

Comprehensive Ecosystem-Based Amendment (CE-BA 3)

Development and Timing History

At the December 2012 meeting, the Council:

1. Moved VMS to Snapper Grouper Amendment 30
2. Moved SAFMC For-hire reporting to a Generic SG, D/W & CMP Amendment
3. Moved Commercial Reporting to a Joint SA/GM Amendment

The only remaining item in CE-BA 3 is bycatch reporting; staff was directed to revise the document and bring to the Council in March 2013 for final review and approval.

At the March 2013 meeting, the Council reviewed and made changes to CE-BA 3. These changes were based on recommendations from the IPT to clarify wording and intent. The IPT conducted the analyses in the March 2013 document based on their new, suggested wording that was approved by the Council. Also, at the March 2013 meeting, NOAA GC offered to prepare an analysis of how the South Atlantic Council is currently meeting the MSA bycatch requirements. The Council accepted NOAA GC's offer and the Council also voted to postpone further consideration of CE-BA 3 until receipt of the analysis from NOAA GC. NOAA GC was scheduled to present their analysis during the September 2013 Council meeting to the Data Collection Committee. However, this presentation was rescheduled for the December 2013 meeting due to workload issues, and was recently rescheduled for the March 2014 meeting due to the government closure.

At the March 2014 meeting, Anna Martin (Council Staff) reviewed the current status of CE-BA 3. Monica Smit-Brunello (NOAA GC) advised the Council on how to proceed with CE-BA 3. Similar amendments in the Northeast Region have been disapproved due to the Anti-Deficiency Act and other types of funding requirements. If CE-BA 3 were submitted now, it would likely be disapproved for similar reasons. The New England and Mid-Atlantic Councils are working on a shared cost approach to covering the cost of observers and so the recommendation is to not take action now and monitor what is going on in the northeast. Then the Council could determine how best to proceed. The Council was also advised to address some of the discussion in the document on species-specific observer requirements.

The Committee/Council requested a presentation on the status of work in the northeast on the approach to cover observer costs for the June 2014 meeting; Council staff and NOAA GC are to provide updates. The presentation was scheduled for the September 2014 meeting due to time constraints at the June 2014 meeting. A staff member from the Mid-Atlantic Council gave a presentation on the two amendments, one addressing the methodology and one addressing potential industry cost sharing.

Based on discussions at the September 2014 Council meeting, the SEFSC/SERO agreed to draft a comprehensive bycatch reporting system for the southeast.

At the December 2014 Council meeting, Dr. Jack McGovern, NMFS SERO, updated the committee:

1. Dr. Crabtree and Dr. Ponwith have formed a group to work on this: Jack McGovern, Steve Branstetter, Bill Arnold, Nick Farmer & Jennifer Lee from the SERO; Jim Nance, SEFSC; and Shep Grimes, NOAA GC.
2. The group has met and is compiling information on what has been done and what is being done related to consideration of a bycatch reporting system. This will be compared with the legal requirements and they will be drafting what needs to be changed to meet the requirements.
3. A more complete update will be provided at the March 2015 Council meeting.

At the September 2015 meeting, Council staff (Chip Collier) gave a brief overview of CE-BA 3. The NMFS SEFSC and SERO (Dr. Jack McGovern) gave an update on their efforts. The Council's intent thus far is that bycatch reporting would be specified in the Comprehensive Ecosystem-Based Amendment 3 (CE-BA 3).