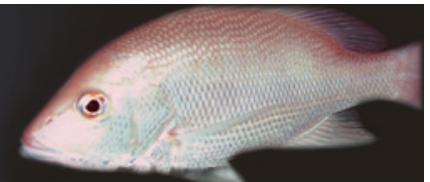


THE  
**PEW**  
ENVIRONMENT GROUP



## SOUTHEAST FISH CONSERVATION CAMPAIGN

[www.PewEnvironment.org/SouthAtlanticFish](http://www.PewEnvironment.org/SouthAtlanticFish) [www.PewEnvironment.org/GulfFish](http://www.PewEnvironment.org/GulfFish)

### NEW STUDY:

# Overfishing cost Southeast commercial fishermen **\$15.2 M** in just one year

#### GULF OF MEXICO

Total Possible Revenue:  
\$23.7 Million

Loss:  
\$12.3 Million

Actual  
Revenue:  
\$11.4 Million



“  
I BELIEVE  
THAT BRINGING  
FISH STOCKS  
BACK TO  
HEALTHY  
LEVELS  
WOULD BE  
ECONOMICALLY  
BENEFICIAL  
TO EVERYONE.

”  
— Donald Waters,  
Gulf Coast  
commercial fisherman,  
Pensacola, FL

Seafavorites.com

Southeast commercial fishermen have lost revenue from limited amounts of red snapper and other species.

An analysis commissioned by the Pew Environment Group shows commercial fishermen in the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic lost \$12.3 million and \$2.9 million respectively in 2009 due to population declines in important species, such as red snapper and gag grouper. Revenues could have been between 16 and 32 percent higher if several fish populations were at healthier levels.

This additional income could have been earned had these fish populations not been subject to years of overfishing—catching fish faster than they can reproduce—that resulted in their current depleted condition. Congress recognized this costly legacy of overfishing in 2006 when it strengthened the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) with bipartisan requirements to establish science-based catch limits to end overfishing and rebuild depleted

fish populations. **Congress should stay the course with the MSA** to restore our nation’s fish populations to healthy levels and put those dollars back in fishermen’s wallets.

The one-year snapshot, conducted by the nonprofit research organization Ecotrust, examined dwindling species and calculated how much more fish commercial fishermen would have been allowed to catch if populations were at healthy levels. The analysis found South Atlantic commercial fishermen from North Carolina to Florida lost money because of limited amounts of red snapper, red grouper, snowy grouper, red porgy and black sea bass. Gulf of Mexico commercial fishermen in Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas would have been able to catch more red snapper, gag grouper, gray triggerfish and greater amberjack if populations had been robust.

#### SOUTH ATLANTIC

Total Possible Revenue:  
\$6.6 Million

Loss:  
\$2.8 Million

Actual  
Revenue:  
\$3.8 Million



# Study results in context

The species analyzed by Ecotrust have been at unsustainably low population levels for years or even decades. The financial loss due to those lower populations have likely spanned many years and may continue. That situation lends urgency to ending overfishing and quickly getting these species on the road to recovery. The calculated losses represent just a small fraction of the total cost of overfishing. Although not addressed in this study, full costs extend to the broader commercial fishing industry, recreational fishermen and coastal communities.

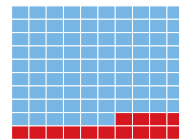
## On the water

### SOUTH ATLANTIC

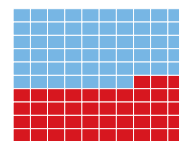
Commercial fishermen hauled in \$17.7 million for all grouper and snapper fishing in 2009, which includes the five species studied by Ecotrust and 68 others. With healthy amounts of red snapper, red grouper, red porgy, black sea bass and snowy grouper, fishermen would have increased their revenue by 16 percent.

#### IN SHORT SUPPLY

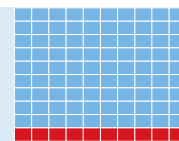
How much of a healthy population remains\*



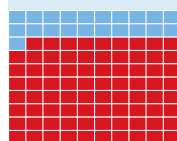
Red snapper  
**11-14%**



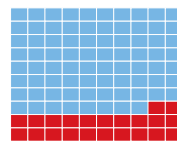
Red porgy  
**43%**



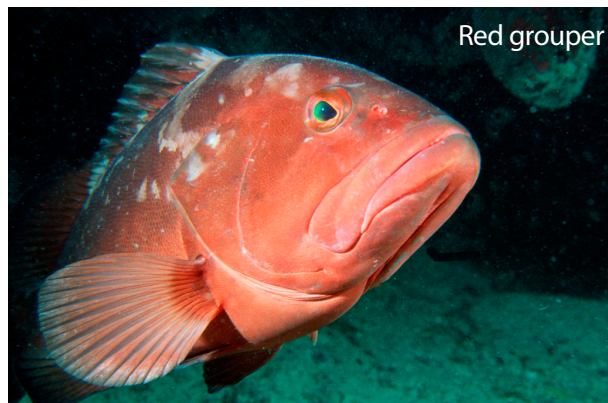
Snowy grouper  
**10%**



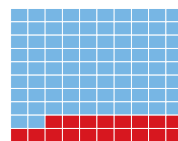
Red grouper  
**79%**



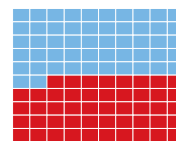
Black sea bass  
**22%**



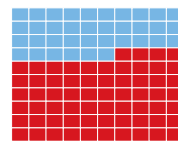
Red grouper



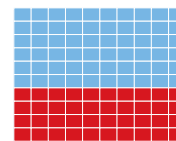
Red snapper  
**18%**



Greater amberjack  
**48%**



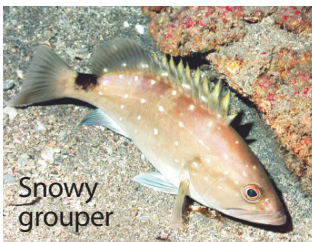
Gray triggerfish  
**64%**



Gag grouper  
**40%**

Commercial fishermen hauled in \$38.5 million for all grouper and snapper fishing in 2009, which includes the four species studied by Ecotrust and 38 others. With healthy amounts of red snapper, gray triggerfish, greater amberjack and gag grouper, fishermen would have increased their revenue by 32 percent.

\*From most recent government data



Snowy grouper



Gag grouper

#### FULL REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

[www.pewenvironment.org/costofoverfishing](http://www.pewenvironment.org/costofoverfishing)

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#### PEW'S SOUTHEAST FISH CONSERVATION CAMPAIGN

Visit [www.PewEnvironment.org/SouthAtlanticFish](http://www.PewEnvironment.org/SouthAtlanticFish) and [www.PewEnvironment.org/GulfFish](http://www.PewEnvironment.org/GulfFish) to learn more. The campaigns work to bring scientific expertise to bear on fishery management plans and seek common ground with fishermen to find solutions that balance human and environmental needs and raise awareness about overfishing and potential remedies.