

**Appendix A. Alternatives the Council considered but eliminated from detailed study, and a brief discussion of the reasons for their elimination.**

This section describes alternatives to the proposed actions that the Council considered in developing this document, but decided not to pursue. The description of each alternative is followed by a summary statement of why it was eliminated from more detailed summary.

**Rejected Alternatives 1. Modify the Council’s current definition of Optimum Yield (OY) for red snapper undergoing overfishing by using the sum of the sector ACTs (Table 1).**

Table 1. OY alternatives for ten species undergoing overfishing.

Alternatives	OY equation	F <sub>OY</sub> equals
Alternative 1.	OY equals the sum of the sector ACTs.	_____ pounds (will be added after the Committee & Council specify ACTs.)

*Rationale for elimination:* The Council had considered this action because of concern that the ACL and ACT could be at or below the ABC. Amendment 17A includes an action to specify OY for red snapper. The Council is not considering establishing ACTs for red snapper at this time.

**Rejected Alternatives 2 and 3. Modify the Council’s current definition of minimum stock size threshold (MSST) for red snapper (Table 2).**

Table 2. MSST alternatives for red snapper.

Alternatives	MSST equation
Alternative 3.	MSST equals $SSB_{MSY}(0.5)$ .
Alternative 4.	MSST equals $SSB_{MSY}(0.75)$ .

*Rationale for elimination:* The Council has modified the definition of MSST for snowy grouper and golden tilefish over concern that recruitment fluctuations could cause a reoccurring overfished status determination for these species. The low value for natural mortality creates a numerical similar value for MSST and  $SSB_{MSY}$ . Despite a low natural mortality rate for red snapper, the Council is not considering modifying MSST at this time.

**Rejected Alternatives 4-7. Define allocations for red snapper (Table 3).**

**Alternative 4.** Define allocations based upon landings from the ALS, MRFSS, and headboat databases. The allocation would be based on landings from the years 1986-2007.

**Alternative 5.** Define allocations based upon landings from the ALS, MRFSS, and headboat databases. The allocation would be based on landings from the years 2005-2007.

**Alternative 6.** Define allocations based upon landings from the ALS, MRFSS, and headboat databases. The allocation would be based on the following formula for each sector:  
Sector apportionment = (50% \* average of long catch range (lbs) 1986-2007) + (50% \* average of recent catch trend (lbs) 2005-2007)

**Alternative 7.** Split the allocation equally among the three sectors.

*Rationale for elimination: At their December 2006 meeting, the Council decided not to specify allocations for species in Amendments 17A and 17B. But we specified allocations for golden tilefish in 17B. The Council has decided that implementing a single ACL is a preferable way to manage as red snapper harvest could be prohibited or significantly reduced.*

Table 3. Percent allocations from allocation alternatives for red snapper. CM = Commercial, RC = Recreational, FH = For Hire, PR = Private Recreational, NS=Not Specified.

Species	Alt. 1. No Action		Alt. 2. 1986-2007			Alt. 3. 2005-2007			Alt. 4. Equation			Alt. 5. Split Evenly		
	CM	RC	CM	FH	PR	CM	FH	PR	CM	FH	PR	CM	FH	PR
Red snapper	NS	NS	30%	30%	40%	26%	33%	41%	28%	31%	41%	33%	33%	33%

**Rejected Alternative 8.** Prohibit commercial and recreational harvest, possession, and retention of species in the Snapper Grouper FMU in an area that includes commercial logbook grids 2880, 2980, 2981, 3179, 3080, 3081, 3180, 3181, 3278, 3279, 3280, 3378, and 3379.

**Rejected Alternative 9.** Prohibit commercial and recreational harvest, possession, and retention of species in the Snapper Grouper FMU in an area that includes commercial logbook grids 2880, 2980, 2981, 3179, 3080, 3081, 3180, 3181, 3278, 3279, 3280, 3378, and 3379. Allow commercial black sea bass pots, commercial harvest of golden tilefish by vessels with a hook-and-line or longline endorsement, and spearfishing.

