

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE



SSC Assessment Planning and Prioritization Workshop

April 28 - 29, 2014

**Crowne Plaza
North Charleston, SC**

**VERSION
Briefing Book**

PURPOSE

Topics to address during this meeting:

- Assessment Priorities and long-term planning

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Documents:

- Attachment 1. SAFMC Assessment Productivity
- Attachment 2. Assessment Prioritization Framework
- Attachment 3. MARMAP/SEFIS Report, 2011
- Attachment 4. SAFIMP Workshop Report
- Attachment 5. 2003 Trends Report
- Attachment 6. Reef Fish Assemblages analysis
- Attachment 7. Carruthers et al Data limited methods

*** Indicates documents not available for the first Briefing Book.**

TABLES:

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Documents

Agenda

1.2. Action

Introductions

Review and Approve Agenda

2. CURRENT PRIORITIES, SCHEDULE AND APPROACHES

2.1. Documents

Attachment 1. SAFMC Assessment Productivity

2.2. Presentation

Summary of prioritization approaches and outcomes: John Carmichael

2.3. Overview

Assessment prioritization and scheduling involves many steps and participants; the approach is covered in the SAFMC productivity attachment. The general approach and outcomes will be reviewed in the presentation. As this topic was initially discussed at the October 2013 SSC meeting, the SSC comments from that meeting are included.

3. NOAA FISHERIES PRIORITIZATION

3.1. Documents

None

3.2. Presentation

Prioritization Approach: Rick Methot

3.3. Overview

NOAA fisheries is working on a comprehensive assessment prioritization, in response to a recommendation from a GAO review of stock assessments. The Committee will be briefed on this national effort.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1. Documents

- Attachment 2. Assessment Prioritization Framework
- Attachment 3. MARMAP/SEFIS Report, 2011
- Attachment 4. SAFIMP Workshop Report
- Attachment 5. 2003 Trends Report
- Attachment 6. Reef Fish Assemblages analysis
- Attachment 7. Carruthers et al Data limited methods

4.2. Overview

Background documents are provided to help the Committee address some of the traits to be considered when establishing assessment priorities and scheduling, such as fishery importance, ecosystem role, past assessment history and stock status, and biological traits. Most of these documents have been provided to the SSC in the past, during discussions of ABCs.

Since discussion of long term scheduling and workload management in October 2013 triggered this workshop, an excerpt from the October 2013 SSC report is provided here:

The SSC reviewed the long-term assessment document (briefing book attachment 7). In general, the committee found the document to be well-done and very helpful. More specific comments and suggestions are provided below:

- *The idea of having a 5-year schedule for benchmark assessments may be problematic for assessments that can only provide short- and medium-term projections (i.e., having catch level recommendations to cover the full period in between assessments).*
- *Consider different time frames for assessing different stocks based on the stock's life history (i.e., longer intervals for long-lived species that have more stable population dynamics);*
- *Consider the potential impact of management changes that might make it difficult to differentiate between changes in selectivity vs. changes in recruitment or other population parameters. In some cases it might be necessary to wait 3-4 years after a change in regulations before having an assessment.*
- *Consider taking into account input provided by the SEDAR RW and SSC regarding the type and timing for the next assessment.*
- *Consider assigning higher assessment priority for 'choke species' that may be requiring area closures or impacting harvest of other stocks.*
- *The SSC suggests that a workshop be held in conjunction with the April 2014 SSC meeting to discuss the use of alternative analytical methods for data-poor stocks or stocks that are difficult to assess using conventional assessment*

methods (e.g., Warsaw grouper, speckled hind, shrimp, dolphin). An outcome of this workshop would be identification of types of analyses that would allow some kind of rapid assessment without requiring a full SEDAR slot (i.e., faster throughput, higher efficiency, lower cost).

During the October 2013 SSC meeting, the Committee also received a presentation on a recent evaluation of a wide range of data limited assessment approaches by Dr. Tom Carruthers. The final publication is provided (Attachment 7). A workshop was held in Miami, January 14 - 17, where these topics were discussed in further detailed and a tool allowing convenient exploration of many of the data limited approaches was introduced. While a report from that workshop is in preparation, as of the completion of the Briefing materials for this workshop it was not available. Documents provided to the workshop participants will be available during the meeting.

SAFMC staff prepared a spreadsheet to explore possible stock prioritization considerations. Characteristics discussed by the SSC in October 2013 are scored and used to rank the stocks. This is provided as an example for consideration during the workshop, and is not offered as a specific prioritization suggestion.

4.3. Presentation

Mike Errigo - Spreadsheet Prioritization Example

4.4. Action

- Recommend an approach for identifying assessment and schedule priorities, considering both current needs and future revisions
- Recommend assessment priorities
- Recommend short term schedule priorities (2016-2018)
- Recommend a long-term scheduling strategy

5. **ADJOURN**