



# SSC – Council Review Process

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**SAFMC SSC Meeting**  
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# SSC Review

- The Council values the advice from the SSC and generally sends all technical analyses to the SSC for their review.
- Some amendments and analyses are more general in nature and are not routinely sent to the SSC for detailed discussion.
- Concern was expressed by the SSC during the September 5, 2017 webinar about the red snapper emergency action and Snapper Grouper Amendment 43.
- We want to clarify the Council's actions on these two items.



# SSC: Council Peer Review Body

- SSC serves as the primary Council peer review body
- Role defined in the MSA and Council guidance documents
- Broadly defined to include any aspects of the Council program
- SSC previously requested to be asked to comment on specific technical items in FMPs rather than commenting on all FMPS in general
- Revisions to ABC Control Rule: separate uncertainty (SSC) and risk tolerance (Council) decisions



# SSC Charge in the MSA

1. **Assist in the development, collection, evaluation, and peer review** of such statistical, biological, economic, social, and other scientific information as is relevant to such Council's development and amendment of any fishery management plan.
2. **Provide to the Council ongoing scientific advice for fishery management decisions**, including recommendations for acceptable biological catch, preventing overfishing, maximum sustainable yield, and achieving rebuilding targets, and reports on stock status and health, bycatch, habitat status, social and economic impacts of management measures, and sustainability of fishing practices.
3. **Provide fishing level recommendations for use by the Council in developing annual catch limits. [Note: The SSC provides ABC recommendations; leave ACL to Council.]**
4. **Assist the council in developing multi-year research priorities** for fisheries, fisheries interactions, habitats, and other areas of research that are necessary for management purposes.



# National Standard 2 – scientific information

- Information-limited fisheries, commonly referred to as “data-poor” fisheries, may require use of simpler assessment methods and greater use of proxies for quantities that cannot be directly estimated, as compared to data-rich fisheries
- *Timeliness.* Mandatory management actions should not be delayed due to limitations in the scientific information or the promise of future data collection or analysis. (excerpt)



# NS 2 – scientific information

## Timeliness: full text

- (v) *Timeliness*. Mandatory management actions should not be delayed due to limitations in the scientific information or the promise of future data collection or analysis. In some cases, due to time constraints, results of important studies or monitoring programs may be considered for use before they are fully complete. Uncertainties and risks that arise from an incomplete study should be acknowledged, but interim results may be better than no results to help inform a management decision. Sufficient time should be allotted to audit and analyze recently acquired information to ensure its reliability. Data collection methods are expected to be subjected to appropriate review before providing data used to inform management decisions



# SSC Training

- We plan to have a review/training session at the April 2018 SSC meeting.
- Open to any suggestions for modifications for how the Council/SSC review is conducted.



# Factors relevant to Red Snapper Emergency Request

- **Time Constraints** –
  - Emergency action requests are not provided to the SSC for review.
  - By their nature timing is very critical.
  - Usually, the Council discusses an issue with at most some background information and makes a request to NMFS to take action via an emergency rule.
  - In the case of red snapper, the only way to preserve the Council's ability to make a request, and have it implemented in 2017, was for the Council and NMFS staffs to prepare a document for consideration at the September 2017 meeting. This document was included in the Council's briefing book for the September 2017 meeting.
- Council approved **Preferred Alternative 4** and requested it be implemented via emergency action.





# Factors relevant to Red Snapper Emergency Request

- **Preferred Alternative 4** sets the ACL equal to the landings in 2014, the last time the fishery was open under a mini-season, with the rationale that the population has continued to rebuild after that level of landings in 2014 and whatever level of discard mortality occurred during and after 2014.
  - The Council used the trap index, recent data from research projects in Florida, and observations shared through public testimony to support their conclusions that the population is continuing to rebuild and that **the risk that limited harvest will result in overfishing** or jeopardize stock rebuilding is minimal.
  - Prior review and use of MARMAP survey data by SSC.



