfer of a permit that is undertaken under paragraph (b)(1)(ii) of this section will constitute a transfer of the vessel's entire catch history to the new owner.
- (2) **Trip-limited permits.** An owner of a vessel with a trip-limited permit may request that the RA transfer the permit to another vessel owned by the same entity.
- (c) **Renewal.** NMFS will not reissue a commercial vessel permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper if the permit is revoked or if the RA does not receive an application for renewal within one year of the permit's expiration date.

§ 622.172 Wreckfish individual transferable quota (ITQ) system.

The provisions of this section apply to wreckfish in or from the South Atlantic EEZ.

(a) **General** –

(1) **Percentage shares** –

- (i) **Initial ITQ shares.** In accordance with the procedure specified in the Fishery Management Plan for the Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region, percentage shares of the quota for wreckfish were assigned at the beginning of the program. Each person was notified by the RA of his or her percentage share and shareholder certificate number.
 - (ii) **Reverted ITQ shares.** Any shares determined by NMFS to be inactive, will be redistributed proportionately among remaining shareholders (subject to cap restrictions) based on shareholder landings history. Inactive shares are, for purposes of this section, those shares held by ITQ shareholders who have not reported any wreckfish landings between April 16, 2006, and January 14, 2011.
 - (iii) **Percentage share set-aside to accommodate resolution of appeals.** During the 2012-2013 fishing year, the RA will reserve 1.401 percent of wreckfish ITQ shares prior to redistributing shares (see paragraph (a)(1)(ii) of this section) to accommodate resolution of appeals, if necessary. NMFS will distribute any portion of the 1.401-percent share remaining after the appeals process as soon as possible among the remaining shareholders.
 - (iv) **Procedure for appealing wreckfish quota share status and landings information.** Appeals must be submitted to the RA postmarked no later than January 24, 2013, and must contain documentation supporting the basis for the appeal. The only items subject to appeal are the status of wreckfish quota shares, as active or inactive, and the accuracy of the amount of landings. The RA will review and evaluate all appeals, render final decisions on the appeals, and advise the appellant of the final decision. Appeals based on hardship factors will not be considered. The RA will determine the outcome of appeals based on NMFS' logbooks. If NMFS' logbooks are not available, the RA may use state landings records. Appellants must submit NMFS' logbooks or state landings records, as appropriate, to support their appeal.
- (2) **Share transfers.** All or a portion of a person's percentage shares are transferrable. Transfer of shares must be reported on a form available from the RA. The RA will confirm, in writing, each transfer of shares. The effective date of each transfer is the confirmation date provided by the RA. NMFS charges a fee for each transfer of shares and calculates the amount in accordance with the

procedures of the NOAA Finance Handbook. The handbook is available from the RA. The fee may not exceed such costs and is specified with each transfer form. The appropriate fee must accompany each transfer form.

(3) **ITQ share cap.** No person, including a corporation or other entity, may individually or collectively hold ITQ shares in excess of 49 percent of the total shares. For the purposes of considering the share cap, a corporation's total ITQ share is determined by adding the corporation's ITQ shares to any other ITQ shares the corporation owns in another corporation. If an individual ITQ shareholder is also a shareholder in a corporation that holds ITQ shares, an individual's total ITQ share is determined by adding the applicable ITQ shares held by the individual to the applicable ITQ shares equivalent to the corporate share the individual holds in a corporation. A corporation must provide the RA the identity of the shareholders of the corporation and their percent of shares in the corporation, and provide updated information to the RA within 30 days of when a change occurs. This information must also be provided to the RA any time a commercial vessel permit for wreckfish is renewed or transferred.

(b) **List of wreckfish shareholders.** Annually, on or about March 1, the RA will provide each wreckfish shareholder with a list of all wreckfish shareholders and their percentage shares, reflecting share transactions on forms received through February 15.

(c) **ITQs.**

(1) Annually, as soon after March 1 as the TAC for wreckfish for the fishing year that commences April 16 is known, the RA will calculate each wreckfish shareholder's ITQ. Each ITQ is the product of the wreckfish TAC, in round weight, for the ensuing fishing year, the factor for converting round weight to eviscerated weight, and each wreckfish shareholder's percentage share, reflecting share transactions reported on forms received by the RA through February 15. Thus, the ITQs will be in terms of eviscerated weight of wreckfish.

(2) The RA will provide each wreckfish shareholder with ITQ coupons in various denominations, the total of which equals his or her ITQ, and a copy of the calculations used in determining his or her ITQ. Each coupon will be coded to indicate the initial recipient.

(3) An ITQ coupon may be transferred from one wreckfish shareholder to another by completing the sale endorsement thereon (that is, the signature and shareholder certificate number of the buyer). An ITQ coupon may be possessed only by the shareholder to whom it has been issued, or by the shareholder's employee, contractor, or agent, unless the ITQ coupon has been transferred to another shareholder. An ITQ coupon that has been transferred to another shareholder may be possessed only by the shareholder whose signature appears on the coupon as the buyer, or by the shareholder's employee, contractor, or agent, and with all required sale endorsements properly completed.

(4) Wreckfish may not be possessed on board a fishing vessel that has been issued a commercial vessel permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper and a commercial vessel permit for wreckfish—

(i) In an amount exceeding the total of the ITQ coupons on board the vessel; or

(ii) That does not have on board logbook forms for that fishing trip, as required under § 622.176(a)(3)(i).

(5) Prior to termination of a trip, a signature and date signed must be affixed in ink to the "Fisherman" part of ITQ coupons in denominations equal to the eviscerated weight of the wreckfish on board. The "Fisherman" part of each such coupon must be separated from the coupon and submitted with the logbook forms required by § 622.176(a)(3)(i) for that fishing trip.

- (6) The “Fish House” part of each such coupon must be given to the dealer to whom the wreckfish are transferred in amounts totaling the eviscerated weight of the wreckfish transferred to that dealer. Wreckfish may be transferred only to a Gulf and South Atlantic dealer permit holder, as required under § 622.170(c)(1).
- (7) A dealer may first receive wreckfish only from a vessel for which a commercial permit for wreckfish has been issued, as required under § 622.170(a)(2). A dealer must receive the “Fish House” part of ITQ coupons in amounts totaling the eviscerated weight of the wreckfish received; enter the permit number of the vessel from which the wreckfish were received, enter the date the wreckfish were received, enter the dealer's permit number, and sign each such “Fish House” part; and submit all such parts with the electronic dealer reports required by § 622.5(c).
- (8) An owner or operator of a vessel and a dealer must make available to an authorized officer all ITQ coupons in his or her possession upon request.

(d) **Wreckfish limitations.**

- (1) A wreckfish taken in the South Atlantic EEZ may not be transferred at sea, regardless of where the transfer takes place; and a wreckfish may not be transferred in the South Atlantic EEZ.
- (2) A wreckfish possessed by a fisherman or dealer shoreward of the outer boundary of the South Atlantic EEZ or in a South Atlantic coastal state will be presumed to have been harvested from the South Atlantic EEZ unless accompanied by documentation that it was harvested from other than the South Atlantic EEZ.
- (3) A wreckfish harvested by a vessel that has been issued a commercial vessel permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper and a commercial vessel permit for wreckfish may be offloaded from a fishing vessel only between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., local time.
- (4) If a wreckfish harvested by a vessel that has been issued a commercial vessel permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper and a commercial vessel permit for wreckfish is to be offloaded at a location other than a fixed facility of a dealer who holds a Gulf and South Atlantic dealer permit, as required under § 622.170(c)(1), the wreckfish shareholder or the vessel operator must advise the NMFS Office for Law Enforcement, Southeast Region, St. Petersburg, FL, by telephone (727-824-5344), of the location not less than 24 hours prior to offloading.

[78 FR 22952, Apr. 17, 2013, as amended at 79 FR 19495, Apr. 9, 2014]

§§ 622.173-622.175 [Reserved]

§ 622.176 Recordkeeping and reporting.

(a) **Commercial vessel owners and operators —**

- (1) **General reporting requirements.** The owner or operator of a vessel for which a commercial permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, as required under § 622.170(a)(1), or whose vessel fishes for or lands South Atlantic snapper-grouper in or from state waters adjoining the South Atlantic EEZ, who is selected to report by the SRD must maintain a fishing record on a form available from the SRD and must submit such record as specified in paragraph (a)(4) of this section.

- (2) **Electronic logbook/video monitoring reporting.** The owner or operator of a vessel for which a commercial permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, as required under § 622.170(a)(1), who is selected to report by the SRD must participate in the NMFS-sponsored electronic logbook and/or video monitoring reporting program as directed by the SRD. Compliance with the reporting requirements of this paragraph (a)(2) is required for permit renewal.
- (3) **Wreckfish reporting.** The wreckfish shareholder under § 622.172, or operator of a vessel for which a commercial permit for wreckfish has been issued, as required under § 622.170(a)(2), must—
 - (i) Maintain a fishing record on a form available from the SRD and must submit such record as specified in paragraph (a)(4) of this section.
 - (ii) Make available to an authorized officer upon request all records of commercial offloadings, purchases, or sales of wreckfish.
- (4) **Reporting deadlines.** Completed fishing records required by this paragraph (a) must be submitted to the SRD postmarked not later than 7 days after the end of each fishing trip. If no fishing occurred during a calendar month, a report so stating must be submitted on one of the forms postmarked not later than 7 days after the end of that month. Information to be reported is indicated on the form and its accompanying instructions.

(b) **Charter vessel/headboat owners and operators —**

(1) **General reporting requirement —**

- (i) **Charter vessels.** The owner or operator of a charter vessel for which a charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, as required under § 622.170(b)(1), and whose vessel is operating as a charter vessel, must record all fish harvested and discarded, and any other information requested by the SRD for each trip, and submit an electronic fishing report within the time period specified in paragraph (b)(2)(i) of this section. The electronic fishing report must be submitted to the SRD via NMFS-approved hardware and software, as specified in paragraph (b)(5) of this section. If the owner or operator subject to this paragraph (b)(1)(i) has been issued a Federal permit that requires more restrictive reporting requirements, as determined by NMFS and posted on the NMFS Southeast Region website, reporting under those more restrictive regulations will meet the requirements of this paragraph (b)(1)(i).
- (ii) **Headboats.** The owner or operator of a headboat for which a charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, as required under § 622.170(b)(1), and whose vessel is operating as a headboat in state or Federal waters, must record all fish harvested and discarded, and any other information requested by the SRD for each trip in state or Federal waters, and submit an electronic fishing report within the time period specified in paragraph (b)(2)(i) of this section. The electronic fishing report must be submitted to the SRD via NMFS-approved hardware and software, as specified in paragraph (b)(5) of this section.
- (iii) **Electronic logbook/video monitoring reporting.** The owner or operator of a vessel for which a charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, as required under § 622.170(b)(1), and whose vessel fishes for or lands such snapper-grouper in or from state or Federal waters, who is selected to report by the SRD must participate in the NMFS-sponsored electronic logbook and/or video monitoring program as directed by the SRD. Compliance with the reporting requirements of paragraph (b)(2)(i) of this section is required for permit renewal.

(2) **Reporting deadlines for charter vessels and headboats.**

- (i) Completed electronic fishing reports required by paragraph (b)(1) of this section must be submitted to the SRD by the Tuesday following each previous reporting week of Monday through Sunday, or at shorter intervals if notified by the SRD. If no fishing activity as a charter vessel or headboat occurred during a reporting week, an electronic report so stating must be submitted by the Tuesday following that reporting week, or at a shorter interval if notified by the SRD.
- (ii) Completed fishing reports required by paragraph (b)(1)(iii) of this section for charter vessels or headboats may be required weekly or daily, as directed by the SRD. Information to be reported is indicated on the form and its accompanying instructions.

(3) **Catastrophic conditions.** During catastrophic conditions only, NMFS provides for use of paper forms for basic required functions as a backup to the electronic reports required by paragraphs (b)(1)(i) and (ii) of this section. The RA will determine when catastrophic conditions exist, the duration of the catastrophic conditions, and which participants or geographic areas are deemed affected by the catastrophic conditions. The RA will provide timely notice to affected participants via publication of notification in the FEDERAL REGISTER, and other appropriate means such as fishery bulletins or NOAA weather radio, and will authorize the affected participants' use of paper forms for the duration of the catastrophic conditions. The paper forms will be available from NMFS. During catastrophic conditions, the RA has the authority to modify or waive reporting time requirements.

(4) **Compliance requirement.** Electronic reports required by paragraphs (b)(1)(i) and (ii) of this section must be submitted and received by NMFS according to the reporting requirements under this section. A report not received within the applicable time specified in paragraph (b)(2)(i) of this section is delinquent. A delinquent report results in the owner and operator of a charter vessel or headboat for which a charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued being prohibited from harvesting or possessing such species automatically, with no additional requirement for NMFS to provide notice to the owner and operator of their delinquency. The owner and operator who are prohibited from harvesting or possessing such species due to delinquent reports are authorized to harvest or possess such species only after all required and delinquent reports have been submitted and received by NMFS according to the reporting requirements under this section.

(5) **Hardware and software requirements for electronic reporting.** Owners and operators must submit electronic reports using NMFS-approved hardware and software as posted on the NMFS Southeast Region website.

(c) **Dealers.**

- (1) A dealer who first receives South Atlantic snapper-grouper (including wreckfish) must maintain records and submit information as specified in § 622.5(c).
- (2) On demand, a dealer who has been issued a Gulf and South Atlantic dealer permit, as required under § 622.170(c)(1), must make available to an authorized officer all records of offloadings, purchases, or sales of South Atlantic snapper-grouper (including wreckfish).

(d) **Private recreational vessels in the South Atlantic snapper-grouper fishery.** The owner or operator of a vessel that fishes for or lands South Atlantic snapper-grouper in or from the South Atlantic EEZ who is selected to report by the SRD must—

- (1) Maintain a fishing record for each trip, or a portion of such trips as specified by the SRD, on forms provided by the SRD. Completed fishing records must be submitted to the SRD monthly and must either be made available to an authorized statistical reporting agent or be postmarked not later than 7 days after the end of each month. Information to be reported is indicated on the form and its accompanying instructions.
- (2) Participate in the NMFS-sponsored electronic logbook and/or video monitoring reporting program as directed by the SRD.

[78 FR 22952, Apr. 17, 2013, as amended at 78 FR 78781, Dec. 27, 2013; 79 FR 19495, Apr. 9, 2014; 85 FR 10339, Feb. 24, 2020]

§ 622.177 Gear identification.

(a) *Sea bass pots and associated buoys* —

- (1) **Sea bass pots.** A sea bass pot used or possessed in the South Atlantic EEZ between 35°15.19' N. lat. (due east of Cape Hatteras Light, NC) and 28°35.1' N. lat. (due east of the NASA Vehicle Assembly Building, Cape Canaveral, FL), or a sea bass pot on board a vessel with a commercial permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper, must have a valid identification tag issued by the RA attached.
- (2) **Associated buoys.** In the South Atlantic EEZ, buoys are not required to be used, but, if used, each buoy must display the official number and color code assigned by the RA so as to be easily distinguished, located, and identified.
- (3) **Presumption of ownership.** A sea bass pot in the EEZ will be presumed to be the property of the most recently documented owner. This presumption will not apply with respect to such pots that are lost or sold if the owner reports the loss or sale within 15 days to the RA.
- (4) **Unmarked sea bass pots or buoys.** An unmarked sea bass pot or a buoy deployed in the EEZ where such pot or buoy is required to be marked is illegal and may be disposed of in any appropriate manner by the Assistant Administrator or an authorized officer.

(b) [Reserved]

§ 622.178 At-sea observer coverage.

(a) *Required coverage.*

- (1) A vessel for which a Federal commercial vessel permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper or a charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued must carry a NMFS-approved observer, if the vessel's trip is selected by the SRD for observer coverage. Vessel permit renewal is contingent upon compliance with this paragraph (a)(1).
- (2) Any other vessel that fishes for South Atlantic snapper-grouper in the South Atlantic EEZ must carry a NMFS-approved observer, if the vessel's trip is selected by the SRD for observer coverage.

(b) **Notification to the SRD.** When observer coverage is required, an owner or operator must advise the SRD in writing not less than 5 days in advance of each trip of the following:

- (1) Departure information (port, dock, date, and time).
- (2) Expected landing information (port, dock, and date).

(c) **Observer accommodations and access.** An owner or operator of a vessel on which a NMFS-approved observer is embarked must:

- (1) Provide accommodations and food that are equivalent to those provided to the crew.
- (2) Allow the observer access to and use of the vessel's communications equipment and personnel upon request for the transmission and receipt of messages related to the observer's duties.
- (3) Allow the observer access to and use of the vessel's navigation equipment and personnel upon request to determine the vessel's position.
- (4) Allow the observer free and unobstructed access to the vessel's bridge, working decks, holding bins, weight scales, holds, and any other space used to hold, process, weigh, or store fish.
- (5) Allow the observer to inspect and copy the vessel's log, communications logs, and any records associated with the catch and distribution of fish for that trip.

§ 622.179 Conservation measures for protected resources.

(a) *South Atlantic snapper-grouper commercial vessels and charter vessels/headboats* –

(1) *Sea turtle conservation measures.*

- (i) The owner or operator of a vessel for which a commercial vessel permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper or a charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, as required under § 622.170(a)(1) and (b)(1), respectively, and whose vessel has on board any hook-and-line gear, must have the 2019 version of the NMFS document titled, “Careful Release Protocols for Sea Turtle Release with Minimal Injury” available for reference on board electronically or have a paper copy on board inside the wheelhouse, or within a waterproof case if there is no wheelhouse. In addition, the NMFS sea turtle handling and release guidelines placard must be posted inside the wheelhouse or an easily viewable area on the vessel if there is no wheelhouse.
- (ii) Such owner or operator must also comply with the sea turtle interaction mitigation measures, including the release gear and handling requirements specified in appendix F of this part.
- (iii) Those permitted vessels with a freeboard height of 4 ft (1.2 m) or less must have on board a net or hoist, tire or other support device, short-handled dehooker(s) for internal and external hooks, long-nose or needle-nose pliers, bolt cutters, monofilament line cutters, and at least two types of mouth openers or mouth gags. This equipment must meet the specifications described in appendix F of this part.
- (iv) Those permitted vessels with a freeboard height of greater than 4 ft (1.2 m) must have on board a net or hoist, tire or other support device, long-handled line clipper or cutter, short-handled dehooker(s) for internal and external hooks, long-handled dehooker(s) for internal and external hooks, a long-handled device to pull an inverted “V” in the fishing line, long-nose or needle-nose pliers, bolt cutters, monofilament line cutters, and at least two types of mouth openers or mouth gags. This equipment must meet the specifications described in appendix F of this part.

(2) *Smalltooth sawfish conservation measures.* The owner or operator of a vessel for which a commercial vessel permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper or a charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, as required under §§ 622.170(a)(1) and 622.170(b)(1), respectively, that incidentally catches a smalltooth sawfish must—

- (i) Keep the sawfish in the water at all times;
- (ii) If it can be done safely, untangle the line if it is wrapped around the saw;

- (iii) Cut the line as close to the hook as possible; and
- (iv) Not handle the animal or attempt to remove any hooks on the saw, except with a long-handled dehooker.

(b) **Incorporation by reference.** The standards required in paragraph (a)(1) of this section are incorporated by reference into this section with the approval of the Director of the Federal Register under 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51. All approved material is available for inspection at the National Marine Fisheries Service, Southeast Regional Office, 263 13th Ave. South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701, phone: 727-824-5301, website: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/southeast/endangered-species-conservation/sea-turtle-and-smalltooth-sawfish-release-gear-protocols>, and is available from the sources listed in paragraphs (b)(1) and (2) of this section. It is also available for inspection at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). For information on the availability of this material at NARA, email fedreg.legal@nara.gov or go to www.archives.gov/federal-register/cfr/ibr-locations.html.

(1) U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service, Southeast Fisheries Science Center, 75 Virginia Beach Drive, Miami, FL 33149.

(i) Careful Release Protocols for Sea Turtle Release with Minimal Injury, NOAA Technical Memorandum NMFS-SEFSC-735, Stokes, L., and Bergmann, C. (Editors), 2019.

(ii) [Reserved]

(2) U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service, Southeast Regional Office, 263 13th Ave. South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701.

