

Steven Atran

From: Steven Atran
Sent: Friday, September 11, 2009 4:55 PM
To: Bob Shipp (rshipp@jaguar1.usouthal.edu); Vernon Minton (vernon.minton@dcnr.alabama.gov)
Cc: Bob Gill (bgillbgill@embarqmail.com); Kay Williams (hkaywilliams@hotmail.com); Steve Bortone; Richard Leard; Carrie Simmons
Subject: SSC's request that red grouper and gag OFLs and ABCs for 2011 and beyond be recalculated
Attachments: B - 8 RFSSC Summary - 06-2009.doc

Bob and Vernon,

When the SSC reviewed the gag and red grouper update assessments last June, they declined to recommend an OFL or ABC for red grouper beyond 2010, and only conditionally recommended an ABC yield stream for gag beyond 2010. They felt that the estimated 2009 catches used in the projection model exceeded what would actually be caught and produced a more pessimistic projection than would be the case once the actual landings were known. The model projection used actual catches through 2008, and assumed that the entire TAC would be filled in 2009. For gag, realizing that a rebuilding plan would need to be implemented, they recommended recalculating the ABCs once the 2009 landings were available, and using a rebuilding yield stream based on the projections they had in hand only if there was not time to recalculate the yields with the actual 2009 landings data. The specific SSC motions, which are in the attached SSC report, were as follows:

 Red Grouper:

By a vote of 16 to 1, the SSC moves that the OFL projection of 6.43 mp gutted weight be accepted for 2010 as shown in Table 9.3 of the red grouper assessment (page 89 in the May 26, 2009 pre-decisional draft), and that OFLs in 2011-2014 be recalculated pending final 2009 landing statistics.

By a vote of 14 to 3, the SSC moves to recommend an ABC of 5.96 mp gutted weight for red grouper for 2010.

(There was no red grouper ABC recommendation made for the years beyond 2010 because of the concern over the 2009 estimated landings.)

 Gag:

By a vote of 14 to 2 with 1 abstention, the SSC moves that the OFL projection of 0.88 mp gutted weight be accepted as the OFL for gag for 2010 and that OFLs in 2011-2014 be recalculated pending final 2009 landing statistics.

By a vote of 14 to 1 with 1 abstention, the SSC moves that ABC yields for 2011-2014 be based on Frebuild-SSBmax following the reevaluation of OFL, or tabulated yields (1.20 mp/1.71 mp/2.23 mp/2.68 mp) in the Gag Benchmark Table 6-2-09.xls if the reevaluation cannot be done in time.

 The SSC recommendations to recalculate the OFLs and ABCs once the 2009 landings are available was not discussed or acted upon by the Council at either the June or August meetings. However, this could make a difference in the ABC yield streams for 2011 and beyond. The final 2009 landings data should become available around April or May 2010, long before Reef Fish Amendment 32 becomes finalized, and possibly before it goes to public hearing. We are targeting 2011 for implementation of Amendment 32.

As things stand now, we do not have an ABC recommendation for 2011 for red grouper, and we have only a conditional recommendation for gag. Should this SSC recommendation be taken up in the October Reef Fish Committee? (A similar concern will probably exist for the red snapper update assessment as well.)

Steven Atran
Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council