*Rationale for elimination:* The Council believes that spatial management will be a component of the management measures to end overfishing and rebuild the red snapper stock in the South Atlantic. However, one of the Council's stated objectives is minimize the economic and social effects of a snapper and grouper prohibition in an area by proposing an area that is no larger than necessary to achieve reductions in fishing mortality. In order to accomplish this, the Council proposes to prohibit snapper grouper harvest in locations where the majority of the red snapper mortality occurs (Figure 1).

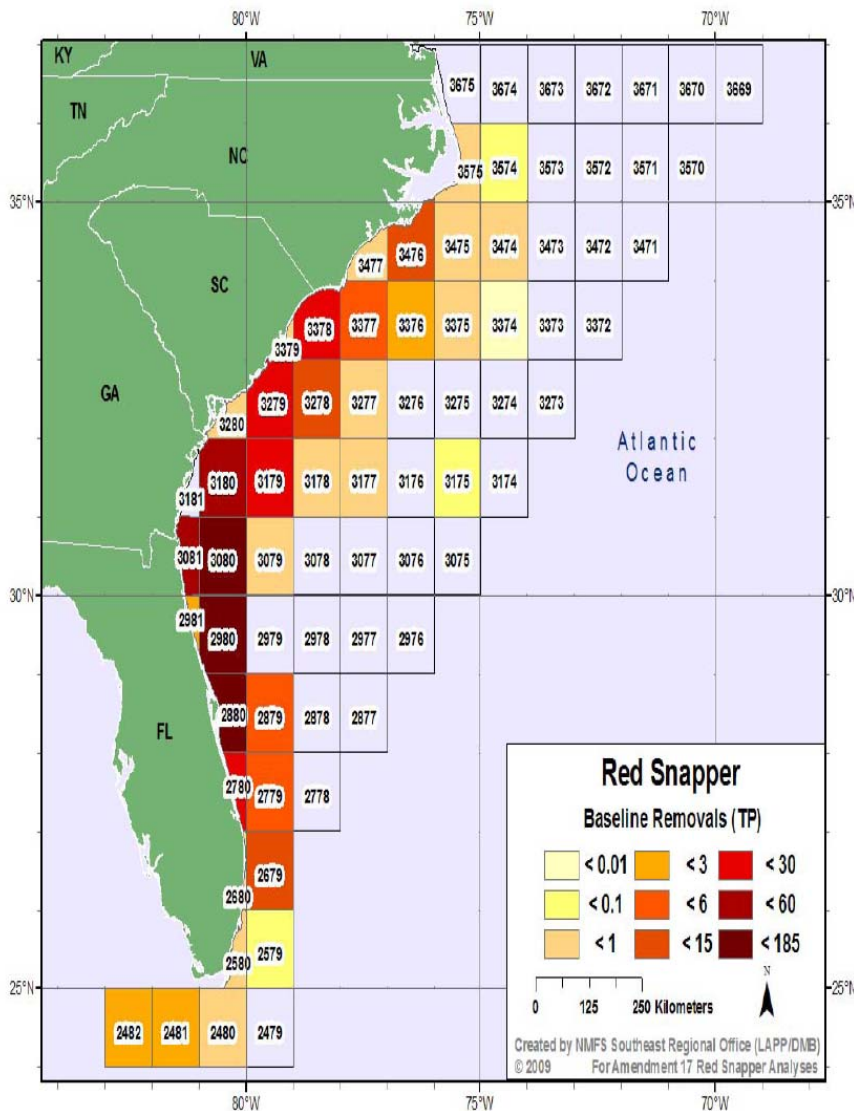


Figure 1. Baseline removals of South Atlantic red snapper by logbook grid, 2005-2007. Removals include landings and dead discards from the commercial, headboat and private/charterboat sectors.

**Rejected Alternative 10.** Modify the bag and/or size limit.

**Sub-alternative 10a.** Remove the existing commercial and recreational 20 inch size limit.

**Sub-alternative 10b.** Reduce the bag limit to 1.

*Rationale for elimination:* An according to the April 2009 Southeast Fisheries Science Center Projections, an 85% reduction in total removals of red snapper is required to immediately end overfishing. Neither a reduction in bag limit to 1 or a removal of the size limit will achieve this reduction (Table 4).

