Southeast Fishery Bulletin

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

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Commercial Harvest of Vermilion Snapper Closes in the South Atlantic Federal Waters on September 30, 2011

Commercial harvest of vermilion snapper in the South Atlantic federal waters is **closed, effective 12:01 a.m., (local time) September 30, 2011,** through 12:01 a.m., January 1, 2012. NOAA Fisheries Service has determined the 2011 July through December commercial quota of 302,523 pounds of vermilion snapper will be reached by this date. During the closure period, no person aboard a vessel for which a commercial permit for snapper-grouper has been issued may commercially fish for vermilion snapper in federal waters of the South Atlantic.

During the quota closure, South Atlantic snapper-grouper commercial permit holders can retain the recreational bag limit of 5 fish, but may not sell those fish. During the November 2011 through March 2012 recreational closure of vermilion snapper the recreational harvest or possession of vermilion snapper is prohibited.

In addition, for a person on board a vessel for which a federal South Atlantic snapper-grouper commercial permit has been issued, these provisions of the closure for vermilion snapper would apply regardless of whether the fish are harvested in state or federal waters.

Closing commercial fishing for vermilion snapper in 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 snapper-grouper resource.

The operator of a vessel with vermilion snapper in excess of the bag or possession limit aboard must have landed such vermilion snapper prior to 12:01 a.m., local time, September 30, 2011, and all sale or purchase of vermilion snapper must occur prior to 12:01 a.m., local time, September 30, 2011. The prohibition on sale or purchase does not apply to sale or purchase of vermilion snapper that were harvested, landed ashore, and sold prior to 12:01 a.m., local time, September 30, 2011, and were held in cold storage by a dealer or processor.

If you would like to receive these fishery bulletins via e-mail as soon as they are published, please contact us at SERO.Communications.Comments@noaa.gov.

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*.

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