

# Bajo de Sico

## Area Managed by CFMC

Notes from 'Record'

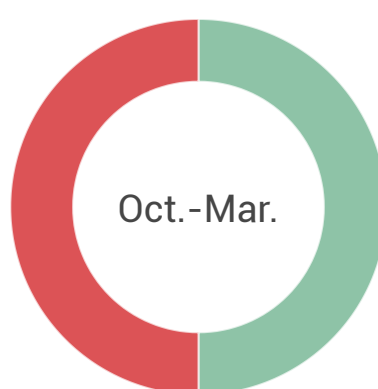
  
1996

Established to protect grouper spawning aggregations in area of 31 km<sup>2</sup> during 3 months (Dec.-Feb.)

"We would like to explore a joint federal/state no-take designation of Bajo de Sico or any other means to permanently protect Bajo de Sico marine resources. We welcome any ideas that you may have to achieve this goal. It would be of utmost significance to obtain such a milestone within the Year of the Reef framework."  
Puerto Rico DNER (28-Oct-2008)

2010

2008



Amendment 3 to the Reef Fish FMP modified the closure to 'Council Manged Species' during 6 months (Oct. - March)



2012

Nassau Grouper FSA documented & research to better understand habitat use and abundance suggested the aggregation was vulnerable to by-catch in April



2016

Endangered Species Act listing of Nassau Grouper as a Threatened Species

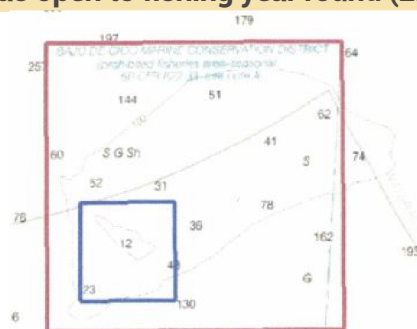
### Endangered Species Act Section 7 Consultation Biological Opinion

"Farmer (2016) stated that existing regulatory mechanisms and law enforcement have not been effective in preventing fishing at many spawning aggregation sites... Additionally, where Nassau grouper-specific regulations do exist, law enforcement in many foreign countries is less than adequate, thus rendering the regulations ineffective."

2020

172 CFMC Meeting: Añasco Fishers Association propose a 12 month's closure of the core zone (<70 fa) in US-EEZ waters, and keep the deeper areas open to fishing year round (E. Font)

2020



2023

Unprecedented juvenile nassau grouper settlement in south & west Puerto Rico



CFMC management of Bajo de Sico could recover Nassau grouper.

- 1) Aggregation is vulnerable after the closed season ends March 31
- 2) Nassau Grouper residing year-round are subject to by-catch
- 3) Fishers requested access to deeper areas 12 months
- 4) Enforcement staff need simplified regulations
- 5) NOAA 4-D rule to pursue an ESA case