

REEF FISHES

(06/07 ARCHIVE - NCDMF)

Stock status - *Concern* - Of the 73 species in the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (SAFMC) management unit, 17 species are overfished, 16 are not overfished, and the status of the other 40 is unknown. The 17 overfished species include vermilion snapper, red snapper, red porgy, black sea bass, red grouper, snowy grouper, golden tilefish, and gray triggerfish.

Average Commercial Landings and Value 1997-2006 - 2,666,492 lbs./\$4,462,178 (Including black sea bass)

2006 Commercial Landings and Value – 2,656,197 lbs./\$5,360,733

Average Recreational Landings 1997-2006 – 856,145 lbs., **2006** – 1,483,810 lbs.

Average Number of Award Citations 1997-2006/ 2006 only –Amberjack (50 lbs.) (376/105), Grouper (20 lbs.) (39/79), Jack Crevalle (20 lbs.) (51/17), Porgy (4 lbs.) (12/39), Sheepshead (10 lbs.) (32/41), Red snapper (10 lbs.) (30/41), and Triggerfish (7 lbs.) (5/1).

Status of Fisheries Management Plan (FMP) - In North Carolina, reef fish are currently included in the Interjurisdictional FMP, which defers to SAFMC FMP compliance requirements. Managed under Amendments 1-13C by the SAFMC. Amendment 13C was approved by SAFMC in December 2005 and became effective in October 2006. This amendment established an annual quota for commercial black sea bass and vermilion snapper and reduced the commercial quota and recreational bag limits for snowy grouper and golden tilefish. The commercial trip limit and recreational bag limit for red porgy was increased. The recreational size limits on black sea bass and vermilion snapper were increased.

Research and Data Needs - Develop representative juvenile and adult indices, assess survival rates, conduct population assessment, expand age and growth studies, and determine migration patterns.

Current Regulations (2007) - State and federal: greater amberjack-28 inches Fork Length (FL) (recreational) and 36 inches FL (commercial); black and gag groupers-24 inches Total Length (TL); red, scamp, yellowfin, and yellowmouth groupers-20 inches TL; red porgy-14 inches TL; silk and blackfin snappers-12 inches TL; red snapper-20 inches TL; and vermilion snapper- 12 inches TL. Federal only: hogfish (not pigfish)-12 inches FL; dog, gray, cubera, mahogany, queen, schoolmaster, and yellowtail snappers-12 inches TL; and mutton snapper-16 inches TL.

Harvest Season - Currently open year round except for the following species: Wreckfish has a spawning closure from January 15-April 15, gag and black grouper have a March and April closure (no sale, bag limit only), red porgy closure is January-April, and greater amberjack has an April closure (no sale) with a season and quota beginning May 1.

Size and Age at Maturity - Variable

Historical and Current Maximum Age - Variable

Juvenile Abundance Index - None available

Habits and Habitats - Occur on hard or "live" bottom on the outer continental shelf

For more information, see [DMF Species Leads page](#)