

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

DOLPHIN WAHOO COMMITTEE

Webinar

December 9, 2020

TRANSCRIPT

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Other observers and participants attached.

The Dolphin Wahoo Committee of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council convened via webinar on Wednesday, December 9, 2020, and was called to order by Chairman Anna Beckwith.

MS. BECKWITH: I will bring the Dolphin Wahoo Committee to order. The first item is Approval of the Agenda. I suspect we will be discussing a few things under Other Business, including the letter from Florida, although I think we'll probably bring that up a few times during discussions, our regular discussions, of Amendment 10. If there is nothing else, is there any opposition to approving the agenda? Seeing none, the agenda is approved.

The next item is Approval of the September Minutes. There were a couple of things that needed to be fixed on the minutes, and it's showing that Dr. Carolyn Belcher is Chair and Kerry Marhefka is Vice Chair, and it is not showing Tony and Dewey as being members of the committee, although they speak throughout, and I wanted to pass it over to Shep, to see if he had found any other corrections to the minutes.

MR. GRIMES: I did not, Madam Chair, but thank you very much for asking.

MS. BECKWITH: Well, you know, I count on you now, Shep. Okay. With those few corrections, then is there any opposition to approval of the minutes? Seeing none, those minutes are approved. The next item of business is the Status of Amendments Under Formal Review.

MR. HADLEY: All right, and I will pass that over to Rick in just a moment, but I just wanted to fill in the blank there. The amendment was submitted to the NMFS Southeast Regional Office on December 3. Also, a notification letter was sent to the Mid-Atlantic Council as well that this amendment has been sent to the Southeast Regional Office. Rick, I don't know if you have any additional updates on that.

MR. DEVICTOR: No, and that's pretty much it. We're working on the proposed rule right now.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Next is going to be a summary report for the October 2020 Dolphin Wahoo AP Meeting.

MR. HADLEY: With that, I will turn it over to Christopher Burrows, who is our new AP Chair, and he's going to walk you through the summary report. Chris, take it away whenever you're ready.

MR. BURROWS: Good morning, council members and Madam Chair. Thanks for having me on. This is my first time doing this, and so please be gentle. Let's see. We initially approved the agenda and the August 2019 meeting minutes and received opening comments from Anna Beckwith, followed by an update on recent council actions and an update on the work that has been carried out by the Citizen Science Program, to begin our meeting in October. Anna, did you wish to speak on that at this point, or am I getting out of order?

MS. BECKWITH: No, and this is just your report. I will speak plenty later. Don't worry about it.

MR. BURROWS: Thank you. We were all updated on the following: Dolphin Wahoo Amendment 10, the revision of dolphin wahoo management measures; Dolphin Wahoo

Amendment 12, which is bullet mackerel and frigate mackerel as ecosystem component species; Dolphin Wahoo Amendment 13, changes to the pelagic longline fishery; Snapper Grouper Amendment 29, the best fishing practices amendment; and the for-hire electronic reporting amendment.

We were updated on the South Atlantic Citizen Science Program, and we were updated on the council's Citizen Science Program and pilot projects, and, as part of this presentation, the AP was provided a demonstration of the FISHstory project, using the old pictures to determine the size of fish, and that was I think what everybody took out of that, and, additionally, the AP was briefed on efforts to plan for the development of a customizable Citizen Science mobile app.

Item 3 was revising the dolphin and wahoo management measures, Amendment 10. Council staff provided an overview of the development and status of Amendment 10. The AP reviewed all actions in the amendment, providing the following comments, recommendations, and motions. Some AP members expressed concern over population trends for dolphin, noting that abundance is important for the recreational fishery. Dolphin tend to be relatively easy to catch when present, thus making them more susceptible to depletion, and a more cautious approach is appropriate to management.

On the other hand, wahoo are more difficult to target, and they're not as susceptible to traditional fishing pressure, and a less seasonable approach than you would see with dolphinfish. Multiple AP members, specifically from Florida, stated that there is concern over increased fishing pressure, particularly from divers using spearfishing gear. It was noted that some divers seem to be targeting spawning aggregations of wahoo, and divers were accounting for a notable number of wahoo harvested directly, and through delayed mortality due to wahoo being speared, but escaping when the spear pulls out of the fish.

On to the recommendations. In Actions 3 and 4 regarding sector allocations and ACLs for dolphin and wahoo, the advisory panel expressed support for Alternatives 2 and 3, respectively, noting that these alternatives would not encourage increased harvest of dolphin or wahoo, but would maintain adequate harvest levels for both sectors. The AP wants to avoid in-season closures to the recreational sector, whenever possible.

Regarding Actions 5 and 7, setting the trigger for additional accountability measures in the recreational sector, the AP did not choose a single alternative, but noted that multiyear triggers that take into account variability in landings are preferred, taking the statistical outliers out of play with a really good season or a season with sustained good weather.

In Actions 6 and 8, specifying recreational accountability measures, a vessel limit reduction would be slightly preferable compared to the other alternatives being considered, especially compared to a closed season. If vessel limits are reduced, try to maintain limits that are viable for the for-hire component of the fishery and now shut the charter boat industry down, and it was noted that eight fish per vessel is recommended as a minimum limit for wahoo in an accountability measure.

In Action 9, possession of dolphin and wahoo when specified unauthorized gears are onboard, consider trip limits of no more than 500 pounds for dolphin. Limits above that tend to go beyond total landings of dolphin on typical rod and reel commercial trips. In Action 10, removal of the operator card requirement, the AP endorsed their previous motion to remove the operator card

requirements for both the recreational and commercial sectors, the operator card being an idea whose time has come and gone.

In Action 11 to reduce the recreational vessel limit for dolphin, there was support for Alternative 1, no action, particularly in North Carolina, or to take action just in the State of Florida, which is Alternative 3. It was noted that the sixty-fish limit is very important to the charter boat industry in North Carolina, especially when bairer dolphin are abundant late in the summer. If limits are reduced, maintaining limits divisible by six is preferred.

In Action 12, the filleting of dolphin at-sea onboard for-hire vessels north of the North Carolina/Virginia border, several advisory panel members noted that allowing filleting of dolphin at-sea would also be useful in the South Atlantic Region. It would help with minimizing turnaround time between half-day charters in South Florida, where dolphin can be successfully targeted. It would also help with spare cold-storage capacity and preserving the meat of harvested fish. Some advisory panel members noted that they also have very long runs, like we have in North Carolina, to and from fishing grounds when targeting dolphin, and that's similar to the conditions they see in the Mid-Atlantic states. If this were to be allowed, the racks of filleted fish could be required to aid in the enforcement of size limits. Are there any questions before we get into any of the motions?

MS. BECKWITH: Are there any questions? Okay. Go ahead.

MR. BURROWS: The motions.

MS. BYRD: Sorry, but Chester had his hand raised.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Chester.

MR. BREWER: Good morning. Can we go back up to Action 9?

MR. BURROWS: We can.

MR. BREWER: Okay. Well, this is my question. We're going to be having discussions with regard to longlining, or longlining that is directed at dolphin, and this is talking about a trip limit of no more than 500 pounds for dolphin. Did that trip limit include longlining gear?

MR. BURROWS: Not longlining gear specific to dolphin fishing. This was being viewed as more of a bycatch issue, for a different approach, when you're targeting another species, as is trolling to and from the spots where you are engaging in another type of fishing.

MS. BECKWITH: Chester, this is relative to our Action 9, which was the request from the Northeast to allow properly-permitted commercial fishing vessels with trap, pot, or buoy gear onboard that are not authorized for use in dolphin wahoo to possess commercial quantities of dolphin wahoo.

MR. BREWER: Okay. I understand. That's why the words "unauthorized gears" is being used right there. I didn't understand, because, right now, longline is an authorized gear for dolphin. Thank you.

MR. BURROWS: Any other questions out there?