# Factors relevant to Red Snapper Amendment 43

- **SSC reviewed Amendment 43 in April 2017 using:**
  - Attachment 19. SEDAR 41 RS Base Run Correction Erratum
  - Attachment 20. SEDAR 41 RS Base Run Correction Presentation
  - Attachment 21. Red Snapper Guidance Request
  - Attachment 22. Amendment 43 Options Paper
  - **Attachment 23. Index Based ABC Options Paper**
  - RS Assessment Correction Presentation: Dr. Erik Williams, SEFSC
  - Red Snapper Amendment Overview Presentation: Dr. Chip Collier, SAFMC Staff
  - **Index Based ABC Presentation: Dr. Chip Collier, SAFMC Staff**



# Factors relevant to Red Snapper Amendment 43

- **The Council requested the following:**
  - Actions 9 and 10 are designed to improve landings and discard estimates from private recreational fishermen. Review and provide comments on potential issues with permits and reporting requirements.
  - Action 12 will include a new estimation of Red Snapper Discard Mortality caught from headboats and charter boats. Additionally, descending devices and venting are alternatives to reduce discard mortality. Review and provide comments on estimation methods.
  - **Review and provide comments on approaches for obtaining a Red Snapper ABC.** [Note: Council staff provided a methodology the SSC could use to provide an updated ABC recommendation.]



# Factors relevant to Red Snapper Amendment 43

- **The SSC Report provided the following conclusions for determining an ABC:**
  - **The SSC acknowledged that at this point it is unable to provide an ABC recommendation for Red Snapper.**
  - One possibility is to look at the relationship between the independent index and the SSB projection in the near term and predict where it should be when the population is rebuilt. This type of approach will require external peer review given how novel it is.
  - Video data could be provided on a one-year delay.
  - **If a short season is allowed, a permit requirement should be enacted to place some of the data collection burden on anglers; however, there are unknown scientific and statistical issues in developing a permit system for private recreational vessels and fishermen.**
  - The Committee supports attempts to apply the DLMTool Kit, as well as newer data limited methods recently developed by SEFSC, to Red Snapper to provide more information for review by the SSC. Perhaps a workshop on the DLMTool Kit can be considered.
  - These new techniques that use the fishery independent index data projected out from the terminal year or scaled to SSB will require cooperation among the SSC, Council, and Science Center to develop.
  - The length of time for use of these techniques will dictate the rigor of analyses and review that can be applied.
  - **Although estimates of discards may be highly uncertain, a continuing upward trend in the fishery independent index has a high probability of reflecting increases in population size.**
  - **Using a short season to obtain a representative age sample will require a scientific design that takes samples from pre-determined areas using a pre-determined methodology.**
  - The SSC recommends prioritizing research into developing a method to determine size of fish (i.e., fish length composition) from the video survey.



# Factors relevant to Red Snapper Amendment 43

- Based on this guidance from the SSC, the Council decided at their June 2017 meeting to pursue an **interim ACL** through Amendment 43 for 2018 onwards and continue work on red snapper through Amendment 46 at the December 2017 meeting.
- The Council's intent was to address the updated ABC recommendations from the SSC in Amendment 46 if one was provided in time.
- If not, the Council would address your updated ABC recommendation when it is provided.
- The Council provided guidance to staff, at the June 2017 Council meeting, that Amendment 43 did not need to be reviewed by the SSC given the review of the index-based ABC options paper in April 2017, and the one action in the amendment is **to set an interim ACL that is a Council decision.**



# Factors relevant to Red Snapper Amendment 43

- **Preferred Alternative 4** sets the ACL equal to the landings in 2014, the last time the fishery was open under a mini-season, with the rationale that the population has continued to rebuild after that level of landings in 2014 and whatever level of discard mortality occurred during and after 2014.
  - The Council used the trap index, recent data from research projects in Florida, and observations shared through public testimony to support their conclusions that the population is continuing to rebuild and that the risk that limited harvest will result in overfishing or jeopardize stock rebuilding is minimal.
  - Prior review and use of MARMAP survey data by SSC.



# Conclusions

- The Council did not bypass the SSC review for the emergency action or for Amendment 43.
- The Council is waiting on ABC recommendations from the SSC and will incorporate them in Amendment 46 or a later amendment.
- If the SSC has concerns about any issues, feel free to contact Gregg, John, Mike, your Council liaison (Ben), or the Council chair (Charlie).
- The Council is open to suggestions from the SSC for improving the SSC's review and role as the Council values the SSC's input.

