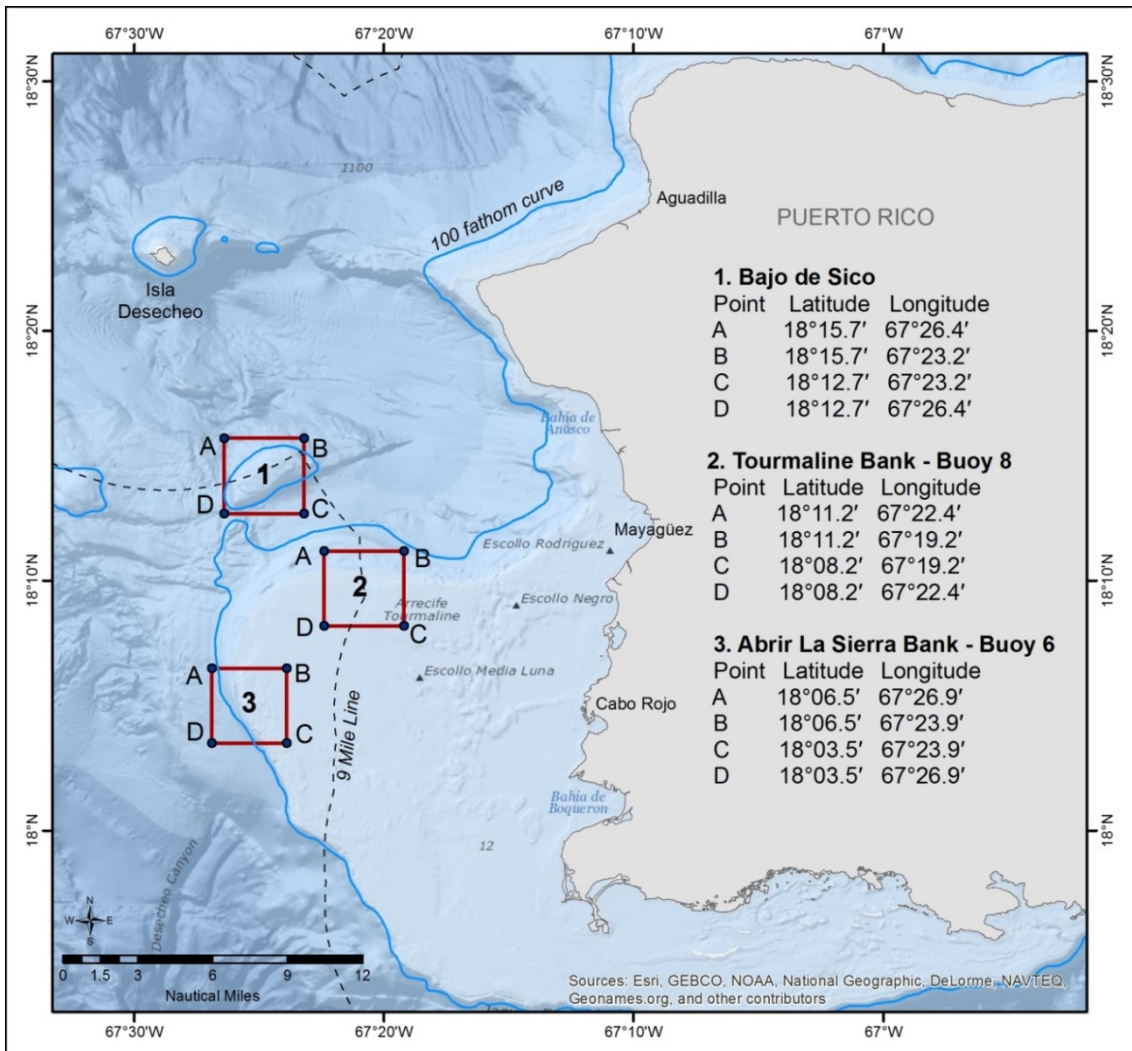


Summary of Commercial and Recreational Fishing Regulations in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) off Puerto Rico

The Caribbean Fishery Management Council and NOAA Fisheries are responsible for the conservation and orderly utilization of the fishery resources of the U.S. Caribbean EEZ, which includes 9-200 nautical miles off the coast of Puerto Rico. For information on the regulations for Highly Migratory Species (HMS) including tunas, swordfish, billfishes, and sharks, visit <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/> or call 301-427-8503.