MR. HADLEY: Chris, I think you're good to go to move along.

MR. BURROWS: All right. We'll move on to motions then. Motion 1 is endorse Alternative 2 as the preferred alternative for Actions 1 and 2. Action 1 would be revise the total annual catch limit for dolphin to reflect the updated acceptable biological catch. Preferred Alternative 2 is the total annual catch limit for dolphin is equal to the updated acceptable biological catch level. Action 2 is revise the total annual catch limit for wahoo to reflect the updated acceptable biological catch level. Preferred Alternative 2 is the total annual catch limit for wahoo is equal to the updated acceptable biological catch level. This was approved by the advisory panel.

Motion 2 is choose Alternative 2 as preferred in Action 3. Action 3 is revise sector allocations and sector ACLs for dolphin. Alternative 2 is allocate 93.75 percent of the revised total annual catch limit for dolphin to the recreational sector. Allocate 6.25 percent of the revised total annual catch limit for dolphin to the commercial sector. This is based on approximately maintaining the current commercial annual catch limit and allocating the remaining revised total annual catch limit to the recreational sector. That was approved by the advisory panel.

Motion 3 is choose Alternative 3 as the preferred alternative in Action 4. Action 4 is revise sector allocations and sector annual catch limits for wahoo. Alternative 3 is allocate 97.55 percent of the revised total annual catch limit for wahoo to the recreational sector. Allocate 2.45 percent of the revised total annual catch limit for wahoo to the commercial sector. This is based on approximately maintaining the current commercial ACL and allocating the remaining revised total annual catch limit to the recreational sector. That was approved by the advisory panel.

Motion 4 is allow vessels with pot, trap, or buoy gear onboard to possess dolphin or wahoo, as long as they are a permitted vessel and fish are caught by rod-and-reel. Again, that was approved by the advisory panel.

Motion 5 is support Alternative 3b or 3c as preferred in Action 11. Action 11 is reduce the recreational vessel limit for dolphin. Alternative 3 is, in Florida only, the recreational daily bag limit is ten dolphin per person, not to exceed -- Then Sub-Alternative 3b is forty-two dolphin per vessel, whichever is less, except onboard a headboat, where the limit is ten dolphin per paying passenger. Sub-Alternative 3c is forty-eight dolphin per vessel, whichever is less, except onboard a headboat, where the limit is ten dolphin per paying passenger. This was approved by the advisory panel. Are there any questions about those before I continue?

MR. HADLEY: I am not seeing any hands going up.

MR. BURROWS: All right. The advisory panel then received an update on the dolphin wahoo participatory workshops that have recently been conducted by the Southeast Fisheries Science Center, and we worked through discussion questions to develop a fishery performance report for wahoo. This fishery performance report is included as an attachment in your briefing book materials.

The AP was provided with an update on a series of participatory workshops that took place with dolphin and wahoo fishermen at locations in Beaufort, North Carolina; Wanchese, North Carolina; and Virginia Beach, Virginia in March 2020. These workshops sought to gather information on major factors affecting fisheries for dolphin and wahoo, risks to these fisheries, how changes in the ecosystem have affected fishing businesses and communities, and what targeted research is needed.

The advisory panel was also updated on preliminary findings of the related work using photos found on social media to characterize the seasonality and makeup of the harvested catch onboard for-hire vessels participating in the dolphin and wahoo fishery in North Carolina and Virginia.

With input from the advisory panels, fishery performance reports have been developed for several recreationally and commercially-important species under the management of the council. The intent of the fishery performance reports is to assemble information from AP members' experience and observations on the water and in the marketplace to complement scientific and landings data. The fishery performance report for wahoo will be provided to the SSC, the Socioeconomic Panel, and the council to inform future management. Council staff provided an overview of landings trends, as well as other background information, and the advisory panel focused their input based on a series of discussion questions from which the fishery performance report for wahoo was developed.

Next, bag limit sales came back on the agenda. This is an issue that is very near-and-dear to a lot of members on the advisory panel, and I don't think we had much dissention, and I want to go over those two motions that were passed. There is a few reasons for this, and, going all the way back to April of 2017, and this is -- This wasn't the first time this issue has been brought up by the advisory panel.

There are a few bullet points here, and, to address possible double counting of landings, the for-hire electronic logbook could potentially be used to identify dolphin caught on for-hire trips that were later sold. Electronic reporting solves a lot of these problems. Several participants in the for-hire fishery also fish commercially and should know how to properly handle fish to the appropriate HACCP and commercial safety standards. This also would address some of the concerns over unfair competition between commercial and recreational sectors as well as food safety concerns.

The need for vessels to be dually-permitted would help with enforcement issues and identifying vessels that may legally sell dolphin. In south Florida, fish caught on for-hire trips were historically an important source of local seafood and an important part of the fishing culture, and local restaurants are now currently buying imported dolphin that is not the same quality as freshly-caught local dolphin. Allowing bag limit sales of dolphin would provide economic relief and better economic utilization of harvested fish. Allowing bag limit sales of dolphin offers a major benefit to the crew. Sale of fish caught on a for-hire trip should not be used as a way to discount charter fees, to keep the playing field level. I want to thank our former Chair, Roy Rosher, for doing so much work with this particular item.

The motions that were passed, Motion 6 is, in Florida only, reinstate charter boat fish sales for dually-permitted vessels to be able to sell bag-limit-only quantities of dolphin to a licensed dealer.

If sold, landings would come from the recreational ACL. That was approved by the advisory panel.

Motion 7 would reinstate charter boat sales for dually-permitted vessels to be able to sell bag-limit-only quantities of dolphin to a licensed dealer. Sold landings would, again, come from the recreational ACL. That was approved by the advisory panel, and so you have two motions. One is Florida-specific, and one would cover the entire region. Does anybody have any questions about that?

MS. BECKWITH: It does not appear that we have questions on that, Chris.

MR. BURROWS: All right. On to Item 7, discussion of the potential for regional management and efforts to address climate change, at the September 2020 meeting, the council requested that advisory panels be provided with regular updates on efforts to address management challenges related to climate change. Council staff briefed the advisory panel on potential upcoming initiatives.

Additionally, within this context, the AP was asked about the potential need for regional management approaches in the dolphin wahoo fishery that could address current or future changes in the fishery. The AP had the following comment. There are no specific new regional management needs identified, but the advisory panel noted that some actions in Dolphin Wahoo Amendment 10 are appropriately considering regional management approaches. That goes through the meat of it.

At the end of the meeting, we elected a new Chair and a new Vice Chair of the Dolphin Wahoo Advisory Panel. They nominated myself to serve as Chair of the Dolphin Wahoo Advisory Panel, and it was approved, and Jon Reynolds was nominated to serve as Vice Chair, and that was also approved.

To conclude, there was discussion about a dolphin stamp or permit that could be added to a fishing license, and funds generated from this stamp or permit could be used with conservation and research of dolphin. With everything being on a state license basis now, that would be a difficult one to figure out, but it's definitely something that merits some thought. That really concludes it. If there's any questions out there, I would be more than happy to try to field them, and I look forward to hopefully doing this again sometime.

MS. BECKWITH: Thank you, Chris, and thanks for taking on the role of Chair, and we appreciate your time and effort, and I look forward to working with you for the next few months while I still get to participate in all of this fun.

MR. BURROWS: Thank you.

MS. BECKWITH: Are there any questions for Chris, or should we move into the discussion of Amendment 10? Okay. Seeing none, John, do you want to take us through?

MR. HADLEY: Sure. I will bring up the amendment document here, and thanks again, Chris, for running through that, and particularly the Amendment 10 discussion. That kind of kicks off -- From the AP, it kicks off our subsequent discussion, and we will go through the AP

recommendations, just as a quick reminder, and they provided some pretty good guidance and discussed it quite a bit, each action, and provided some guidance for the committee to consider, and so thank you again.

