

# History of Red Snapper State and Federal Calibration Discussions

*“Common Currency” issues among states have been discussed for years*

Since the inception of state management of private recreational red snapper fishing in federal waters, managers have discussed the need to unify the outputs of states’ surveys. However, managers have not yet implemented a solution. With the transition from EFPs to Amendment 50, NMFS has acknowledged that calibrations must take place or state management may fail to comply with the law.<sup>1</sup>

## January 2018

At the Council meeting, NMFS presented that the state and federal survey results would not be directly comparable without a calibration.<sup>2</sup>

## September 2018

The Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission hosted a special workshop to discuss approaches to calibrating state surveys. The term “common currency” was coined at this meeting.<sup>3</sup>

## November 2018

NMFS acknowledged at the Council meeting that state survey data should be calibrated after MRIP certification, and highlighted the need for calibrations to be ready for the next red snapper stock assessment.<sup>4</sup>

## January 2019

The Gulf Council acknowledged that a common currency should be developed; NMFS indicated that they would not calibrate until a stock assessment.<sup>5</sup>

## March 2019

NMFS indicated at the Council meeting that they would investigate addressing common currency prior to the next stock assessment.

## July 2019

NMFS Office of Science and Technology (OST) published simple-ratio calibrations for converting state and federal survey data into a common currency.<sup>6</sup>

## October 2019

At the October Gulf Council meeting, NMFS leadership confirmed that they would apply calibrations to state surveys as soon as they are available, as early as 2020, but no later than 2021.<sup>7</sup> NMFS began a process with the state agencies to develop revised calibration factors.

## February 2020

On February 6, 2020, NMFS published the final rule for Amendment 50, which said, “NMFS agrees that the state ACLs should be calibrated to each state’s reporting system” and implementing that step in 2020 “will help ensure that this final rule is consistent with the Magnuson-Stevens Act.”<sup>8</sup>



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1 Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Reef Fish Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico; Amendments 50A-F, Final Rule, 85 Fed. Reg. 6819, 6822 (Feb. 6, 2020) (Response to Comment 5).  
2 Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council. *Using recreational effort or biomass to determine allocation*. Farmer, N. and M. Karnauskas, January 22, 2018.  
3 This report has not yet been released.  
4 NOAA Fisheries, Gulf States Prioritize Integrating, Calibrating Recreational Red Snapper Data <http://gulfcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/GMFMC-Full-Council-January-2019.pdf> Published November 27, 2018. Accessed December 12, 2019.  
5 Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council Reef Fish Committee Report <http://gulfcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/GMFMC-Reef-Fish-January-2019.pdf> Accessed December 12, 2019 page 34.  
6 NOAA Fisheries Recommends Source of Recreational Catch Statistics for Assessing Gulf Reef Fish Stocks <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/feature-story/noaa-fisheries-recommends-source-recreational-catch-statistics-assessing-gulf-reef> Published August 7, 2019 Accessed December 12, 2019.  
7 Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council Full Council Report <http://gulfcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/GMFMC-Full-Council-October-2019.pdf> Accessed December 12, 2019 page 92.  
8 Amendment 50A-F to the Reef Fish Fishery in the Gulf of Mexico 85 FR 6819 Published February 2, 2020 <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/02/06/2020-01653/fisheries-of-the-caribbean-gulf-of-mexico-and-south-atlantic-reef-fish-fishery-of-the-gulf-of-mexico> Accessed June 4, 2020