Table 4. Reduction in harvest associated with reducing the bag limit for red snapper to 1 fish per person per day. Includes non-compliance with bag limit, and 40% release mortality. Based on data from 2003-2007.

Sector	Bag limit 1
Private	1.96
Charter	5.00
Private/Charter Combined	3.26
Headboat	3.12
All rec	3.22

Annual Catch Limits

**Rejected Alternative 11.** ACL equals ABC.

**Rejected Alternative 12.** ACL equals 90% of the ABC.

**Rejected Alternative 13.** ACL equals 80% of the ABC.

*Note: The Council may specify more than one preferred alternative for this action as 10 species are under consideration.*

Allocations

**Rejected Alternative 14.** Define allocations based upon landings from the ALS, MRFSS, and headboat databases. The allocation would be based on landings from the years 1986-2007.

**Rejected Alternative 15.** Define allocations based upon landings from the ALS, MRFSS, and headboat databases. The allocation would be based on landings from the years 2005-2007.

**Rejected Alternative 16.** Define allocations based upon landings from the ALS, MRFSS, and headboat databases. The allocation would be based on the following formula for each sector: Sector apportionment = (50% \* average of long catch range (lbs) 1986-2007) + (50% \* average of recent catch trend (lbs) 2005-2007).

*Note: The Council's selection of the preferred alternative could vary for the four species experiencing overfishing. In other words, the same preferred alternative does not have to be chosen for all four species*

#### Annual Catch Targets for the Commercial Sector

**Rejected Alternative 17.** The commercial sector ACT equals the commercial sector ACL.

**Rejected Alternative 18.** The commercial sector ACT equals 90% of the commercial sector ACL.

**Rejected Alternative 19.** The commercial sector ACT equals 80% of the commercial sector ACL.

*Note: The Council may specify more than one preferred alternative for this action as 10 species are under consideration.*

#### Annual Catch Targets for the Recreational Sector

**Rejected Alternative 20.** The recreational sector ACT equals 85% of the private recreational sector ACL.

**Rejected Alternative 21.** The recreational sector ACT equals 75% of the private recreational sector ACL.

**Rejected Alternative 22.** The recreational sector ACT equals sector ACL[(1-PSE) or 0.5, whichever is greater].

*Note: The Council may specify more than one preferred alternative for this action as 10 species are under consideration.*

#### Accountability Measures for the Commercial Sector

**Rejected Alternative 23.** Implement Accountability Measures for the commercial sector for **species undergoing overfishing**. If the sector ACT is projected to be met, prohibit the harvest and retention of species or species group. If the sector ACL is exceeded, the Assistant Administrator shall publish a notice to **reduce the sector ACT** in the following year by the amount of the overage.

**Rejected Alternative 24.** Implement Accountability Measures for the commercial sector for **species undergoing overfishing**. If the sector ACT is projected to be met, prohibit the harvest and retention of species or species group. If the sector ACL is exceeded, the Assistant Administrator shall publish a notice to **reduce the length of the following fishing year** by the amount necessary to recover the overage from the prior fishing year.

**Rejected Alternative 25.** Implement Accountability Measures for the commercial sector for **species undergoing overfishing**. **If the species is overfished or not overfished and the sector ACT** is projected to be met, prohibit the harvest and retention of species or species group. **If the species is overfished and the sector ACL is exceeded**, the Assistant Administrator shall publish a notice to reduce the sector ACT in the following year by the amount of the overage. **If the species is not overfished and the sector ACL** is exceeded, the Assistant Administrator shall publish a notice to reduce the length of the following fishing year by the amount necessary to recover the overage from the prior fishing year.

#### Accountability Measures for the Recreational Sector

**Rejected Alternative 26.** Implement Accountability Measures (AMs) for the recreational sector for species undergoing overfishing. **The AM would not vary depending on stock status.**

**Sub-alternative 26A.** Do not implement *in season* AMs if the sector ACT is **projected to be met**. If the sector ACL is exceeded, the Assistant Administrator shall publish a notice to **reduce the length of the following fishing year** by the amount necessary to ensure landings do not exceed the sector ACT for the following fishing year.

