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Gulf of Mexico Reef Fish Shareholders' Alliance Statement on the Gulf Council's Reallocation of Commercial Quota

*Commercial fishermen disappointed as managers inflict damage on
seafood businesses and coastal communities*

GALVESTON, TX – Eric Brazer, Deputy Director of the Gulf of Mexico Reef Fish Shareholders' Alliance (Shareholders' Alliance), released the following statement in response to the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council's (Gulf Council's) decision to reallocate commercial red grouper quota to the recreational sector:

Commercial fishermen in the Gulf of Mexico reacted with shock as the Gulf Council deprived American consumers of red grouper, increased risk of overfishing, and harmed family businesses that sustainably supply red grouper to the nation.

The hard-working men and women of the Gulf – who abide the rules and report every single pound of red grouper they land, and whose businesses feed coastal communities and consumers throughout the nation – watched in disbelief on Friday, June 25, 2021 as the Gulf Council reallocated 600,000 pounds of red grouper each year from the commercial sector the recreational sector. The Gulf Council's action deprives commercial fishing families of \$3,000,000 dockside value of fish annually, increases discards of dead fish from the recreational sector, and admittedly "is more likely to result in overfishing/overfished Gulf red grouper."

Commercial fishermen watched in sadness as members of the Gulf Council ignored their pleas for fairness, conservation, and common sense.

We are disappointed that some members of the Gulf Council chose the false promise of short-term gain over long term conservation, chose discards of dead fish over accountable landings, and chose inequity over fairness. We applaud those Gulf Council members that fought to do the right thing for commercial fishing families, for red grouper, for sustainability, and for the integrity of our management process.

We look forward to working with NOAA Fisheries and the Department of Commerce to correct this egregious error and avoid harm to commercial fishing families that have worked hard for generations to feed the nation, be accountable to quotas, and protect our fishery resources for the long term.

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The [Gulf of Mexico Reef Fish Shareholders' Alliance](#) is the largest organization of commercial grouper and snapper fishermen in the Gulf of Mexico. We work hard to ensure that our fisheries are sustainably managed so our fishing businesses can thrive, and our fishing communities can exist for future generations. We are the harvesters that provide much of the American public with a reliable source of domestically-caught wild Gulf seafood, and we do this through a philosophy that sustainable seafood and profitable fishing businesses depend on healthy fish populations.