

kilograms) (50 CFR 622.193(i)(1)(i)). This regulation also specifies the commercial in-season accountability measure (AM) for the scamp and yellowmouth grouper complex in the South Atlantic. The AM requires NMFS to close the commercial sector of the scamp and yellowmouth grouper complex for the rest of the fishing year when commercial landings reach or are projected to reach the commercial ACL. NMFS projects that the commercial ACL will have been reached by *[insert date 5 days after date of filing for public inspection with the Office of the Federal Register]*. Accordingly, the commercial sector of the scamp and yellowmouth grouper complex is closed beginning on August 24, 2026, and will remain closed through December 31, 2026, the end of the current fishing year.

During the commercial closure, all sale or purchase of scamp and yellowmouth grouper is prohibited and harvest and possession of scamp and yellowmouth grouper in or from South Atlantic Federal waters is limited to the recreational bag and possession limits. These bag and possession limits apply in the South Atlantic on board a vessel for which a valid Federal commercial or charter/vessel headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, without regard to where such species were harvested, *i.e.*, in state or Federal waters.

Classification

NMFS issues this action pursuant to section 305(d) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act. This action is required by 50 CFR 622.193(i)(1)(i), which was issued pursuant to section 304(b) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(B), there is good cause to waive prior notice and an opportunity for public comment on this action, as notice and comment are unnecessary and contrary to the public interest. Such procedures are unnecessary because the regulations associated with the commercial closure of the scamp and yellowmouth grouper complex have already been subject to notice and public comment, and all that remains is to notify the public of the closure. Prior notice and opportunity for public comment on this action is contrary to the public interest because of the need to immediately implement the commercial closure to protect the scamp and yellowmouth grouper resource in the South Atlantic. The capacity of the commercial fishing fleet allows for rapid harvest of the commercial ACL, and any delay in the closure could result in the exceedance

of the applicable ACL. Prior notice and opportunity for public comment would require time and would potentially result in a harvest that exceeds the commercial ACL.

For the reasons just stated, NMFS also finds good cause to waive the 30-day delay in the effectiveness of this action under 5 U.S.C. 553(d)(3).

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: August 19, 2026.

Shannon Bettridge,
Acting Director, Office of Sustainable
Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 622

[Docket No. 1710319998630–02; RTID 0648–XF979]

Fisheries of the South Atlantic; 2026 Commercial Closure of Red Snapper in the South Atlantic

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Temporary rule; closure.

SUMMARY: NMFS implements an accountability measure for red snapper in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of the South Atlantic. NMFS projects that commercial landings of red snapper will reach the commercial annual catch limit (ACL) for the 2026 fishing year. Therefore, NMFS is closing the commercial sector for red snapper in the South Atlantic EEZ. This closure is necessary to protect the red snapper resource.

DATES: This temporary rule is effective from August 24, 2026, through December 31, 2026.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Nikhil Mehta, NMFS Southeast Regional Office, 727–824–5305, nikhil.mehta@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The snapper-grouper fishery of the South Atlantic includes red snapper and is managed under the Fishery Management Plan for the Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region (FMP). The FMP was prepared by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council and NMFS, and was approved by the Secretary of Commerce, and is implemented by

NMFS through regulations at 50 CFR part 622 under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act).

The regulations codified at 50 CFR 622.193(y)(1) specify the commercial ACL and the commercial accountability measures (AM) for South Atlantic red snapper. The commercial ACL is 102,951 pounds (46,698 kilograms), round weight. The commercial AM states that NMFS is required to close the commercial sector for red snapper when NMFS projects that commercial landings reach or are projected to reach the commercial ACL. NMFS projects that the commercial ACL will have been reached by August 24, 2026. Accordingly, the commercial sector for South Atlantic red snapper is closed from August 24, 2026, through December 31, 2026, the end of the current fishing year. Unless NMFS specifies otherwise, the commercial season for red snapper in the 2027 fishing year will begin on the second Monday in July (50 CFR 622.183(b)(5)(i)).

The operator of a vessel with a valid commercial vessel permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper with red snapper on board must have landed and bartered, traded, or sold such red snapper prior to August 24, 2026.

During the commercial closure for South Atlantic red snapper, all sale or purchase of red snapper is prohibited. This prohibition on the harvest, possession, sale, or purchase of red snapper applies in the South Atlantic on a vessel issued a Federal commercial or charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper, regardless if such fish were harvested or possessed in State or Federal waters (50 CFR 622.181(c)(2) and 622.193(y)(1)).

Classification

NMFS issues this action pursuant to section 305(d) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act. This action is required by 50 CFR 622.193(y)(1), which was issued pursuant to section 304(b) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(B), there is good cause to waive prior notice and an opportunity for public comment on this action, as notice and comment are unnecessary and contrary to the public interest. Such procedures are unnecessary because the rule that established the commercial AM for red snapper has already been subject to notice and comment, and all that remains is to notify the public of the closure. Such procedures are contrary to

the public interest because of the need to immediately implement this action to protect red snapper, because the capacity of the fishing fleet allows for rapid harvest of the commercial ACL. Prior notice and opportunity for public comment would require time and could potentially result in a harvest well in excess of the established commercial ACL.

