

FINAL
Summary of the SAFMC Data Collection Committee Meeting
March 6, 2014
Hilton Savannah DeSoto
Savannah, GA

Members:

Mel Bell, Chair	Jessica McCawley, Vice-Chair
Michelle Duval	Jack Cox
Wilson Laney	Roy Crabtree

The agenda was adopted, and the minutes of the December 2013 meeting were approved.

Joint Gulf & South Atlantic Council Generic Dealer Amendment

Dr. Jack McGovern reported that the amendment was sent to NMFS for formal Secretarial review on 9/26/13. The notice of availability (NOA) published on 12/19/13 with comments due by 2/18/14. The proposed rule was published on 1/2/14 with comments due by 2/3/14. The final rule package is under review.

Joint South Atlantic & Gulf Council Generic For-Hire Reporting Amendment (SA Headboats only)

Dr. Jack McGovern reported that the amendment was sent to NMFS for Secretarial review on 4/23/13. The Notice of Availability of the amendment was published in the Federal Register on 9/18/13, and comments were accepted through 11/18/13. The proposed rule published on September 18, and the comment period ended on 11/18/13. The final rule was published on 12/17/13 and regulations became effective 1/27/14.

Gulf Framework to implement For-Hire Reporting (Headboat only)

Dr. Jack McGovern reported that the amendment was sent to NMFS for Secretarial review on 7/18/13. The proposed rule published on October 25, and the comment period ended on 11/25/13. The final rule published on 1/3/14 and regulations became effective 3/5/14.

Comprehensive Ecosystem-Based Amendment 3 (CE-BA 3)

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.

Update on Commercial Logbook Pilot Study

Dr. Bonnie Ponwith updated the committee on the status of this project. The committee discussed the original intent to provide fishermen the option of filing their logbook form electronically or using the current paper logbook versus the current pilot study evaluating an on-vessel electronic logbook. Input from the Snapper Grouper visioning process thus far indicates support for reporting electronically rather than via paper. The committee expressed interest in future discussions about providing the opportunity for fishermen to report electronically, in addition to using paper.

Joint South Atlantic & Gulf Council Generic Charterboat Reporting Amendment

Gregg Waugh, Council staff, reviewed the status of appointments to the technical subcommittee to work on the technical issues related to this amendment:

1. South Atlantic Council – John Carmichael (Mike Errigo assisting)
2. Gulf Council – John Froeschke
3. Dr. Andy Strelcheck – SERO
4. Ken Brennan/Vivian Matter – SEFSC
5. Dr. Katie Drew – ASMFC
6. Dr. Ron Saltz – MRIP
7. (TBD) – HMS
8. (TBD) - ACCSP

The Gulf Council is interested in moving this amendment along and requests that the technical subcommittee provide their report by summer and approved a motion to develop a joint framework action to establish electronic reporting or other approved methods within the federally permitted reef fish and coastal migratory pelagics charter fishery. The committee discussed this but felt that the technical committee would need the rest of this year to complete their work. The committee discussed work that could be conducted by the two Councils to begin working on an amendment to require electronic reporting from charter vessels.

Electronic Technology Workshop & Implementation Plan

A National Electronic Monitoring and Reporting Workshop was held January 8-9, 2014 in Seattle, WA. Council members Mel Bell and Dr. Michelle Duval attended; Robert Johnson, Snapper Grouper AP, also attended. The purpose of this workshop was to bring key decision makers and stakeholders together in an effort to facilitate the implementation and integration of electronic monitoring (EM) into U.S. fisheries.

The committee discussed the workshop and noted:

1. Make it clear that Electronic Technology refers to electronic reporting and electronic monitoring and not just electronic monitoring.
2. The South Atlantic Council is focused on electronic reporting.
3. Reporting should link data bases with common elements (e.g., water body codes).
4. Agency does not need to build everything but should focus on developing the standards; third party vendors should be involved from the start.

5. Amount of data from video monitoring is very large and costly; compare costs for observer versus electronic monitoring. The project by Scott Baker may provide some comparison.
6. Regional Implementation Plans will be developed with a target date of December 2014. Mel Bell is representing the SAFMC; Dr. Andy Strelcheck is representing the SERO; and Ken Brennan/Dave Gloeckner are representing the SEFSC.
7. The Regional Implementation Plan should be considered a living document and change as we move forward.

Other Business

Dr. Roy Crabtree briefed the committee on issues arising in the MRIP Wave 3 data for 2013. The methodology changed for the dockside intercepts and the landings for red snapper in Alabama and the Panhandle of Florida were the highest on record; the EEZ effort was the highest recorded. On the Atlantic, EEZ trips have been low for the past several years and Wave 3 effort was the lowest ever. There is a Calibration workshop being held by NMFS in Charlotte, NC on September 8-10, 2014 to address this issue.

Timing and Task Draft Motion

The following draft motion has been developed based on direction from the Committee:

MOTION: ACCEPT THE TASKS AND TIMING AS PRESENTED:
APPROVED BY COUNCIL

1. Directed staff to expand the discussion in CE-BA 3 on species-specific observer coverage as required by the ACCSP minimum data standards and to bring the document back at the June 2014 meeting for further consideration.
2. 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.
3. Direct staff to provide some options on how commercial fishermen could report electronically and via paper and provide at the June 2014 meeting.
4. Direct staff to follow up with ACCSP and HMS for their appointments to the technical subcommittee.
5. Direct South Atlantic Staff to work with Gulf Staff to provide support to the technical committee and facilitate the committee's work. Discuss what work can be accomplished on the amendment while the technical committee is completing their work. Report back at the June 2014 meeting.
6. Direct staff to attend the MRIP Calibration Workshop, September 8-10, 2014 in Charlotte, NC.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my report.