





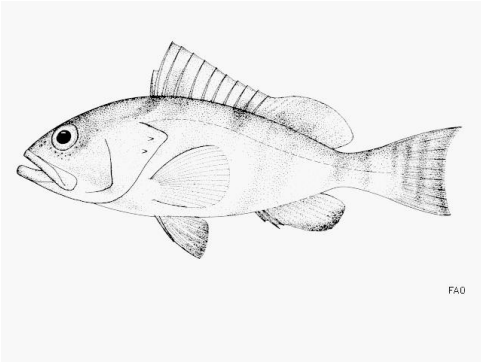
Fishery Profile
https://www.fishsource.org/fishery_page/2536

This profile last updated on 27 March 2018

Red grouper Gulf of Mexico and NW Atlantic

 Fishery:  Northern Gulf of Mexico  US Gulf of Mexico  United States  Bottom-set longlines

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 Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council \(GMFMC\)](#)
- [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.
- Management measures implemented in 2010 appear to have reduced previously excessive interactions with sea turtles in the longline fishery to acceptable levels.
- 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.
- Management measures implemented in response to an overfished/overfishing determination were successful in fully rebuilding the stock above the biomass target within the specified rebuilding period
- The most recent stock assessment concluded that the stock is not overfished and harvest rates are sustainable below the fishing mortality threshold.

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.
- Interactions with protected species are known to occur. Excessive interactions with sea turtles have been addressed, but no formal report on their effect has been developed.

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

RECOMMENDATIONS

RETAILERS & SUPPLY CHAIN

- Improve and increase discard data collection.
- Increase number and frequency of stock assessments on incidentally harvested species (species that are retained but are not the primary targets of this fishery).