



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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Trish Murphey, Chair | Jessica McCawley, Vice-Chair
John Carmichael, Executive Director

AGENDA

Full Council Session I

Radisson Resort at the Port
8701 Astronaut Blvd.,
Cape Canaveral, FL

Monday, June 9, 2025, 1:30 pm to 5:00 pm

- Call to order and introductions
- Adoption of agenda
- Approval of minutes (March 2025)
- Litigation Brief

1:30 pm – 3:00 pm

1. Reports

- a. Law Enforcement Reports
 - i. NOAA Office of Law Enforcement (*Attachments 1a & 1b*) – TBD, NOAA OLE
 - ii. US Coast Guard (*Attachment 1c*) – Lt. Tom Pease
- b. Council Liaisons
 - i. Gulf Council (*Attachment 1d*) – CJ Sweetman
 - ii. Mid-Atlantic Council (*Attachment 1e*) – Sonny Gwin
- c. Staff (*Attachment 1f*) – John Carmichael
- d. Council Coordination Committee (*Attachment 1g*)
- e. Resilient Fisheries Projects (*Attachment 1h*) – Chip Collier
- f. National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)
 - i. Southeast Regional Office (SERO) (*Attachment 1i*) – Andy Strelcheck
 - ii. Southeast Fisheries Science Center (SEFSC) – John Walter, SEFSC
- g. Dolphin Wahoo Advisory Panel (AP) (*Attachment 1j*) – Jon Reynolds, AP Chair

--- Break ---

3:15 pm – 4:00 pm

2. Executive Orders Review and Discussion (*Attachments 2a-2c*) – John Carmichael

4:00 pm – 5:00 pm

3. SAFMC Research and Monitoring Plan (2023-2027) Recommendations (*Attachments 3a-3c*) – Chip Collier

Tuesday, June 10, 2025, 8:30 am to 12:00 noon

8:30 am – 10:00 am

4. For-Hire Reporting Improvement Amendment (*Attachment 4*) – John Hadley and Myra Brouwer

--- Break ---

10:15 am – 11:00 am

5. Terms of Reference for Gag Assessment (*Attachment 5*) – Chip Collier

11:00 am – 12:00 noon

6. South Atlantic Headboats Report (*Attachments 6a and 6b*) – Chip Collier

Attachments:

Attachment 1a: NOAA Office of Law Enforcement Report

Attachment 1b: NOAA Office of Law Enforcement Presentation (*available by June 4*)

Attachment 1c: USCG Briefing Presentation (*available by June 4*)

Attachment 1d: Gulf Council Liaison Report

Attachment 1e: Mid-Atlantic Council Liaison Report

Attachment 1f: Staff Report

Attachment 1g: Council Coordination Committee Summary Presentation (May 2025)

Attachment 1h: Resilient Fisheries Projects Overviews

Attachment 1i: NMFS SERO Protected Species Report (*available by June 4*)

Attachment 1j: Dolphin Wahoo Advisory Panel Report

Attachment 2a: Executive Order 14276 (2025)

Attachment 2b: NMFS guidance letter EO 14276

Attachment 2c: SAFMC Response to EO 13921 (2020)

Attachment 3a: SAFMC Research and Monitoring Plan (2025-2029) Recommendations
(*available by June 4*)

Attachment 3b: [SEFSC report on activities addressing items in the 2023-2027 Research and Monitoring Plan](#)

Attachment 3c: State Research and Monitoring Projects 2023-2025

Attachment 4: For-Hire Reporting Improvement Amendment Decision Document

Attachment 5: Terms of Reference for the Gag Assessment (*available by June 4*)

Attachment 6a: South Atlantic Headboats Report

Attachment 6b: South Atlantic Headboats Report Presentation (*available by June 4*)

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

OVERVIEW

Full Council Session I

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

Description: Representatives and staff will provide reports to the Council.

Council Action: None

2. Executive Orders Discussion (*Attachments 2a-2c*)

Description: A number of Executive Orders have been issued that affect fisheries and Council operations. NMFS will be asked to provide an overview of those affecting federal regulations and NOAA Fisheries.

