



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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Carolyn N. Belcher, Ph.D., Chair | Trish Murphey, Vice-Chair
John Carmichael, Executive Director

AGENDA **Full Council Session I**

Town & Country Inn
2008 Savannah Highway
Charleston SC

Monday, September 11, 2023 **8:30 am to 5:00 pm (Times subject to change)**

Call to order and introductions

Oath for new members

Adoption of agenda

Approval of minutes (June 2023)

1. Reports (NOAA Office of Law Enforcement, US Coast Guard, state agencies, Council liaisons) (*Attachments 1a-1c*)
2. Joint Commercial Electronic Logbook Amendment (*Attachments 2a and 2b*)
 - a. Overview of updated analyses and public comment summary – Myra Brouwer
 - b. Consider approval for formal review
3. East Coast Climate Change Scenario Planning (ECCCSP) Update (*Attachments 3a-3d*) – Roger Pugliese
 - a. Overview of Summit Report and Potential Action Menu
 - b. Review High Priority Actions in Potential Action Menu and develop Council recommendations.
4. Allocation Review Process (*Attachment 4a-4c*) – John Hadley
 - a. Overview of draft Allocation Review Guidelines and revisions to Allocation Review Trigger Policy.
 - b. Review and approve revisions to the Allocation Review Trigger Policy and provide guidance on the draft Allocation Review Guidelines.
5. Southeast Reef Fish Survey (SERFS) and Southeast Area Monitoring and Assessment Program (SEAMAP) Updates (*Attachments 5a and 5b*) – Tracey Smart and Wally Bublely, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources

6. Marine Recreational Information Program pilot study briefing (*Attachment 6*) – Richard Cody, NMFS Office of Science and Technology, Fisheries Statistics Division Chief

7. NMFS Council Governance Procedural Directive Discussion (*Attachments 7a and 7b*)

Attachments:

Attachment 1a: NOAA OLE Report

Attachment 1b: NOAA OLE presentation

Attachment 1c: Gulf Council Liaison Report

Attachment 2a: Joint Commercial Electronic Logbook Amendment Draft (*Available in Recent Documents on September 6*)

Attachment 2b: Draft Commercial Electronic Logbook Amendment Codified Text (*Available in Recent Documents on September 6*)

Attachment 3a: ECCCSP February 2023 Summit Report

Attachment 3b: ECCCSP Potential Action Menu

Attachment 3c: Presentation ECCCSP Summit Report and Action Menu

Attachment 3d: ECCCSP Actions Overview

Attachment 4a: Draft Allocation Review Guidelines

Attachment 4b: Summary presentation slides for the draft Allocation Review Guidelines

Attachment 4c: Draft updated Allocation Review Trigger Policy in tracked changes

Attachment 5a: 2023 SERFS & SEAMAP Overview Presentation (*Available in Recent Documents on September 6*)

Attachment 5b: SERFS Trends Report

Attachment 6: Presentation on MRIP Pilot Study on Survey Design

Attachment 7a: Draft Procedural Directive on Governance MSA 304(F)

Attachment 7b: Bullet discussion points on 304(f) procedural directive (*Available in Recent Documents on September 6*)

Staff Lead: John Carmichael (john.carmichael@safmc.net)

OVERVIEW

Full Council Session I

1. **Reports (*Attachments 1a-1c*)**

Description: NOAA Office of Law Enforcement, US Coast Guard, state agencies, and Council liaisons will provide reports to the Council.

2. **Joint Commercial Electronic Logbook Amendment (*Attachments 2a and 2b*)**

Description: Council staff will update the Council on progress on the joint commercial electronic logbook amendment and provide an overview of comments received during the July 2023 public hearing webinars.

Required Council Action: Consider approval for formal review.

3. **Climate Change Scenario Planning (CCSP) Update (*Attachments 3a-3d*)**

Description: Council staff will provide an update the East Coast Climate Scenario Planning Process whose objectives are to: 1) explore how East Coast fishery governance and management issues will be affected by climate-driven change in fisheries, particularly changing stock availability and distributions and; 2) advance a set of tools and processes that provide flexible and robust fishery management strategies, which continue to promote fishery conservation and resilient fishing communities, and address uncertainty in an era of climate change.

Many documents were produced throughout the scenario planning process with final themes and potential actions emerging during the initiative summarized in two main documents. The capstone to this initiative was the [East Coast Scenario Planning Summit](#), held on February 15-16, 2023 with its goal to develop a set of potential governance and management actions resulting from a scenario-based exploration of the future.