Just to orient everyone on Dolphin Wahoo Amendment 10, as a reminder, this amendment has twelve actions in total, and we sort of break them up into three groups, actions that accommodate revised data and catch level recommendations, and, in doing so, new total annual catch limits for dolphin and wahoo, as well as sector allocations to go along with those new ACLs.

There are actions that change the recreational accountability measures, and those are kind of looked at in a manner that you are setting the trigger for the post-season accountability measure for the recreational sector, and then the next action is specifying what that accountability measure will be, and last, but certainly not least, there's a sort of catch-all category that implements various different management revisions in the dolphin wahoo fishery, looking at allowable gears and the operator card requirement and potentially reducing the recreational vessel limit for dolphin and allowing filleting of dolphin at-sea onboard for-hire boats north of the North Carolina/Virginia border.

As far as objectives for this meeting, we'll go through and go through the decision document, and one thing that this amendment doesn't have just yet is a committee-approved purpose and need statement, and I know that this amendment has been -- We've been adding actions or taking actions, and so there's been some changes there, and it's been hard to nail down a purpose and need statement, but, now that the amendment is in a fairly steady state, I'm looking for approval of a draft purpose and need statement. After that, we'll get into the actions and alternatives and modify those as appropriate.

As part of that, we're looking to choose preferred alternatives, since this amendment, if it is to stay on track for final approval by the committee and the council at the June 2021 meeting, we'll be looking for an approval for public hearings at this meeting, and so, as part of that, it would be helpful to choose preferred alternatives, where possible, to sort of signal to the public how the committee and how the council is leaning on each action.

I will remind you that we do have preferred alternatives on Actions 1 and 2, but the other actions do not have preferred alternatives just yet, and just a quick overview of the timing. Assuming that the amendment does get approved for public hearings, these public hearings would occur in January or February of next year. The council would review the public hearing comments, as well as the additional and revised effects in March, and then we're looking for approval for secretarial review in June, with implementation of the amendment and any regulatory changes likely sometime in 2022. Before I jump into that, are there any questions, before I get into the purpose and need statement?

I am not seeing any, and so, with that, we have -- The IPT worked on the purpose and need statement, the draft purpose and need statement, that was presented in the past, and they really narrowed it down quite a bit, particularly taking out the unnecessary items, since some of the actions had been removed, and before you is the revised suggested purpose and need statement, kind of a first start for the council to consider.

I will just go over it very quickly, and the purpose of Dolphin Wahoo Amendment 10 is to revise catch levels, including acceptable biological catch and annual catch limits, sector allocations, accountability measures, and management measures for dolphin and wahoo. Management measures address authorized gear and the operator card requirement in the dolphin and wahoo fisheries, as well as the recreational vessel limits and allowing fillets at-sea onboard for-hire vessels in the dolphin fishery.

The need for Dolphin Wahoo Amendment 10 is to base conservation and management measures on the best scientific information available and increase net benefits to the nation, consistent with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act and its National Standards. I am looking for input here from the committee, as far as the purpose and need statement and potentially approving it for inclusion in Amendment 10.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. I'm not sure if we're having some issues with audio, because I just got a text message from Tim as well, saying that he keeps getting kicked off the webinar, and he's got no audio at the moment.

MS. BYRD: Anna, hang on a second. Tim and Mel have both been on and off. Let me just see -
- Do you mind if we do an audio check with them, real quick?

MS. BECKWITH: Yes, please.

MS. BYRD: Mel, it looks like you're muted on your end.

MR. BELL: I am back. Can you hear me okay?

MS. BYRD: Loud and clear. Thank you.

MR. BELL: Mine is an internet problem on my end, and I'm not sure about Tim or others.

MS. BYRD: Okay. Thanks, Mel. Then, Tim, it looks like you're on and self-muted. I don't know if you can unmute yourself. Anna, maybe we'll follow-up with Tim and he see if we can help with any technical issues he's having.

MS. BECKWITH: Yes, that would be great, and even if he's got to call in on the phone, and he can just sort of speak freely as needed, but, yes. Okay. Thanks. All right. Back to John. Are there any thoughts on the purpose and need statement as they are now, recognizing that we always have the potential to edit them as changes occur, if needed? If not, I would be looking for a motion to approve the draft purpose and need statement.

MR. POLAND: **So moved, Madam Chair.**

MS. BECKWITH: Thank you. I will take Spud as a second. Is there any further discussion?
Seeing none, is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion carries.

MR. HADLEY: All right. Thank you. We will move along to the actions and alternatives. Moving on to Action 1 in the amendment, this provides us the total ACL for dolphin, to reflect the updated acceptable biological catch. As a reminder, you have chosen Alternative 2 as your

preferred alternative, and this was chosen at the last council meeting in September, and this would set the total ACL for dolphin equal to the updated acceptable biological catch level that you received from your SSC.

I won't go into too much detail here, since you have selected preferreds, but I did want to show you one bit of a new analysis, just because you will see it over and over again through the different ACL actions, and the IPT discussed analysis of the ACLs, one of the main reasons being that the outcome is very sensitive, in some cases, to the baseline that you assume, and so we provided a range.

We were able to provide a range of baselines, looking at a five-year average of landings, a three-year average of landings, and sort of a maximum landings scenario for the past five years, to sort of show how the landings compare to these new potential ACLs, and so here you see, in Table 2, you have the five-year average, and, under that, the total dolphin ACL is not expected to be reached under the five or three-year average. If you use a max landings scenario, it would be projected to reach, and so that's kind of your elevated year, your year that the fishery is really firing on all cylinders, so to speak. The total ACL would be reached sometime in the early fall, late September or early October.

I just wanted to introduce that here, and we'll get into that in much more detail when we get into the discussion of sector allocations, but, with that, as mentioned by Chris earlier, the AP did review this action and endorsed Alternative 2 as the preferred alternative for Action 1, and Action 2 as well, and so no committee action is needed here, but I will just take a pause, in case you want to discuss your preferred alternative or if there's any questions.

MS. BECKWITH: Yes, and I actually do want to take a few minutes and discuss this action, because, to me, this action is tied to Action 11, which is the bag limit action, and I just sort of want to bring the committee's attention to a couple of things. So, you know, our preferred alternative would, obviously, bring our ACL up to about twenty-four-and-a-half million pounds. Alternative 3 would bring, potentially, our ACL up to twenty-three-million-plus pounds. The difference between that is about one-point-two-million-odd pounds.

We had originally discussed, at our last committee meeting, the idea of considering Alternative 3, 95 percent of the ABC, and one of the reasons that we didn't move in that direction, was because we felt that, with all the conservation concerns related to dolphin, that we would be dealing with some of those conservation concerns using other management measures, including reconsideration of bag limits. John, can you go down to Action 11, real quick, and show the Figures 11 and 12?

Just so we're looking at this whole concept, if you look at Figure 11, this is the recreational dolphin harvest per vessel when we're looking at it along the east coast, and you see this obviously includes North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and north. If you look, there is very few trips that actually harvest greater than forty dolphin per vessel.

If you go down to the next figure, Figure 12, this one shows the number of dolphin harvested per vessel for just Florida, which, as we know, is the preferred alternative for bag limit considerations from our AP. Given this information that's provided to us, it's actually showing that Florida doesn't catch really almost any trips that have more than forty dolphin, and so can you go down to that table, John?

Basically, if we moved to bag limits, for Florida only, of even down to forty dolphin, the savings would be miniscule, and so, if we move all the way down to forty, forty as a vessel limit, for the entire east coast, you see that the savings in landings would be about 900,000, less than a million, pounds. Most of those would be coming probably out of the North Carolina fleet, because, if they're not being caught in Florida, that nine-hundred-plus pounds is likely being caught in North Carolina.

