



Southeast Fishery Bulletin

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Commercial Harvest of Deep-Water Grouper in South Atlantic Waters Will Close on July 10, 2014

Commercial harvest of deep-water grouper in South Atlantic waters will **close, at 12:01 a.m. (local time) on July 10, 2014**. The deep-water grouper complex is comprised of the following species: yellowedge grouper, silk snapper, misty grouper, queen snapper, sand tilefish, black snapper, and blackfin snapper. Reports indicate that landings are approaching the 2014 commercial sector catch limit of 60,371 pounds whole weight. Commercial harvest will reopen at 12:01 a.m. (local time) on January 1, 2015.

The operator of a vessel with a federal commercial permit for snapper-grouper that is landing deep-water grouper for sale must have landed and bartered, traded, or sold such deep-water grouper prior to 12:01 a.m. local time, July 10, 2014. The prohibition on sale does not apply to sale or purchase of deep-water grouper that were harvested, landed ashore, and sold prior to 12:01 a.m. local time, July 10, 2014, and held in cold storage by a dealer or processor.

During the closure:

- Harvest or possession of deep-water grouper in or from federal waters is limited to the recreational bag and possession limits.
- Sale and purchase of deep-water grouper in or from federal waters is prohibited.
- The closure applies in both state and federal waters for a person onboard a vessel with a federal snapper-grouper permit.

This closure is necessary to protect the snapper-grouper resource.