




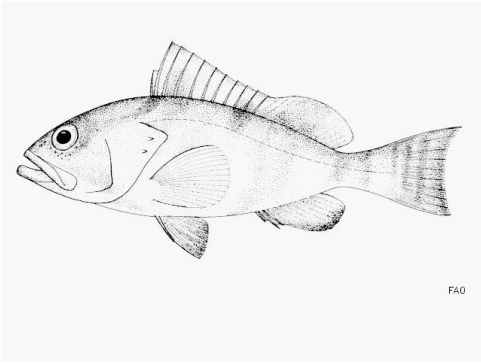
**Fishery Profile**
[https://www.fishsource.org/fishery\\_page/2535](https://www.fishsource.org/fishery_page/2535)

This profile last updated on 27 March 2018

# Red grouper Gulf of Mexico and NW Atlantic

 Fishery:  NW Atlantic  US NW Atlantic  United States  Hooks and lines

## IDENTIFICATION


**SCIENTIFIC NAME**
*Epinephelus morio*
**SPECIES NAME(S)**

Red grouper

**COMMON NAMES**

Mero

**STOCK IDENTIFICATION**

Genetic analyses have shown low genetic variation across red grouper's US and Mexican distribution suggesting the existence of a single stock, but not ruling out the possibility of several reproductively distinct stocks, supported by distribution discontinuity and life-history traits (*Richardson and Gold 1997*) (*Zatcoff et al. 2004*). Until further studies become available, we are using the former structure.

A 2017 study proposes adoption of the concept of a noxiline, or subarea unit, for which EBFM targets and limits can be set, which could be more appropriate for this species in this area (*Arreguín-Sánchez et al. 2017*). This is not currently being used.

Mexican and US stocks are minimally connected (*SEDAR and Southeast Data, Assessment, and Review (SEDAR) 2015*).


**RELATED LINKS:**

- [US South Atlantic Fishery Management Council \(SAFMC\)](#)
- [US SouthEast Data, Assessment, and Review \(SEDAR\)](#)

## ASSESSMENT

**Strengths**

- Management is based on results of peer reviewed stock assessments relative to explicitly defined biological reference points.
- Explicit harvest control rules and accountability measures are in place to minimize the risk of overfishing and allow overfished stocks to rebuild.
- Interactions with marine mammal species are considered to be low.
- Mandatory harvester reporting, with bycatch and discards sampled (not 100%) through bycatch logbooks and an observer program.
- A system of managed areas protects critical habitat for target species and the ecosystem.

**Weaknesses**

- Stock structure is not well known and is managed separately by various organizations throughout its range.
- Multispecies fishery with limited selectivity; many species captured in fishery have no formal stock assessment.
- Discarding practices are known only from a three year pilot observer program for the vertical line fishery. No observer information is available for the longline fishery.
- Uncertainty may not be adequately considered when setting harvest levels since annual catch limits are set equal to the optimum yield. However, accountability measures are in place which require paybacks for excessive harvest.

## SCORES

**Management Quality:**

Management Strategy	Managers Compliance	Fishers Compliance
4.0 to 7.3	< 6 to 10	< 6 to 10

**Stock Health:**

Current Health	Future Health
2.3 to 10	< 6 to 9.9

## FIPS

No related FIPs

## MSC

No related MSC fisheries