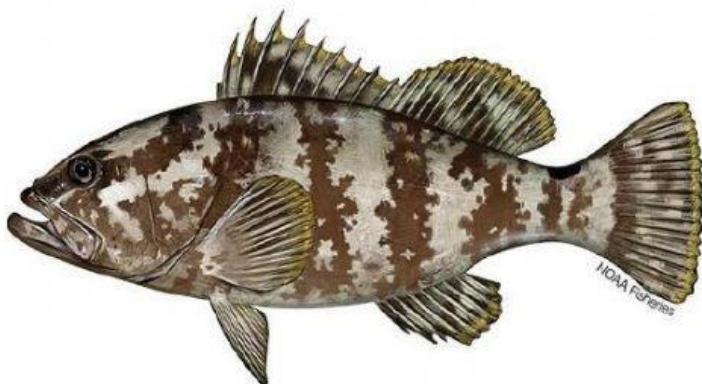


Ecosystems

An **ecosystem** is a place where living and non-living things interact with each other and depend on each other. Plants and animals are living things in an ecosystem. The non-living things include rocks, soil, water and air.

The grouper lives in the **coral reef ecosystem**. They often rest on the seafloor under ledges, around caves and in crevices and cracks on the reef.

The grouper is endangered because they are exceptionally vulnerable to over exploitation because of their spawning exploitation which form in predictable areas and predictable times, and from which fish can be caught prior to reproduction.



Direct threats to grouper include uncontrolled fishing on spawning aggregations, spear fishing, and the capture of juveniles in mesh traps. Other threats are habitat destruction, coral breakage, siltation, runoff, dredging, sewage, and other contaminants harm coral reefs and nursery areas.

To protect the Nassau Grouper a closed season from December to February was established. This protects the grouper when they gather in spawning aggregations and are the most vulnerable. Other measures are: marine parks and reserves where fishing of the grouper is prohibited; enforcement of the minimum legal harvest size of three pounds.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Answer the following questions in complete sentences where applicable.

1. What is an ecosystem?

2. Plants and animals are nonliving things in an ecosystem.

3. Where does the grouper live?

4. Circle the letter next to the items listed that are direct threats to the grouper.

(A) speed boats (B) spear fishing (c) dredging

5. State one measure that was put in place to conserve the grouper.

Write one living and nonliving thing that can be found in an ecosystem.

Living	Non-living
6.	7.