(i) Sea Turtle Handling/Release Guidelines: Quick Reference for Hook and Line Fisheries, English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Revised April 2019.

(ii) [Reserved]

[78 FR 22952, Apr. 17, 2013, as amended at 84 FR 67238, Dec. 9, 2019]

§ 622.180 Prohibited gear and methods.

Also see § 622.9 for additional prohibited gear and methods that apply more broadly to multiple fisheries or in some cases all fisheries.

(a) **Poisons.** A poison may not be used to fish for South Atlantic snapper-grouper in the South Atlantic EEZ.

(b) **Rebreathers and spearfishing gear.** In the South Atlantic EEZ, a person using a rebreather may not harvest South Atlantic snapper-grouper with spearfishing gear. The possession of such snapper-grouper while in the water with a rebreather is *prima facie* evidence that such fish was harvested with spearfishing gear while using a rebreather.

(c) **Longlines for wreckfish.** A bottom longline may not be used to fish for wreckfish in the South Atlantic EEZ. A person aboard a vessel that has a longline on board may not retain a wreckfish in or from the South Atlantic EEZ. For the purposes of this paragraph, a vessel is considered to have a longline on board when a power-operated longline hauler, a cable of diameter suitable for use in the longline fishery longer than 1.5 mi (2.4 km) on any reel, and gangions are on board. Removal of any one of these three elements constitutes removal of a longline.

§ 622.181 Prohibited and limited-harvest species.

- (a) **General.** The harvest and possession restrictions of this section apply without regard to whether the species is harvested by a vessel operating under a commercial vessel permit. The operator of a vessel that fishes in the EEZ is responsible for the limit applicable to that vessel.
- (b) **Prohibited species.**
- (1) Goliath grouper may not be harvested or possessed in the South Atlantic EEZ. Goliath grouper taken in the South Atlantic EEZ incidentally by hook-and-line must be released immediately by cutting the line without removing the fish from the water.
 - (2) [Reserved]
 - (3) **Speckled hind and warsaw grouper.** Speckled hind and warsaw grouper may not be harvested or possessed in or from the South Atlantic EEZ. Such fish caught in the South Atlantic EEZ must be released immediately with a minimum of harm. These restrictions also apply in the South Atlantic on board a vessel for which a valid Federal commercial or charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, *i.e.*, in state or Federal waters.
 - (4) Nassau grouper may not be harvested or possessed in the South Atlantic EEZ or the Gulf EEZ. Nassau grouper taken in the South Atlantic EEZ or the Gulf EEZ incidentally by hook-and-line must be released immediately by cutting the line without removing the fish from the water.
- (c) **Limited-harvest species.** A person who fishes in the EEZ may not combine a harvest limitation specified in this paragraph (c) with a harvest limitation applicable to state waters. A species subject to a harvest limitation specified in this paragraph (c) taken in the EEZ may not be transferred at sea, regardless of where such transfer takes place, and such species may not be transferred in the EEZ.
- (1) **Cubera snapper.** No person may harvest more than two cubera snapper measuring 30 inches (76.2 cm), TL, or larger, per day in the South Atlantic EEZ off Florida and no more than two such cubera snapper in or from the South Atlantic EEZ off Florida may be possessed on board a vessel at any time.
 - (2) **Red snapper.** Red snapper may only be harvested or possessed in or from the South Atlantic EEZ during the commercial and recreational seasons as specified in §§ 622.183(b)(5) and 622.193(y). Any red snapper caught in the South Atlantic EEZ during a time other than the specified commercial or recreational seasons specified in § 622.193(y) must be released immediately with a minimum of harm. In addition, for a person on board a vessel for which a valid Federal commercial or charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, the prohibition on the harvest or possession of red snapper applies in the South Atlantic, regardless of where such fish are harvested or possessed, *i.e.*, in state or Federal waters.

[78 FR 22952, Apr. 17, 2013, as amended at 78 FR 44464, July 24, 2013; 78 FR 78775, Dec. 27, 2013; 83 FR 35434, July 26, 2018]

§ 622.182 Gear-restricted areas.

- (a) **Special management zones (SMZs).**
- (1) The SMZs consist of artificial reefs and surrounding areas as follows:
 - (i) **Paradise Reef** is bounded on the north by 33°31.59' N. lat.; on the south by 33°30.51' N. lat.; on the east by 78°57.55' W. long.; and on the west by 78°58.85' W. long.

- (ii) **Ten Mile Reef** is bounded on the north by 33°26.65' N. lat.; on the south by 33°24.80' N. lat.; on the east by 78°51.08' W. long.; and on the west by 78°52.97' W. long.
- (iii) **Pawleys Island Reef** is bounded on the north by 33°26.58' N. lat.; on the south by 33°25.76' N. lat.; on the east by 79°00.29' W. long.; and on the west by 79°01.24' W. long.
- (iv) **Georgetown Reef** is bounded on the north by 33°14.90' N. lat.; on the south by 33°13.85' N. lat.; on the east by 78°59.45' W. long.; and on the west by 79°00.65' W. long.
- (v) **Capers Reef** is bounded on the north by 32°45.45' N. lat.; on the south by 32°43.91' N. lat.; on the east by 79°33.81' W. long.; and on the west by 79°35.10' W. long.
- (vi) **Kiawah Reef** is bounded on the north by 32°29.78' N. lat.; on the south by 32°28.25' N. lat.; on the east by 79°59.00' W. long.; and on the west by 80°00.95' W. long.
- (vii) **Edisto Offshore Reef** is bounded on the north by 32°15.30' N. lat.; on the south by 32°13.90' N. lat.; on the east by 79°50.25' W. long.; and on the west by 79°51.45' W. long.
- (viii) **Hunting Island Reef** is bounded on the north by 32°13.72' N. lat.; on the south by 32°12.30' N. lat.; on the east by 80°19.23' W. long.; and on the west by 80°21.00' W. long.
- (ix) **Fripp Island Reef** is bounded on the north by 32°15.92' N. lat.; on the south by 32°14.75' N. lat.; on the east by 80°21.62' W. long.; and on the west by 80°22.90' W. long.
- (x) **Betsy Ross Reef** is bounded on the north by 32°03.60' N. lat.; on the south by 32°02.88' N. lat.; on the east by 80°24.57' W. long.; and on the west by 80°25.50' W. long.
- (xi) **Hilton Head Reef/Artificial Reef—T** is bounded on the north by 32°00.71' N. lat.; on the south by 31°59.42' N. lat.; on the east by 80°35.23' W. long.; and on the west by 80°36.37' W. long.
- (xii) **Artificial Reef—A** is bounded on the north by 30°57.4' N. lat.; on the south by 30°55.4' N. lat.; on the east by 81°13.9' W. long.; and on the west by 81°16.3' W. long.
- (xiii) **Artificial Reef—C** is bounded on the north by 30°52.0' N. lat.; on the south by 30°50.0' N. lat.; on the east by 81°08.5' W. long.; and on the west by 81°10.9' W. long.
- (xiv) **Artificial Reef—G** is bounded on the north by 31°00.0' N. lat.; on the south by 30°58.0' N. lat.; on the east by 80°56.8' W. long.; and on the west by 80°59.2' W. long.
- (xv) **Artificial Reef—F** is bounded on the north by 31°06.8' N. lat.; on the south by 31°04.8' N. lat.; on the east by 81°10.5' W. long.; and on the west by 81°13.4' W. long.
- (xvi) **Artificial Reef—J** is bounded on the north by 31°36.7' N. lat.; on the south by 31°34.7' N. lat.; on the east by 80°47.3' W. long.; and on the west by 80°50.1' W. long.
- (xvii) **Artificial Reef—L** is bounded on the north by 31°46.0' N. lat.; on the south by 31°44.0' N. lat.; on the east by 80°34.7' W. long.; and on the west by 80°37.1' W. long.
- (xviii) **Artificial Reef—KC** is bounded on the north by 31°51.2' N. lat.; on the south by 31°49.2' N. lat.; on the east by 80°45.3' W. long.; and on the west by 80°47.7' W. long.
- (xix) **Ft. Pierce Inshore Reef** is bounded on the north by 27°26.8' N. lat.; on the south by 27°25.8' N. lat.; on the east by 80°09.24' W. long.; and on the west by 80°10.36' W. long.

(xx) *Ft. Pierce Offshore Reef* is bounded by rhumb lines connecting, in order, the following points:

Point	North lat.	West long.
A	27°23.68'	80°03.95'
B	27°22.80'	80°03.60'
C	27°23.94'	80°00.02'
D	27°24.85'	80°00.33'
A	27°23.68'	80°03.95'

- (xxi) *Key Biscayne/Artificial Reef—H* is bounded on the north by 25°42.82' N. lat.; on the south by 25°41.32' N. lat.; on the east by 80°04.22' W. long.; and on the west by 80°05.53' W. long.
- (xxii) *Little River Offshore Reef* is bounded on the north by 33°42.10' N. lat.; on the south by 33°41.10' N. lat.; on the east by 78°26.40' W. long.; and on the west by 78°27.10' W. long.
- (xxiii) *BP-25 Reef* is bounded on the north by 33°21.70' N. lat.; on the south by 33°20.70' N. lat.; on the east by 78°24.80' W. long.; and on the west by 78°25.60' W. long.
- (xxiv) *Vermilion Reef* is bounded on the north by 32°57.80' N. lat.; on the south by 32°57.30' N. lat.; on the east by 78°39.30' W. long.; and on the west by 78°40.10' W. long.
- (xxv) *Cape Romaine Reef* is bounded on the north by 33°00.00' N. lat.; on the south by 32°59.50' N. lat.; on the east by 79°02.01' W. long.; and on the west by 79°02.62' W. long.
- (xxvi) *Y-73 Reef* is bounded on the north by 32°33.20' N. lat.; on the south by 32°32.70' N. lat.; on the east by 79°19.10' W. long.; and on the west by 79°19.70' W. long.
- (xxvii) *Eagles Nest Reef* is bounded on the north by 32°01.48' N. lat.; on the south by 32°00.98' N. lat.; on the east by 80°30.00' W. long.; and on the west by 80°30.65' W. long.
- (xxviii) *Bill Perry Jr. Reef* is bounded on the north by 33°26.20' N. lat.; on the south by 33°25.20' N. lat.; on the east by 78°32.70' W. long.; and on the west by 78°33.80' W. long.
- (xxix) *Comanche Reef* is bounded on the north by 32°27.40' N. lat.; on the south by 32°26.90' N. lat.; on the east by 79°18.80' W. long.; and on the west by 79°19.60' W. long.
- (xxx) *Murrel's Inlet 60 Foot Reef* is bounded on the north by 33°17.50' N. lat.; on the south by 33°16.50' N. lat.; on the east by 78°44.67' W. long.; and on the west by 78°45.98' W. long.
- (xxxi) *Georgetown 95 Foot Reef* is bounded on the north by 33°11.75' N. lat.; on the south by 33°10.75' N. lat.; on the east by 78°24.10' W. long.; and on the west by 78°25.63' W. long.
- (xxxii) *New Georgetown 60 Foot Reef* is bounded on the north by 33°09.25' N. lat.; on the south by 33°07.75' N. lat.; on the east by 78°49.95' W. long.; and on the west by 78°51.45' W. long.
- (xxxiii) *North Inlet 45 Foot Reef* is bounded on the north by 33°21.03' N. lat.; on the south by 33°20.03' N. lat.; on the east by 79°00.31' W. long.; and on the west by 79°01.51' W. long.

- (xxxiv) *CJ Davidson Reef* is bounded on the north by 33°06.48' N. lat.; on the south by 33°05.48' N. lat.; on the east by 79°00.27' W. long.; and on the west by 79°01.39' W. long.
- (xxxv) *Greenville Reef* is bounded on the north by 32°57.25' N. lat.; on the south by 32°56.25' N. lat.; on the east by 78°54.25' W. long.; and on the west by 78°55.25' W. long.
- (xxxvi) *Charleston 60 Foot Reef* is bounded on the north by 32°33.60' N. lat.; on the south by 32°32.60' N. lat.; on the east by 79°39.70' W. long.; and on the west by 79°40.90' W. long.
- (xxxvii) *Edisto 60 Foot Reef* is bounded on the north by 32°21.75' N. lat.; on the south by 32°20.75' N. lat.; on the east by 80°04.10' W. longitude; and on the west by 80°05.70' W. long.
- (xxxviii) *Edisto 40 Foot Reef* is bounded on the north by 32°25.78' N. lat.; on the south by 32°24.78' N. lat.; on the east by 80°11.24' W. long.; and on the west by 80°12.32' W. long.
- (xxxix) *Beaufort 45 Foot Reef* is bounded on the north by 32°07.65' N. lat.; on the south by 32°06.65' N. lat.; on the east by 80°28.80' W. long.; and on the west by 80°29.80' W. long.
- (xl) *Artificial Reef—ALT* is bounded on the north by 31°18.6' N. lat.; on the south by 31°16.6' N. lat.; on the east by 81°07.0' W. long.; and on the west by 81°09.4' W. long.
- (xli) *Artificial Reef—CAT* is bounded on the north by 31°40.2' N. lat.; on the south by 31°38.2' N. lat.; on the east by 80°56.2' W. long.; and on the west by 80°58.6' W. long.
- (xlii) *Artificial Reef—CCA* is bounded on the north by 31°43.7' N. lat.; on the south by 31°41.7' N. lat.; on the east by 80°40.0' W. long.; and on the west by 80°42.3' W. long.
- (xliii) *Artificial Reef—DRH* is bounded on the north by 31°18.0' N. lat.; on the south by 31°16.0' N. lat.; on the east by 80°56.6' W. long.; and on the west by 80°59.0' W. long.
- (xliv) *Artificial Reef—DUA* is bounded on the north by 31°47.8' N. lat.; on the south by 31°45.8' N. lat.; on the east by 80°52.1' W. long.; and on the west by 80°54.5' W. long.
- (xlv) *Artificial Reef—DW* is bounded on the north by 31°22.8' N. lat.; on the south by 31°20.3' N. lat.; on the east by 79°49.8' W. long.; and on the west by 79°51.1' W. long.
- (xlvi) *Artificial Reef—KBY* is bounded on the north by 30°48.6' N. lat.; on the south by 30°46.6' N. lat.; on the east by 81°15.0' W. long.; and on the west by 81°17.4' W. long.
- (xlvii) *Artificial Reef—KTK* is bounded on the north by 31°31.3' N. lat.; on the south by 31°29.3' N. lat.; on the east by 80°59.1' W. long.; and on the west by 81°01.5' W. long.
- (xlviii) *Artificial Reef—MRY* is bounded on the north by 30°47.5' N. lat.; on the south by 30°45.5' N. lat.; on the east by 81°05.5' W. long.; and on the west by 81°07.8' W. long.
- (xlix) *Artificial Reef—SAV* is bounded on the north by 31°55.4' N. lat.; on the south by 31°53.4' N. lat.; on the east by 80°45.2' W. long.; and on the west by 80°47.6' W. long.
- (l) *Artificial Reef—SFC* is bounded on the north by 31°00.8' N. lat.; on the south by 30°59.8' N. lat.; on the east by 81°02.2' W. long.; and on the west by 81°03.4' W. long.
- (li) *Artificial Reef—WW* is bounded on the north by 31°43.5' N. lat.; on the south by 31°42.2' N. lat.; on the east by 79°57.7' W. long.; and on the west by 79°59.3' W. long.

- (2) To determine what restrictions apply in the SMZs listed in paragraph (a)(1) of this section, follow this table:

TABLE 2 TO PARAGRAPH (a)(2)

In SMZs specified in the following paragraphs of this section	These restrictions apply
(a)(1)(i) through (x) and (a)(1)(xxii) through (xxxix)	Use of a powerhead to take South Atlantic snapper-grouper is prohibited.
(a)(1)(i) through (x) and (a)(1)(xxii) through (xxxix)	Possession of a powerhead and a mutilated South Atlantic snapper-grouper in, or after having fished in, one of these SMZs constitutes <i>prima facie</i> evidence that such fish was taken with a powerhead in the SMZ. Harvest and possession of a South Atlantic snapper-grouper is limited to the bag limits specified in § 622.187(b).
(a)(1)(i) through (xviii) and (a)(1)(xxii) through (li)	Fishing may only be conducted with handline, rod and reel, and spearfishing gear.
(a)(1)(i) through (li)	Use of a sea bass pot or bottom longline is prohibited.
(a)(1)(xii) through (xviii) and (a)(1)(xl) through (li)	Possession of South Atlantic snapper-grouper taken with a powerhead is limited to the bag limits specified in § 622.187(b).
(a)(1)(xix) and (a)(1)(xx)	A hydraulic or electric reel that is permanently affixed to the vessel is prohibited when fishing for South Atlantic snapper-grouper.
(a)(1)(xix) and (a)(1)(xxi)	Use of spearfishing gear is prohibited.

- (b) **Longline prohibited areas.** A longline may not be used to fish in the EEZ for South Atlantic snapper-grouper south of 27°10' N. lat. (due east of the entrance to St. Lucie Inlet, FL); or north of 27°10' N. lat. where the charted depth is less than 50 fathoms (91.4 m), as shown on the latest edition of the largest scale NOAA chart of the location. A person aboard a vessel with a longline on board that fishes on a trip in the South Atlantic EEZ south of 27°10' N. lat., or north of 27°10' N. lat. where the charted depth is less than 50

fathoms (91.4 m), is limited on that trip to the bag limit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper for which a bag limit is specified in § 622.187(b), and to zero for all other South Atlantic snapper-grouper. For the purpose of this paragraph, a vessel is considered to have a longline on board when a power-operated longline hauler, a cable or monofilament of diameter and length suitable for use in the longline fishery, and gangions are on board. Removal of any one of these three elements constitutes removal of a longline.

(c) [Reserved]

(d) **Sea bass pot prohibited area.** A sea bass pot may not be used in the South Atlantic EEZ south of 28°35.1' N. lat. (due east of the NASA Vehicle Assembly Building, Cape Canaveral, FL). A sea bass pot deployed in the EEZ south of 28°35.1' N. lat. may be disposed of in any appropriate manner by the Assistant Administrator or an authorized officer.

(d) [Reserved]

(e) **SMZs off North Carolina.**

- (1) The center of each SMZ in Table 3 to this paragraph (e) is located at the given point with a radius extending the applicable distance in every direction laterally from that point to form a circle around the center point.
- (2) Harvest of South Atlantic snapper-grouper while in the SMZs in this paragraph (e) is permitted only by handline, rod and reel, and spearfishing gear. All harvest of South Atlantic snapper-grouper by spearfishing gear in the SMZs in this paragraph (e) is limited to the applicable recreational bag and possession limits in § 622.187.

TABLE 3 TO PARAGRAPH (e)

Reef name	North lat.	West long.	Radius in ft (m)
AR-130	36°00.296'	75°31.957'	1,500 (457)
AR-140	35°56.718'	75°31.965'	1,500 (457)
AR-145	35°54.017'	75°23.883'	1,500 (457)
AR-220	35°08.117'	75°40.633'	3,000 (914)
AR-225	35°06.768'	75°39.322'	1,500 (457)
AR-230	35°06.133'	75°42.933'	1,500 (457)
AR-250	34°56.900'	75°54.860'	1,500 (457)
AR-255	34°55.483'	75°57.910'	1,500 (457)
AR-285	34°33.383'	76°26.350'	1,500 (457)
AR-300	34°18.517'	76°24.133'	1,500 (457)
AR-302	34°10.265'	76°13.703'	1,500 (457)
AR-305	34°16.683'	76°38.650'	1,500 (457)
AR-330	34°33.634'	76°51.267'	3,000 (914)
AR-340	34°34.319'	76°58.345'	1,500 (457)

Reef name	North lat.	West long.	Radius in ft (m)
AR-345	34°32.266'	76°58.508'	1,500 (457)
AR-355	34°21.318'	77°19.877'	1,500 (457)
AR-362	34°15.657'	77°30.392'	1,500 (457)
AR-366	34°12.950'	77°25.250'	1,500 (457)
AR-368	34°09.514'	77°25.782'	1,500 (457)
AR-372	34°06.295'	77°44.917'	1,500 (457)
AR-376	34°03.283'	77°39.633'	1,500 (457)
AR-382	33°58.581'	77°41.172'	1,500 (457)
AR-386	33°57.517'	77°33.400'	1,500 (457)
AR-400	33°29.267'	77°35.227'	1,500 (457)
AR-420	33°51.050'	78°06.710'	1,500 (457)
AR-440	33°49.800'	78°13.083'	1,500 (457)
AR-445	33°44.783'	78°14.100'	1,500 (457)
AR-455	33°47.033'	78°17.883'	1,500 (457)
AR-460	33°50.089'	78°22.022'	1,500 (457)
AR-465	33°23.423'	78°11.052'	1,500 (457)

(f) **Additional SMZs off South Carolina.**

- (1) The center of each SMZ in Table 4 to this paragraph (f) is located at the given point with a radius extending the applicable distance in every direction laterally from that point to form a circle around the center point.
- (2) Harvest of South Atlantic snapper-grouper while in the SMZs in this paragraph (f) is permitted only by handline, rod and reel, and spearfishing gear (excludes a powerhead). All harvest of South Atlantic snapper-grouper by the allowable gear in the SMZs in this paragraph (f) is limited to the applicable recreational bag and possession limits in § 622.187.