Our charter industry has, obviously, spoken very strongly that they are opposed to a reduction in the bag limit, and the North Carolina sort of membership has made that fairly clear, and so what I want sort of to go back and discuss in Action 1 is, if North Carolina is not able or willing to move forward with a bag limit reduction, does this committee want to reconsider our choice in Action 1 to pick the 95 percent of the ABC, in order to achieve that same conservation equivalency, basically, and still note that we are concerned, but handle it in a slightly different way, and so, opening up that discussion for a bit, I'm going to allow Steve to go first and then Jessica.

MR. POLAND: Thank you, Anna, for that. You made a lot of the same points that I was prepared to make. I mean, I'm certainly sensitive to what's going on in south Florida and the comments we received from that area, and I certainly do think that something has changed down there, and I'm not quite sure how management measures can really affect that, because I think what's really going on is what we're seeing in a lot of our other fisheries, and these effects from climate change and species kind of changing their distribution patterns and movement patterns up the coast, and we do know that landings are starting to increase north of us, north of North Carolina, even up into the New England states.

I remember Wes Merton's presentation from a couple of months ago, and he highlighted -- Granted, it was anecdotal, but he highlighted some of the catches up in New England and in the Mid-Atlantic, and, really, with such a high ABC recommendation, and the fact that this is an unassessed stock, and we know that there are some regional concerns, and the fact that, as you rightly pointed out, going to forty fish coast-wide would disproportionately affect primarily our charter fleet here in North Carolina.

I think there's a lot of support to consider changing our preferred alternative, and I'm fine going to Alternative 3, since setting ACL at 95 percent of ABC would actually give us a little bit more of a conservation savings than just going to 40 percent, and, given that, as these species continue to kind of change their range and change their distribution and move further north, where there is different fisheries up there, and we're not quite sure the power that those fisheries have to go out and land these things, and I think it would be a very risk-averse approach to give us a little bit of buffer here, and I am prepared to make a motion, Madam Chair.

MS. BECKWITH: I will come back for that motion and allow Jessica and Art to speak, and then we'll come back for that motion.

MR. POLAND: Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, Anna. Just so I'm clear, because you said trip limit, but do you mean vessel limit, when you were talking about --

MS. BECKWITH: Yes.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. Great. So that was one of my questions. I guess I would say that -- I mean, at this point, and I need to think about it a little bit more, but, at this point, I don't think I would support going to Alternative 3 as the preferred on Action 1, just because of the life history of dolphin. They are short-lived, and I just don't necessarily think that it's needed to go to Alternative 3.

I think that some of the concerns, and you guys saw the letter from Florida, and I think that the State of Florida is also willing to put in some more restrictive management measures in state waters before the council can finalize this amendment, just because it seems that our commission wants to be proactive and try to implement all kinds of things, or consider implementing all kinds of things, in state waters, but I think that one of the points that our commission is made is that dolphin are migratory, and I think that one of their concerns is dolphin is a really valuable fish for Florida, on the commercial side as well as the recreational side, and they don't want to see a closure, because the closure, to them, as you hear oftentimes here at the council, is worse than having a reduced limit, and so they would rather have some reduced limits than any type of closure throughout the year on the recreational or commercial side.

Our commission is thinking that these fish, because of their movements, could be being intercepted not just in North Carolina, but north of there, as the fish are moving around more, and so I think our commission was hoping that we would put in some type of limit that would reduce everybody, throughout the range, some, so that, as these fish are migrating, that everybody, but especially Florida, is continuing to get access to these fish.

I feel like, if we first change the preferred on the ACL, but then only make these changes for Florida, I don't know that it gets us all the way to where our commission is thinking, because we're trying to not have a closure. If you choose a different preferred, then you've got less fish available to be caught, and you could end up with closures in either the recreational or the commercial fishery, and so I just want to throw that out there and try to explain a little bit more about where I think our commission is coming from.

MS. BECKWITH: Jessica, I understood where your guys were coming from, and my concern, and sort of the point that I was trying to have the committee discuss, is, if North Carolina is not able to agree to a reduction in the vessel limit, and there is an opportunity to get that conservation savings and to acknowledge those concerns by setting a slightly more conservative ACL, then that was a path that we would certainly support, but our charter industry has made it very clear that they need that as a selling point.

When we set an ACL, conceivably, we set an ACL that can be caught, and we should meander towards attempting to achieve that ACL, and it shouldn't matter how we achieve it. Once we have those fish set in that ACL, the scientists have sort of given us a number that can be caught, and so limiting how those fish are caught is certainly a choice of the council, but, in this particular instance, I don't know that limiting the vessel limit outweighs the ability for the charter fleet to sell those trips, and, since the council has no interest in sort of treating the charter industry different, with a vessel limit for the charter versus the recreational, this seems like an equally appropriate path forward, but I will let Art and then Roy.

MR. SAPP: I share the concern that Alternative 3 would likely, or possibly, heighten the possibility of a closure, and I couldn't support that. Also, the charts there were great to look at, but I prefer to trust my eyes, and I see what I see on the docks, and through photographs on the internet, and also physically seeing it, and that miniscule number of trips over forty fish isn't a reality, in my opinion. I see hundreds of trips every year, and, also, those comments aren't just coming from Florida. Those comments that you're getting are coming from people who travel to Florida, and North Carolina, to go dolphin fishing, and they're all expressing concern.

I also keep notes of every public comment, and, while we had tons of North Carolina charter fishermen speaking that they didn't want to see a reduced bag limit, they also said, yes, dolphin fishing has not been anything like what it has been in years past, and so they're kind of cutting their nose off to spite their face there, in a lack of willingness to try to make some kind of move to potentially improve dolphin fishing, in my opinion.

MS. BECKWITH: Thank you, Art. If one of the concerns is an earlier closure, because of our accountability measures, I'm sure we could discuss having a closure set to the ABC rather than the ACL, if we actually stepped down from the ACL, but, Roy, go ahead.

DR. CRABTREE: Well, as a general rule, I think you should be setting your ACLs below the ABC, and you should have a buffer between them, and so, as a general practice, I am in favor of that sort of thing, and I differ a little -- I think, Anna, I heard you say the ACL is meant to be caught, and I would point out that it is not meant to be caught. The annual catch limit is a level you are supposed to stay below and not exceed, and so you should set up management in a way that keeps you below the ACL, and that's the goal of it all, but I do have a question, because we've been at this, I know, for a long time, and it's my understanding that a lot of the analysis in the document tiers off of your choice here of the ACL, and so my question for staff would be, if the council, at this point, changes preferred alternatives here, is that going to affect the schedule that folks are trying to keep this on?

MR. HADLEY: If I could respond to that, that's something that I would have to get back to some of our IPT members on. I could have an answer for you by tomorrow, but my initial thought is that we would have to redo the analyses, and this is kind of the major assumption, as Roy mentioned, and everything else is kind of tiered off of this assumption, using the ABC, and so they wouldn't need to be updated, and it may lead to a delay. I mean, assuming what kind of analysis you want to go out to public hearings, and, to redo all of the analyses, it would probably take another quarter or so, and it would probably be difficult to update all of them by say January for public hearings, but I can give you a better answer after I speak with some of the other folks on the IPT, and we can just get more solid dates and that sort of thing.

MS. BECKWITH: Yes, and I certainly don't want to delay this, because I would like to bring this to final vote in June, prior to my departure, but I just simply wanted to make sure that the committee was having this discussion and thinking it through, because I recognize that North Carolina cannot support a decrease in the vessel limit, and so, given that, and looking where those vessel limits were shaking out, I just wanted to make sure that we had an opportunity to recognize how these two actions were linked. Steve.