Seasonal and Area Closures

- 1. Bajo de Sico:** Closed annually from October 1 through March 31 to fishing for Council-managed reef fish; harvest of HMS and spiny lobster is allowed. The use of pots, traps, bottom longlines, gill or trammel nets is prohibited year round; anchoring is prohibited year-round.
- 2. Tourmaline Bank and 3. Abrir La Sierra Bank:** Closed annually from December 1 through the last day of February to all fishing, including HMS species; the use of pots, traps, bottom longlines, gill or trammel nets is prohibited year-round.



Seasonal Closures

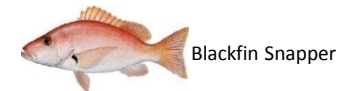
No harvest of the following species in the EEZ during the dates indicated below

February 1 - April 30

April 1 - June 30



October 1 - December 31



December 1 - Last day of February



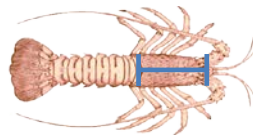
Red Hind Grouper - Closure applies only to the Red Hind Spawning Aggregation Areas and west of 67°10' W.

Gear and Method Restrictions

Applicable to All Fisheries	
No use of explosives.	
Toxic chemicals may not be used or possessed in a coral area.	
Applicable to Specific Fisheries	
Reef Fish, including aquarium trade species	No use of poisons, drugs, or other chemicals, powerheads, gillnets, and trammel nets. Dip nets and slurp guns allowed for aquarium species. *Fish must be landed with head and fins intact.
Coral Reef Resources, including aquarium trade species	No use of chemical, plant-derived toxins, and power-assisted tools.
Spiny Lobster	No use of spears, hooks, or similar devices, gillnets or trammel nets. Lobster must be landed with head and carapace intact. Harvest of egg bearing females is prohibited.
Queen Conch	No harvest by diving while using a continued surface air supply. Queen conch must be landed with meat and shell intact.

* Certain exceptions to this rule apply. See 50 CFR 622.10

Carapace Length (CL)



Size Limits

Spiny Lobster - Minimum size limit is 3.5 in (8.9 cm) CL.

Total Length (TL)



Yellowtail Snapper - Minimum size limit of 12 in (30.5 cm) TL applies year-round for yellowtail snapper.

Prohibited Harvest

If these species are caught in the U.S. Caribbean EEZ, they must be returned immediately to the water with minimal harm



Queen Conch - EEZ harvest allowed only east of 64°34' W which includes Lang Bank, St. Croix.



Recreational Bag Limits

Aggregate bag limit for:	Allowed quantity:	
	Per Person/Day	Per Vessel/Day
snapper grouper parrotfish	5 fish per person/day	if 3 or more persons are on board, 15 fish per vessel/day
	OR	
	Not to exceed: 2 parrotfish per person/day or 6 parrotfish per vessel/day.	
angelfish, boxfish, goatfish, grunts, wrasses, jacks, scups and porgies, squirrelfish, tilefish, surgeonfish, triggerfish and filefish	5 fish per person/day	if 3 or more persons are on board, 15 fish per vessel/day
	OR	
	Not to exceed: 1 surgeonfish per person/day or 4 surgeonfish per vessel/day	
spiny lobster	3 spiny lobsters per person/day	No more than 10 spiny lobsters per vessel/day

This publication was prepared for general informational purposes only and has no legal force or effect. Fishing regulations are subject to change. For additional and updated regulations please visit http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable_fisheries/policy_branch/index.html. Illustrations: D. Peebles, D. Raver, NOAA, N. Deloach

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