- (3) **PA-04—Ron McManus Memorial Reef.** This SMZ is bounded by lines connecting the following corner points: northwest corner point at 33°46.400' N, 78°36.200' W; northeast corner point at 33°46.400' N, 78°35.600' W; southeast corner point at 33°45.900' N, 78°35.600' W; and southwest corner point at 33°45.900' N, 78°36.200' W.

TABLE 4 TO PARAGRAPH (f)

Reef name	North lat.	West long.	Radius in ft (m)
PA-07 Pop Nash	33°34.510'	78°51.000'	600 (183)
PA-28 Lowcountry Anglers	32°34.300'	79°55.100'	600 (183)
PA-34 CCA-McClellanville	32°51.800'	79°22.500'	600 (183)

[78 FR 22952, Apr. 17, 2013, as amended at 85 FR 36171, June 15, 2020; 87 FR 23149, Apr. 19, 2022]

§ 622.183 Area and seasonal closures.

(a) **Area closures —**

(1) **Marine protected areas (MPAs).**

- (i) No person may fish for a South Atlantic snapper-grouper in an MPA, and no person may possess a South Atlantic snapper-grouper in an MPA. However, the prohibition on possession does not apply to a person aboard a vessel that is in transit with fishing gear appropriately stowed as specified in paragraph (a)(1)(ii) of this section. In addition to these restrictions, see § 635.21(d)(1)(iii) of this chapter regarding restrictions applicable within these MPAs for any vessel issued a permit under part 635 of this chapter that has longline gear on board. MPAs consist of deepwater areas as follows:

- (A) **Snowy Grouper Wreck MPA** is bounded by rhumb lines connecting, in order, the following points:

Point	North lat.	West long.
A	33°25'	77°04.75'
B	33°34.75'	76°51.3'
C	33°25.5'	76°46.5'
D	33°15.75'	77°00.0'

Point	North lat.	West long.
A	33°25'	77°04.75'

- (B) **Northern South Carolina MPA** is bounded on the north by 32°53.5' N. lat.; on the south by 32°48.5' N. lat.; on the east by 78°04.75' W. long.; and on the west by 78°16.75' W. long.
- (C) **Edisto MPA** is bounded on the north by 32°24' N. lat.; on the south by 32°18.5' N. lat.; on the east by 78°54.0' W. long.; and on the west by 79°06.0' W. long.
- (D) **Charleston Deep Artificial Reef MPA** is bounded by rhumb lines connecting, in order, the following points:

Point	North lat.	West long.
A	32°05.04'	79°13.575'
B	32°09.65'	79°09.2'
C	32°07.155'	79°05.595'
D	32°02.36'	79°09.975'
A	32°05.04'	79°13.575'

- (E) **Georgia MPA** is bounded by rhumb lines connecting, in order, the following points:

Point	North lat.	West long.
A	31°43'	79°31'
B	31°43'	79°21'
C	31°34'	79°29'
D	31°34'	79°39'
A	31°43'	79°31'

- (F) **North Florida MPA** is bounded on the north by 30°29' N. lat.; on the south by 30°19' N. lat.; on the east by 80°02' W. long.; and on the west by 80°14' W. long.
- (G) **St. Lucie Hump MPA** is bounded on the north by 27°08' N. lat.; on the south by 27°04' N. lat.; on the east by 79°58' W. long.; and on the west by 80°00' W. long.

(H) *East Hump MPA* is bounded by rhumb lines connecting, in order, the following points:

Point	North lat.	West long.
A	24°36.5'	80°45.5'
B	24°32'	80°36'
C	24°27.5'	80°38.5'
D	24°32.5'	80°48'
A	24°36.5'	80°45.5'

(ii) For the purpose of paragraph (a)(1)(i) of this section, transit means direct, non-stop progression through the MPA. Fishing gear appropriately stowed means—

- (A) A longline may be left on the drum if all gangions and hooks are disconnected and stowed below deck. Hooks cannot be baited. All buoys must be disconnected from the gear; however, buoys may remain on deck.
- (B) A trawl or try net may remain on deck, but trawl doors must be disconnected from such net and must be secured.
- (C) A gillnet, stab net, or trammel net must be left on the drum. Any additional such nets not attached to the drum must be stowed below deck.
- (D) Terminal gear (*i.e.*, hook, leader, sinker, flasher, or bait) used with an automatic reel, bandit gear, buoy gear, handline, or rod and reel must be disconnected and stowed separately from such fishing gear. A rod and reel must be removed from the rod holder and stowed securely on or below deck.
- (E) A crustacean trap, golden crab trap, or sea bass pot cannot be baited. All buoys must be disconnected from the gear; however, buoys may remain on deck.

(2) **Spawning SMZs.**

(i) Any fishing vessel in a spawning SMZ is prohibited to fish for or harvest species in the snapper-grouper fishery management unit year-round. For a fishing vessel to possess snapper-grouper species on board while in a spawning SMZ, the vessel must be in transit and fishing gear must be appropriately stowed, as specified in paragraph (a)(2)(vii) of this section. Except for spawning SMZs of Area 51 and Area 53, the spawning SMZs in this paragraph are effective until August 2, 2027. A person on board a fishing vessel may not anchor, use an anchor and chain, or use a grapple and chain while in the spawning SMZs specified in paragraph (a)(2) of this section. The anchoring prohibition does not apply to fishing vessels in the spawning SMZs of Area 51 and Area 53.

- (ii) *South Cape Lookout Spawning SMZ* is bounded by rhumb lines connecting, in order, the following points:

Point	North lat.	West long.
A	33°53.040'	76°28.617'
B	33°52.019'	76°27.798'
C	33°49.946'	76°30.627'
D	33°51.041'	76°31.424'
A	33°53.040'	76°28.617'

- (iii) *Devil's Hole/Georgetown Hole Spawning SMZ* is bounded by rhumb lines connecting, in order, the following points:

Point	North lat.	West long.
A	32°34.311'	78°34.996'
B	32°34.311'	78°33.220'
C	32°32.748'	78°33.220'
D	32°32.748'	78°34.996'
A	32°34.311'	78°34.996'

- (iv) *Area 51 Spawning SMZ* is bounded by rhumb lines connecting, in order, the following points:

Point	North lat.	West long.
A	32°35.25'	79°28.6'
B	32°35.25'	79°27'
C	32°33.75'	79°27'
D	32°33.75'	79°28.6'

Point	North lat.	West long.
A	32°35.25'	79°28.6'

(v) *Area 53 Spawning SMZ* is bounded by rhumb lines connecting, in order, the following points:

Point	North lat.	West long.
A	32°22.65'	79°22.25'
B	32°22.65'	79°20.5'
C	32°21.15'	79°20.5'
D	32°21.15'	79°22.25'
A	32°22.65'	79°22.25'

(vi) *Warsaw Hole/50 Fathom Hole Spawning SMZ* is bounded by rhumb lines connecting, in order, the following points:

Point	North lat.	West long.
A	24°22.277'	82°20.417'
B	24°22.277'	82°18.215'
C	24°20.932'	82°18.215'
D	24°20.932'	82°20.417'
A	24°22.277'	82°20.417'

(vii) For the purpose of paragraph (a)(2)(i) of this section, transit means direct, non-stop progression through the spawning SMZ. Fishing gear appropriately stowed means—

- (A) A longline may be left on the drum if all gangions and hooks are disconnected and stowed below deck. Hooks cannot be baited. All buoys must be disconnected from the gear; however, buoys may remain on deck.
- (B) Trawl doors and nets must be out of the water, but the doors are not required to be on deck or secured on or below deck.
- (C) A gillnet, stab net, or trammel net must be left on the drum. Any additional such nets not attached to the drum must be stowed below deck.

- (D) Terminal gear (*i.e.*, hook, leader, sinker, flasher, or bait) used with an automatic reel, bandit gear, buoy gear, handline, or rod and reel must be disconnected and stowed separately from such fishing gear. Sinkers must be disconnected from the down rigger and stowed separately.
- (E) A crustacean trap, golden crab trap, or sea bass pot cannot be baited. All buoys must be disconnected from the gear; however, buoys may remain on deck.

(b) **Seasonal closures** –

- (1) **Seasonal closure of the commercial and recreational sectors for gag and associated grouper species.** During January through April each year, no person may fish for, harvest, or possess in or from the South Atlantic EEZ any South Atlantic shallow-water grouper (SASWG): Gag, black grouper, red grouper, scamp, red hind, rock hind, yellowmouth grouper, yellowfin grouper, graysby, and coney. For a person on board a vessel for which a valid Federal commercial or charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, these prohibitions against fishing, harvesting, or possessing apply in the South Atlantic, *i.e.*, in state or Federal waters. Additionally, in the month of May, no person may fish for, harvest, or possess any South Atlantic red grouper in or from the South Atlantic EEZ off North Carolina or off South Carolina. For a person on board a vessel for which a valid Federal commercial or charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, these prohibitions against fishing, harvesting, or possessing red grouper in May apply in state waters off North Carolina and off South Carolina.
- (2) **Wreckfish spawning-season closure.** From January 15 through April 15, each year, no person may harvest or possess on a fishing vessel wreckfish in or from the EEZ; offload wreckfish from the EEZ; or sell or purchase wreckfish in or from the EEZ. The prohibition on sale or purchase of wreckfish does not apply to trade in wreckfish that were harvested, offloaded, and sold or purchased prior to January 15 and were held in cold storage by a dealer or processor.
- (3) **Wreckfish recreational sector closures.** The recreational sector for wreckfish in or from the South Atlantic EEZ is closed from January 1 through June 30, and September 1 through December 31, each year. During a closure, the bag and possession limit for wreckfish in or from the South Atlantic EEZ is zero.
- (4) **Hogfish recreational sector off the Florida Keys and east coast of Florida.** From January through April and from November through December each year, the recreational harvest or possession of hogfish in or from the South Atlantic EEZ off the Florida Keys and east coast of Florida, and in the Gulf EEZ south of 25°09' N. lat. off the west coast of Florida is prohibited, and the bag and possession limits are zero.
- (5) **Closures of the commercial and recreational sectors for red snapper** –
 - (i) The commercial and recreational sectors for red snapper are closed (*i.e.*, red snapper may not be harvested or possessed, or sold or purchased) in or from the South Atlantic EEZ, except as specified in § 622.193(y). Each year, NMFS will announce the season opening dates in the FEDERAL REGISTER. The commercial season will begin on the second Monday in July, unless otherwise specified. The recreational season, which consists of weekends only (Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays) begins on the second Friday in July, unless otherwise specified. NMFS will project the length of the recreational fishing season and announce the recreational fishing season end date in the FEDERAL REGISTER. See § 622.193(y), for establishing the end date of the commercial fishing season.

(ii) If the RA determines tropical storm or hurricane conditions exist, or are projected to exist, in the South Atlantic, during a commercial or recreational fishing season, the RA may modify the opening and closing dates of the fishing season by filing a notification to that effect with the Office of the Federal Register, and announcing via NOAA Weather Radio and a Fishery Bulletin any change in the dates of the red snapper commercial or recreational fishing season.

(iii) For the commercial sector, if the RA determines tropical storm or hurricane conditions exist, or are projected to exist, in the South Atlantic during a commercial fishing season, the RA may modify the opening and closing dates of the fishing season by filing a notification to that effect with the Office of the Federal Register and announcing via NOAA Weather Radio and a Fishery Bulletin any change in the dates of the red snapper commercial fishing season. For the recreational sector, if the RA determines that weather conditions classified by the National Weather Service at least as severe as a small craft advisory exist, or are projected to exist, in the South Atlantic EEZ, the RA may modify the opening and closing dates of the recreational fishing season by filing a notification to that effect with the Office of the Federal Register and announcing via NOAA Weather Radio and a Fishery Bulletin any change in the dates of the red snapper recreational fishing season.

(6) Seasonal closure of the commercial black sea bass pot component of the snapper-grouper fishery.

The closed area is that area and time period described in paragraphs (b)(6)(i) and (b)(6)(ii) of this section, respectively. During the applicable closure, no person may harvest or possess black sea bass in or from the closed area within the South Atlantic EEZ either with sea bass pots or from a vessel with sea bass pots on board, except that a vessel with a valid commercial permit for snapper-grouper with a sea bass pot endorsement that is in transit and with black sea bass pot gear appropriately stowed as described in paragraph (b)(6)(iii) of this section may possess black sea bass. In addition, sea bass pots must be removed from the water in the applicable closed area within the South Atlantic EEZ before the applicable time period, and may not be on board a vessel in the closed area within the South Atlantic EEZ during the applicable closure, except for such sea bass pot gear appropriately stowed on board a vessel in transit through the closed area. See paragraph (b)(6)(iii) of this section for black sea bass pot transit and gear stowage requirements through the closed areas.

(i) From November 1 through November 30 and from April 1 through April 30, no person may harvest or possess black sea bass in or from the closed area within the South Atlantic EEZ either with sea bass pots or from a vessel with sea bass pots on board in the South Atlantic EEZ inshore of the rhumb lines connecting, in order, the following points:

Point	North lat.	West long.
1	35°15'	State/EEZ boundary.
2	35°15'	75°09'.
3	35°06'	75°22'.
4	35°06'	75°39'.
5	35°01'	75°47'.
6	34°54'	75°46'.

Point	North lat.	West long.
7	34°52'	76°04'
8	34°33'	76°22'
9	34°23'	76°18'
10	34°21'	76°27'
11	34°25'	76°51'
12	34°09'	77°19'
13	33°44'	77°38'
14	33°25'	77°27'
15	33°22'	77°40'
16	33°28'	77°41'
17	33°32'	77°53'
18	33°22'	78°26'
19	33°06'	78°31'
20	33°05'	78°40'
21	33°01'	78°43'
22	32°56'	78°57'
23	32°44'	79°04'
24	32°42'	79°13'
25	32°34'	79°23'
26	32°25'	79°25'
27	32°23'	79°37'
28	31°53'	80°09'
29	31°31'	80°33'
30	30°43'	80°49'
31	30°30'	81°01'
32	29°45'	81°01'
33	29°31'	80°58'
34	29°13'	80°52'

Point	North lat.	West long.
35	29°13'	State/EEZ boundary.

- (ii) From December 1 through March 31, no person may harvest or possess black sea bass in or from the closed area within the South Atlantic EEZ either with sea bass pots or from a vessel with sea bass pots on board in the South Atlantic EEZ inshore of the rhumb lines connecting, in order, the following points:

Point	North lat.	West long.
1	35°15'	State/EEZ boundary.
2	35°15'	75°08'.
3	34°58'	75°41'.
4	34°49'	75°50'.
5	34°47'	76°05'.
6	34°31'	76°18'.
7	34°20'	76°13'.
8	34°12'	77°00'.
9	33°43'	77°30'.
10	33°21'	77°21'.
11	33°18'	77°41'.
12	33°22'	77°56'.
13	33°12'	78°20'.
14	33°05'	78°22'.
15	33°01'	78°38'.
16	32°40'	79°01'.
17	32°36'	79°18'.
18	32°19'	79°22'.
19	32°16'	79°37'.
20	32°03'	79°48'.
21	31°39'	80°27'.
22	30°58'	80°47'.
23	30°13'	81°01'.
24	29°32'	80°39'.
25	29°22'	80°44'.
26	28°50'	80°22'.
27	28°21'	80°18'.

Point	North lat.	West long.
28	28°21'	State/EEZ boundary.

- (iii) For the purpose of paragraph (b)(6) of this section, transit means non-stop progression through the area; fishing gear appropriately stowed means all black sea bass pot gear must be out of the water and on board the deck of the vessel. All buoys must either be disconnected from the gear or stowed within the sea bass pot. Disconnected buoys may remain on deck.
- (7) **Blueline tilefish recreational sector closure.** The recreational sector for blueline tilefish in or from the South Atlantic EEZ is closed from January 1 through April 30, and September 1 through December 31, each year. During a closure, the bag and possession limit for blueline tilefish in or from the South Atlantic EEZ is zero.
- (8) **Snowy grouper recreational sector closure.** The recreational sector for snowy grouper in the South Atlantic EEZ is closed each year from January 1 through April 30, and July 1 through December 31. During a recreational closure, the bag and possession limits for snowy grouper harvested in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.
- (9) **Red porgy recreational sector closure.** The recreational sector for red porgy is closed from January 1 through April 30, and July 1 through December 31, each year. During a closure, the bag and possession limits for red porgy in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.
- (10) **Greater amberjack spawning season closure.** From April 1 through April 30, each year, no person may fish for, harvest, or possess in or from the South Atlantic EEZ any greater amberjack. For a person on board a vessel for which a valid Federal commercial or charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, these prohibitions against fishing, harvesting, or possessing apply in the South Atlantic, *i.e.*, in state or Federal waters. Such greater amberjack are also subject to the prohibition on sale or purchase, as specified in § 622.192(g).
- (11) **Golden tilefish commercial longline component.** The golden tilefish commercial longline component in or from the South Atlantic EEZ is closed from January 1 through January 14, each year. During a closure, no vessel with a valid or renewable golden tilefish longline endorsement as described at 50 CFR 622.191(a)(2)(ii), and no person, may fish for, harvest, or possess golden tilefish from the South Atlantic EEZ with longline gear on board.

[78 FR 22952, Apr. 17, 2013, as amended at 78 FR 44464, July 24, 2013; 78 FR 47579, Aug. 6, 2013; 78 FR 49184, Aug. 13, 2013; 78 FR 58253, Sept. 23, 2013; 80 FR 16587, Mar. 30, 2015; 80 FR 43038, July 21, 2015; 81 FR 95902, Dec. 29, 2016; 82 FR 29775, June 30, 2017; 82 FR 34594, July 25, 2017; 83 FR 35435, July 26, 2018; 85 FR 6827, Feb. 6, 2020; 85 FR 64980, Oct. 14, 2020; 87 FR 77747, Dec. 20, 2022; 88 FR 65822, Sept. 26, 2023; 88 FR 76701, Nov. 7, 2023; 88 FR 83868, Dec. 1, 2023; 89 FR 50534, June 14, 2024]

§ 622.184 [Reserved]

§ 622.185 Size limits.

All size limits in this section are minimum size limits unless specified otherwise. A fish not in compliance with its size limit, as specified in this section, in or from the South Atlantic EEZ, may not be possessed, sold, or purchased. A fish not in compliance with its size limit must be released immediately with a minimum of harm. The operator of a vessel that fishes in the EEZ is responsible for ensuring that fish on board are in compliance with the size limits specified in this section.

(a) *Snapper* –

- (1) [Reserved]
- (2) *Vermilion snapper* –12 inches (30.5 cm), TL.
- (3) *Cubera, gray, and yellowtail snappers* –12 inches (30.5 cm), TL.
- (4) *Mutton snapper* –18 inches (45.7 cm), TL.
- (5) *Lane snapper* –8 inches (20.3 cm), TL.

(b) *Grouper* –

- (1) *Red, yellowfin, and yellowmouth grouper; and scamp* –20 inches (50.8 cm), TL.
- (2) *Black grouper and gag* –24 inches (61.0 cm), TL.