For the reasons just stated, there is also good cause to waive the 30-day delay in the effectiveness of this action under 5 U.S.C. 553(d)(3).

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: August 19, 2026.

Shannon Bettridge,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 648

[Docket No. 260702-0161; RTID 0648-XF978]

Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish; 2026 *Illex* Squid Quota Harvested

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Temporary rule; possession limit adjustment.

SUMMARY: NMFS is closing the directed *Illex* squid fishery in Federal waters based on a projection that 96 percent of the 2026 domestic annual harvest (DAH) will be harvested. This closure is effective 0001 hour (hr) local time on August 23, 2026, through 2400 hr local time on December 31, 2026. This action is necessary to comply with the regulations implementing the Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP), and is intended to prevent the 2026 *Illex* squid annual catch limit from being exceeded.

DATES: Effective 0001 hr local time on August 23, 2026, through 2400 hr local time on December 31, 2026.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Maria Fenton, Fishery Policy Analyst, 978-281-9196.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Regulations implementing the Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish FMP appear at 50 CFR part 648, subpart B. The regulations

at § 648.22 describe the specifications that must be set annually for the fisheries managed under the Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish FMP. For the *Illex* squid fishery, these specifications include the Domestic Annual Harvest (DAH), which is also known as the commercial quota and represents the total amount of *Illex* squid that can be landed by commercial fishing vessels in a given fishing year. On July 9, 2026, NMFS published a final rule (91 FR 42360) implementing a 38,631-metric ton (mt) *Illex* squid DAH for fishing year 2026 (January 1–December 31, 2026).

The regulations at § 648.24(a)(2) require NMFS to close the directed *Illex* squid fishery in Federal waters for the remainder of the year when the Regional Administrator projects that 96 percent of the DAH is harvested. When such a closure is in effect, vessels are prohibited from fishing for, possessing, or landing more than 10,000 pounds (lb; 4,536 kilograms (kg)) of *Illex* squid at any time per trip, and from landing *Illex* squid more than once per calendar day, as specified at § 648.26(c)(2).

Based on vessel reports, dealer reports, and other available information, the Regional Administrator projected that 96 percent of the *Illex* squid DAH will be harvested by August 23, 2026. Therefore, effective 0001 hr local time on August 23, 2026, through 2400 hr local time on December 31, 2026, vessels may not fish for, possess, or land more than 10,000 lb (4,536 kg) of *Illex* squid at any time per trip, and may only land *Illex* squid once per calendar day. Vessels issued an *Illex* squid moratorium permit that enter port before 0001 hr local time on August 23, 2026, may land and sell more than 10,000 lb (4,536 kg) of *Illex* squid from that trip, consistent with the possession restrictions at § 648.26(c).

Also, effective 0001 hr local time on August 23, 2026, through 2400 hr local time on December 31, 2026, federally permitted dealers may not purchase, possess, or receive for a commercial purpose or attempt to purchase, possess, or receive for a commercial purpose, more than 10,000 lb (4,536 kg) of *Illex* squid from a vessel unless the vessel enters port before 0001 hr local time on August 23, 2026.

Classification

NMFS issues this action pursuant to section 305(d) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. This action is required by § 648.24(a)(2), which was issued pursuant to section 304(b) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(B), there is good cause to waive prior notice and opportunity for public comment on this action, as notice and comment would be impracticable and contrary to the public interest. The public had prior notice and opportunity to comment on the 2026 *Illex* squid DAH through the proposed rule to implement the 2026 *Illex* squid fishery specifications (91 FR 12545; March 16, 2026), and the closure process for the *Illex* squid fishery when that provision of the FMP was put in place. Further, data indicating that 96 percent of the 2026 DAH will be harvested only recently became available. High volume landings in the *Illex* squid fishery can lead to harvest of the DAH relatively quickly. If implementation of this action is delayed, the 2026 DAH will likely be exceeded, thereby undermining the conservation objectives of the Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish FMP. For these reasons, there is also good cause under 5 U.S.C. 553(d)(3) to waive the 30-day delay in effective date.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: August 19, 2026.

Shannon Bettridge,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 648

[Docket No. 260209-0039; RTID 0648-XF973]

Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Summer Flounder Fishery; Quota Transfer From North Carolina to Massachusetts

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Temporary rule; quota transfer.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces that the State of North Carolina is transferring a portion of its 2026 commercial summer flounder quota to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. This adjustment to the 2026 fishing year quota is necessary to comply with the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan (FMP) quota transfer provisions. This announcement informs the public of the revised 2026