The East Coast Climate Change Scenario Planning Summit Report (*Attachment 3a*) provides a comprehensive summary of discussion themes, outcomes, and “potential actions” identified by summit participants. The Potential Action Menu (*Attachment 3b*) expands on, clarifies, and prioritizes the potential governance and management actions identified during the summit. This document is intended to be an evolving document, used as a planning tool to guide the development of collective and individual priorities, and a place to capture future issues and ideas. Actions are organized and prioritized under three overarching themes: Cross-Jurisdictional Governance, Managing Under Increased Uncertainty, and Data Sources and Partnerships. A [Scenario Planning Toolkit](#) was also created to support ongoing conversations about how climate change will affect fisheries.

Required Council Action: Staff will review High Priority Actions presented in the Potential Action Menu and the Council will provide guidance on the following issues:

- Does the Council support staff and advisors (APs, SSCs) devoting time and effort to the highlighted actions?
- Are there any actions that the Council considers high priority?

- Are there any actions that the Council opposes pursuing as a high priority (if so, could recommend moving to the medium priority or the “parking lot”)
- Are there medium priority or parking lot topics that the Council would like staff to consider pursuing?

4. **Allocation Review Process (*Attachment 4a-4c*)**

Description: The Council is developing allocation review guidelines to formally document the Council’s approach to allocations and respond to various federal policy directives and reports on allocations. Of note is the March 2020 [Government Accountability Office \(GAO\) report](#) on its review of allocations in the South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico regions. Among the recommendations from the GAO was for councils to “document their allocation reviews, including the basis for their allocation decisions, whether fishery management plan objectives are being met, and what factors were considered in the reviews.” On the [GAO website](#), it is noted that this recommendation has only been partially addressed since “the South Atlantic council has not specified how the council will document its allocation reviews that are conducted outside of Fishery Management Plan amendments, including the basis for its allocation decisions, whether Fishery Management Plan objectives are being met, and what factors were considered in the reviews.”

Council staff will review the draft allocation review guidelines, including the Council’s [new allocations webpage](#) and suggested updates to the Council’s allocation review trigger policy, to facilitate a discussion on how the Council would like to move forward with the guidelines.

Required Council Action: Provide guidance on the draft allocation review guidelines and consider approving updates to the Council’s allocation review trigger policy.

5. **Southeast Reef Fish Survey (SERFS) and Southeast Area Monitoring and Assessment Program (SEAMAP) Updates (*Attachments 5a and 5b*)**

Description: Staff from South Carolina Department of Natural Resources will present summarized trends in abundance and distribution for select species collected in the SERFS and SEAMAP through 2022.

Required Council Action: None

6. **Marine Recreational Information Program pilot study briefing (*Attachment 6*)**

Description: In August 2023, the NMFS Office of Science and Technology presented key findings of a [pilot study](#) to evaluate potential sources of bias in the Fishing Effort Survey (FES) questionnaire design. OST held a series of calls with key parties to announce the findings including Hill staff, affected Regional Fishery Management Council Chairs and Executive Directors, the Interstate Marine Fisheries Commission directors, Fisheries Information Network representatives, state fisheries directors from the states participating in NOAA’s Recreational FES, and recreational industry representatives. A presentation on this topic was requested for this meeting to allow the Council to ask questions of MRIP representatives.

Required Council Action: None

7. **NMFS Council Governance Procedural Directive Discussion (*Attachments 7a and 7b*)**

Description: MSA § 304(f)(1) authorizes the Secretary of Commerce to either designate a Council to prepare an FMP, or require the relevant Councils to prepare an FMP jointly. To date, NOAA Fisheries and the Councils have addressed management of fisheries that span multiple Council jurisdictions on a case-by-case basis. However, given that the geographic scope of fisheries is expected to continue to shift across Council jurisdictions in the future, preparing in advance for these situations, and having an established process and guidance in place for addressing them, will give NOAA Fisheries, the Councils, and the public a more transparent, orderly, and responsive approach for fishery management. NMFS has therefore identified a need for guidance on determining the geographic scope of fisheries and on how to determine which Regional Fishery Management Council(s) will be responsible for preparing and amending new or existing fishery management plans for fisheries that extend or have moved beyond the geographical area of authority of any one Council. Several presentations have been given at CCC meetings since this was raised in May 2022.

This is the final Council meeting for discussion of this topic. NMFS is accepting comments on the draft policy through November 17, 2023. A list of potential discussion points for a comment letter is provided for Council consideration at this meeting.

Required Council Action: Review governance discussion points and provide guidance on content for a Council comment letter.