

**CARIBBEAN FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
268 MUNOZ RIVERA AVENUE, SUITE 1108
SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO 00918**

**ADVISORY PANEL MEETING
WINDWARD PASSAGE HOTEL
ST. THOMAS, U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS
AUGUST 25, 2010**

SUMMARY MINUTES

The Caribbean Fishery Management Council's (Council) Advisory Panel (AP) held a meeting on August 25, 2010, at the Windward Passage Hotel, in St. Thomas, VI, to discuss the proposed management alternatives for the draft Amendment 2 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Queen Conch Fishery of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands and Amendment 5 to the Reef Fish Fishery Management Plan of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The AP members agreed on the following general recommendations:

-That NMFS, the CFMC and the local government agencies be held accountable for collecting and analyzing the data needed in a responsible and proper manner and not just hold the fishermen accountable for it. This should be done on monthly basis, not to exceed three months.

-That NMFS, the CFMC, USVI DPNR (DFW) and PR DNER make it mandatory that every recreational fisher be responsible to submit monthly catch reports on Council managed species.

-To provide outreach and education to the recreational fishery community in a more aggressive manner.

-To include closed areas [yield] in the calculations for establishing ACLs.

The AP members recommend the following management alternatives:

-4.1 ACTION 1: Amend the stock complexes in the Reef Fish Fishery Management Units (FMU)

4.1.1 Action 1(a) Grouper complex

-**To adopt** Alternative 2 (PREFERRED) Separate grouper unit 4 into grouper unit 4 (yellowfin, red, tiger plus black grouper) and grouper unit 5 (yellowedge and misty grouper). Move creole-fish from grouper unit 3 into the "data collection only" unit (no specific management measures for the species).

4.1.2 Action 1(b) Snapper complex

-**To adopt** Alternative 2 (PREFERRED) Modify the snapper FMUs by adding cardinal snapper (*Pristipomoides macrophthalmus*) to snapper unit 2 (SU2) and moving wenchman (*Pristipomoides aquilonaris*) into snapper unit 1 (SU1).

-4.2 ACTION 2: MANAGEMENT REFERENCE POINTS

4.2.1 Action 2(a) Snapper, Grouper and Parrotfish Complexes

-**To adopt** Alternative 2(d) $OY=ACL=OFL \times (0.85)$

-**To adopt** Alternative 2(h) $OY=ACL=0$ (Grouper Units 1 and 2, midnight parrotfish, blue parrotfish, rainbow parrotfish) (PREFERRED for GU1 and GU2 and for midnight, blue and rainbow parrotfish). (For the USVI)

-That recreational fishers be allocated a bag limit for the midnight, blue and rainbow parrotfishes for Puerto Rico only. (These species may not have commercial value, but they are of important value to the recreational fishers.)

4.2.2 Action 2(b) Queen Conch Complex

-**To adopt** Alternative 2(b) $OFL=MSY$ proxy; overfishing occurs when annual catches exceed the OFL, unless NMFS' Southeast Fishery Science Center (in consultation with the Caribbean Fishery Management Council) and its Scientific and Statistical Committee) determines the overage occurred because data collection/monitoring improved, rather than because catches actually increased.

-**To adopt** Alternative 2(g) $OY=ACL=ABC$ specified by Scientific and Statistical Committee (Allowable catch issue EEZ and local needs to be clarified.)

4.3 Action 3: Annual Catch Limit Allocation/Management

4.3.1 Action 3(a) Snapper and grouper unit allocation/management

-**To adopt** Alternative 4. Define aggregate reference points for snapper and grouper in the USVI and define aggregate reference points for grouper not for snapper in Puerto Rico.

-**To Adopt** Alternative 2. Specify separate commercial and recreational annual catch limits based on the preferred management reference point time series.

4.3.3 Action 3(c) Geographic Allocation/management

-**To adopt** Alternative 2A. Use a mid-point or equidistant method for dividing the EEZ among islands.

4.4 Action 4: Management Measures

4.4.1 Action 4(a) Species-specific parrotfish prohibitions

-**To reject** Alternative 2 of action 4 section 4.4.

-New Alternative measure offered is to prohibit fishing for or possessing in the EEZ off the USVI for: A. Midnight parrotfish B. Blue parrotfish C. Rainbow parrotfish.

4.4.2 Action 4(b) Recreational bag limits

Alternative 7 (PREFERRED) Establish an aggregate bag limit for snapper, grouper and parrotfish FMUs of: 10 per fisher including not more than two parrotfish per fisher or six parrotfish per boat, and 30 aggregate snapper, grouper, and parrotfish per boat on a fishing day (would not

apply to a fisherman who has a valid commercial fishing license issued by Puerto Rico or the USVI).

-**To offer** an alternative language that would substitute the numbers 10 and 30 for 5 and 15, respectively in the preferred Alternative 7.

4.5 Action 5(a): Accountability Measures

-**To adopt** preferred Alternative 3(c)

Action 5(b)

-**To adopt** Alternative 2, if and when a system is put in place by DNER, DPNR and NMFS to assess the status of the fishery.

4.6 Action 6: Framework Measures

4.6.1 Action 6(a): Establish Framework Measures for Reef Fish FMP

-**To Adopt** Alternative 3, that is to amend the framework procedures for the Reef Fish FMP to provide the Council with a mechanism to expeditiously adjust a subset of management measures outlined in Alternative 2.

4.6.2. Action 6(b): Establish Framework Measures for the Queen Conch FMP

-**To adopt** Alternative 3, that is to amend the framework procedures for the Queen Conch FMP to provide the Council with a mechanism to expeditiously adjust a subset of management measures outlined in Alternative 2.