



Southeast Fishery Bulletin

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NOAA Fisheries Announces New Regulations for Blueline Tilefish, Black Sea Bass, and Yellowtail Snapper in Federal Waters of the South Atlantic

The final rule for Regulatory Amendment 25 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region (Regulatory Amendment 25) will publish on July 13, 2016.

The final rule for Regulatory Amendment 25 will implement the following changes:

Blueline Tilefish

Regulations for blueline tilefish will be effective on July 13, 2016.

- Increase the annual catch limits for blueline tilefish from 26,766 to 87,521 pounds whole weight (commercial sector) and 26,691 to 87,277 pounds whole weight (recreational sector).
- Reopen commercial harvest for blueline tilefish on July 13, 2016. Commercial harvest will close in 2016 if the commercial annual catch limit is met.
- Increase the commercial trip limit from 100 to 300 pounds gutted weight.
- Increase the recreational bag limit from one fish per vessel to three fish per person per day for the months of May through August within the aggregate bag limit. There will continue to be no recreational retention of blueline tilefish during the months of January through April and September through December, each year.
- The increases in the commercial trip limit and the recreational bag limit are in response to the increase in the annual catch limit.

Black sea bass

Regulations for black sea bass will be effective on August 12, 2016.

- Increase the recreational bag limit for black sea bass from five to seven fish per person per day.

Yellowtail Snapper

Regulations for yellowtail snapper will be effective on August 12, 2016.

- Change the yellowtail snapper fishing year start date for both the commercial and recreational sectors from January 1 to August 1, each year. Changing the start of the fishing year to August 1 will benefit

both sectors because it will ensure harvest is open during the winter months when yellowtail snapper obtains a higher price per pound commercially, and during peak tourist season in south Florida where the majority of yellowtail snapper harvest takes place.

More Information

For more information, including electronic copies of Amendment 25 and Frequently Asked Questions may be obtained from the NOAA Fisheries Web site:

http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable_fisheries/s_atl/sg/2015/reg_am25/index.html.

This bulletin serves as a Small Entity Compliance Guide, complying with section 212 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996.