MR. POLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. In general, I mean, Jessica brought up some points about the life history and the biology and the movement of dolphin, and that is kind of what has

stuck in my craw this whole discussion and work on Amendment 10, is that I'm just not convinced that anything, management-wise, that we do at the council is really going to affect the dolphin stock, because, I mean, going back to Wes's presentation, it's an international fishery, and it's a Transatlantic species, and, I mean, there's a bunch of harvest outside of the EEZ, and I just --

If there really is a biological concern, which I think there is, and we need to spend some time looking at that, us adjusting our vessel limits and that is -- I just don't think it's going to be fruitful, because, I mean, these fish on the Atlantic are here sometimes for less than six weeks before they're off of Massachusetts, out in international waters, and round through the Azores and back off of South America, and we can't affect management out there, and so I just -- I don't want to take any actions that are going to disproportionately affect our industry here in North Carolina, when I don't have a clear, you know, biological rationale to point to and tell these charter operators that, hey, this is why your vessel limit is going down to forty.

There's no science to support it one way or the other, and that's really a lot of my concerns with a lot of these actions here, and I think setting that buffer here really moves us more towards that precautionary management approach, where there's still a lot of uncertainty in the management of this species, and so, if we need to play around with our accountability measures, to ensure that we won't have -- That there will be a low potential for having chronic closures, I'm fine with that. That's all I have right now.

MS. BECKWITH: Mel.

MR. BELL: Thanks, Anna. Some of what I was going to cover has already been covered, but, you know, I think there is, obviously, things that are going on in the fishery that are realized at perhaps a local level a little more obviously, and I certainly appreciate the importance of this fish to all of us, but, in particular, to Florida and North Carolina.

You know, we're kind of in the middle here, and the big players in the fishery, in terms of landings and all, are, obviously, North Carolina and Florida, and, even within Florida, of course, there is specific things going on, whether you're in the Keys or whether you're up the coast, and I get that. To Steve's point about -- It is an international fishery, and so the assumption that some of these actions we're looking at are going to fix things, when -- For instance, we just covered that, if we go with -- You said Figure 11, I guess it is, and, if you go that route -- If you look at Figure 11, and you say, okay, it's going to be -- I'll take the cut, and, I mean, you're going to save less than a million pounds.

The Florida-alone approach, again, going back to Figure 12, you can see where Florida would, obviously, have the -- Whether they do it through state waters or a combination of state and federal off of just Florida, I mean, they could achieve some savings there, but even that said -- I mean, going to the vessel limits north of Florida, you're not saving that much. In South Carolina, just specifically, and I can't speak for Georgia, but we don't see that many trips. We could go to that boat limit, and it really wouldn't have much of an impact, and so there's not much savings from our perspective, but you would be imposing some harm on the fishery to the north of us.

I like the -- I mean, the idea of the council going to a different ACL -- I mean, in my mind, that showed that the council was trying to be responsive to this, and, as Roy has pointed out, the ACL is there to not exceed, and, you know, we have a tendency to set an ACL at ABC, but this being a

deviation from that would be an indication that the council is trying to take a conservation measure and that we're taking this seriously, and it's maybe the only time that we would set ACL at not ABC, and so that sends a message, I think, but I fully understand the fear that setting a lower ACL could possibly result in a closure of the fishery, which has been pointed out would be more devastating than anything, in some folks minds.

It's just kind of a difficult spot, and the way the amendment -- The way we've got this set up, at the point we're approaching a public hearing, is -- There is no option in the middle, for let's say if Georgia and South Carolina -- I am not speaking for Georgia, but, if we were comfortable in going along with Florida, we sort of don't have that option, and it's either Florida alone or everybody all together, and that's -- But, again, even if Georgia and Florida went along, I don't think it would make that much more difference, in terms of when you look at the landings and all, and so the idea of going to a different ACL is appealing, but, if we stick to the original plan, we are -- North Carolina is going to get more of a bite than anybody else north of Florida. I am just pointing that out at this point. Thanks.

MS. BECKWITH: Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, Anna. I agree with a lot of Steve's points about this being an international fishery, and another thing that our commission is doing is we're going to talk to the State Department, and we're going to discuss some international management issues, including reporting in other countries, et cetera, and so we're trying to come at this from other ways as well, because I agree that this is an international problem, and not just a council problem, and I don't think that the U.S. is even the largest recipient of the dolphin in international waters.

There are other counties, including some small island nations, that are taking more than the U.S. combined, but I guess that my point here -- So I mentioned that the closure would be certainly detrimental in Florida on the commercial and the recreational side, and we have had that commercial closure in 2015.

So I guess that just what I'm hearing, to put it in as blunt terms as I can, is that it's okay for North Carolina to grab those fish as they're coming by, and, if Florida wants to go ahead and preemptively take less, then they can, but let North Carolina folks get as many as they can within the existing limit, and so it seems like we're choosing North Carolina here over Florida, and Florida is going to take a bunch of these preemptive actions, just to kind of spread this out, and they don't want a closure, and so I guess I will just say it like that. I feel like we're trading here, and I don't necessarily think that choosing this Alternative 3, because we do have this international fishery, is really going to make a big difference, and I am trying to avoid a closure here throughout the range, but especially -- I just want to throw that out there.

DR. CRABTREE: Anna, as a point of order, do we have a motion or not?

MS. BECKWITH: We do not have a motion yet. I was trying to have sort of a more philosophical discussion first, but, if somebody --

DR. CRABTREE: Wouldn't it be more appropriate to have a motion, before you have such a prolonged discussion?

MS. BECKWITH: Sure. Sure. Why not? Steve, would you like to put your motion on the table?

MR. POLAND: Yes. I can do it, for discussion. I move to de-select Preferred Alternative 2 and select Alternative 3 as our preferred management option.

MS. BECKWITH: Is there a second? Okay. I am not seeing a second.

MS. BYRD: All of these hands were raised before, and so I'm assuming they are not for a second, but, if they are, please unmute yourself and speak up.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. I am not hearing a second, and so we can, I guess, move on to Action 2. Touché, Roy. Is there any other desire to put any other motion on the table for Action 1? Seeing none, is there any need for any final discussion on this, or shall we move on?

MR. SAPP: I lowered my hand, until I'm sure further discussion later.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. All right. Let's go on to Action 2 then. That's why we need to keep you around, Roy.

MR. HADLEY: All right. Moving along to Action 2, this is essentially the same thing, but for wahoo, and so we're setting the total ACL for wahoo to reflect the updated acceptable biological catch level, and you selected Alternative 2 as your preferred alternative at the September meeting, and that would set the total ACL equal to the ABC, and, there again, kind of the new analysis for this meeting is looking at the similar analysis that I showed earlier for dolphin, looking at how the ACL would stack up to recent landings, looking at a five-year average, a three-year average, and a maximum landings scenario over the past five years.

Depending on your baseline, you have different results. Based on the five-year average landings, the total ACL is expected to be met. However, it will be late in the year, likely late November or sometime in December. If you use the three-year average, if you look at the three-year average landings for wahoo, the ACLs -- None of the ACLs would be met. If you take a maximum landings scenario, and so, there again, that one year where the fishery is really firing on all cylinders, the total ACL would likely be met sometime in the late summer, or potentially early fall. For Preferred Alternative 2, you're looking at some time probably in late September. As a reminder, the Dolphin Wahoo AP did endorse your selection of Alternative 2 as preferred, and, with that, I will pause for any discussion or questions.

MS. BECKWITH: Steve, is your hand up, or is that old?

MR. POLAND: No, ma'am. It was up from an earlier discussion.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. I don't see any hands raised.

MR. HADLEY: All right. If you're okay with that as your preferred, we will move along. There again, the subsequent analysis that we'll see for dolphin and wahoo are based on Actions 1 and 2, respectively. The assumption was that ABC does equal ACL for the analysis. Moving into Action 3, this is looking at sector allocations and sector ACLs for dolphin.

A few highlighted changes here that the IPT made is, as you may recall, there was a note sort of in between Alternative 1 and 2 last time, as well as some verbiage in Alternative 1, and your direction was sort of to clean up the Alternative 1 language, but keep that note and move it up to the top, and so that's something that we have done, and I just wanted to point that out.

