Review of: "Estimates of Atlantic Goliath Grouper (Epinephelus Itajara) Bycatch Mortality in Commercial Fisheries of the Southeastern Us From 2002 to 2022"

Ousmane Sarr[1]

1 Shanghai Ocean University

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

In this manuscript, the authors investigated the extent of bycatch in the southeastern United States from 2002 to 2022 resulting from commercial fishing only, based on data from NOAA Fisheries logbooks.

In general, I think the research of this manuscript, "Estimates of Atlantic Goliath Grouper (Epinephelus itajara) Bycatch Mortality in Commercial Fisheries of the Southeastern US From 2002 to 2022," addresses the pressing issue of bycatch mortality in commercial fisheries of the southeastern US. By calculating depth-of-capture-related mortality based on known patterns of depth-related barotrauma, the study showed that the majority of the Epinephelus itajara captures died from both barotrauma and from the inability of the fish to return to the bottom due to trapped swim bladder gas. The authors have made considerable efforts to find significant insights to answer the research issue at hand. Nevertheless, the manuscript needs minor revisions. Authors can easily handle all changes and improve their manuscripts accordingly.

Main concern:

2. Materials and Methods

1) I think it would be very useful to materialize the study area on a map, which would make the study clearer and easier to understand.

2) I think that section 2.3, "Relevant literature," would be more appropriate in the Introduction section rather than in the Materials and Methods section.

3) Figure 7 comes from a study dating back over 10 years. A recent figure would be much more appropriate for the needs of this research.

As I said, this manuscript can contribute to a better understanding of the extent of Atlantic Goliath Grouper (Epinephelus itajara) bycatch in the southeastern US between 2002 and 2022 and how mortality is related to depth based on barotrauma patterns. Be sure to cite relevant literature and consider potential challenges like data limitations or the need for interdisciplinary collaboration.