Frequently Asked Questions

Amendment 16 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Shrimp Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico

August 2014

Why are changes proposed for royal red shrimp?
- In January 2012, NOAA Fisheries implemented regulations that set an annual catch limit and accountability measures for royal red shrimp.
- The environmental impact statement that analyzed those actions incorrectly stated that there were currently no management restrictions for royal red shrimp, even though a quota and in-season quota closure were already in the regulations.
- Now, both sets of catch limits and accountability measures are in the regulations.
- Because the regulations are conflicting and redundant, NOAA Fisheries and the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council) are reconsidering these management measures.

What changes are proposed to catch limits to resolve the conflict?
- Either the 392,000-lb quota or the 334,000-lb annual catch limit would be removed and the other retained so only one limit remains.
- The annual catch limit could also be changed to 337,000 lbs, based on advice from the Council’s scientific advisors.

What are accountability measures?
- Accountability measures help keep landings within the catch limits.
- Accountability measures may also impose corrective measures if those levels are exceeded.
- In-season accountability measures are implemented during the same season the catch limit is reached or projected to be reached.
- Post-season accountability measures are implemented in the following season if the catch limit is exceeded.

What are the accountability measures for royal red shrimp?
- The original management plan for shrimp established in-season monitoring and an in-season closure if the quota is met or projected to be met.
- The 2012 regulations set a post-season accountability measure as follows:
  - In-season monitoring would not occur unless the accountability measure is triggered.
  - If the annual catch limit is exceeded in one year, the stock will be monitored in-season in the following year.
  - If landings reach or are projected to reach the annual catch limit in the second year, NOAA Fisheries will implement an in-season closure.
  - If a closure is not necessary the second year, then in-season monitoring would stop in subsequent years unless the annual catch limit was exceeded again.
- Both accountability measures are in the regulations.

What changes are proposed to accountability measures to resolve the redundancy?
- Only one of the accountability measures would be retained and the other removed.
How can I comment on the draft environmental impact statement for Amendment 16?

- Comments must be submitted between August 22 and October 6, 2014.
- You may submit comments by either of the following methods. Comments received through other means may not be considered.
    Click the “Comment Now!” icon, complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments.
  - Mail: Susan Gerhart, NOAA Fisheries
    Southeast Regional Office, Sustainable Fisheries Division
    263 13th Avenue South
    St. Petersburg, Florida 33701-5505.

Where can I find more information on management of the Gulf of Mexico shrimp fishery?

- For more information, please visit http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable_fisheries/gulf_fisheries/shrimp/index.html.