

after the completion of each stock assessment or at the request of the Council Chairman. The Monitoring Committee shall review tilefish landings information and any other relevant available data to determine if the annual quota requires modification to respond to any changes to the stock's biological reference points or to ensure that the rebuilding schedule is maintained. The Monitoring Committee will consider whether any additional management measures or revisions to existing measures are necessary to ensure that the TAL will not be exceeded. Based on that review, the Monitoring Committee will provide a recommendation to the Tilefish Committee of the Council. Based on these recommendations and any public comment received, the Tilefish Committee shall recommend to the Council the appropriate quota and management measures for the next fishing year. The Council shall review these recommendations and any public comments received, and recommend to the Regional Administrator, at least 120 days prior to the beginning of the next fishing year, the appropriate TAL for the next fishing year, the percentage of TAL allocated to research quota, and any management measures to assure that the TAL will not be exceeded. The Council's recommendations must include supporting documentation, as appropriate, concerning the environmental and economic impacts of the recommendations. The Regional Administrator shall review these recommendations, and after such review, NMFS will publish a proposed rule in the FEDERAL REGISTER specifying the annual TAL and any management measures to assure that the TAL will not be exceeded. After considering public comments, NMFS will publish a final rule in the FEDERAL REGISTER to implement a TAL and any management measures. The previous year's specifications will remain effective unless revised through the specification process and/or the research quota process described in paragraph (e) of this section. NMFS will issue notification in the FEDERAL REGISTER if the previous year's specifications will not be changed.

(e) *Research quota.* See § 648.21(g).

§ 648.291 Closures.

(a) *EEZ closure.* If the Regional Administrator determines that the quota for a certain limited access category will be exceeded, the Regional Administrator will close the EEZ to fishing for tilefish by those vessels in that category for the remainder of the fishing year and publish notification in the FEDERAL REGISTER.

(b) [Reserved]

§ 648.292 Tilefish trip limits.

Any U.S. fishing vessel fishing under a tilefish incidental catch category permit is prohibited from possessing more than 300 lb (138 kg) of tilefish per trip.

§ 648.293 Framework specifications.

(a) *Within-season management action.* The Council may, at any time, initiate action to add or adjust management measures if it finds that action is necessary to meet or be consistent with the goals and objectives of the Tilefish FMP.

(1) *Specific management measures.* The following specific management measures may be implemented or adjusted at any time through the framework process:

- (i) Minimum fish size,
- (ii) Minimum hook size,
- (iii) Closed seasons,
- (iv) Closed areas,
- (v) Gear restrictions or prohibitions,
- (vi) Permitting restrictions,
- (vii) Gear limits,
- (viii) Trip limits,
- (ix) Overfishing definition and related thresholds and targets,
- (x) Annual specification quota setting process,
- (xi) Tilefish FMP Monitoring Committee composition and process,
- (xii) Description and identification of EFH,
- (xiii) Fishing gear management measures that impact EFH,
- (xiv) Habitat areas of particular concern, and
- (xv) Set-aside quotas for scientific research.

(2) *Adjustment process.* If the Council determines that an adjustment to management measures is necessary to meet the goals and objectives of the FMP, it will recommend, develop, and analyze