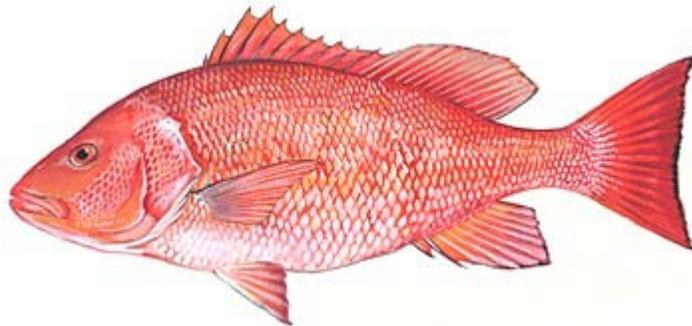


South Atlantic Red Snapper (Regulatory Amendment 10)
Frequently Asked Questions
April 2011



GENERAL QUESTIONS:

What does Regulatory Amendment 10 do?

- Regulatory Amendment 10 eliminates a snapper-grouper area closure approved in Amendment 17A.
- The actions in Amendment 17A, which included a harvest prohibition for red snapper and a snapper-grouper area closure, were based upon the results of a stock assessment conducted in 2008.
- The closure is 4,827 square miles and extends from southern Georgia to northern Florida where harvest and possession of all snapper-grouper species would be prohibited (except when fishing with black sea bass pots or spearfishing gear for species other than red snapper).

Why was a snapper-grouper area closure proposed in Amendment 17A?

- An assessment conducted in 2008 indicated a harvest prohibition alone was not sufficient to end overfishing due to mortality of incidentally caught red snapper.
- [Amendment 17A](#), which was approved in October 2010, included a multi-species area to reduce bycatch mortality of red snapper. Amendment 17A also included actions to end red snapper overfishing and rebuild the stock.

Why was the snapper-grouper area closure delayed to June 1, 2011?

- After Amendment 17A was approved, a new assessment was completed for red snapper that shows the stock to be overfished and undergoing overfishing; however, the rate of overfishing in the new assessment is less than the rate of overfishing found in the previous stock assessment.
- Temporarily delaying the effective date of the snapper-grouper area closure specified in Amendment 17A to June 1, 2011, was intended to allow the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) time to respond to the new stock assessment information through a regulatory amendment.

What was done to delay the snapper-grouper area closure?

- An emergency rule was published on December 9, 2011, with a correction that was published on December 20, 2011, to delay the effective date of the area closure for snapper-grouper specified in Amendment 17A.

Why was the snapper-grouper area closure eliminated through Regulatory Amendment 10?

- Based on results from the new assessment, evidence of decreased effort in the recreational fishery, and recommendations from their Scientific and Statistical Committee, the Council determined that the snapper-grouper area closure approved in Amendment 17A, in addition to a harvest prohibition, was more conservative than what is needed to end red snapper overfishing.
- A harvest prohibition alone is sufficient to end red snapper overfishing.

Does the elimination of the snapper-grouper area closure have any effect on the prohibition of harvest for red snapper?

- No, the decision to eliminate this area closure **does not affect** the prohibition on harvest and possession of red snapper.
- The prohibition on harvest and possession of red snapper in federal waters (and in state waters for vessels holding a federal snapper-grouper permit) became effective on December 3, 2010.

How long would a prohibition on red snapper and/or an area closure for all snapper-grouper fishing last?

- It is the Council's intent to re-open the red snapper fishery as soon as the science and the law indicate it is possible.
- Over the course of the rebuilding plan, the number of fish in the population should increase each year as the stock recovers. At some point, this number will be large enough to support reopening the red snapper fishery under an alternative management program.

Where can I get more information on Regulatory Amendment 10?

- More information on Regulatory Amendment 10 may be obtained via the Web at: <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov> or <http://www.safmc.net>.
- Hardcopies of the most recent version of Regulatory Amendment 10:

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