Under Alternative 1, it would maintain the current allocation of 90 percent of the total ACL to the recreational sector and 10 percent of the total ACL to the commercial sector. That's your existing allocation for dolphin. Alternative 2 would set the allocation on the basis of approximately maintaining the commercial ACL, based on a pound level or a pound basis, and allocate the remaining revised total ACL to the recreational sector.

Alternative 3 looks at a 93/7 split, with 93 percent of the total ACL for dolphin going to the recreational sector and 7 percent going to the commercial sector. We added some verbiage here, just so it pairs well with the other alternative, and Alternative 2 is sort of a basis for the alternative, and we mentioned that this is based on the council's intent to explore alternatives for sector allocations that would not result in a decrease in the current pounds of dolphin available to either sector, and so this is kind of a summarized rationale from your previous discussion. Then, finally, Alternative 4 would have a 92/8 split, with 92 percent of the total ACL going to the recreational sector and 8 percent going to the commercial sector.

I wanted to go down to the analysis that I sort of presented earlier, looking at whether there is potential for the sectors to reach the sector ACLs and sector allocations. If you use the baseline of the past five years, or the past three years, of average landings, for dolphin, neither sector is expected to reach the ACL. If you use a maximum landings scenario, and so the highest landings observed over the past five years, and you're looking at really the 2015 landings, the recreational sector would be expected to reach its ACL sometime in the early fall, and so we're looking at late September or early October for all of the alternatives presented.

However, the commercial sector is not expected to reach the sector ACL under any of the alternatives presented, even under a maximum landings scenario. The two figures that I will go over really quickly here show this in sort of a visual level. If you look at the Figure 3 here, this is the different potential ACLs for the different alternatives plotted against landings over the past ten years, and you see that spike in 2015 is really that maximum landings scenario that the analysis was picking up, and that's for the recreational sector. Otherwise, you have a five-million-pound-plus buffer, most years, between landings and what would be the new annual catch limits for the recreational sector.

Moving down to Figure 4 and looking at the commercial sector, here again, the vertical lines, you have the potential new ACLs plotted against landings over the past ten years, and you can see that, even under a relatively high landings scenario, you still have a fairly decent buffer there between what the commercial landings would be at the new ACL.

The AP discussion, just as a very quick reminder, the AP expressed support for Alternative 2, noting that it does not encourage increased harvest of dolphin, but it maintains adequate harvest levels for both sectors, and they passed a motion endorsing Alternative 2 as the preferred alternative in Action 3.

With that, we're really looking for two motions, one to approve -- If you're okay with the IPT's suggested edits, approve the IPT's suggested edits in the action and then another to choose the preferred alternative ahead of public hearings.

MS. BECKWITH: **Okay, and so let's start with a motion to approve the IPT's suggested edits to Action 3 in Amendment 10.** Anybody?

MR. POLAND: **So moved, Madam Chair.**

MS. BECKWITH: Thank you. How about a second?

UNIDENTIFIED: Second.

MS. BECKWITH: Excellent. All right. Is there any discussion? **Any opposition? Seeing none, that motion carries.** Now, if someone would kindly throw something on the table as a preferred, that would be most excellent. Suggestions? Come on. I know somebody has got an opinion. Tim.

MR. GRINER: **I would like to see Alternative 4 as a preferred, personally.** I think, as we move down this road of allocations, or reallocations, that, if the overall ACL is going to increase, and especially when we're talking about an increase this much, then, just out of fairness and equity, then both sectors should be able to realize some benefit from that, and I don't see the harm to the recreational sector that would be realized under Alternative 4.

It would just give a little bit more buffer, just in case there was some event that put us back into a scenario like 2015, and I don't foresee that happening, and I don't foresee the commercial fishery for dolphin growing in any circumstance whatsoever, and, in fact, I see just the opposite.

There really is not a true commercial fishery for dolphin, not in the South Atlantic anyway, and it is just a small couple weeks of a pulse and that's it, and I think, if you looked at the catch, the commercial catch, for this year, or last year, you can clearly see that there is no directed true commercial fishery for dolphin, but I do think that, as an overarching reason for Alternative 4, it's just pure fairness and equity that, if the ACL is going to bump up, especially by this much, then both sectors should benefit from it. Thank you.

MS. BECKWITH: Okey-dokey.

DR. CRABTREE: A point of order, Anna. Did we get a second?

MS. BECKWITH: Yes, we need a second.

DR. CRABTREE: We should get seconds before the discussion.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay.

MR. BELL: I think we did.

MS. BECKWITH: I didn't hear a second, but would anyone like to second that motion?

MR. BELL: I will.

MS. BECKWITH: So Mel seconds it. Okay. Excellent. All right. Is there any further discussion on this motion? Jessica, I see your hand is up.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Anna. While I agree with a number of the points that Tim brought up, bringing in the FES estimates -- I feel like that changes kind of the historic way we were thinking about recreational, and, so if we hadn't brought in the FES estimates, then I could support Alternative 4, and I was kind of looking at Alternative 2.

This was the AP's preferred, and it seems fairly close to the current, but I might be able to support Alternative 4, especially to get more comments on it, but that's -- I was thinking Alternative 2, and it's what the AP suggested, and, based on the new landings, it seems to be the closest to what we had before, and so I will just throw that out there.

MS. BECKWITH: Yes, and there's always Alternative 3, which is that little sweet spot in the middle. Art.

MR. SAPP: There I am, that sweet spot in the middle, and I feel like I remember the reason we didn't go with -- Or were speaking against Alternative 2 last time, and that was that it was slightly under the previous commercial sector's take, and Alternative 3 brought it slightly over what it was in the past, and it's not like the recreational sector is getting more fish from this, and I think we're simply recognizing what they had been doing in the past with the revised MRIP numbers, and so I don't believe the recreational is actually getting more fish here, and so I don't think we have to actually bring equity into this one, and we're just actually getting correct. Thank you.

MS. BECKWITH: Did you want to put a substitute motion on the table, Art?

MR. SAPP: Sure. **Alternative 3 for the preferred, please.**

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Is there a second to that?

MS. MCCAWLEY: Second.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Excellent. All right. **So, the substitute motion is to select Alternative 3 as a preferred alternative in Action 3.** Is there any discussion on that motion? I see Jessica's hand is still up and Chris and Chester. Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks. I was just going to say that I think I could go with Alternative 3, and so I was just going to throw it out there that I know I said something about 2, and I looked at the graphs and stuff on Alternative 3, and I think I can get onboard with that as well.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Chris.

MR. CONKLIN: I just wanted to point out that, especially in 2015, the commercial fishery had to shut down because we're accountable, and we could have kept on fishing and caught more, and hopefully got more fish allocated to us out of this thing, but we had to follow the Magnuson-

Stevens Conservation Act, and that's what we did, and so we'll sit here and stay where we are, hopefully, or go down, but I don't see anything fair and equitable about that.

MS. BECKWITH: Chester.

MR. BREWER: I am going to let Chris's comments pass, and I'm not going to respond to them, but I did want to say that it's always been my thought that, when these numbers came around, that we should try to keep the two sectors essentially in the same spot that they were in before the new numbers and that what we would do is try to set it up such that the commercial folks didn't get hurt and they got the same amount of fish, the same number of pounds, the same -- However we were going to set it up, but get the same number of pounds, and perhaps even get a little sweetener. Alternative 3 does that, and, therefore, I can support it.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Mel, last word, and then we'll take a vote.

MR. BELL: I mean, I follow the logic that Chester has, and I would agree. I think I was getting lost in trying to look at the tables, but 3 or 4 give the commercial fishery a bump, and 3 is kind of more closer to status quo, because, as we discussed before, when you just hold the percentages the same in these reallocation considerations, you are, in effect, kind of not staying the same, and so I'm fine with 3, myself.

