

South Atlantic Deepwater Longline (SADL) Survey

Scope of Work for SSC Review

Background:

The South Atlantic Deepwater Longline (SADL) survey was developed to survey deep-water species inhabiting the continental shelf and upper slope habitats of the Southeastern US, particularly in depths ranging from 75-366 m. These demersal deep-water species include Blueline Tilefish, Snowy Grouper, and Tilefish (Golden), as well as other snapper and grouper species managed by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council. These deep-water species tend to be data-limited with assessments relying heavily on fishery-dependent data. The SADL survey was designed to fill data gaps by incorporating cooperative sampling approaches with stakeholders using industry vessels as survey platforms to collect abundance data and life-history information (e.g., otoliths and reproductive samples) to support stock assessments and management.

The survey was implemented in 2020 and repeated in 2021 and 2022. Survey methodology was developed through guidance from the 2015 South Atlantic Deepwater Survey Workshop (Carmichael et al. 2015), results from the Mid-Atlantic deepwater longline fisheries-independent pilot survey (Frisk et al. 2018), and based on prior cooperative SCDNR-industry projects. In order to incorporate information into SEDAR stock assessments, the SSC has been asked to review a report from the Southeast Fishery Science Center documenting the sampling design and methodology and data generated from this survey. An SSC workgroup comprised of four members was formed in Oct 2022 that has been tasked with providing comments during the development of a final report that will be presented to the SSC. The SSC will review the survey and ensure the methods are consistent with best scientific information available (BSIA).

Purpose of the SSC Review:

The SADL Survey is a new survey in the South Atlantic region and has not been reviewed for use in assessments and management. The SSC will review the final report of the workgroup to:

- Assess the appropriateness of the survey design and methodology for generating data to support species-specific data products for use in SEDAR stock assessments
- Provide guidance when considering the survey in operational assessments.

Workgroup Objectives:

- Review the survey design and sampling methodology.
 - Review methods for site selection (e.g., geographic range, stratification)
 - Review sampling methodology (e.g., gear, sampling method, hook sizes, bait)
 - Document differences in year, seasonality, gear, and geographic distribution of the survey and sample collections (i.e., catch and life history data).
 - Describe strengths and weaknesses of the survey design and data collection

- Develop final report for SSC review that summarizes the workgroup discussions, describes concerns, potential improvements, or recommendations with respect to survey design, data collection, and use in the development of analytical products.

Meeting Formats:

Workgroup will meet via webinar hosted by SAFMC to develop a report addressing the workgroup objectives. The final report will be presented to and reviewed by the full SSC at the October SSC 2023 Meeting to determine if the survey design is providing information sufficient for consideration in SEDAR stock assessments.

Number of Meetings:

2 Workgroup Meetings (and one optional) held between June – August, 2023

Report Writing August – September, 2023

Report delivered to Judd Curtis by October 2, 2023 for the SSC Briefing book

Findings presented to October 2023 SSC Meeting for review

Workgroup Members:

SSC Workgroup – George Sedberry, Fred Scharf, Marcel Reichert, Jie Cao, and Wally Bublely

SAFMC Staff – Chip Collier, Judd Curtis, Mike Schmidtke

SEDAR Staff – Kathleen Howington

NMFS Staff – TBD

Funding:

SAFMC will provide support for the review including meeting format and costs associated with any travel or meeting needed for SAFMC and SEDAR staff and SSC Workgroup Members. NMFS will be responsible for covering costs associated with NMFS personnel.

Responsibilities:

NMFS will be responsible for providing background material and analyses needed for the workgroup review. All background materials will be provided to the Workgroup electronically no later than 1 week prior to meeting covering a topic. Materials developed for the Workgroup will be retained by SAFMC staff. Workgroup members will be responsible for developing a summary report that address the workgroup objectives. A final report will be provided to SAFMC staff on October 5, 2023 for inclusion in the October SSC meeting.

Supporting Documentation:

- Carmichael, J, M Duval, M Reichert, N Bacheler and T Kellison. 2015. Workshop to determine optimal approaches for surveying the deep-water species complex off the southeastern U.S. Atlantic coast. U.S. Department of Commerce, NOAA Technical Memorandum NMFS-SEFSC- 685. 24 p. doi:10.7289/V5GB222C

- Frisk, MG, JA Olin, RM Cerrato, P Nitschke, L Nolan. 2018. FINAL REPORT: Fisheries-Independent pilot survey for Golden and Blueline Tilefish throughout the range from Georges Bank to Cape Hatteras.
- Bacheler, NM, and JT Carmichael. 2014. Southeast Reef Fish Survey Video Index Development Workshop. SEDAR41-RD23.
- Kellison ... Workshop on SA Longline Survey
- B Price, R Munoz, T Kellison, W Bublely, and M Reichert. 2022. South Atlantic Deepwater Longline Survey (SADL). Presentation to the SAFMC-SSC, April 2022.

SADL survey working Group Schedule

TORs and participant list finalized end of April

Webinar 1: June – 2 hours

- Presentations about SADL survey by SEFSC – summary document including background on survey development and the estimated timeline for data availability
- Review draft schedule and topics (below)
- Discuss any data and analyses that will be useful for Work Group discussions

Webinar 2: late July – 4 hours

- Presentation by SEFSC – Data requests from previous webinar
- Discuss survey design and sampling methodology
- Discuss data collection (catch and life history)
- Discuss use of the survey data to support SEDAR assessments

Webinar 3: August – 2 hours (optional)

- Wrap up discussions (i.e., remaining issues from Webinar 1 and 2)
- Outline a list of relevant issues for integration of the SADL survey into SEDAR assessments
- Discuss report writing

Report writing - August and September

Meeting outcome – A report written by the work group describing the relevant discussions and commenting on each of the work group objectives.

Report completed by October SSC