



THE  
**PEW**  
ENVIRONMENT GROUP



**END OVERFISHING  
IN THE SOUTHEAST**  
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**Testimony before South Atlantic Fishery Management Council  
Holly Binns, Pew Environment Group  
December 10, 2009**

Good afternoon, Chairman Harris and Council members. My name is Holly Binns and I manage the Pew Environment Group's Campaign to End Overfishing in the Southeast U.S. Thank you for the opportunity to provide public comments today.

We appreciate the hard work of Council members and staff to finalize Amendment 17-B, which will put into place protections for 9 species, including two species, Warsaw grouper and speckled hind, which are considered critically endangered by the respected International Union for Conservation of Nature.

We thank the Council for expanding the accountability measures for some species in this amendment. This is a necessary step toward restoring healthy fish populations in the South Atlantic region, and we strongly urge the Council to vote today to send this amendment to the Secretary of Commerce for approval and implementation.

However, there are several issues in Amendment 17-B that will need to be addressed in the Comprehensive ACL Amendment. Specifically, an Allowable Biological Catch control rule must be incorporated in the Comprehensive Amendment and applied to ALL species under the Council's jurisdiction, including those covered by Amendment 17-B.

In addition, we believe that management uncertainty has not been adequately accounted for in this amendment, as is required by law. The Comprehensive ACL Amendment should address uncertainty in a systematic way through the use of annual catch target control rule.

These measures are critical to ensuring healthy fish populations that can provide jobs, food and recreational opportunities for generations to come. We look forward to working with the Council to end overfishing and restore healthy fish populations in the South Atlantic region.