



Southeast Fishery Bulletin

National Marine Fisheries Service, Southeast Regional Office, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT:

Rick DeVactor or Rick.DeVactor@noaa.gov
727-824-5305, FAX 727-824-5308

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NOAA Fisheries Service Has Implemented a Rebuilding Plan for Red Grouper in the South Atlantic

NOAA Fisheries Service has implemented a rebuilding plan for red grouper. The red grouper stock of the South Atlantic was assessed in 2010 through the Southeast Data, Assessment, and Review Process. The assessment determined red grouper to be overfished (population too low) and undergoing overfishing (rate of fish removal too high). The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) is required by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act to implement a rebuilding plan within two years after notification of an overfished stock. Amendment 24 will implement a plan that has an 81 percent probability of rebuilding the stock in 10 years. The final rule published in the *Federal Register* on June 11, 2012, and is effective on July 11, 2012 (77 FR 34254).

Other actions in Amendment 24:

- Implementation of red grouper annual catch limits for the commercial and recreational sectors. The sector annual catch limits are based on the Council's allocations of 44 percent commercial and 56 percent recreational.

- Specification of an annual catch target for the recreational sector.
- Implementation of red grouper accountability measures for the commercial and recreational sectors. Accountability measures are management controls to prevent annual catch limits from being exceeded and to correct overages of the catch limits if they are exceeded. The accountability measures will close each sector when the sector annual catch limit is projected to be met. If a sector annual catch limit is exceeded, the Regional Administrator will publish a notice to reduce the sector annual catch limits in the following season by the amount of the overage.
- Elimination of the commercial and recreational aggregate annual catch limits and accountability measures for black grouper, gag, and red grouper.
- Revision of the following management benchmarks for red grouper: Maximum sustainable yield; optimum yield; and minimum stock size threshold.

More information, including Frequently Asked Questions for Amendment 24 can be found online at: <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov>.

	Commercial ACL	Recreational ACL
2012	284,680	362,320
2013	315,920	402,080
2014 and subsequent years	343,200	436,800
Numbers are in pounds whole weight		