EO 14276

On April 17, 2025, the President signed Executive Order 14276 Restoring American Seafood Competitiveness. This order requests that the Regional Fishery Management Councils provide updates to their 2020 responses to EO 13921 to reduce burdens on domestic fishing and increase production. Councils have 180d from the signing of the EO to submit their responses. The Council's response to 2020's EO 13921 is provided along with EO 14276 and a letter from NMFS providing guidance on the response process.

Similar to the process for replying to the 2020 EO, NMFS has provided the Councils a spreadsheet template to submit responses. **NMFS has established a deadline of September 1, 2025, for Councils to respond.** By establishing a deadline for responding to NMFS that is less than the 180d specified in the EO and that occurs prior to the September SAFMC meeting, this is the only scheduled meeting for the Council to discuss the EO.

The Council is asked to consider which of the items from 2020 to include in the updated reply, how 2020 items should be modified, and identify additional topics to include. In addition to considering topics to address the EO, the Council is asked to provide guidance on finalizing and reviewing the SAFMC reply to comply with the September 1, 2025, deadline.

Council Action: Provide suggested topics for the EO response and guidance on developing and reviewing the SAFMC response.

3. SAFMC Research and Monitoring Plan Recommendations (*Attachments 3a-3c*)

Description: The Council revises their research and monitoring plan every two years. The research and monitoring plan is used by the Council and NOAA Fisheries staff to identify and prioritize research needs for fisheries in the South Atlantic. These research needs are circulated to funding agencies to be included as research grant priorities and used by researchers during development of research proposals. The research and monitoring plan is more comprehensive than past research and monitoring plans to aid in

understanding the full breadth of research and monitoring occurring in the region. The research and monitoring plan was provided to the Scientific and Statistical Committee and Social Economic Panel. In addition to just reviewing the research and monitoring plan, staff gathered feedback from the Dolphin Wahoo, Habitat Protection and Ecosystem, Mackerel Cobia, and Snapper Grouper Advisory Panels. Council staff will present the 2025-2029 South Atlantic Research and Monitoring Plan (*Attachment 3a*) for approval by the Council. Southeast Fisheries Science Center staff will provide an update on activities related to the 2023-2027 Research and Monitoring Plan (*Attachment 3b*) and Council staff will provide an update on state activities related to the 2023-2027 Research and Monitoring Plan (*Attachment 3c*).

Council Action: Review the research and monitoring plan, provide recommendations for high priorities, and consider approving as the plan for 2025-2029.

4. For-Hire Electronic Reporting Improvements Amendment (*Attachment 4*)

Description: The Council reviewed and approved the For-Hire Reporting Improvements Amendment for scoping at their March 2025 meeting. Scoping was held via the [Council's webpage](#), with a comment period from April 24 to May 8, 2025. One scoping comment was submitted via the Council's webpage. The online scoping comment may be accessed [HERE](#). During their spring 2025 meetings, the Snapper Grouper, Mackerel Cobia, and Dolphin Wahoo advisory panels (APs) reviewed potential actions and alternatives to include in the amendment. At the June 2025 meeting, the Council will review summary comments received during scoping and from the three finfish APs.

Council Action: Review scoping comments, AP and IPT recommendations, and provide guidance on timeline for development.

5. Terms of Reference for the Gag Assessment (*Attachment 5*)

Description: SEDAR 71 estimated Gag to be overfished and be experiencing overfishing. The new assessment will update the terminal year from 2019 to 2024. The assessment will have a topical working group to characterize changes in the reproductive dynamics, if new data are available, and have a technical panel to aid in the development of the assessment product following a new process proposed for Southeast Fisheries Science Center assessments. Staff will present the terms of reference and identify any changes suggested by the Scientific and Statistical Committee during the May 2025 meeting.

Council Action: Consider approving the Terms of Reference for the Gag Assessment.

6. South Atlantic Headboats Report (*Attachments 6a and 6b*)

Description: In June 2024, the Council requested a report be prepared to examine headboat vessel limits for South Atlantic managed species for discussion at the December 2024 meeting. The impetus behind this request came from discussions regarding the recent modifications to the vessel limits for gag and black grouper in Snapper Grouper Amendments 53 and Regulatory Amendment 36. The Council requested additional information on headboats to be presented in June 2025. The Southeast Fisheries Science

Center developed responses to the Council's request. Council staff will go through the report.

Council Action: Review report and determine whether additional information is needed for potential management action.