(c) *Other snapper-grouper species* –

- (1) *Black sea bass*.
 - (i) For a fish taken by a person subject to the bag limit specified in § 622.187(b)(7)–13 inches (33 cm), TL.
 - (ii) For a fish taken by a person not subject to the bag limit specified in § 622.187(b)(7)–11 inches (28 cm), TL.
- (2) *Gray triggerfish* –12 inches (30.5 cm), FL.
- (3) *Hogfish*.
 - (i) In the South Atlantic EEZ off Georgia, South Carolina, and North Carolina–17 inches (43.2 cm), fork length.
 - (ii) In the South Atlantic EEZ off the Florida Keys and east coast of Florida, and in the Gulf EEZ south of 25°09' N. lat. off the west coast of Florida–16 inches (40.6 cm), fork length.
- (4) *Red porgy* –14 inches (35.6 cm), TL.
- (5) *Greater amberjack* –28 inches (71.1 cm), fork length, for a fish taken by a person subject to the bag limit specified in § 622.187(b)(1) and 34 inches (86.4 cm), fork length, for a fish taken by a person not subject to the bag limit.
- (6) *Almaco jack*. For a fish taken by a person not subject to the bag limit specified in § 622.187(b)(8)–20 inches (50.8 cm), FL.

[78 FR 22952, Apr. 17, 2013, as amended at 78 FR 44465, July 24, 2013; 80 FR 30952, June 1, 2015; 81 FR 32253, May 23, 2016; 82 FR 34594, July 25, 2017; 83 FR 1309, Jan. 11, 2018; 85 FR 4594, Jan. 27, 2020; 85 FR 11309, Feb. 27, 2020; 88 FR 65822, Sept. 26, 2023]

§ 622.186 Landing fish intact.

- (a) South Atlantic snapper-grouper in or from the South Atlantic EEZ must be maintained with head and fins intact, except as specified in paragraph (b) of this section. Such fish may be eviscerated, gilled, and scaled, but must otherwise be maintained in a whole condition. The operator of a vessel that fishes in the EEZ is responsible for ensuring that fish on that vessel in the EEZ are maintained intact and, if taken from the EEZ, are maintained intact through offloading ashore, as specified in this section.
- (b) In the South Atlantic EEZ, snapper-grouper lawfully harvested in Bahamian waters are exempt from the requirement that they be maintained with head and fins intact, provided that the skin remains intact on the entire fillet of any snapper-grouper carcasses, valid Bahamian fishing and cruising permits are on board the vessel, each person on the vessel has a valid government passport with current stamps and dates from The Bahamas, and the vessel is in transit through the South Atlantic EEZ with fishing gear appropriately stowed. For the purpose of this paragraph, a vessel is in transit through the South Atlantic EEZ when it is on a direct and continuous course through the South Atlantic EEZ and no one aboard the vessel fishes in the EEZ. For the purpose of this paragraph, fishing gear appropriately stowed means that terminal gear (*i.e.*, hook, leader, sinker, flasher, or bait) used with an automatic reel, bandit gear, buoy gear, handline, or rod and reel must be disconnected and stowed separately from such fishing gear. Sinkers must be disconnected from the down rigger and stowed separately. See § 622.187(a)(3) for the limit of snapper-grouper fillets lawfully harvested from Bahamian waters that may transit through the South Atlantic EEZ.

[78 FR 22952, Apr. 17, 2013, as amended at 80 FR 80688, Dec. 28, 2015]

§ 622.187 Bag and possession limits.

- (a) **Additional applicability provisions for South Atlantic snapper-grouper.** Section 622.11(a) provides the general applicability for bag and possession limits. However, § 622.11(a) notwithstanding:
 - (1) The bag and other limits specified in § 622.182(b) apply for South Atlantic snapper-grouper in or from the EEZ to a person aboard a vessel for which a commercial permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued that has on board a longline in the longline closed area.
 - (2) A person aboard a vessel for which a commercial permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued must comply with the bag limits specified in paragraph (b)(1) of this section for South Atlantic snapper-grouper taken with a powerhead, regardless of where taken, when such snapper-grouper are possessed in an SMZ specified in § 622.182(a)(1)(xii) through (a)(1)(xviii) or (a)(1)(xi) through (a)(1)(li).
 - (3) In the South Atlantic EEZ, a vessel that lawfully harvests snapper-grouper in Bahamian waters, as per § 622.186 (b), must comply with the bag and possession limits specified in this section. For determining how many snapper-grouper are on board a vessel in fillet form when harvested lawfully in Bahamian waters, two fillets of snapper-grouper, regardless of the length of each fillet, is equivalent to one snapper-grouper. The skin must remain intact on the entire fillet of any snapper-grouper carcass.
- (b) **Bag limits** –

- (1) **Greater amberjack** –1.
- (2) **Grouper and tilefish, combined** –3. Within the 3-fish aggregate bag limit:
 - (i) No more than one fish may be gag or black grouper, combined. However, no gag or black grouper may be retained by the captain or crew of a vessel operating as a charter vessel or headboat. The bag limit for such captain and crew is zero;
 - (A) In addition to the bag limits specified in this paragraph (b)(2)(i), for gag, the vessel limit for a vessel operating as a private recreational vessel may not exceed 2 fish per vessel per day.
 - (B) In addition to the bag limits specified in this paragraph (b)(2)(i), for gag, the vessel limit for a vessel operating as a charter vessel or headboat may not exceed 2 fish per vessel per trip.
 - (C) In addition to the bag limits specified in this paragraph (b)(2)(i), for black grouper, the vessel limit for a vessel operating as a private recreational vessel may not exceed 2 fish per vessel per day.
 - (D) In addition to the bag limits specified in this paragraph (b)(2)(i), for black grouper, the vessel limit for a vessel operating as a charter vessel or headboat may not exceed 2 fish per vessel per trip.
 - (ii) No more than one fish per vessel may be a snowy grouper;
 - (iii) No more than one fish may be a golden tilefish; and
 - (iv) No more than two fish may be blueline tilefish. However, no blueline tilefish may be retained by the captain or crew of a vessel operating as a charter vessel or headboat. The bag limit for such captain and crew is zero.
 - (v) No goliath grouper or Nassau grouper may be retained.
- (3) **Hogfish**.
 - (i) In the South Atlantic EEZ off Georgia, South Carolina, and North Carolina—2.
 - (ii) In the South Atlantic EEZ off the Florida Keys and east coast of Florida, and in the Gulf EEZ south of 25°09' N. lat. off the west coast of Florida—1.
- (4) **Snappers, combined** –10.
 - (i) Within the 10-fish bag limit, no more than 5 fish may be mutton snapper.
 - (ii) Excluded from this 10-fish bag limit are cubera snapper, measuring 30 inches (76.2 cm), TL, or larger, in the South Atlantic off Florida, and red snapper and vermilion snapper. (See § 622.181(b)(2) for the prohibitions on harvest or possession of red snapper, except during a limited recreational fishing season, and § 622.181(c)(1) for limitations on cubera snapper measuring 30 inches (76.2 cm), TL, or larger, in or from the South Atlantic EEZ off Florida.)
- (5) **Vermilion snapper** –5.
- (6) **Red porgy**. 1.
- (7) **Black sea bass**—7.

- (8) *South Atlantic snapper-grouper (whitebone porgy, jolthead porgy, knobbed porgy, saucereye porgy, scup, almaco jack, banded rudderfish, lesser amberjack, white grunt, margate, sailor's choice, Atlantic spadefish, gray triggerfish, bar jack), combined* –20. However, excluded from this 20-fish bag limit are tomtate, South Atlantic snapper-grouper ecosystem component species (specified in table 4 of appendix A to part 622), and those specified in paragraphs (b)(1) through (7) and paragraphs (b)(9) and (10) of this section. Within the 20-fish bag limit, no more than 10 fish can be of any one of these single snapper-grouper species.
- (9) *Red snapper* –1.
- (10) No more than one fish per vessel may be a wreckfish.
- (11) *Longline bag limits.* Other provisions of this paragraph (b) notwithstanding, a person on a trip aboard a vessel for which the bag limits apply that has a longline on board is limited on that trip to the bag limit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper for which a bag limit is specified in this paragraph (b), and to zero for all other South Atlantic snapper-grouper. For the purposes of this paragraph (b)(11), a vessel is considered to have a longline on board when a power-operated longline hauler, a cable or monofilament of diameter and length suitable for use in the longline fishery, and gangions are on board. Removal of any one of these elements constitutes removal of a longline.

(c) *Possession limits.*

- (1) Provided each passenger is issued and has in possession a receipt issued on behalf of the vessel that verifies the duration of the trip—
 - (i) A person aboard a charter vessel or headboat on a trip that spans more than 24 hours may possess no more than two daily bag limits of species other than red porgy.
 - (ii) A person aboard a headboat on a trip that spans more than 48 hours and who can document that fishing was conducted on at least 3 days may possess no more than three daily bag limits of species other than red porgy.
- (2) A person aboard a vessel may not possess red porgy in or from the EEZ in excess of one per day or one per trip, whichever is more restrictive.

[78 FR 22952, Apr. 17, 2013, as amended at 78 FR 44465, July 24, 2013; 78 FR 78775, Dec. 27, 2013; 80 FR 16587, Mar. 30, 2015; 80 FR 80688, Dec. 28, 2015; 81 FR 45248, July 13, 2016; 82 FR 34594, July 25, 2017; 83 FR 1309, Jan. 11, 2018; 83 FR 35435, July 26, 2018; 85 FR 11309, Feb. 27, 2020; 87 FR 77747, Dec. 20, 2022; 88 FR 65146, Sept. 21, 2023; 88 FR 76701, Nov. 7, 2023]

§ 622.188 Required gear, authorized gear, and unauthorized gear.

- (a) *Required gear.* For a person on board a vessel to harvest or possess South Atlantic snapper-grouper in or from the South Atlantic EEZ, the vessel must possess on board and such person must use the gear as specified in paragraphs (a)(1) and (a)(2) of this section.
 - (1) *Dehooking device.* At least one dehooking device is required and must be used as needed to remove hooks embedded in South Atlantic snapper-grouper with minimum damage. The hook removal device must be constructed to allow the hook to be secured and the barb shielded without re-engaging during the removal process. The dehooking end must be blunt, and all edges rounded. The device must be of a size appropriate to secure the range of hook sizes and styles used in the South Atlantic snapper-grouper fishery.

- (2) **Non-offset, non-stainless steel circle hooks.** Non-offset, non-stainless steel circle hooks are required to be used when fishing for South Atlantic snapper-grouper with hook-and-line gear and natural baits north of 28° N lat.
 - (3) **Non-stainless steel hooks.** Non-stainless steel hooks are required to be used when fishing for South Atlantic snapper-grouper with hook-and-line gear and natural baits south of 28° N lat.
 - (4) **Descending device.** At least one descending device is required to be on board a vessel and be ready for use while fishing for or possessing South Atlantic snapper-grouper. Descending device means an instrument capable of releasing the fish at the depth from which the fish was caught, and to which is attached a minimum of a 16-ounce (454-gram) weight and a minimum of a 60-ft (15.2-m) length of line. The descending device may either attach to the fish's mouth or be a container that will retain the fish while it is lowered to depth. The device must be capable of releasing the fish automatically, by actions of the operator of the device, or by allowing the fish to escape on its own when at depth.
- (b) **Authorized gear.** Subject to the gear restrictions specified in § 622.180, the following are the only gear types authorized in a directed fishery for snapper-grouper in the South Atlantic EEZ: Bandit gear, bottom longline, buoy gear, handline, rod and reel, sea bass pot, and spearfishing gear.
- (c) **Unauthorized gear.** All gear types other than those specified in paragraph (b) of this section are unauthorized gear and the following possession and transfer limitations apply.
- (1) A vessel with trawl gear on board that fishes in the EEZ on a trip may possess no more than 200 lb (90.7 kg) of South Atlantic snapper-grouper, excluding wreckfish, in or from the EEZ on that trip. It is a rebuttable presumption that a vessel with more than 200 lb (90.7 kg) of South Atlantic snapper-grouper, excluding wreckfish, on board harvested such fish in the EEZ.
 - (2) Except as specified in paragraphs (d) through (f) of this section, a person aboard a vessel with unauthorized gear on board, other than trawl gear, that fishes in the EEZ on a trip is limited on that trip to:
 - (i) South Atlantic snapper-grouper species for which a bag limit is specified in § 622.187—the bag limit.
 - (ii) All other South Atlantic snapper-grouper—zero.
 - (3) South Atlantic snapper-grouper on board a vessel with unauthorized gear on board may not be transferred at sea, regardless of where such transfer takes place, and such snapper-grouper may not be transferred in the EEZ.
 - (4) No vessel may receive at sea any South Atlantic snapper-grouper from a vessel with unauthorized gear on board, as specified in paragraph (c)(3) of this section.
- (d) **Possession allowance regarding sink nets off North Carolina.** A vessel that has on board a commercial permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper, excluding wreckfish, that fishes in the EEZ off North Carolina with a sink net on board, may retain, without regard to the limits specified in paragraph (c)(2) of this section, otherwise legal South Atlantic snapper-grouper taken with bandit gear, buoy gear, handline, rod and reel, or sea bass pot. For the purpose of this paragraph (d), a sink net is a gillnet with stretched mesh measurements of 3 to 4.75 inches (7.6 to 12.1 cm) that is attached to the vessel when deployed.
- (e) **Possession allowance regarding bait nets.** A vessel that has on board a commercial permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper, excluding wreckfish, that fishes in the South Atlantic EEZ with no more than one bait net on board, may retain, without regard to the limits specified in paragraph (c)(2) of this section,

otherwise legal South Atlantic snapper-grouper taken with bandit gear, buoy gear, handline, rod and reel, or sea bass pot. For the purpose of this paragraph (e), a bait net is a gillnet not exceeding 50 ft (15.2 m) in length or 10 ft (3.1 m) in height with stretched mesh measurements of 1.5 inches (3.8 cm) or smaller that is attached to the vessel when deployed.

- (f) **Possession allowance regarding cast nets.** A vessel that has on board a commercial permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper, excluding wreckfish, that fishes in the South Atlantic EEZ with a cast net on board, may retain, without regard to the limits specified in paragraph (c)(2) of this section, otherwise legal South Atlantic snapper-grouper taken with bandit gear, buoy gear, handline, rod and reel, or sea bass pot. For the purpose of this paragraph (f), a cast net is a cone-shaped net thrown by hand and designed to spread out and capture fish as the weighted circumference sinks to the bottom and comes together when pulled by a line.
- (g) **Longline species limitation.** A vessel that has on board a valid Federal commercial permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper, excluding wreckfish, that fishes in the EEZ on a trip with a longline on board, may possess only the following South Atlantic snapper-grouper: snowy grouper, yellowedge grouper, misty grouper, golden tilefish, blueline tilefish, and sand tilefish. See § 622.170(f) for the requirement to possess a valid South Atlantic golden tilefish longline endorsement to fish for golden tilefish in the South Atlantic EEZ using longline gear. For the purpose of this paragraph, a vessel is considered to have a longline on board when a power-operated longline hauler, a cable of diameter suitable for use in the longline fishery on any reel, and gangions are on board. Removal of any one of these three elements constitutes removal of a longline.

[78 FR 22952, Apr. 17, 2013, as amended at 78 FR 23863 Apr. 23, 2013; 85 FR 36171, June 15, 2020]

§ 622.189 Restrictions and requirements for sea bass pots.

- (a) **Tending restriction.** A sea bass pot in the South Atlantic EEZ may be pulled or tended only by a person (other than an authorized officer) aboard the vessel permitted to fish such pot or aboard another vessel if such vessel has on board written consent of the owner or operator of the vessel so permitted.
- (b) **Configuration restriction.** In the South Atlantic EEZ, sea bass pots may not be used or possessed in multiple configurations, that is, two or more pots may not be attached one to another so that their overall dimensions exceed those allowed for an individual sea bass pot. This does not preclude connecting individual pots to a line, such as a “trawl” or trot line.
- (c) **Requirement for escape mechanisms.**
 - (1) A sea bass pot that is used or possessed in the South Atlantic EEZ between 35°15.19' N. lat. (due east of Cape Hatteras Light, NC) and 28°35.1' N. lat. (due east of the NASA Vehicle Assembly Building, Cape Canaveral, FL) is required to have—
 - (i) On at least one side, excluding top and bottom, a panel or door with an opening equal to or larger than the interior end of the trap's throat (funnel). The hinges and fasteners of each panel or door must be made of one of the following degradable materials:
 - (A) Ungalvanized or uncoated iron wire with a diameter not exceeding 0.041 inches (1.0 mm), that is, 19 gauge wire.
 - (B) Galvanic timed-release mechanisms with a letter grade designation (degradability index) no higher than J.

(ii) An unobstructed escape vent opening on at least two opposite vertical sides, excluding top and bottom. The minimum dimensions of an escape vent opening (based on inside measurement) are:

(A) $1\frac{1}{8}$ by $5\frac{3}{4}$ inches (2.9 by 14.6 cm) for a rectangular vent.

(B) 1.75 by 1.75 inches (4.5 by 4.5 cm) for a square vent.

(C) 2.0-inch (5.1-cm) diameter for a round vent.

(2) [Reserved]

(d) **Construction requirements and mesh sizes.**

(1) A sea bass pot used or possessed in the South Atlantic EEZ must have mesh sizes as follows (based on centerline measurements between opposite, parallel wires or netting strands):

(i) For sides of the pot other than the back panel:

(A) Hexagonal mesh (chicken wire)—at least 1.5 inches (3.8 cm) between the wrapped sides;

(B) Square mesh—at least 1.5 inches (3.8 cm) between sides; or

(C) Rectangular mesh—at least 1 inch (2.5 cm) between the longer sides and 2 inches (5.1 cm) between the shorter sides.

(ii) For the entire back panel, *i.e.*, the side of the pot opposite the side that contains the pot entrance, mesh that is at least 2 inches (5.1 cm) between sides.

(2) [Reserved]

(e) **Requirements for pot removal.**

(1) A sea bass pot must be removed from the water in the South Atlantic EEZ and the vessel must be returned to a dock, berth, beach, seawall, or ramp at the conclusion of each trip. Sea bass pots may remain on the vessel at the conclusion of each trip.

(2) A sea bass pot must be removed from the water in the South Atlantic EEZ when the applicable quota specified in § 622.190(a)(5) is reached. After a closure is in effect, a black sea bass may not be retained by a vessel that has a sea bass pot on board.

(f) **Restriction on number of pots.** A vessel that has on board a valid Federal commercial permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper and a South Atlantic black sea bass pot endorsement that fishes in the South Atlantic EEZ on a trip with black sea bass pots, may possess only 35 black sea bass pots per vessel per permit year. Each black sea bass pot in the water or onboard a vessel in the South Atlantic EEZ, must have a valid identification tag attached. Endorsement holders must apply for new tags each permit year through NMFS to replace tags from the previous year.

(g) **Sea bass pot buoy line marking requirement.** In addition to the gear marking requirements specified in 50 CFR 229.32(b), from November 15 through April 15, each year, in the Southeast U.S. Restricted Area North as described in 50 CFR 229.32(f) and from September 1 through May 31, each year in the Offshore Trap/Pot Waters Area and the Southern Nearshore Trap/Pot Waters Area, as described in 50 CFR 229.32(c)(6) and (9), respectively, the buoy line must be marked with a purple color band. The colored band must be clearly visible when the gear is hauled or removed from the water, including if the color of the rope is the same as, or similar, to the colored band. The purple band must be marked directly onto the line and adjacent to the buoy line markings specified in 50 CFR 229.32(b), that is, at the top, middle, and bottom of

each buoy line deployed by, or on board, the vessel. Each of the three purple bands must be a 12-inch (30.5 cm) color mark. In marking or affixing the purple band, the line may be dyed, painted, or marked with thin colored whipping line, thin colored plastic, or heat-shrink tubing, or other material.

[81 FR 1792, Jan. 13, 2016, as amended at 81 FR 95902, Dec. 29, 2016]

§ 622.190 Quotas.

See § 622.8 for general provisions regarding quota applicability and closure and reopening procedures. This section provides quotas and specific quota closure restrictions for South Atlantic snapper-grouper.

- (a) **South Atlantic snapper-grouper, excluding wreckfish.** The quotas apply to persons who are not subject to the bag limits. (See § 622.11 for applicability of the bag limits.) The quotas are in gutted weight, that is eviscerated but otherwise whole, except for the quotas in paragraphs (a)(4) through (6) of this section which are in both gutted weight and round weight.

(1) **Snowy grouper** –

- (i) From January 1 through June 30 each year.

