



Southeast Fishery Bulletin

National Marine Fisheries Service, Southeast Regional Office, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, Florida 33701-5505

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NOAA Fisheries Service Seeks Public Comment on a Proposed Rule to Implement the 2010 Caribbean Annual Catch Limit Amendment

Comment Period Ends November 18, 2011

NOAA Fisheries Service is seeking public comment on a proposed rule to implement the 2010 Caribbean Annual Catch Limit Amendment for the U.S. Caribbean Region. The proposed rule published in the *Federal Register* on October 27, 2011. The public comment period ends on **November 18, 2011**.

Background

NOAA Fisheries Service and the Caribbean Fishery Management Council developed this amendment to the Fishery Management Plans for the reef fish and queen conch resources in the U.S. Caribbean to bring those fisheries into compliance with the 2007 revisions to the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

If the 2010 Caribbean Annual Catch Limit Amendment is approved, the final regulations are expected to be implemented in 2012.

The proposed rule would:

- Amend the composition of the snapper and grouper complexes.
- For species designated as undergoing overfishing (rate of removal is too high), and for the fishery management units within which those species reside (i.e., snapper, grouper and parrotfish), establish annual catch limits (amount of fish that can be taken without triggering accountability measures) and accountability measures (measures to prevent or address an overage of an annual catch limit) to end and prevent further overfishing in both the commercial and recreational sectors.
- Prohibit harvest of three species of parrotfish (midnight, blue, rainbow).
- Establish an aggregate bag limit for recreational fishing of snapper, grouper, and parrotfish consisting of five fish per person per day with no more than two parrotfish per person per day within the

aggregate, or fifteen fish per vessel per day with no more than six parrotfish per vessel per day within the aggregate.

- Establish exclusive economic zone sub-boundaries for purposes of allocating ACLs and applying accountability measures.
- Adjust management measures as needed to constrain harvest to specified annual catch limits.

Request for Comments

Comments on this proposed rule must be received no later than **November 18, 2011**, to be considered by NOAA Fisheries Service. See the **Addresses** section below for information on where and how to submit comments.

Addresses

Electronic copies of the proposed rule and the 2010 Caribbean Annual Catch Limit Amendment may be obtained from the NOAA Fisheries Service Web site <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sf/CaribbeanReefFish.htm> under the **Items of Interest** heading, and the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal <http://www.regulations.gov>.

You may submit comments by any of the following methods:

- Electronic submissions: Federal e-Rulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>, click on "submit a comment," then enter **NOAA-NMFS-2010-0028** in the keyword search and click on "search." All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be posted to <http://www.regulations.gov> without change. All Personal Identifying Information (for example, name, address, etc.) voluntarily submitted by the commenter may be publicly accessible. Do not submit confidential business information or otherwise sensitive or protected information. NOAA Fisheries Service will accept anonymous comments.

You may submit attachments to electronic comments in Microsoft Word, Excel, WordPerfect, or Adobe PDF file formats only.

- Mail: Maria Lopez
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Comments received through means not specified in this bulletin or the proposed rule may not be considered.

If you would like to receive these fishery bulletins via e-mail as soon as they are published, please e-mail: sero.communications.comments@noaa.gov.