





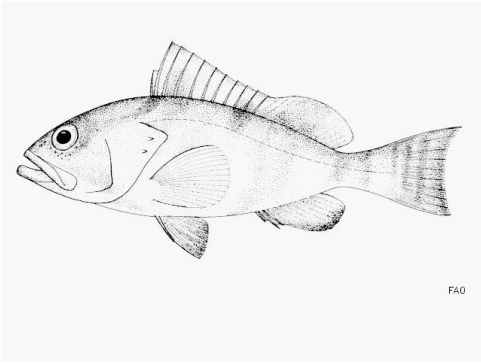
**Fishery Profile**
[https://www.fishsource.org/fishery\\_page/2537](https://www.fishsource.org/fishery_page/2537)

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  Vertical 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 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).