(A) 2023—73,330 lb (33,262 kg).

(B) 2024—74,322 lb (33,712 kg).

(C) 2025 and subsequent fishing years—75,312 lb (34,161 kg).

- (ii) From July 1 through December 31 each year.

(A) 2023—31,427 lb (14,255 kg).

(B) 2024—31,852 lb (14,448 kg).

(C) 2025 and subsequent fishing years—32,277 lb (14,641 kg).

- (iii) Any unused portion of the quota specified in paragraph (a)(1)(i) of this section will be added to the quota specified in paragraph (a)(1)(ii) of this section. Any unused portion of the quota specified in paragraph (a)(1)(ii) of this section, including any addition of quota specified in paragraph (a)(1)(i) of this section that was unused, will become void and will not be added to any subsequent quota.

(2) **Golden tilefish** –

- (i) **Commercial sector (hook-and-line and longline components combined).**

(A) For the 2023 fishing year—420,645 lb (190,801 kg).

(B) For the 2024 fishing year—433,216 lb (196,503 kg).

(C) For the 2025 fishing year—442,886 lb (200,890 kg).

(D) For the 2026 and subsequent fishing years—450,622 lb (204,399 kg).

- (ii) **Hook-and-line component.**

(A) For the 2023 fishing year—105,161 lb (47,700 kg).

(B) For the 2024 fishing year—108,304 lb (49,126 kg).

- (C) For the 2025 fishing year—110,722 lb (50,223 kg).
- (D) For the 2026 and subsequent fishing years—112,656 lb (51,100 kg).

(iii) **Longline component.**

- (A) For the 2023 fishing year—315,484 lb (143,101 kg).
- (B) For the 2024 fishing year—324,912 lb (147,378 kg).
- (C) For the 2025 fishing year—332,165 lb (150,668 kg).
- (D) For the 2026 and subsequent fishing years—337,967 lb (153,299 kg).

(3) **Greater amberjack** –

- (i) For the period of March 1 through August 31 each year.
 - (A) For the 2023-2024 fishing year, 652,817 lb (296,113 kg).
 - (B) For the 2024-2025 fishing year, 569,019 lb (258,103 kg).
 - (C) For the 2025-2026 fishing year, 544,990 lb (247,203 kg).
 - (D) For the 2026-2027 and subsequent fishing years, 538,933 lb (244,456 kg).

- (ii) For the period of September 1 through the end of February each year.

- (A) For the 2023-2024 fishing year, 435,212 lb (197,409 kg).
- (B) For the 2024-2025 fishing year, 379,346 lb (172,068 kg).
- (C) For the 2025-2026 fishing year, 363,327 lb (164,802 kg).
- (D) For the 2026-2027 and subsequent fishing years, 359,288 lb (162,970 kg).

- (iii) Any unused portion of the quota specified in paragraph (a)(3)(i) of this section will be added to the quota specified in paragraph (a)(3)(ii) of this section. Any unused portion of the quota specified in paragraph (a)(3)(ii) of this section, including any addition of quota specified in paragraph (a)(3)(i) of this section that was unused, will become void and will not be added to any subsequent quota.

(4) **Vermilion snapper.**

- (i) For the period January through June each year.
 - (A) For the 2019 fishing year—483,658 lb (219,384 kg), gutted weight; 536,860 lb (243,516 kg), round weight.
 - (B) For the 2020 fishing year—452,721 lb (205,351 kg), gutted weight; 502,520 lb (227,939 kg), round weight.
 - (C) For the 2021 fishing year—431,279 lb (195,625 kg), gutted weight; 478,720 lb (217,144 kg), round weight.
 - (D) For the 2022 fishing year—417,189 lb (189,234 kg), gutted weight; 463,080 lb (210,050 kg), round weight.
 - (E) For the 2023 and subsequent fishing years—409,225 lb (185,621 kg), gutted weight; 454,240 lb (206,040 kg), round weight.

- (ii) For the period July through December each year.
 - (A) For the 2019 fishing year—483,658 lb (219,384 kg), gutted weight; 536,860 lb (243,516 kg), round weight.
 - (B) For the 2020 fishing year—452,721 lb (205,351 kg), gutted weight; 502,520 lb (227,939 kg), round weight.
 - (C) For the 2021 fishing year—431,279 lb (195,625 kg), gutted weight; 478,720 lb (217,144 kg), round weight.
 - (D) For the 2022 fishing year—417,189 lb (417,189 kg), gutted weight; 463,080 lb (210,050 kg), round weight.
 - (E) For the 2023 and subsequent fishing years—409,225 lb (185,621 kg), gutted weight; 454,240 lb (206,040 kg), round weight.
- (iii) Any unused portion of the quota specified in paragraph (a)(4)(i) of this section will be added to the quota specified in paragraph (a)(4)(ii) of this section. Any unused portion of the quota specified in paragraph (a)(4)(ii) of this section, including any addition of quota specified in paragraph (a)(4)(i) of this section that was unused, will become void and will not be added to any subsequent quota.

(5) **Black sea bass.**

- (i) For the 2019 fishing year—276,949 lb (125,622 kg), gutted weight; 326,800 lb (148,234 kg), round weight.
- (ii) For the 2020 fishing year—243,788 lb (110,580 kg), gutted weight; 287,670 lb (130,485 kg), round weight.
- (iii) For the 2021 fishing year and subsequent fishing years—234,314 lb (106,283 kg), gutted weight; 276,490 lb (125,414 kg), round weight.

(6) **Red porgy —**

- (i) For the period January 1 through April 30 each year.
 - (A) For the 2022 fishing year—11,127 lb (5,047 kg).
 - (B) For the 2023 fishing year—12,017 lb (5,451 kg).
 - (C) For the 2024 fishing year—12,907 lb (5,855 kg).
 - (D) For the 2025 fishing year—13,500 lb (6,123 kg).
 - (E) For the 2026 and subsequent fishing years—14,094 lb (6,393 kg).
- (ii) For the period May 1 through December 31 each year.
 - (A) For the 2022 fishing year—25,962 lb (11,776 kg).
 - (B) For the 2023 fishing year—28,039 lb (12,718 kg).
 - (C) For the 2024 fishing year—30,116 lb (13,660 kg).
 - (D) For the 2025 fishing year—31,501 lb (14,289 kg).
 - (E) For the 2026 and subsequent fishing years—32,886 lb (14,917 kg).

- (iii) Any unused portion of the quota specified in paragraph (a)(6)(i) of this section will be added to the quota specified in paragraph (a)(6)(ii) of this section. Any unused portion of the quota specified in paragraph (a)(6)(ii) of this section, including any addition of quota specified in paragraph (a)(6)(i) of this section that was unused, will become void and will not be added to any subsequent quota.

(7) **Gag.**

- (i) For the 2023 fishing year—85,326 lb (38,703 kg).
- (ii) For the 2024 fishing year—128,096 lb (58,103 kg).
- (iii) For the 2025 fishing year—171,687 lb (77,876 kg).
- (iv) For the 2026 fishing year—215,051 lb (97,545 kg).
- (v) For the 2027 fishing year—259,823 lb (117,854 kg).
- (vi) For the 2028 fishing year—306,400 lb (138,981 kg).
- (vii) For the 2029 fishing year—353,220 lb (160,218 kg).
- (viii) For the 2030 fishing year—397,555 lb (180,328 kg).
- (ix) For the 2031 fishing year—437,390 lb (198,397 kg).
- (x) For the 2032 and subsequent fishing years—471,966 lb (214,080 kg).

(8) **Gray triggerfish.**

- (i) For the period January through June each year—156,162 lb (70,834 kg), round weight.
- (ii) For the period July through December each year—156,162 lb (70,834 kg), round weight.
- (iii) Any unused portion of the quota specified in paragraph (a)(8)(i) of this section will be added to the quota specified in paragraph (a)(8)(ii) of this section. Any unused portion of the quota specified in paragraph (a)(8)(ii) of this section, including any addition of quota specified in paragraph (a)(8)(i) of this section that was unused, will become void and will not be added to any subsequent quota.

(b) **Wreckfish.**

- (1) The quotas for wreckfish apply to wreckfish shareholders, or their employees, contractors, or agents. The quotas are given round weight. See § 622.172 for information on the wreckfish shareholder under the ITQ system.
 - (i) For the 2015 fishing year—411,350 lb (186,585 kg).
 - (ii) For the 2016 fishing year—402,515 (182,578 kg).
 - (iii) For the 2017 fishing year—393,490 lb (178,484 kg).
 - (iv) For the 2018 fishing year—385,985 lb (175,080 kg).
 - (v) For the 2019 fishing year—376,960 lb (170,986 kg).
 - (vi) For the 2020 and subsequent fishing years—369,645 lb (167,668 kg).

- (2) [Reserved]

(c) *Restrictions applicable after a commercial quota closure* –

(1) *South Atlantic gag, greater amberjack, snowy grouper, golden tilefish, vermilion snapper, black sea bass, red porgy, wreckfish, and gray triggerfish.*

- (i) The appropriate bag limits specified in § 622.187(b) and the possession limits specified in § 622.187(c) apply to all harvest or possession of the applicable species in or from the South Atlantic EEZ, and the sale or purchase of the applicable species taken from or possessed in the EEZ is prohibited. The prohibition on sale/purchase during a closure for the applicable species does not apply to fish that were harvested, landed ashore, and sold prior to the effective date of the closure and were held in cold storage by a dealer or processor.
- (ii) The bag and possession limits for the applicable species and the prohibition on sale/purchase apply in the South Atlantic on board a vessel for which a valid Federal commercial or charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, without regard to where such species were harvested, *i.e.*, in state or Federal waters.

(2) [Reserved]

[78 FR 22952, Apr. 17, 2013, as amended at 78 FR 23863 Apr. 23, 2013; 78 FR 47579, Aug. 6, 2013; 78 FR 49195, Aug. 13, 2013]; 78 FR 58253, Sept. 23, 2013; 79 FR 66322, Nov. 7, 2014; 80 FR 30953, June 1, 2015; 80 FR 43038, July 21, 2015; 80 FR 48278, Aug. 12, 2015; 81 FR 3738, Jan. 22, 2016; 83 FR 62512, Dec. 4, 2018; 83 FR 14024, Apr. 9, 2019; 85 FR 4594, Jan. 27, 2020; 87 FR 77747, Dec. 20, 2022; 88 FR 65146, Sept. 21, 2023; 88 FR 65822, Sept. 26, 2023; 88 FR 76701, Nov. 7, 2023; 88 FR 83869, Dec. 1, 2023; 89 FR 277, Jan. 3, 2024]

§ 622.191 Commercial trip limits.

Commercial trip limits are limits on the amount of the applicable species that may be possessed on board or landed, purchased, or sold from a vessel per day. A person who fishes in the EEZ may not combine a trip limit specified in this section with any trip or possession limit applicable to state waters. A species subject to a trip limit specified in this section taken in the EEZ may not be transferred at sea, regardless of where such transfer takes place, and such species may not be transferred in the EEZ. Commercial trip limits apply as follows (all weights are round or eviscerated weights unless specified otherwise):

(a) When a vessel fishes on a trip in the South Atlantic EEZ, the vessel trip limits specified in this paragraph (a) apply, provided persons aboard the vessel are not subject to the bag limits. See § 622.11 and § 622.187(a) for applicability of the bag limits.

(1) *Trip-limited permits.* A vessel for which a trip-limited permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued is limited to 225 lb (102.1 kg) of snapper-grouper.

(2) *Golden tilefish* –

- (i) *South Atlantic snapper-grouper unlimited permit holders, with a longline endorsement, using longline gear.* Until the quota specified in § 622.190(a)(2)(iii) is reached, 4,000 lb (1,814 kg), gutted weight; 4,480 lb (2,032 kg), round weight.
- (ii) *South Atlantic snapper-grouper unlimited permit holders, without a longline endorsement, using hook-and-line gear.* Until the quota specified in § 622.190(a)(2)(ii) is reached, the trip limit for golden tilefish is 500 lb (227 kg), gutted weight; 560 lb (254 kg), round weight. Vessels that

have valid or renewable golden tilefish longline endorsements any time during the fishing year, are not eligible to fish for golden tilefish using hook-and-line gear under this 500-lb (227-kg), gutted weight, trip limit.

- (iii) See § 622.190(c)(1) for the limitations regarding golden tilefish after the applicable commercial quota is reached.
- (3) **Snowy grouper.** Until the quota specified in § 622.190(a)(1) is reached—200 lb (91 kg), gutted weight; 236 lb (107 kg), round weight. See § 622.190(c)(1) for the limitations regarding snowy grouper after the fishing year quota is reached.
- (4) **Red porgy.** The following commercial trip limits apply until the applicable commercial quota specified in § 622.190(a)(6) is reached. See § 622.190(c)(1) for the limitations regarding red porgy after the applicable commercial quota is reached.
 - (i) From January 1 through April 30—15 fish.
 - (ii) From May 1 through December 31—15 fish.
- (5) **Greater amberjack.** Until the applicable commercial quota specified in § 622.190(a)(3) is reached—1,200 lb (544 kg). See § 622.190(c)(1) for the limitations regarding greater amberjack after the applicable commercial quota is reached.
- (6) **Vermilion snapper.** Until the applicable commercial quota specified in § 622.190(a)(4) is reached—1,000 lb (454 kg), gutted weight. See § 622.190(c)(1) for the limitations regarding vermilion snapper after the applicable commercial quota is reached.
- (7) **Gag.** Until the applicable commercial quota specified § 622.190(a)(7) is reached—300 lb (136 kg), gutted weight. See § 622.190(c)(1) for the limitations regarding gag after the commercial quota is reached.
- (8) **Black sea bass—**
 - (i) **Hook-and-line component.**
 - (A) From January 1 through April 30, until the applicable quota specified in § 622.190(a)(5) is reached—300 lb (136 kg), gutted weight; 354 lb (161 kg), round weight.
 - (B) From May 1 through December 31, until the applicable quota specified in § 622.190(a)(5) is reached—1,000 lb (454 kg), gutted weight; 1,180 lb (535 kg), round weight.
 - (ii) **Sea bass pot component.** Until the applicable quota specified in § 622.190(a)(5) is reached—1,000 lb (454 kg), gutted weight; 1,180 lb (535 kg), round weight.
 - (iii) See § 622.190(c)(1) for the limitations regarding black sea bass after the applicable quota is reached.
- (9) **Red snapper.** Until the commercial ACL specified in § 622.193(y)(1) is reached, 75 lb (34 kg), gutted weight.
- (10) **Blueline tilefish.** The following commercial trip limits apply until the commercial ACL specified in § 622.193(z)(1)(i) is reached. See § 622.193(z)(1)(i) for the limitations regarding blueline tilefish after the commercial ACL is reached.
 - (i) From January 1 through April 30—100 lb (45 kg), gutted weight; 106 lb (48 kg), round weight.

(ii) From May 1 through December 31—300 lb (136 kg), gutted weight; 318 lb (144 kg), round weight.

(11) **Gray triggerfish.** Until the applicable quota specified in either § 622.190(a)(8)(i) or (ii) is reached, 1,000 lb (454 kg), round weight. See § 622.190(c)(1) for the limitations regarding gray triggerfish after either quota specified in § 622.190(a)(8)(i) or (ii) is reached or projected to be reached.

(12) **Hogfish.**

(i) Until the commercial ACL specified in § 622.193(u)(1)(iii)(A) is reached or is projected to be reached off Georgia, South Carolina, and North Carolina, 500 lb (227 kg), round weight.

(ii) Until the commercial ACL specified in § 622.193(u)(2)(iii)(A) is reached or is projected to be reached off the Florida Keys and east coast of Florida, and south of 25°09' N. lat. off the west coast of Florida, 25 lb (11 kg), round weight.

(iii) See § 622.193(u)(1)(i) or (u)(2)(i) for the limitations regarding hogfish after a commercial ACL is reached.

(13) **Mutton snapper.** The following commercial trip limits apply until the applicable commercial ACL in § 622.193(o)(1)(iii) is reached. See § 622.193(o)(1) for the limitations regarding mutton snapper after the commercial ACL is reached.

(i) From January 1 through March 31, and July 1 through December 31—500 lb (227 kg), round weight.

(ii) From April 1 through June 30—5 fish per person per day or 5 fish per person per trip, whichever is more restrictive.

(14) **Other jacks complex (lesser amberjack, almaco jack, and banded rudderfish).** Until the commercial ACL specified in § 622.193(l)(1)(i) is reached—500 lb (227 kg), gutted weight; 520 lb (236 kg), round weight. See § 622.193(l)(1)(i) for the limitations regarding the other jacks complex after the commercial ACL is reached.

(15) **Red grouper.** Until the commercial ACL specified in § 622.193(d)(1)(iii) is reached—200 lb (91 kg), gutted weight; 236 lb (107 kg), round weight. See § 622.193(d)(1) for the limitations regarding red grouper after the commercial ACL is reached.

(b) When a vessel fishes for hogfish on a trip in the Gulf EEZ south of 25°09' N. lat. off the west coast of Florida, the vessel trip limit specified in paragraph (a)(12)(ii) of this section applies, provided persons aboard are not subject to the bag limit. See § 622.11(a) and § 622.187(a) for applicability of the bag limit.

[78 FR 22952, Apr. 17, 2013, as amended at 78 FR 23863 Apr. 23, 2013; 78 FR 44465, July 24, 2013; 78 FR 47579, Aug. 6, 2013; 79 FR 66322, Nov. 7, 2014; 80 FR 16587, Mar. 30, 2015; 80 FR 30953, June 1, 2015; 80 FR 43038, July 21, 2015; 81 FR 32253, May 23, 2016; 81 FR 45248, July 13, 2016; 82 FR 11157, Feb. 21, 2017; 82 FR 34594, July 25, 2017; 83 FR 1309, Jan. 11, 2018; 83 FR 35435, July 26, 2018; 85 FR 4594, Jan. 27, 2020; 85 FR 6828, Feb. 6, 2020; 87 FR 77748, Dec. 20, 2022; 88 FR 65146, Sept. 21, 2023; 88 FR 65823, Sept. 26, 2023; 89 FR 277, Jan. 3, 2024]

§ 622.192 Restrictions on sale/purchase.

The restrictions in this section are in addition to the restrictions on sale/purchase related to quota closures as specified in § 622.190(c).

- (a) A South Atlantic snapper-grouper harvested or possessed in the EEZ on board a vessel that does not have a valid commercial permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper, as required under § 622.170(a), or a South Atlantic snapper-grouper harvested in the EEZ and possessed under the bag limits specified in § 622.187(b), may not be sold or purchased. In addition, a South Atlantic snapper-grouper harvested or possessed by a vessel that is operating as a charter vessel or headboat with a Federal charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper may not be sold or purchased regardless of where harvested, *i.e.*, in state or Federal waters.
- (b) South Atlantic snapper-grouper harvested in or from the EEZ or adjoining state waters by a vessel that has a valid commercial vessel permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper may be sold or transferred only to a dealer who has a valid Gulf and South Atlantic dealer permit, as required under § 622.170(c)(1).
- (c) South Atlantic snapper-grouper harvested in or from the EEZ may be first received by a dealer who has a valid Gulf and South Atlantic dealer permit, as required under § 622.170(a), only from a vessel that has a valid commercial permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper.
- (d) A warsaw grouper or speckled hind in or from the South Atlantic EEZ may not be sold or purchased.
- (e) No person may sell or purchase a snowy grouper, gag, golden tilefish, greater amberjack, vermilion snapper, black sea bass, or red porgy harvested from or possessed in the South Atlantic, *i.e.*, in state or Federal waters, by a vessel for which a valid Federal commercial permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued for the remainder of the fishing year after the applicable commercial quota for that species specified in § 622.190(a) has been reached. The prohibition on sale/purchase during these periods does not apply to such of the applicable species that were harvested, landed ashore, and sold prior to the applicable commercial quota being reached and were held in cold storage by a dealer or processor.
- (f) [Reserved]
- (g) During April, no person may sell or purchase a greater amberjack harvested from the South Atlantic EEZ or, if harvested by a vessel for which a valid Federal commercial permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, harvested from the South Atlantic, *i.e.*, in state or Federal waters. The prohibition on sale/purchase during April does not apply to greater amberjack that were harvested, landed ashore, and sold prior to April 1 and were held in cold storage by a dealer or processor. This prohibition also does not apply to a dealer's purchase or sale of greater amberjack harvested from an area other than the South Atlantic, provided such fish is accompanied by documentation of harvest outside the South Atlantic. The requirements for such documentation are specified in paragraph (i) of this section.
- (h) During January through April, no person may sell or purchase a gag, black grouper, red grouper, scamp, red hind, rock hind, yellowmouth grouper, yellowfin grouper, graysby, or coney harvested from or possessed in the South Atlantic EEZ or, if harvested or possessed by a vessel for which a valid Federal commercial permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, harvested from the South Atlantic, *i.e.*, in state or Federal waters. Additionally, in the month of May, no person may sell or purchase South Atlantic red grouper harvested from or possessed in the South Atlantic EEZ off North Carolina or off South Carolina, or, if harvested or possessed by a vessel for which a valid Federal commercial permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, harvested in or from the EEZ or state waters off North Carolina or off South Carolina. The prohibitions on sale and purchase during January through May do not apply to such species that were harvested, landed ashore, and sold prior to January 1 and were held in cold storage by a dealer or processor. These prohibitions also do not apply to a dealer's purchase or sale of such species

harvested from an area other than the South Atlantic, provided such fish are accompanied by documentation of harvest outside the South Atlantic. The requirements for such documentation are specified in paragraph (i) of this section.

