



Southeast Fishery Bulletin

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November 2, 2010
FB10-096

NOAA Fisheries Service Publishes Final Rule to Modify the Seasonal Closure of Bajo de Sico in the U.S. Caribbean

NOAA Fisheries Service has published a final rule to the Regulatory Amendment to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for the Reef Fish Fishery of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands Modifying the Bajo de Sico Seasonal Closure. The Caribbean Fishery Management Council (Council) submitted the regulatory amendment and associated finding of no significant impacts for review, approval, and implementation by NOAA Fisheries Service. The final rule was published in the *Federal Register* on November 2, 2010 (75 FR 67247), and the provisions are effective December 2, 2010.

The final rule modifies the Bajo de Sico seasonal closure from a 3-month closure to a 6-month closure, and prohibits fishing for and possession of Caribbean reef fish in or from the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) portion of Bajo de Sico from October 1 through March 31, each year. The final rule also prohibits anchoring in the Bajo de Sico EEZ year-round. This final rule also adds spear to the list of allowable gears in the commercial sector of the Caribbean reef fish fishery.

For the 2010-2011 fishing year, Bajo de Sico will be closed for Caribbean reef fish from December 2, 2010, through March 31, 2011. For each consecutive year, the full 6-month closure, October 1 through March 31, will be in effect.

Need more information on these topics?

Frequently Asked Questions:

Management of Bajo de Sico off Puerto Rico's West Coast
http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sf/pdfs/Bajo_de_Sico_FAQs_Nov_2010.pdf

at the Southeast Regional Office's Web page:
<http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov>.

Addresses

Electronic copies of the final rule or regulatory amendment may be obtained from the e-Rulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov>, the Council's Web site at <http://www.caribbeanfmc.com/>, or:

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This bulletin provides only a summary of the information pertinent to the rule. Any discrepancies between this bulletin and the rule as published in the *Federal Register* will be resolved in favor of the *Federal Register*.

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