Southeast Fishery Bulletin

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COMMERCIAL FISHERY FOR BLACK SEA BASS CLOSED TO VESSELS FISHING IN THE SOUTH ATLANTIC FEDERAL WATERS

The commercial fishery for black sea bass in federal waters of the South Atlantic will be **closed, effective 12:01 a.m. (local time) May 15, 2009**, until 12:01 a.m. June 1, 2009. NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service has determined the 2009 commercial quota of 309,000 pounds of black sea bass will be reached by May 15, 2009.

The operator of a vessel that has been issued a federal commercial permit for snapper-grouper and that is landing black sea bass for sale, including a charter vessel or headboat that has a commercial permit for snapper-grouper, must have landed and bartered, traded, or sold such black sea bass prior to 12:01 a.m., local time, May 15, 2009. All black sea bass pots must be removed from South Atlantic federal waters prior to 12:01 a.m., local time, May 15, 2009.

During the closure, all harvest and possession of black sea bass in or from federal waters of the South Atlantic is subject to the applicable bag and possession limits, and the sale or purchase of black sea bass taken from South Atlantic federal waters is prohibited. In addition, those bag and possession limits and the prohibition on sale or purchase apply in state and federal waters of the South Atlantic for a vessel for which a valid federal commercial or charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued.

The prohibition on sale or purchase does not apply to sale or purchase of black sea bass that were harvested, landed ashore, and sold prior to 12:01 a.m., local time, May 15, 2009, and were held in cold storage by a dealer or processor.

Closure of the commercial fishery for black sea bass in federal waters of the South Atlantic complies with regulations implementing the Fishery Management Plan for the Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region and is necessary to protect the black sea bass resource.

How can we improve these fishery bulletins?
If you have any suggestions on how we may improve future fishery bulletins, please contact:
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If you would like to receive these fishery bulletins via e-mail as soon as they are published, e-mail us at: SERO.Communications.Comments@noaa.gov. You will still receive a hard copy of these bulletins through the mail.

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