- (i) The documentation supporting a dealer's purchase or sale of applicable species during the times specified in paragraphs (f) through (h) of this section must contain:
 - (1) The information specified in part 300, subpart K, of this title for marking containers or packages of fish or wildlife that are imported, exported, or transported in interstate commerce;
 - (2) The official number, name, and home port of the vessel harvesting the applicable species;
 - (3) The port and date of offloading from the vessel harvesting the applicable species; and
 - (4) A statement signed by the dealer attesting that the applicable species was harvested from an area other than the South Atlantic.
- (j) No person may sell or purchase a red snapper harvested from or possessed in the South Atlantic, *i.e.*, state or Federal waters, by a vessel for which a Federal commercial vessel permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, except if NMFS determines a limited commercial fishing season for red snapper is allowable, as specified in § 622.183(b)(5).
- (k) Snapper-grouper possessed pursuant to the bag and possession limits specified in § 622.187(a)(3) may not be sold or purchased.

[78 FR 22952, Apr. 17, 2013, as amended at 78 FR 44465, July 24, 2013; 79 FR 19495, Apr. 9, 2014; 80 FR 80689, Dec. 28, 2015; 85 FR 6828, Feb. 6, 2020; 85 FR 73643, Nov. 19, 2020]

§ 622.193 Annual catch limits (ACLs) and accountability measures (AMs).

(a) *Golden tilefish* –

(1) *Commercial sector* –

- (i) **Hook-and-line component.** If commercial hook-and-line landings for golden tilefish, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the commercial ACL (commercial quota) specified in § 622.190(a)(2)(ii), the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the hook-and-line component of the commercial sector for the remainder of the fishing year. Applicable restrictions after a commercial quota closure are specified in § 622.190(c).
- (ii) **Longline component.** If commercial longline landings for golden tilefish, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the longline commercial ACL (commercial quota) specified in § 622.190(a)(2)(iii), the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the longline component of the commercial sector for the remainder of the fishing year. After the commercial ACL for the longline component is reached or projected to be reached, golden tilefish may not be fished for or possessed by a vessel with a golden tilefish longline endorsement. Applicable restrictions after a commercial quota closure are specified in § 622.190(c).
- (iii) If all commercial landings of golden tilefish, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the commercial ACL (including both the hook-and-line and longline component quotas) specified in § 622.190(a)(2)(i), and the combined commercial and recreational ACL specified in paragraph

(a)(3) of this section is exceeded during the same fishing year, and golden tilefish are overfished based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the commercial ACL for that following fishing year by the amount of the commercial ACL overage in the prior fishing year.

(2) **Recreational sector.** The recreational ACL for golden tilefish is 2,559 fish for the 2023 fishing year; 2,635 fish for the 2024 fishing year; 2,694 for the 2025 fishing year; 2,741 fish for the 2026 and subsequent fishing years. NMFS will project the length of the recreational fishing season based on catch rates from the previous fishing year and when NMFS projects the recreational ACL specified in this paragraph (a)(2) is expected to be met, and annually announce the recreational fishing season end date in the FEDERAL REGISTER. On and after the effective date of the recreational closure notification, the bag and possession limit for golden tilefish in or from the South Atlantic EEZ is zero.

(3) **Combined commercial and recreational ACL.** The combined commercial and recreational ACL is 435,000 lb (197,313 kg), gutted weight, for the 2023 fishing year; 448,000 lb (203,209 kg), gutted weight, for the 2024 fishing year; 458,000 lb (207,745 kg), gutted weight, for the 2025 fishing year; and 466,000 lb (211,374 kg), gutted weight, for the 2026 and subsequent fishing years.

(b) **Snowy grouper –**

(1) **Commercial sector.**

(i) If commercial landings of snowy grouper, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the commercial ACL that is equal to the commercial quota specified in § 622.190(a)(1), the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the commercial sector for the remainder of the fishing year. Applicable restrictions after a commercial quota closure are specified in § 622.190(c).

(ii) If commercial landings of snowy grouper, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the commercial ACL, and the combined commercial and recreational ACL specified in paragraph (b)(3) of this section is exceeded, and snowy grouper are overfished based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the commercial ACL for that following fishing year by the amount of the commercial ACL overage in the prior fishing year.

(2) **Recreational sector.**

(i) The recreational ACL for snowy grouper is 1,668 fish for 2023; 1,691 fish for 2024; and 1,713 fish for 2025 and subsequent fishing years.

(ii) If recreational landings for snowy grouper exceed the recreational ACL specified in paragraph (b)(2)(i) of this section, then during the following fishing year NMFS will reduce the length of the recreational fishing season by the amount necessary to prevent recreational landings from exceeding the recreational ACL in the following fishing year. NMFS will use the best scientific information available to determine if reducing the length of the recreational fishing season is necessary. When the recreational sector for snowy grouper is closed as a result of NMFS reducing the length of the recreational fishing season, the bag and possession limits for snowy grouper harvested in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.

(3) **Total ACL.** The combined commercial and recreational ACL for snowy grouper in gutted weight is 119,654 lb (54,274 kg) for 2023; 121,272 lb (55,008 kg) for 2024; and 122,889 lb (55,741 kg) for 2025 and subsequent fishing years.

(c) **Gag** –

(1) **Commercial sector.**

- (i) If commercial landings for gag, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the commercial ACL (commercial quota) specified in § 622.190(a)(7), the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the commercial sector for gag for the remainder of the fishing year. Applicable restrictions after a commercial quota closure are specified in § 622.190(c).
- (ii) If the commercial landings for gag, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the commercial ACL specified in § 622.190(a)(7), and the combined commercial and recreational ACL specified in paragraph (c)(3) of this section, is exceeded during the same fishing year, and gag are overfished based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the commercial ACL for that following fishing year by the amount of the commercial ACL overage in the prior fishing year.

(2) **Recreational sector.**

- (i) If recreational landings for gag, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the recreational ACL, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the recreational sector for the remainder of the fishing year regardless if the stock is overfished, unless NMFS determines that no closure is necessary based on the best scientific information available. On and after the effective date of such notification, the bag and possession limits for gag in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero. The recreational ACL for gag is 90,306 lb (40,962 kg), gutted weight, for 2023; 133,075 lb (60,362 kg), gutted weight, for 2024; 176,665 lb (80,134 kg), gutted weight, for 2025; 220,030 lb (99,804 kg), gutted weight, for 2026; 264,802 lb (120,112 kg), gutted weight, for 2027; 311,378 lb (141,239 kg), gutted weight, for 2028; 358,199 lb (162,476 kg), gutted weight, for 2029; 402,533 lb (182,586 kg), gutted weight, for 2030; 442,368 lb (200,655 kg), gutted weight, for 2031; 476,945 lb (216,339 kg), gutted weight, for 2032 and subsequent years.
- (ii) If recreational landings, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the recreational ACL specified in paragraph (c)(2)(i) of this section, then during the following fishing year, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the length of the recreational fishing season by the amount necessary to prevent the recreational ACL from being exceeded. NMFS will use the best scientific information available to determine if reducing the length of the recreational fishing season is necessary. When the recreational sector is closed as a result of NMFS reducing the length of the recreational fishing season, the bag and possession limits for gag in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.

- (3) **Combined commercial and recreational ACL.** The combined commercial and recreational ACL for gag is 175,632 lb (79,665 kg), gutted weight, for 2023; 261,171 lb (118,465 kg), gutted weight, for 2024; 348,352 lb (158,010 kg), gutted weight, for 2025; 435,081 lb (192,349 kg), gutted weight, for 2026; 524,625 lb (237,965 kg), gutted weight, for 2027; 617,778 lb (280,219 kg), gutted weight, for 2028; 711,419 lb (322,694 kg), gutted weight, for 2029; 800,088 lb (362,914 kg), gutted weight, for 2030; 879,758 lb (399,052 kg), gutted weight, for 2031; 948,911 lb (430,419 kg), gutted weight, for 2032 and subsequent years.

(d) **Red grouper** –

(1) **Commercial sector.**

- (i) If commercial landings for red grouper, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the commercial ACL, specified in paragraph (d)(1)(iii) of this section, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the commercial sector for the remainder of the fishing year. On and after the effective date of such a notification, all sale or purchase of red grouper is prohibited and harvest or possession of red grouper in or from the South Atlantic EEZ is limited to the bag and possession limits. These bag and possession limits apply in the South Atlantic on board a vessel for which a valid Federal commercial or charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, without regard to where such species were harvested, *i.e.*, in state or Federal waters.
- (ii) If the commercial landings for red grouper, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the commercial ACL, specified in paragraph (d)(1)(iii) of this section, and the combined commercial and recreational ACL, specified in paragraph (d)(3) of this section, is exceeded during the same fishing year, and the species is overfished based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the commercial ACL in the following fishing year by the amount of the commercial ACL overage in the prior fishing year.
- (iii) The commercial ACL for red grouper is 61,160 lb (27,742 kg), round weight, for 2018; 66,000 lb (29,937 kg), round weight, for 2019; and 71,280 lb (32,332 kg), round weight, for 2020 and subsequent fishing years.

(2) **Recreational sector.**

- (i) If recreational landings for red grouper, as estimated by the SRD, are projected to reach the recreational ACL, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the recreational sector for the remainder of the fishing year regardless if the stock is overfished, unless NMFS determines that no closure is necessary based on the best scientific information available. On and after the effective date of such a notification, the bag and possession limits for red grouper in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.
- (ii) The recreational ACL for red grouper is 77,840 lb (35,308 kg), round weight, for 2018; 84,000 lb (38,102 kg), round weight, for 2019; and 90,720 lb (41,150 kg), round weight, for 2020 and subsequent fishing years.
- (iii) If recreational landings for red grouper, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the recreational ACL, specified in paragraph (d)(2)(ii) of this section, then during the following fishing year recreational landings will be monitored for a persistence in increased landings, and if necessary, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the length of the recreational fishing season and the recreational ACL by the amount of the recreational ACL overage, if the species is overfished based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, and if the combined commercial and recreational ACL, specified in paragraph (d)(3) of this section, is exceeded during the same fishing year. The AA will use the best scientific information available to determine if reducing the length of the recreational season and recreational ACL is necessary. When the recreational sector is closed as a result of NMFS reducing the length of the recreational fishing season and ACL, the bag and possession limits for red grouper in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.

- (3) The combined commercial and recreational ACL for red grouper is 139,000 lb (63,049 kg), round weight, for 2018; 150,000 lb (68,039 kg), round weight, for 2019; and 162,000 lb (73,482 kg), round weight, for 2020 and subsequent fishing years.

(e) *Black sea bass* –

(1) *Commercial sector.*

- (i) If commercial landings, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the quota specified in § 622.190(a)(5), the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the commercial sector for the remainder of the fishing year.
- (ii) If commercial landings exceed the quota specified in § 622.190(a)(5), the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register, at or near the beginning of the following fishing year to reduce the ACL for that following year by the amount of the overage in the prior fishing year, unless the SRD determines that no overage is necessary based on the best scientific information available.

- (2) *Recreational sector.* The recreational ACL for black sea bass is 848,455 lb (384,853 kg), gutted weight, 1,001,177 lb (454,126 kg), round weight for the 2018-2019 fishing year; 367,119 lb (166,522 kg), gutted weight, 433,200 lb (196,496 kg), round weight for the 2019-2020 fishing year; 323,161 lb (146,583 kg), gutted weight, 381,330 lb (172,968 kg), round weight, for the 2020-2021 fishing year; and 310,602 lb (140,887 kg), gutted weight, 366,510 lb (166,246 kg), round weight, for the 2021-2022 and subsequent fishing years. NMFS will project the length of the recreational fishing season based on when NMFS projects the recreational ACL specified in this paragraph is expected to be met and announce the recreational fishing season end date in the FEDERAL REGISTER prior to the start of the recreational fishing year on April 1. On and after the effective date of the recreational closure notification, the bag and possession limit for black sea bass in or from the South Atlantic EEZ is zero. This bag and possession limit applies in the South Atlantic on board a vessel for which a valid Federal charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, without regard to where such species were harvested, *i.e.* in state or Federal waters.

(f) *Vermilion snapper* –

- (1) *Commercial sector.* If commercial landings, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the applicable commercial ACL (commercial quota) specified in § 622.190(a)(4)(i) or (ii), the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the commercial sector for that portion of the fishing year applicable to the respective quota.

(2) *Recreational sector.*

- (i) If recreational landings, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the applicable recreational ACL specified in paragraph (f)(2)(iv) of this section the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the recreational sector for vermilion snapper for the remainder of the fishing year. On and after the effective date of such notification, the bag and possession limit for vermilion snapper in or from the South Atlantic EEZ is zero. This bag and possession limit also applies in the South Atlantic on board a vessel for which a valid Federal commercial or charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, without regard to where such species were harvested, *i.e.*, in state or Federal waters.
- (ii) If the combined vermilion snapper commercial and recreational landings exceed the combined vermilion snapper ACLs specified in paragraphs (f)(1) and (f)(2)(iv) of this section, and vermilion snapper are overfished, based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to

Congress, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register, at or near the beginning of the following fishing year to reduce the recreational ACL for that following year by the amount of the recreational overage in the prior fishing year.

- (iii) Recreational landings will be evaluated relative to the ACL based on a moving multi-year average of landings, as described in the FMP.
- (iv) The recreational ACL for vermilion snapper is 455,207 lb (206,478 kg), gutted weight, 505,280 lb (229,191 kg), round weight, for the 2019 fishing year; 426,090 lb (193,271 kg), gutted weight, 472,960 lb (214,531 kg), round weight, for the 2020 fishing year; 405,910 lb (184,118 kg), gutted weight, 450,560 lb (204,552 kg), round weight, for the 2021 fishing year; 392,649 lb (178,103 kg), gutted weight, 435,840 lb (197,694 kg), round weight, for the 2022 fishing year; and 385,520 lb (174,869 kg), gutted weight, 427,520 lb (193,920 kg), round weight, for the 2023 and subsequent fishing years.

(g) **Black grouper** –

(1) **Commercial sector.**

- (i) If commercial landings for black grouper, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the commercial ACL of 96,844 lb (43,928 kg), round weight, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the commercial sector for the remainder of the fishing year. On and after the effective date of such a notification, all sale or purchase of black grouper is prohibited and harvest or possession of black grouper in or from the South Atlantic EEZ is limited to the bag and possession limits. These bag and possession limits apply in the South Atlantic on board a vessel for which a valid Federal commercial or charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, without regard to where such species were harvested, *i.e.*, in state or Federal waters.
- (ii) If commercial landings for black grouper, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the commercial ACL, and the combined commercial and recreational ACL of 262,594 lb (119,111 kg), round weight, is exceeded during the same fishing year, and the species is overfished based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the commercial ACL for that following fishing year by the amount of the commercial ACL overage in the prior fishing year.

(2) **Recreational sector.**

- (i) If recreational landings for black grouper, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the recreational ACL of 165,750 lb (75,183 kg), round weight, and the AA determines that a closure is necessary by using the best scientific information available, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the recreational sector for the remainder of the fishing year regardless if the stock is overfished, unless NMFS determines that no closure is necessary based on the best scientific information available. On and after the effective date of such a notification, the bag and possession limits for black grouper in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.
- (ii) If recreational landings for black grouper, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the recreational ACL, then during the following fishing year recreational landings will be monitored for a persistence in increased landings, and if necessary, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the length of the recreational fishing season and the recreational ACL by the amount of the recreational ACL overage, if black grouper are overfished based on

the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, and if the combined commercial and recreational ACL of 262,594 lb (119,111 kg), round weight, is exceeded during the same fishing year. NMFS will use the best scientific information available to determine if reducing the length of the recreational fishing season and recreational ACL is necessary. When the recreational sector is closed as a result of NMFS reducing the length of the recreational fishing season and ACL, the bag and possession limits for black grouper in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.

(h) **Deep-water complex (including yellowedge grouper, silk snapper, misty grouper, queen snapper, sand tilefish, and blackfin snapper) –**

(1) **Commercial sector –**

- (i) If commercial landings for the deep-water complex, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the commercial ACL of 131,268 lb (59,542 kg), round weight, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the commercial sector for the remainder of the fishing year. On and after the effective date of such a notification, all sale or purchase of deep-water complex species is prohibited and harvest or possession of these species in or from the South Atlantic EEZ is limited to the bag and possession limits. These bag and possession limits apply in the South Atlantic on board a vessel for which a valid Federal commercial or charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, without regard to where such species were harvested, *i.e.*, in state or Federal waters.
- (ii) If commercial landings exceed the ACL, and the combined commercial and recreational ACL of 169,896 lb (77,064 kg), round weight, is exceeded, and at least one of the species in the deep-water complex is overfished, based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register, at or near the beginning of the following fishing year to reduce the commercial ACL for that following year by the amount of the commercial ACL overage in the prior fishing year.

(2) **Recreational sector.**

- (i) If recreational landings for the deep-water complex, as estimated by the SRD, are projected to reach the recreational ACL of 38,628 lb (17,521 kg), round weight, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the recreational sector for the remainder of the fishing year, unless the RA determines that no closure is necessary based on the best scientific information available. On and after the effective date of such a notification, the bag and possession limits are zero.
- (ii) If recreational landings for the deep-water complex, exceed the applicable recreational ACL, and the combined commercial and recreational ACL of 169,896 lb (77,064 kg), round weight, is exceeded, and at least one of the species in the deep-water complex is overfished, based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register, to reduce the length of the recreational fishing season in the following fishing year to ensure recreational landings do not exceed the recreational ACL the following fishing year. When NMFS reduces the length of the following recreational fishing season and closes the recreational sector, the following closure provisions apply: The bag and possession limits for the deep-water complex in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.

Additionally, the recreational ACL will be reduced by the amount of the recreational ACL overage in the prior fishing year. The fishing season and recreational ACL will not be reduced if the RA determines, using the best scientific information available that no reduction is necessary.

(i) **Scamp** –

(1) **Commercial sector.**

- (i) If commercial landings for scamp, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the commercial ACL of 219,375 lb (99,507 kg), round weight, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the commercial sector for the remainder of the fishing year. On and after the effective date of such a notification, all sale or purchase of scamp is prohibited and harvest or possession of scamp in or from the South Atlantic EEZ is limited to the bag and possession limits. These bag and possession limits apply in the South Atlantic on board a vessel for which a valid Federal commercial or charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, without regard to where such species were harvested, *i.e.*, in state or Federal waters.
- (ii) If commercial landings for scamp, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the commercial ACL, and the combined commercial and recreational ACL of 335,744 lb (152,291 kg), round weight, is exceeded, and scamp are overfished based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the commercial ACL for that following fishing year by the amount of the commercial ACL overage in the prior fishing year.