**Sub-alternative 26B.** Do not implement *in season* AMs if the sector ACT is **projected to be met**. If the sector ACL is exceeded, the Assistant Administrator shall publish a notice to **reduce the sector ACT** in the following year by the amount of the overage.

**Sub-alternative 26C.** **If the sector ACT is projected to be met**, prohibit the harvest and retention of species or species group. If the sector ACL is exceeded, the Assistant Administrator shall publish a notice to **reduce the length of the following fishing year** by the amount necessary to recover the overage from the prior fishing year.

**Sub-alternative 26D.** If the sector ACT is projected to be met, prohibit the harvest and retention of species or species group. If the sector ACL is exceeded, the Assistant Administrator shall publish a notice to **reduce the sector ACT** in the following year by the amount of the overage.

**Alternative 27.** Implement Accountability Measures for the recreational sector for species undergoing overfishing. **The AM would vary depending on stock status.**

**Sub-alternative 27A.** Do not implement *in season* AMs if the sector ACT is projected to be met. **If the species is overfished and the ACL is exceeded**, the Assistant Administrator shall publish a notice to reduce the sector ACT in the following year by the amount of the overage. **If not overfished and the ACL is exceeded**, the Assistant Administrator shall publish a notice to reduce the length of the following fishing year by the amount necessary to ensure landings do not exceed the sector ACT for the following fishing year.

**Sub-alternative 27B.** If the sector ACT is projected to be met, prohibit the harvest and retention of species or species group. **If the species is overfished and the ACL is exceeded**, the Assistant Administrator shall publish a notice to reduce the sector ACT in the following year by the amount of the overage. **If not overfished and the ACL is exceeded**, the Assistant Administrator shall publish a notice to reduce the length of the following fishing year by the amount necessary to ensure landings do not exceed the sector ACT for the following fishing year.

**Alternative 28.** Compare ACL in Alternatives 2 and 3 with recreational landings over a range of years. For 2010, use only 2010 landings. For 2011, use the average landings of 2010 and 2011. For 2012 and beyond, use three year running average.

*Rationale for elimination:* During the Amendment development process, the Council considered a system that would establish allocations, Annual Catch Limits (ACLs), Annual Catch Targets (ACTs), and Accountability Measures (AMs) for the ten species undergoing overfishing (including red snapper) with the SSC's ABC recommendation as an upper limit. Under this system, the Council would then evaluate whether current regulations would be expected to keep the mortality below the ACT for each of these species. If not, the Council would propose regulatory changes.

During the development of the amendment guidelines became available, which indicate ACTs are not a requirement of the reauthorized Magnuson-Stevens Act. Rather, the Council has the option of using ACTs to ensure ACLs are not exceeded if they feel it is appropriate. The Council is continuing to evaluate ACLs, ACTs, AMs, and management measures in Amendments 17A and 17B for ten species undergoing overfishing (the rationale for the exclusion of allocations alternatives for red snapper is described above). However, the Council has acknowledged that ACLs, ACTs, allocations, and AMs are in place for some fisheries. For example, the Council views the commercial quota for snowy grouper at the yield at the fishing mortality at optimum yield level and the

regulations that specify a closure when the quota is projected to be met to represent a commercial ACL and a commercial AM, respectively. The Council directed staff to include these descriptions in the status quo alternative.

In turn, the Council is evaluating where ACLs, ACTs, AMs, allocations, and management measures are not in place or are not sufficient to keep mortality at the ACL and proposing these reference points where appropriate. For example, the Council views the recreational ACL of 523 snowy grouper currently in place as a sufficient ACL for the recreational sector. However, the Council is proposing AMs for the recreational sector for the snowy grouper fishery and a change in regulations to ensure that mortality remains below the recreational ACL. The Council is also considering alternatives that would modify existing ACLs, ACTs, AMs, allocations, and management measures to ensure overfishing does not occur.

In summary, the Council decided to move from a comprehensive approach to establish ACLs, ACTs, allocations, AMs, and management regulations to one that evaluates where these reference points are currently in place. If the management reference points are not in place or are insufficient to meet the goals and objectives of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, the Council is proposing action in Amendment 17A.