

# Review of: "Review of: Estimates of Atlantic Goliath Grouper (*Epinephelus itajara*) Bycatch Mortality in Commercial Fisheries of the Southeastern US From 2002 to 2022"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

The paper titled "Estimates of Atlantic Goliath Grouper (*Epinephelus itajara*) Bycatch Mortality in Commercial Fisheries of the Southeastern US From 2002 to 2022" is quite interesting. However, the paper looks more like a review of published works. The authors have written the entire paper based on data gathered from NOAA fisheries logbooks. And they suggest that, with data collection being insufficient and faulty, the services of paid observers may be utilized. Though it is a very good suggestion, I am not sure if it is feasible to employ paid observers on all the commercial vessels to collect bycatch data for one species. Instead, the authors could have carried out some field sampling or experimental analysis to substantiate their conclusions on barotrauma. Furthermore, the ecology and importance of *Epinephelus itajara* has not been mentioned anywhere in the paper.

To conclude, the authors have not collected data themselves but suggest an ambitious proposal for data collection. I am afraid this paper does not have the scientific merit to be published.