



Three Commercial Serranid Species of Turkey: A General Evaluation

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Abstract

Family Serranidae includes important commercial species. Twelve Serranid species inhabit in the surrounding waters of Turkey and 3 of them (Painted comber *Serranus scriba*, Dusky grouper *Epinephelus marginatus* and White grouper *Epinephelus aeneus*) are of commercial importance according to the fishery statistics of Turkey. Total capture production of these species together constitutes less than 1% of the total capture production of Turkey. While angling, spearfishing, and longlining are the main catching methods for groupers, painted comber is generally captured by demersal trawls, gill nets, longlines and handlines. Minimum landing size (MLS) was assigned to be 45 cm total length for groupers and no MLS was determined for painted comber. According to Turkish fishery statistics, white grouper has a production amount of 191.5 tons, followed by painted comber (44.6 tons) and dusky grouper (13.4 tons) in 2014. Production amounts of these 3 species in 2014 are below the production amounts of 2005 displaying sudden declines in this period. The probable reasons of this decrease are considered to be illegal fishing, uncontrolled landings, inadequate controlling during marketing and unconscious fishing. Although their high commercial and ecological importance, there are very limited studies on the biology, ecology and fishing of these species in Turkey. On the other side, inadequate nomenclature of the Serranids in the Turkish official documents constitutes a big deficiency. First step for a sustainable fishing management for these fishes is to make proper naming of the groupers according to scientific nomenclature and improve our knowledge on the biology of the species.

Keywords:

Serranidae, grouper, painted comber
