Red Grouper Operational Assessment – Options Paper

NMFS have developed a data summary document that describes reasoning for developing a spatial or two-area model for Red Grouper in the South Atlantic. There is currently an ongoing operational assessment with no topical working groups for a single stock of Red Grouper along the SA region.

SAFMC Staff have brainstormed a range of options (with pros and cons listed for each approach), for the SSC to consider after reviewing the documentation provided by NMFS and, if appropriate, the SSC should discuss an approach to incorporate model configuration changes.

Approach 1. Continue operational assessment with single stock model.

+ No disruption to the SEDAR schedule
+ Tracks current rebuilding plan for the stock
+ Remains consistent with terms of reference for operational assessment
– Ignores potential spatial structure in the population.
– NMFS has indicated that this may not be consistent with BSIA.

Approach 2. Continue operational assessment with two stock or spatial model.

+ Addresses concerns raised in SEDAR 19 (2010).
+ No disruption to SEDAR schedule
– No topical working groups were approved.
– Requires single stock model as back up model in case proposed model does not pass SSC review.
– Changes to model seems out of scope for an operational assessment.

Approach 3. Continue operational assessment but develop topical working group to address two stock or spatial model. Will need a schedule to be provided by NMFS.

+ Addresses concerns raised in SEDAR 19 (2010).
+ Changes recommended on spatial structure done in open and transparent method.
± New terms of reference will need to be developed.
– Disruption to SEDAR schedule
– Assessment needs to be delayed to form topical working group and develop noticed meetings.
– Requires single stock model as back up model in case proposed model does not pass SSC review.
– Changes to model seems out of scope for an operational assessment.

Approach 4. Conduct benchmark assessment

+ Enables a stock id workshop to identify appropriate boundaries for the stock.
+ Changes to spatial structure done in open and transparent method.

+ Appears to best match the intent of benchmark assessment.
+ Enables review of data inputs given changes in spatial structure.
+ Enables sufficient time to explore consequences of change in model type.
− Most disruptive option on the SEDAR schedule
− NMFS staff may not be able to fit this assessment into SEDAR schedule with current workload.
− Not clear which other species would be impacted.