MS. BECKWITH: Spud, you haven't spoken. Go ahead.

MR. WOODWARD: Thank you, Anna. This is a persistent problem that we're going to grapple with across a lot of fisheries, and, when you mix census-based data with estimates, it's easy to see that things appear to be unfair and inequitable. The reality is that these numbers reflect a recalculation of the recreational harvest estimate, and with that comes variability and a lot of other issues, but I agree with Alternative 2, and I think it reflects what happened with the recalculations, based on the FES, but I can go along with Alternative 3, with some acceptance of maybe some of the variability that has brought up the mixing census-based catch estimates versus survey-based estimates, and so thank you.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. **Is there any opposition to this motion? Speak, and then we'll take a roll call vote, if there is.**

MR. GRINER: Yes.

MS. BECKWITH: Tim. Okay. All right. So then would you guys take us through a roll call vote, since there is opposition?

MR. HADLEY: Sure. I will start with Art.

MR. SAPP: Yes.

MR. HADLEY: All right. Chester.

MR. BREWER: Yes.

MR. HADLEY: Chris.

MR. CONKLIN: Sure.

MR. HADLEY: Tim.

MR. GRINER: No.

MR. HADLEY: Steve.

MR. POLAND: Yes.

MR. HADLEY: Spud.

MR. WOODWARD: Yes.

MR. HADLEY: Carolyn.

DR. BELCHER: Yes.

MR. HADLEY: Mel.

MR. BELL: Yes.

MR. HADLEY: Kyle.

DR. CHRISTIANSEN: Yes.

MR. HADLEY: Roy.

DR. CRABTREE: Yes.

MR. HADLEY: Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Yes.

MR. HADLEY: Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: Yes.

MR. HADLEY: Lieutenant Copeland.

LT. COPELAND: Abstain from voting.

MR. HADLEY: Tony.

MR. DILERNIA: Abstain.

MR. HADLEY: Dewey.

MS. BECKWITH: I don't hear Dewey, but he typically abstains. Dewey, we can't hear you.

MR. HEMILRIGHT: I have got my hand sign issue, but, yes, I support it.

MR. HADLEY: Okay. Then I don't believe Rick Bellavance is on, but I just want to double-check. I don't see him on there. **The motion passes with twelve in favor, one opposed, and two abstentions.**

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Let's make it through one more action, and I'm getting text messages for a biological break.

MR. HADLEY: All right. Moving on to Action 4, this looks at sector allocations and sector ACLs for wahoo. Similarly, the note that was previously between Alternative 1 and 2 was moved up to the top of the action before the alternatives, noting that that total annual catch limit includes Monroe County, recreational landings from Monroe County, as well as the new FES estimates from MRIP and revised landings from the commercial and headboat sector.

Currently, the sector allocations for wahoo are 96.07 percent to the recreational sector and 93.93 percent to the commercial sector, and Alternative 2 would look at setting the annual catch limit based on total landings between 1994 and 2007, and this is the same time series that the SSC examined for setting the ACL. Alternative 3 would look at essentially allocating the -- Well, maintaining the current commercial ACL as-is on a pound basis and allocating the remaining total ACL to the recreational sector, and Alternative 4 would look at a 97/3 percent split for wahoo, and this is based on the council's intent to explore alternatives for sector allocations that would not result in a decrease in the current pounds of wahoo available for either sector.

One thing I will mention here, and I should have gone over in the last one, but I didn't want to go back and disrupt the conversation, but there's a table in here that shows the difference for the commercial sector and what the different ACLs would be, as well as the difference from the current commercial ACL, and you can see what that difference would be. There again, Alternative 3 isn't exactly zero, and it's approximately trying to maintain the sector ACL, but we can't do that, rounding out two decimal places, and so it's slight bump there, and then there are larger additions to the commercial ACL, depending on the alternative that is chosen otherwise.

Then, last but not least, looking at the predicted date when the sector ACLs would be met under a scenario of looking at the five-year average landings, three-year average, and then sort of a maximum landings scenario. For the commercial sector, regardless of the baseline landings that are assumed, the sector ACL is not expected to be met, with the exception of maximum landings scenarios under Alternative 3.

Then, moving over to the recreational sector, there again, this varies on the baseline that you use. If you use a baseline of looking at the average of over the past five years of recreational landings, the ACL is expected to be met. However late in the year, sometime in December. If you use a three-year average baseline for landings, the sector ACL would not be expected to be met. If you use a maximum landings scenario, the recreational sector ACL would likely be met sometime in September.

Looking at the different alternatives compared to recreational landings over the past ten years, you can see there were several years, recent years, where the observed landings would have been over the potential new ACLs, and, in fact, in three of the past five years, landings would have been over the sector ACLs in Action 4 for the recreational sector. However, landings have dropped back down to a lower level in 2018 and 2019.

A similar figure here, but this is for the commercial sector in Figure 6, and you can see the commercial landings have been fairly steady in recent years, but just under the current ACL, and you can see the different alternatives here, and there is that one year. In 2019, there were slightly elevated landings that were observed that were above the Alternative 3, which is looking at maintaining the commercial ACL on approximately a pound basis, but it's well below -- Landings are well below any of the other commercial allocation alternatives.

As a reminder, the AP did express support for Alternative 3, noting that the alternative would not encourage increased harvest for wahoo, while maintaining adequate harvest levels for both sectors, and they approved a motion endorsing Alternative 3 as the preferred alternative in Action 4. Similarly, we're looking for two actions here. If you're okay with the IPT's suggested edits, a motion stating that, and, also, a motion choosing a preferred alternative.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Great. I will take it as a shout-out. **Is anyone willing to make a motion to approve the IPT edits for Action 4?**

MS. WOODWARD: **So moved.**

MS. BECKWITH: All right, and so Spud, and I heard Jessica as a second. Is there any discussion? **Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion carries.** While John is putting that up, does anyone want to start discussion on their preferred alternative? Steve.

MR. POLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. I mean, I feel like, for the same rationale as the previous action, that we should support Alternative 3 here, because it kind of balances the same kind of commercial/recreational allocation and rationale that we used to give the commercial a little bit, but not outrageous, and so I would say Alternative 3.

MS. BECKWITH: Just to make a note that Alternative 3 really only increases by 148 pounds, and I think wahoo is a little bit -- That would be the alternative that kind of keeps them at their status quo, wahoo being a little bit different too, that we are going to have to expect recreational closures.

MR. POLAND: That's a good point too, because this is one where it does approach it for both sectors, and so maybe backtrack a little bit and the rationale is stay status quo.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay, and so do we have a second?

MS. MCCAWLEY: I can second for discussion.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Thank you. Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, and so I agree with Alternative 3 is close to the status quo, but, when I look at the chart, or it's actually Table 10, I am wondering if we would rather go with Alternative 4, and so I could probably support 3, but I'm wondering if Alternative 4 is a little bit better. It changes the closure date just a little bit for recreational, and it looks like, based on the 2015 to 2019 landings, that Alternative 4 would be no closure for commercial, and am I reading that right, John?

MR. HADLEY: Yes, that's correct, and one thing that I will mention is that is based on the 2019 data point, which is still preliminary, and we're still waiting on kind of final landings, and so that closure date may change a little bit, but, yes, that interpretation is correct.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, John, and so, based on that, I would say that -- I'm just going to throw out that I'm wondering if Alternative 4 is better, and so let me just throw that out there.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Let me go to Tim, and I will come back for a substitute, if you so desire. Tim.

MR. GRINER: Thank you. I was going to say the same thing. I think looking at Table 10 kind of -- I looked at the same thing there as Jessica, and I just think Alternative 4 may be a -- Although it's not my preferred, it's definitely better, and I don't want to run that risk of having that closure. 148 pounds, you're talking about two fish, and that's -- I don't even think that's worth even considering, and so I definitely could be supportive of Alternative 4. Thank you.