(2) **Recreational sector.**

- (i) If recreational landings for scamp, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the recreational ACL of 116,369 lb (52,784 kg), round weight, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the recreational sector for the remainder of the fishing year regardless if the stock is overfished, unless NMFS determines that no closure is necessary based on the best scientific information available. On and after the effective date of such a notification, the bag and possession limits for scamp in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.
- (ii) If recreational landings for scamp, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the recreational ACL, then during the following fishing year recreational landings will be monitored for a persistence in increased landings, and if necessary, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the length of the recreational fishing season and the recreational ACL by the amount of the recreational ACL overage, if scamp are overfished based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, and if the combined commercial and recreational ACL of 335,744 lb (152,291 kg), round weight, is exceeded during the same fishing year. NMFS will use the best scientific information available to determine if reducing the length of the recreational fishing season and recreational ACL is necessary. When the recreational sector is closed as a result of NMFS reducing the length of the recreational fishing season and ACL, the bag and possession limits for scamp in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.

(j) **Other SASWG combined (including red hind, rock hind, yellowmouth grouper, yellowfin grouper, coney, and graysby)** –

(1) **Commercial sector.**

- (i) If commercial landings for other SASWG combined, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the commercial ACL of 55,542 lb (25,193 kg), round weight, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the commercial sector for this complex for the remainder of the fishing year. On and after the effective date of such a notification, all sale or purchase of red hind, rock hind, yellowmouth grouper, yellowfin grouper, coney, and graysby is prohibited, and harvest or possession of any of these species in or from the South Atlantic EEZ is limited to the bag and possession limits. These bag and possession limits apply in the South Atlantic on board a vessel for which a valid Federal commercial or charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, without regard to where such species were harvested, *i.e.*, in state or Federal waters.
- (ii) If commercial landings for other SASWG combined, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the commercial ACL, and the combined commercial and recreational ACL of 104,190 lb (47,260 kg), round weight, is exceeded, and at least one of the species in other SASWG combined is overfished based on the most recent status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the commercial ACL for that following fishing year by the amount of the commercial ACL overage in the prior fishing year.

(2) **Recreational sector.**

- (i) If recreational landings for other SASWG combined, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the recreational ACL of 48,648 lb (22,066 kg), round weight, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the recreational sector for the remainder of the fishing year regardless if any stock in other SASWG combined is overfished, unless NMFS determines that no closure is necessary based on the best scientific information available. On and after the effective date of such a notification, the bag and possession limits for any species in the other SASWG combined in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.
- (ii) If recreational landings for other SASWG combined, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the recreational ACL, then during the following fishing year recreational landings will be monitored for a persistence in increased landings, and if necessary, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the length of the recreational fishing season and the recreational ACL by the amount of the recreational ACL overage, if at least one of the species in other SASWG combined is overfished based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, and if the combined commercial and recreational ACL of 104,190 lb (47,260 kg) is exceeded during the same fishing year. NMFS will use the best scientific information available to determine if reducing the length of the recreational fishing season and recreational ACL is necessary. When the recreational sector is closed as a result of NMFS reducing the length of the recreational fishing season and ACL, the bag and possession limits for any species in the other SASWG combined in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.

(k) **Greater amberjack –**

(1) **Commercial sector.**

- (i) If commercial landings for greater amberjack, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the applicable commercial ACL (commercial quota) specified in § 622.190(a)(3), the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the commercial sector for that portion of the fishing year applicable to the respective quota. Applicable restrictions after a commercial quota closure are specified in § 622.190(c).

- (ii) If commercial landings for greater amberjack, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the commercial ACL, and the combined commercial and recreational ACL as specified in paragraph (k)(3) of this section is exceeded during the same fishing year, and the species is overfished based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the commercial ACL in the following fishing year by the amount of the commercial ACL overage in the prior fishing year. The total commercial ACL is 1,088,029 lb (493,522 kg), gutted weight, for the 2023-2024 fishing year; 948,365 lb (430,171 kg), gutted weight, for the 2024-2025 fishing year; 908,317 lb (412,006 kg), gutted weight, for the 2025-2026 fishing year; and 898,221 lb (407,426 kg), gutted weight, for the 2026-2027 and subsequent fishing years.

(2) **Recreational sector.**

- (i) If recreational landings for greater amberjack, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the recreational ACL, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the recreational sector for the remainder of the fishing year regardless of whether the stock is overfished, unless NMFS determines that no closure is necessary based on the best scientific information available. On and after the effective date of such a notification, the bag and possession limits for greater amberjack in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero. The recreational ACL is 2,101,450 lb (953,202 kg), round weight, for the 2023-2024 fishing year; 1,831,700 lb (830,845 kg), round weight, for the 2024-2025 fishing year; 1,754,350 lb (795,760 kg), round weight, for the 2025-2026 fishing year; and 1,734,850 lb (786,915 kg), round weight, for the 2026-2027 and subsequent fishing years.
- (ii) If recreational landings for greater amberjack, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the recreational ACL, then during the following fishing year recreational landings will be monitored for a persistence in increased landings, and if necessary, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the length of the recreational fishing season and recreational ACL by the amount of the recreational ACL overage, if the species is overfished based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, and if the combined commercial and recreational ACL specified in paragraph (k)(3) of this section, is exceeded during the same fishing year. The AA will use the best scientific information available to determine if reducing the length of the recreational season and recreational ACL is necessary. When the recreational sector is closed as a result of NMFS reducing the length of the recreational fishing season and ACL, the bag and possession limits for greater amberjack in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.

- (3) **Combined commercial and recreational ACLs.** The combined commercial and recreational ACL for greater amberjack is 3,233,000 lb (1,466,464 kg), round weight, for the 2023-2024 fishing year; 2,818,000 lb (1,278,223 kg), round weight, for the 2024-2025 fishing year; 2,699,000 lb (1,224,246 kg), round weight, for the 2025-2026 fishing year; and 2,669,000 lb (1,210,638 kg), round weight, for the 2026-2027 and subsequent fishing years.

(l) **Other jacks complex (including lesser amberjack, almaco jack, and banded rudderfish, combined) –**

(1) **Commercial sector.**

- (i) If commercial landings for the other jacks complex, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the commercial ACL of 189,422 lb (85,920 kg), round weight, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the commercial sector for the other jacks complex for the remainder of the fishing year. On and after the effective date of such a

notification, all sale or purchase of lesser amberjack, almaco jack, and banded rudderfish is prohibited, and harvest or possession of any of these species in or from the South Atlantic EEZ is limited to the bag and possession limits. These bag and possession limits apply in the South Atlantic on board a vessel for which a valid Federal commercial or charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, without regard to where such species were harvested, *i.e.*, in state or Federal waters.

- (ii) If commercial landings for the other jacks complex, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the commercial ACL, and the combined commercial and recreational ACL of 457,221 lb (207,392 kg), round weight, is exceeded, and at least one of the species in the other jacks complex is overfished based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the commercial ACL for that following fishing year by the amount of the commercial ACL overage in the prior fishing year.

(2) **Recreational sector.**

- (i) If recreational landings for the other jacks complex, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the recreational ACL of 267,799 lb (121,472 kg), round weight, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the recreational sector for the remainder of the fishing year regardless if any stock in the other jacks complex is overfished, unless NMFS determines that no closure is necessary based on the best scientific information available. On and after the effective date of such a notification, the bag and possession limits for any species in the other jacks complex in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.
- (ii) If recreational landings for the other jacks complex, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the recreational ACL, then during the following fishing year recreational landings will be monitored for a persistence in increased landings, and if necessary, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the length of the recreational fishing season and the recreational ACL by the amount of the recreational ACL overage, if at least one of the species in the other jacks complex is overfished based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, and if the combined commercial and recreational ACL of 457,221 lb (207,392 kg), round weight, is exceeded during the same fishing year. NMFS will use the best scientific information available to determine if reducing the length of the recreational fishing season and recreational ACL is necessary. When the recreational sector is closed as a result of NMFS reducing the length of the recreational fishing season and ACL, the bag and possession limits for any species in the other jacks complex in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.

(m) **Bar jack –**

(1) **Commercial sector.**

- (i) If commercial landings for bar jack, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the commercial ACL of 13,228 lb (6,000 kg), round weight, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the commercial sector for the remainder of the fishing year. On and after the effective date of such a notification, all sale or purchase of bar jack is prohibited and harvest or possession of bar jack in or from the South Atlantic EEZ is limited to the bag and possession limits. These bag and possession limits apply in the South Atlantic on board a vessel for which a valid Federal commercial or charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, without regard to where such species were harvested, *i.e.*, in state or Federal waters.

- (ii) If commercial landings for bar jack, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the commercial ACL, and the combined commercial and recreational ACL of 62,249 lb (28,236 kg), round weight, is exceeded, and bar jack are overfished based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the commercial ACL for that following fishing year by the amount of the commercial ACL overage in the prior fishing year.

(2) *Recreational sector.*

- (i) If recreational landings for bar jack, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the recreational ACL of 49,021 lb (22,236 kg), round weight, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the recreational sector for the remainder of the fishing year regardless if the stock is overfished, unless NMFS determines that no closure is necessary based on the best scientific information available. On and after the effective date of such a notification, the bag and possession limits for bar jack in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.
- (ii) If recreational landings for bar jack, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the recreational ACL, then during the following fishing year recreational landings will be monitored for a persistence in increased landings, and if necessary, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the length of the recreational fishing season and the recreational ACL by the amount of the recreational ACL overage, if bar jack are overfished based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, and if the combined commercial and recreational ACL of 62,249 lb (28,236 kg), round weight, is exceeded during the same fishing year. NMFS will use the best scientific information available to determine if reducing the length of the recreational fishing season and recreational ACL is necessary. When the recreational sector is closed as a result of NMFS reducing the length of the recreational fishing season and ACL, the bag and possession limits for bar jack in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.

(n) *Yellowtail snapper* –

(1) *Commercial sector.*

- (i) If commercial landings for yellowtail snapper, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the commercial ACL of 1,596,510 lb (724,165 kg), round weight, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the commercial sector for the remainder of the fishing year. On and after the effective date of such a notification, all sale or purchase of yellowtail snapper is prohibited and harvest or possession of yellowtail snapper in or from the South Atlantic EEZ is limited to the bag and possession limits. These bag and possession limits apply in the South Atlantic on board a vessel for which a valid Federal commercial or charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, without regard to where such species were harvested, *i.e.*, in state or Federal waters.
- (ii) If commercial landings for yellowtail snapper, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the commercial ACL, and the combined commercial and recreational ACL of 3,037,500 lb (1,377,787 kg), round weight, is exceeded during the same fishing year, and yellowtail snapper are overfished based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the commercial ACL for that following fishing year by the amount of the commercial ACL overage in the prior fishing year.

(2) *Recreational sector.*

- (i) If recreational landings for yellowtail snapper, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the recreational ACL of 1,440,990 lb (653,622 kg), round weight, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the recreational sector for the remainder of the fishing year regardless if the stock is overfished, unless NMFS determines that no closure is necessary based on the best scientific information available. On and after the effective date of such a notification, the bag and possession limits for yellowtail snapper in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.
- (ii) If recreational landings for yellowtail snapper, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the recreational ACL, then during the following fishing year recreational landings will be monitored for a persistence in increased landings, and if necessary, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the length of the recreational fishing season and the recreational ACL by the amount of the recreational ACL overage, if the species is overfished based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, and if the combined commercial and recreational ACL of 3,037,500 lb (1,377,787 kg), round weight, is exceeded during the same fishing year. The AA will use the best scientific information available to determine if reducing the length of the recreational fishing season and recreational ACL is necessary. When the recreational sector is closed as a result of NMFS reducing the length of the recreational fishing season and ACL, the bag and possession limits for yellowtail snapper in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.

(o) **Mutton snapper** –

(1) **Commercial sector.**

- (i) If commercial landings for mutton snapper, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the applicable commercial ACL specified in paragraph (o)(1)(iii) of this section, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the commercial sector for the remainder of the fishing year. On and after the effective date of such a notification, all sale or purchase of mutton snapper is prohibited and harvest or possession of mutton snapper in or from the South Atlantic EEZ is limited to the bag and possession limits. These bag and possession limits apply in the South Atlantic on board a vessel for which a valid Federal commercial or charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, without regard to where such species were harvested, *i.e.*, in state or Federal waters.
- (ii) If commercial landings for mutton snapper, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the applicable commercial ACL specified in paragraph (o)(1)(iii) of this section, and the applicable combined commercial and recreational ACL specified in paragraph (o)(3) of this section is exceeded during the same fishing year, and the species is overfished based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the commercial ACL in the following fishing year by the amount of the commercial ACL overage in the prior fishing year.
- (iii) The commercial ACLs for the following fishing years are given in round weight. For 2017—100,015 lb (45,366 kg); for 2018—104,231 lb (47,278 kg); for 2019—107,981 lb (48,979 kg); for 2020 and subsequent fishing years—111,354 lb (50,509 kg).

(2) **Recreational sector.**

- (i) If recreational landings for mutton snapper, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the applicable recreational ACL specified in paragraph (o)(2)(iii) of this section, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the recreational sector for

the remainder of the fishing year regardless if the stock is overfished, unless NMFS determines that no closure is necessary based on the best scientific information available. On and after the effective date of such a notification, the bag and possession limits for mutton snapper in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.

(ii) If recreational landings for mutton snapper, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the applicable recreational ACL specified in paragraph (o)(2)(iii) of this section, then during the following fishing year recreational landings will be monitored for a persistence in increased landings, and if necessary, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the length of the recreational fishing season and the recreational ACL by the amount of the recreational ACL overage, if the species is overfished based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, and if the applicable combined commercial and recreational ACL specified in paragraph (o)(3) of this section is exceeded during the same fishing year. NMFS will use the best scientific information available to determine if reducing the length of the recreational fishing season and recreational ACL is necessary. When the recreational sector is closed as a result of NMFS reducing the length of the recreational fishing season and ACL, the bag and possession limits for mutton snapper in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.

(iii) The recreational ACLs for the following fishing years are given in numbers of fish. For 2017—116,127; for 2018—121,318; for 2019—124,766; for 2020 and subsequent fishing years—127,115.

(3) **Combined commercial and recreational ACL.** The combined commercial and recreational ACLs for the following fishing years are given in round weight. For 2017—587,633 lb (266,546 kg); for 2018—612,401 lb (277,780 kg); for 2019—634,435 lb (287,775 kg); for 2020 and subsequent fishing years—654,257 lb (296,766 kg).

(p) **Other snappers complex (including cubera snapper, gray snapper, and lane snapper) —**

(1) **Commercial sector —**

(i) If commercial landings for the other snappers complex, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the complex commercial ACL of 344,575 lb (156,297 kg), round weight, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register, to close the commercial sector for this complex for the remainder of the fishing year. On and after the effective date of such a notification, all sale or purchase of cubera snapper, gray snapper, and lane snapper is prohibited, and harvest or possession of any of these species in or from the South Atlantic EEZ is limited to the bag and possession limits. These bag and possession limits apply in the South Atlantic on board a vessel for which a valid Federal commercial or charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, without regard to where such species were harvested, *i.e.*, in state or Federal waters.

(ii) If commercial landings for the other snappers complex, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the commercial ACL, and the combined commercial and recreational ACL of 1,513,883 lb (686,686 kg), round weight, is exceeded, and at least one of the species in the other snappers complex is overfished, based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the commercial ACL for that following year by the amount of the commercial ACL overage in the prior fishing year.

(2) **Recreational sector —**

- (i) If recreational landings for the other snappers complex, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the recreational ACL of 1,169,308 lb (530,391 kg), round weight, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the recreational sector for the remainder of the fishing year regardless if any stock in the other snappers complex is overfished, unless NMFS determines that no closure is necessary based on the best scientific information available. On and after the effective date of such a notification, the bag and possession limits for any species in the other snappers complex in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.
- (ii) If recreational landings for the other snappers complex, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the recreational ACL, then during the following fishing year, recreational landings will be monitored for a persistence in increased landings, and if necessary, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register, to reduce the length of the recreational fishing season and the recreational ACL by the amount of the recreational ACL overage, if at least one of the species in the other snappers complex is overfished based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, and the combined commercial and recreational ACL of 1,513,883 lb (686,686 kg), round weight, is exceeded during the same fishing year. NMFS will use the best scientific information available to determine if reducing the length of the recreational fishing season and recreational ACL is necessary. When the recreational sector is closed as a result of NMFS reducing the length of the recreational fishing season and the ACL, the bag and possession limits for any species in the other snappers complex in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.

(q) *Gray triggerfish* –

(1) *Commercial sector.*

- (i) If commercial landings for gray triggerfish, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the commercial ACL (commercial quota) specified in § 622.190(a)(8)(i) or (ii), the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the commercial sector for the remainder of the fishing year. Applicable restrictions after a commercial quota closure are specified in § 622.190(c).
- (ii) If commercial landings for gray triggerfish, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the commercial ACL, and the combined commercial and recreational ACL of 716,999 lb (325,225 kg), round weight, is exceeded, and gray triggerfish are overfished based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the commercial ACL for that following fishing year by the amount of the commercial ACL overage in the prior fishing year.

(2) *Recreational sector.*

- (i) If recreational landings for gray triggerfish, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the recreational ACL of 404,675 lb (183,557 kg), round weight, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the recreational sector for the remainder of the fishing year regardless if the stock is overfished, unless NMFS determines that no closure is necessary based on the best scientific information available. On and after the effective date of such a notification, the bag and possession limits for gray triggerfish in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.

- (ii) If recreational landings for gray triggerfish, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the recreational ACL, then during the following fishing year recreational landings will be monitored for a persistence in increased landings, and if necessary, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the length of the recreational fishing season and the recreational ACL by the amount of the recreational ACL overage, if gray triggerfish are overfished based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, and if the combined commercial and recreational ACL of 716,999 lb (325,225 kg), round weight, is exceeded during the same fishing year. NMFS will use the best scientific information available to determine if reducing the length of the recreational fishing season and recreational ACL is necessary. When the recreational sector is closed as a result of NMFS reducing the length of the recreational fishing season and ACL, the bag and possession limits for gray triggerfish in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.

(r) **Wreckfish –**

(1) **Commercial sector.**

- (i) The ITQ program for wreckfish in the South Atlantic serves as the accountability measures for commercial wreckfish. The commercial ACL for wreckfish is equal to the commercial quota specified in § 622.190(b). Applicable restrictions after a commercial quota closure are specified in § 622.190(c).
- (ii) The combined commercial and recreational ACL for wreckfish is 433,000 lb (196,405 kg), round weight, for 2015; 423,700 lb (192,187 kg), round weight, for 2016; 414,200 lb (187,878 kg), round weight, for 2017; 406,300 lb (184,295 kg), round weight, for 2018; 396,800 lb (179,985 kg), round weight, for 2019; and 389,100 lb (176,493 kg), round weight, for 2020 and subsequent fishing years.

(2) **Recreational sector.**

- (i) If recreational landings for wreckfish, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the recreational ACL specified in § 622.193(r)(2)(iii), the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the recreational sector for the remainder of the fishing year regardless if the stock is overfished, unless NMFS determines that no closure is necessary based on the best scientific information available. On and after the effective date of such a notification, the bag and possession limits for wreckfish in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.
- (ii) If recreational landings for wreckfish, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the recreational ACL, then during the following fishing year recreational landings will be monitored for a persistence in increased landings, and if necessary, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the length of the recreational fishing season and the recreational ACL by the amount of the recreational ACL overage, if the species is overfished based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, and if the combined commercial and recreational ACL specified in § 622.193(r)(1)(ii) is exceeded during the same fishing year. The AA will use the best scientific information available to determine if reducing the length of the recreational fishing season and recreational ACL is necessary. When the recreational sector is closed as a result of NMFS reducing the length of the recreational fishing season and ACL, the bag and possession limits for wreckfish in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.

- (iii) The recreational ACL for wreckfish is 21,650 lb (9,820 kg), round weight, for 2015; 21,185 lb (9,609 kg), round weight, for 2016; 20,710 lb (9,394 kg), round weight, for 2017; 20,315 lb (9,215 kg), round weight, for 2018; 19,840 lb (8,999 kg), round weight, for 2019; and 19,455 lb (8,825 kg), round weight, for 2020 and subsequent fishing years.

(s) [Reserved]

(t) *Atlantic spadefish* –

(1) *Commercial sector.*

- (i) If commercial landings for Atlantic spadefish, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the commercial ACL of 150,552 lb (68,289 kg), round weight, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the commercial sector for the remainder of the fishing year. On and after the effective date of such a notification, all sale or purchase of Atlantic spadefish is prohibited and harvest or possession of Atlantic spadefish in or from the South Atlantic EEZ is limited to the bag and possession limits. These bag and possession limits apply in the South Atlantic on board a vessel for which a valid Federal commercial or charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, without regard to where such species were harvested, *i.e.*, in state or Federal waters.
- (ii) If commercial landings for Atlantic spadefish, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the ACL, and the combined commercial and recreational ACL of 812,478 lb (368,534 kg), round weight, is exceeded, and Atlantic spadefish are overfished based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the commercial ACL for that following fishing year by the amount of the commercial ACL overage in the prior fishing year.

