



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Marine Fisheries Service Southeast
Fisheries Science Center
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May 22, 2025

MEMORANDUM FOR: John Carmichael
Executive Director, South Atlantic Fishery Management Council

FROM: Dr. John F. Walter, III
Deputy Director for Science and Council Services
NOAA Fisheries - Southeast Fisheries Science Center

SUBJECT: Requests and follow-up from March 2025 Council meeting

The Southeast Fisheries Science Center has prepared the following documents for the June 2025 Council meeting:

- Presentations on stock assessments Black Sea Bass and is attached. Blueline Tilefish is currently still under review by the SSC so would be premature to present to the Council until approved by the SSC.
- Discussion of Snapper Grouper Amendment 46 (private recreational permit and education component)
- SERO is taking lead discussion of Snapper Grouper Amendment 46 (private recreational permit and education component)
- Southeast Regional Headboat request was sent in by Rob Cheshire, May 2nd

I will be giving verbal updates at the council meeting on the following:

- SPR Proxies: Council requests a presentation on SPR proxies. The presentation should include analyses for which proxy is most appropriate for the species with a focus on currently assessed species in the South Atlantic region.
- Report on accomplishments related to the SAFMC Research and Monitoring Plan 2023-2027. A brief overview follows on the next page and the Excel file is attached to this email.
- Report on the status of funding for fishery data collection, including port sampling and the Southeast Region Headboat Survey. John Walter will update on the state of reduced resources, loss of port agents and potential implications on assessments and monitoring. .
- Update on the status of the Beaufort Laboratory. John Walter will get an update immediately prior to the Council meeting so as to have the latest update.

Sincerely,

Dr. John F. Walter, III
Deputy Director for Science and Council Services
NOAA Fisheries - Southeast Fisheries Science Center
Miami, FL

Table 1. Progress on SAFMC Research and Monitoring Plan.

The [research plan](#) progress was last updated in 2023. Since then there have been some key completed projects but other projects have been delayed or delayed indefinitely. Some major themes are that a number of stock assessments are delayed or delayed indefinitely, which reduces the percentage complete from 2023. Given that we are at the mid-point of the 2023-2027 research plan, it may be timely to review it to determine whether some aspects need to be reconsidered given the, likely, reduced resources for science and research in the region and to ensure that it still meets current Council objectives.

status

2025

Subject	Completed	Delayed/not planned	Ongoing: research in progress or routine	Total	Status 2025 (% completed and ongoing)	Status 2023 (% completed and ongoing)
I. Short Term needs for stock assessments in 2020-2023	15	8	3	26	69%	81%
II. Long Term needs for stock assessments within the next 5 years.	1	8	2	11	27%	36%
III. Short Term Needs for Spawning Special Management Zones in next 5 years.		1	4	5	80%	80%
IV. Short Term Needs for MPA monitoring within the next 5 years.		3	3	6	50%	50%
V. Long Term Needs to be developed within the next 5 years.		1	11	12	92%	92%
VI. Habitat Research and Monitoring Needs			2	2	100%	100%
VII. Specific Monitoring Priorities	2		9	11	100%	100%
VIII. Specific Annual Reporting Requests	2		1	3	100%	67%
TOTAL (2025)	20	21	35	76	72%	75%
TOTAL (2023)	13	18	45	77		