(2) *Recreational sector.*

- (i) If recreational landings for Atlantic spadefish, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the recreational ACL of 661,926 lb (300,245 kg), round weight, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the recreational sector for the remainder of the fishing year regardless if the stock is overfished, unless NMFS determines that no closure is necessary based on the best scientific information available. On and after the effective date of such a notification, the bag and possession limits for Atlantic spadefish in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.
- (ii) If recreational landings for Atlantic spadefish, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the recreational ACL, then during the following fishing year recreational landings will be monitored for a persistence in increased landings, and if necessary, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the length of the recreational fishing season and the recreational ACL by the amount of the recreational ACL overage, if Atlantic spadefish are overfished based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, and if the combined commercial and recreational ACL of 812,478 lb (368,534 kg), round weight, is exceeded during the same fishing year. NMFS will use the best scientific information available to determine if reducing the length of the recreational fishing season and recreational ACL is necessary. When the recreational sector is closed as a result of NMFS reducing the length of the recreational fishing season and ACL, the bag and possession limits for Atlantic spadefish in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.

(u) *Hogfish* –

(1) *Hogfish off Georgia, South Carolina, and North Carolina (Georgia-North Carolina) –*

(i) *Commercial sector.*

- (A) If commercial landings for the Georgia-North Carolina hogfish stock, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the commercial ACL specified in paragraph (u)(1)(iii)(A) of this section, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the commercial sector for the remainder of the fishing year. On and after the effective date of such a notification, all sale or purchase of hogfish in or from the South Atlantic EEZ off Georgia, South Carolina, and North Carolina is prohibited, and harvest or possession of this species is limited to the bag and possession limits. These bag and possession limits apply to the Georgia-North Carolina hogfish stock on board a vessel for which a valid Federal commercial or charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, without regard to where such species were harvested, *i.e.*, in state or Federal waters.
- (B) If commercial landings for the Georgia-North Carolina hogfish stock, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the commercial ACL specified in paragraph (u)(1)(iii)(A) of this section, and the combined commercial and recreational ACL specified in paragraph (u)(1)(iii)(C) of this section is exceeded during the same fishing year, and the Georgia-North Carolina hogfish stock is overfished based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the commercial ACL for the stock in the following fishing year by the amount of the commercial ACL overage in the prior fishing year.

(ii) *Recreational sector.*

- (A) If recreational landings for the Georgia-North Carolina hogfish stock, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the recreational ACL specified in paragraph (u)(1)(iii)(B) of this section, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the recreational sector for the remainder of the fishing year regardless if the stock is overfished, unless NMFS determines that no closure is necessary based on the best scientific information available. On and after the effective date of such a notification, the bag and possession limits for hogfish in or from the South Atlantic EEZ off Georgia, South Carolina, and North Carolina are zero.
- (B) If recreational landings for the Georgia-North Carolina hogfish stock, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the recreational ACL specified in paragraph (u)(1)(iii)(B) of this section, then during the following fishing year recreational landings will be monitored for a persistence in increased landings. If necessary, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the length of the following recreational fishing season and recreational ACL in the following fishing year by the amount of the recreational ACL overage if the Georgia-North Carolina hogfish stock is overfished, based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, and the combined commercial and recreational ACL is exceeded during the same fishing year to ensure recreational landings do not exceed the recreational ACL in the following fishing year. NMFS will use the best scientific information available to determine if reducing the length of the recreational fishing season and recreational ACL is necessary. When a recreational sector is closed as a result of NMFS reducing the length of the following recreational fishing season and ACL, the bag and possession limits for hogfish in or from the South Atlantic EEZ off Georgia, South Carolina, and North Carolina are zero.

- (iii) **ACLs for the Georgia-North Carolina stock.** This stock includes hogfish off Georgia, South Carolina, and North Carolina. All weights are given in round weight.
 - (A) **Commercial ACL** –23,456 lb (10,639 kg).
 - (B) **Recreational ACL** –988 fish.
 - (C) The combined commercial and recreational ACL for the Georgia-North Carolina hogfish stock is 33,930 lb (15,390 kg).
- (2) **Hogfish off the Florida Keys and east coast of Florida, and south of 25°09' N. lat. off the west coast of Florida (Florida Keys-East Florida) –**
 - (i) **Commercial sector.**
 - (A) If commercial landings for the Florida Keys-East Florida hogfish stock, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the applicable commercial ACL specified in paragraph (u)(2)(iii)(A) of this section, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the commercial sector for the remainder of the fishing year. On and after the effective date of such a notification, all sale or purchase of hogfish in or from the EEZ off the Florida Keys and east coast of Florida, and south of 25°09' N. lat. off the west coast of Florida is prohibited, and harvest or possession of this species is limited to the bag and possession limits. These bag and possession limits apply for this hogfish stock on board a vessel for which a valid Federal commercial or charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, without regard to where such species were harvested, *i.e.*, in state or Federal waters.
 - (B) If commercial landings for the Florida Keys-East Florida hogfish stock, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the applicable commercial ACL specified in paragraph (u)(2)(iii)(A) of this section, and the applicable combined commercial and recreational ACL specified in paragraph (u)(2)(iii)(C) of this section is exceeded during the same fishing year, and the stock is overfished based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the commercial ACL for the stock in the following fishing year by the amount of the applicable commercial ACL overage in the prior fishing year.
 - (ii) **Recreational sector.**
 - (A) If recreational landings for the Florida Keys-East Florida hogfish stock, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the applicable recreational ACL specified in paragraph (u)(2)(iii)(B) of this section, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the recreational sector for the remainder of the fishing year regardless if the stock is overfished, unless NMFS determines that no closure is necessary based on the best scientific information available. On and after the effective date of such a notification, the bag and possession limits for hogfish in or from the EEZ off the Florida Keys and east coast of Florida, and south of 25°09' N. lat. off the west coast of Florida are zero.
 - (B) If recreational landings for the Florida Keys-East Florida hogfish stock, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the applicable recreational ACL specified in paragraph (u)(2)(iii)(B) of this section, then during the following fishing year recreational landings will be monitored for a persistence in increased landings. If necessary, the AA will file a notification with the

Office of the Federal Register to reduce the length of the following applicable recreational fishing season and recreational ACL in the following fishing year by the amount of the recreational ACL overage if the Florida Keys-East Florida hogfish stock is overfished, based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, and the applicable combined commercial and recreational ACL is exceeded during the same fishing year to ensure recreational landings do not exceed the recreational ACL in the following fishing year. NMFS will use the best scientific information available to determine if reducing the length of the recreational fishing season and recreational ACL is necessary. When a recreational sector is closed as a result of NMFS reducing the length of the following recreational fishing season and ACL, the bag and possession limits for hogfish in or from the EEZ off the Florida Keys and east coast of Florida, and south of 25°09' N. lat. off the west coast of Florida are zero.

(iii) **ACLs for the Florida Keys-East Florida stock.** This stock includes hogfish off the Florida Keys and east coast of Florida, and south of 25°09' N. lat. off the west coast of Florida.

(A) **Commercial ACL.** See the following table. All weights are given in round weight.

Year	Commercial ACL
2017	3,510 lb (1,592 kg).
2018	4,524 lb (2,052 kg).
2019	5,670 lb (2,572 kg).
2020	6,926 lb (3,142 kg).
2021	8,277 lb (3,754 kg).
2022	9,703 lb (4,401 kg).
2023	11,179 lb (5,071 kg).
2024	12,677 lb (5,750 kg).
2025	14,167 lb (6,426 kg).
2026	15,621 lb (7,086 kg).
2027	17,018 lb (7,719 kg).

(B) **Recreational ACL.** See the following table. The recreational ACL is in numbers of fish.

Year	Recreational ACL
2017	15,689
2018	18,617
2019	21,574
2020	25,086
2021	29,096

Year	Recreational ACL
2022	33,358
2023	37,671
2024	41,934
2025	46,046
2026	49,949
2027	53,610

(C) *Combined commercial and recreational ACL.* See the following table. The combined commercial and recreational ACL is in numbers of fish.

Year	Combined commercial and recreational ACL
2017	17,034
2018	20,350
2019	23,746
2020	27,740
2021	32,267
2022	37,076
2023	41,954
2024	46,791
2025	51,474
2026	55,934
2027	60,130

(v) *Red porgy* –

(1) *Commercial sector.*

- (i) If commercial landings for red porgy, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the commercial ACL (commercial quota) specified in § 622.190(a)(6), the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the commercial sector for the remainder of the fishing year. Applicable restrictions after a commercial quota closure are specified in § 622.190(c).
- (ii) If commercial landings for red porgy, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the commercial ACL, and the combined commercial and recreational ACL as specified in paragraph (v)(3) of this section, is exceeded during the same fishing year, and red porgy are overfished based on the most

recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the commercial ACL in the following fishing year by the amount of the commercial ACL overage in the prior fishing year.

(2) **Recreational sector.**

- (i) If recreational landings for red porgy, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the recreational ACL specified in paragraph (v)(2)(ii) of this section, then during the following fishing year, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the length of the recreational fishing season by the amount necessary to ensure recreational landings do not exceed the recreational ACL. However, the length of the recreational fishing season will not be reduced in the following fishing year if NMFS determines, using the best scientific information available, that no fishing season reduction is necessary. When the recreational sector is closed as a result of NMFS reducing the length of the recreational fishing season, the bag and possession limits for red porgy in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.
- (ii) The recreational ACL for red porgy is 35,026 lb (15,888 kg), gutted weight, for the 2022 fishing year; 37,829 lb (17,139 kg), gutted weight, for 2023 fishing year; 40,631 lb (18,430 kg), gutted weight, for the 2024 fishing year; 42,499 lb (19,277 kg), gutted weight, for the 2025 fishing year; and 44,367 lb (20,125 kg), gutted weight, for the 2026 and subsequent fishing years.

- (3) **Combined commercial and recreational ACLs.** The combined commercial and recreational ACL for red porgy is 72,115 lb (32,711 kg), gutted weight, 75,000 lb (34,019 kg), round weight, for the 2022 fishing year; 77,885 lb (35,328 kg), gutted weight, 81,000 lb (36,741 kg), round weight, for 2023 fishing year; 83,654 lb (37,945 kg), gutted weight, 87,000 lb (39,463 kg), round weight, for the 2024 fishing year; 87,500 lb (39,689 kg), gutted weight, 91,000 lb (41,277 kg), round weight, for the 2025 fishing year; and 91,346 lb (41,434 kg), gutted weight, 95,000 lb (43,091 kg), round weight, for the 2026 and subsequent fishing years.

(w) **Other porgies complex (including jolthead porgy, knobbed porgy, whitebone porgy, scup, and saucereye porgy) –**

(1) **Commercial sector.**

- (i) If commercial landings for the other porgies complex, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the commercial ACL of 36,348 lb (16,487 kg), round weight, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the commercial sector for the other porgies complex for the remainder of the fishing year. On and after the effective date of such a notification, all sale or purchase of jolthead porgy, knobbed porgy, whitebone porgy, scup, and saucereye porgy is prohibited, and harvest or possession of any of these species in or from the South Atlantic EEZ is limited to the bag and possession limits. These bag and possession limits apply in the South Atlantic on board a vessel for which a valid Federal commercial or charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, without regard to where such species were harvested, *i.e.*, in state or Federal waters.
- (ii) If commercial landings for the other porgies complex, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the commercial ACL, and the combined commercial and recreational ACL of 143,262 lb (64,983 kg), round weight, is exceeded, and at least one of the species in the complex is overfished based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the commercial ACL for that following fishing year by the amount of the commercial ACL overage in the prior fishing year.

(2) *Recreational sector.*

- (i) If recreational landings for the other porgies complex, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the recreational ACL of 106,914 lb (48,495 kg), round weight, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the recreational sector for the remainder of the fishing year regardless if any stock in the other porgies complex is overfished, unless NMFS determines that no closure is necessary based on the best scientific information available. On and after the effective date of such a notification, the bag and possession limits for any species in the other porgies complex in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.
- (ii) If recreational landings for the other porgies complex, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the recreational ACL, then during the following fishing year recreational landings will be monitored for a persistence in increased landings, and if necessary, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the length of the recreational fishing season and the recreational ACL by the amount of the recreational ACL overage, if one of the species in the complex is overfished based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, and if the combined commercial and recreational ACL of 143,262 lb (64,983 kg), round weight, is exceeded during the same fishing year. NMFS will use the best scientific information available to determine if reducing the length of the recreational fishing season and recreational ACL is necessary. When the recreational sector is closed as a result of NMFS reducing the length of the recreational fishing season and ACL, the bag and possession limits for any species in the other porgies complex in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.

(x) *Grunts complex (including white grunt, sailor's choice, tomtate, and margate) –*

(1) *Commercial sector.*

- (i) If commercial landings for the grunts complex, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the commercial ACL of 217,903 lb (98,839 kg), round weight, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the commercial sector for this complex for the remainder of the fishing year. On and after the effective date of such a notification, all sale or purchase of white grunt, sailor's choice, tomtate, and margate is prohibited, and harvest or possession of these species in or from the South Atlantic EEZ is limited to the bag and possession limits. These bag and possession limits apply in the South Atlantic on board a vessel for which a valid Federal commercial or charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, without regard to where such species were harvested, *i.e.*, in state or Federal waters.
- (ii) If commercial landings for the grunts complex, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the commercial ACL, and the combined commercial and recreational ACL of 836,025 lb (379,215 kg), round weight, and at least one of the species in the complex is overfished based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register, at or near the beginning of the following fishing year to reduce the commercial ACL for that following fishing year by the amount of the commercial ACL overage in the prior fishing year.

(2) *Recreational sector.*

- (i) If recreational landings for the grunts complex, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the recreational ACL of 618,122 lb (280,375 kg), round weight, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the recreational sector for the remainder of the fishing year regardless if any stock in the grunts complex is overfished, unless

NMFS determines that no closure is necessary based on the best scientific information available. On and after the effective date of such a notification, the bag and possession limits for any species in the grunts complex in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.

- (ii) If recreational landings for the grunts complex, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the recreational ACL, then during the following fishing year recreational landings will be monitored for a persistence in increased landings, and if necessary, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the length of the recreational fishing season and the recreational ACL by the amount of the recreational ACL overage, if at least one of the species in the grunts complex is overfished based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, and if the combined commercial and recreational ACL of 836,025 lb (379,215 kg), round weight, is exceeded during the same fishing year. NMFS will use the best scientific information available to determine if reducing the length of the recreational fishing season and recreational ACL is necessary. When the recreational sector is closed as a result of NMFS reducing the length of the recreational fishing season and ACL, the bag and possession limits for any species in the grunts complex in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.

(y) **Red snapper** –

- (1) **Commercial sector.** The commercial ACL for red snapper is 124,815 lb (56,615 kg), round weight. See § 622.183(b)(5) for details on the commercial fishing season. NMFS will monitor commercial landings during the season, and if commercial landings, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the commercial ACL, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the commercial sector for red snapper for the remainder of the year. On and after the effective date of the closure notification, all sale or purchase of red snapper is prohibited and harvest or possession of red snapper is limited to the recreational bag and possession limits and only during such time as harvest by the recreational sector is allowed as described in § 622.183(b)(5). This bag and possession limit and the prohibition on sale/purchase apply in the South Atlantic on board a vessel for which a valid Federal commercial or charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, without regard to where such species were harvested or possessed, *i.e.*, in state or Federal waters.
- (2) **Recreational sector.** The recreational ACL for red snapper is 29,656 fish. The AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to announce the length of the recreational fishing season for the current fishing year. The length of the recreational fishing season for red snapper serves as the in-season accountability measure. See § 622.183(b)(5) for details on the recreational fishing season. On and after the effective date of the recreational closure notification, the bag and possession limits for red snapper are zero.

(z) **Blueline tilefish** –

- (1) **Commercial sector.**
 - (i) If commercial landings for blueline tilefish, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the commercial ACL of 117,148 lb (53,137 kg), round weight, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the commercial sector for the remainder of the fishing year. On and after the effective date of such a notification, all sale or purchase of blueline tilefish is prohibited and harvest or possession of blueline tilefish in or from the South Atlantic EEZ is limited to the bag and possession limits. These bag and possession limits apply

in the South Atlantic on board a vessel for which a valid Federal commercial or charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, without regard to where such species were harvested, *i.e.*, in state or Federal waters.

(ii) If commercial landings exceed the ACL, and the combined commercial and recreational ACL (total ACL) specified in paragraph (z)(3) of this section, is exceeded, and blueline tilefish is overfished, based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register, at or near the beginning of the following fishing year to reduce the commercial ACL for that following year by the amount of the commercial ACL overage in the prior fishing year.

(2) **Recreational sector.** The recreational ACL for blueline tilefish is 116,820 lb (52,989 kg), round weight. NMFS will project the length of the recreational fishing season based on catch rates from the previous fishing year and when NMFS projects the recreational ACL specified in this paragraph (z)(2) is expected to be met, and annually announce the recreational fishing season end date in the FEDERAL REGISTER. On and after the effective date of the recreational closure notification, the bag and possession limit for blueline tilefish in or from the South Atlantic EEZ is zero.

(3) The combined commercial and recreational sector ACL (total ACL) is 233,968 lb (106,126 kg), round weight.

(aa) **Red snapper** –

(1) **Commercial sector.** The commercial ACL for red snapper is 85,268 lb (38,677 kg), round weight. See § 622.183(b)(5) for details on the commercial fishing season. NMFS will monitor commercial landings during the season, and if commercial landings, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the commercial ACL, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the commercial sector for red snapper for the remainder of the year. On and after the effective date of the closure notification, all sale or purchase of red snapper is prohibited and harvest or possession of red snapper is limited to the recreational bag and possession limits and only during such time as harvest by the recreational sector is allowed as described in § 622.183(b)(5). This bag and possession limit and the prohibition on sale/purchase apply in the South Atlantic on board a vessel for which a valid Federal commercial or charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, without regard to where such species were harvested or possessed, *i.e.*, in state or Federal waters.

(2) **Recreational sector.** The recreational ACL for red snapper is 21,167 fish. The AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to announce the length of the recreational fishing season for the current fishing year. The length of the recreational fishing season for red snapper serves as the in-season accountability measure. See § 622.183(b)(5) for details on the recreational fishing season. On and after the effective date of the recreational closure notification, the bag and possession limits for red snapper are zero.

[78 FR 22952, Apr. 17, 2013]

Editorial Note: For FEDERAL REGISTER citations affecting § 622.193, see the List of CFR Sections Affected, which appears in the Finding Aids section of the printed volume and at www.govinfo.gov.

§ 622.194 Adjustment of management measures.

In accordance with the framework procedures of the FMP for the Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region, the RA may establish or modify the items specified in paragraph (a) of this section for South Atlantic snapper-grouper and wreckfish, or paragraph (b) of this section for sea turtles and other protected species.

- (a) Biomass levels, age-structured analyses, target dates for rebuilding overfished species, maximum sustainable yield (or its proxy), optimum yield, acceptable biological catch, total allowable catch, quotas (including a quota of zero), annual catch limits, annual catch targets, accountability measures, maximum fishing mortality threshold, minimum stock size threshold, trip limits, bag limits, size limits, gear restrictions (ranging from regulation to complete prohibition), seasonal or area closures, fishing year, rebuilding plans, definitions of essential fish habitat (EFH), establishment of or modifications to EFH habitat areas of particular concern (HAPCs) or coral HAPCs, restrictions on gear and fishing activities applicable in EFH and EFH HAPCs, establish or modify spawning SMZs, and allow transfer of the unharvested total or sector ACL to the following fishing year.
- (b) Possession, specifications, and use of required release gear and handling requirements for sea turtles and other protected species.

[78 FR 22952, Apr. 17, 2013, as amended at 78 FR 23863 Apr. 23, 2013; 82 FR 29776, June 30, 2017; 84 FR 67238, Dec. 9, 2019; 89 FR 276, Jan. 3, 2024]