MS. BECKWITH: Mel, go ahead.

MR. BELL: I am following Jessica's logic. If I'm reading the table correctly, then 3 is the alternative that gives you a potential for a commercial closure, and so, if you go with four, there is no -- **Then, also, it only makes a couple of days difference in the recreational, and so, I mean I would be prepared to offer a substitute motion to select Alternative 4 and achieve that.**

MS. BECKWITH: Okay.

MR. SAPP: If you did it, I second it.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay.

MR. BELL: Let's get it done then. That's my motion, and that's Art's second.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Sounds good. So we're going to have to vote on the substitute motion real quick, and then we're going to have to go back and vote on it as a main motion, and then we've got to go back to the previous one and vote up the -- We only made it through the substitute motion, and so we've got to correct that, real quick. Steve, did you have any point to add?

MR. POLAND: I was just going to make the point that I'm fine with Alternative 4, and I'm glad that Mel got the substitute motion in, so I didn't have to speak against my motion.

MS. BECKWITH: That's fantastic. Okay. If there's no opposition, this goes easy. **Otherwise, we'll call votes, and so speak up if there's any opposition to the substitute motion. I am**

hearing no opposition, and so the substitute motion carries. Now it becomes the main motion. **Is there any opposition to the main motion to select Alternative 4 as the preferred in Action 4? Hearing none, that motion carries.**

Then if we can go back, real quick, to the previous action and just vote up that substitute motion. Then we'll take a quick biological break. Okay. **The substitute motion in Action 3 was to select Alternative 3 as the preferred alternative in Action 3, and so that was approved. Now, is there any opposition as the main motion? Hearing no opposition, that motion carries.** Okay. Let's take -- It's 10:04, and let's come back at 10:15.

(Whereupon, a recess was taken.)

MS. BECKWITH: It's 10:15, and hopefully enough people are back that we can start discussion on Action 5.

MR. BELL: Fire away, Anna.

MS. BECKWITH: Yes. I am waiting on John.

MR. HADLEY: All right. Moving along to Action 5, this looks at setting or revising the trigger for the post-season accountability measure for the recreational sector for dolphin. Currently, as you may recall, the existing trigger -- Well, the recreational AM specifies that, if the recreational ACL is exceeded, it will be reduced by any overage in the following fishing year and the fishing season, the recreational season, will be reduced by the amount necessary to ensure that that reduced ACL is adhered to.

However, the trigger mechanism specifies that this will only occur if the total annual catch limit is met, or is exceeded rather, and the species is deemed overfished, and that's problematic, since we don't expect to have a stock assessment on dolphin anytime soon, and there's not really much of a mechanism there to deem the species as overfished, and so that's fairly unlikely, hence the existing accountability measure is not viable.

Alternatives 2 through 6 will revise the trigger for the post-season AM for dolphin. Alternative 3 looks at a three-year geometric mean, where, if the three-year geometric mean of recreational dolphin landings exceeded the sector annual catch limit, that would be the trigger for the accountability measure.

Alternative 3 looks at a trigger of examining the three-year summed total of recreational landings compared to the three-year summed total of the recreational sector ACL. Alternative 4 examines whether or not the recreational sector exceeded its annual catch limit in two of the previous three years or if the total acceptable biological catch is exceeded in any single year.

Alternative 5 would implement the post-season AM if the total annual catch limit is exceeded in any single year, there again the total ACL being commercial and recreational landings combined, and, in Alternative 6, the trigger would be that the recreational ACL was exceeded, and the recreational AM would go into place the following year.

I have a summary table, and it's pretty much what I just went over, but there's a summary table in there that kind of leads to a little bit easier comparison of the alternatives between one another, and we'll come back to that in just a second, but, as an overview, as stated earlier, the AP did discuss this action, and they didn't end up choosing a single alternative, but they noted that multiyear triggers that take into account variability in landings would be preferred, and so, under that notion, we're looking at really Alternatives 2, 3, and 4 all have a multiyear trigger, if you will.

The IPT also discussed this action quite a bit, and, as noted earlier, the current AM is inadequate. Alternatives 2 through 6 would address this issue and remove the overfished language from the AM. It was noted that combining three years of data could help overcome some of the issues that we often discuss at the council table regarding MRIP, the Marine Recreational Information Program, and also stemming from timing of the data, as well as data anomalies.

It was also noted that the multiyear alternatives in this action may not be compatible with Alternative 5 in the next action, Action 6, since it may not lead to formulation of an adequate accountability measure, since this scenario would create the potential for overruns of a sector ACL for multiple years, and then potentially no corrective action would take place, and so that's one thing to note in what is chosen as preferred in the following action.

Also, as noted, while potentially unlikely, using multi-year triggers in Alternatives 2 and 3 could lead to multi-year accountability measures being in place if recreational landings greatly exceed the sector ACL in a single year, which is possible since there is no in-season accountability measure in place that could curtail recreational harvest in that initial year, and so, if you really threw your -- Essentially, if you had a really exceptional year in recreational landings of dolphin, essentially, that could throw off your three-year sum, or your three-year geometric mean, to the point where you may end up with AMs over more than one year. With that, there are no IPT-suggested edits for this action, but we're looking for a preferred alternative for public hearings.

MS. BECKWITH: Thanks, John. If I am understanding you right, if we chose Alternative 4, since it's got a multiyear trigger, then Alternative 5 in Action 6 would probably not be reasonable, but, potentially, Alternative 5 here would allow us to use the Alternative 5 in Action 6.

MR. HADLEY: Yes, and that was part of the discussion. Alternative 5 really is looking at a single year, and also keeping in mind that the commercial AM is still in place, the in-season closure, and so any likely major overrun of the total ACL would occur on the recreational side.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. All right, folks. Let's pick a preferred here for public hearings. What are folks' preferences? Come on now. Somebody has got to have an opinion. We really would be best done by sending these out with preferreds for public hearings. Dewey.

MR. HEMILRIGHT: I was wondering what allows, like on the commercial side, if we have quota left over, to give it to the recreational side, and how would that work, if that was possible, like if they needed quota or something like that, and they were bouncing up against something, and how about unused quota and carrying it over to the next year, a certain percentage or something like that, and how does that work to trigger -- To help out if somebody needed it? Thank you.

MS. BECKWITH: So that would -- What you're suggesting would probably be done under that Alternative 5, which would not implement post-season accountability measures unless both the

commercial and recreational combined -- Unless the total annual catch limit was exceeded, and so, if the commercial had some leftover fish, and the recs overrun theirs by a bit, then that extra from the commercial could allow for there not to be an accountability measure. We did, at one point, discuss some carryover options, but we decided to move that into a different amendment, as it was a bit complicated, and that's actually included in our ABC amendment. Roy.

DR. CRABTREE: Well, I was just going to -- It seems to me, if you don't want in-season recreational accountability in this fishery, which I have heard, time and time again, that you don't want that, then it seems to me that the most straightforward alternative is Alternative 6, which then says, okay, you're going to implement -- If you go over, in the next year, you're going to implement a post-season accountability measure, which I guess you choose in the next action.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Alternative 5 is similar to that, but it does -- As Dewey said, if there was extra commercial quota unused, and the recreational overran theirs by a bit, it would help balance things out. Art, go ahead.

MR. SAPP: In reading this over the last week, I was liking the multiyear options there, but is there no workaround in the next action with a multiyear option here?

MS. BECKWITH: To start with, which multiyear option would you be interested in?

MR. SAPP: I think it was either 2 or 3, if you could go back up again, real quick, and I don't have my notes in front of me.

MS. BECKWITH: Alternative 2 is the geometric mean, and the Alternative 3 was the sum total, which has the --

MR. SAPP: Which sounds bad.

MS. BECKWITH: Yes. It has the potential to be bad, if there's one crazy year of overrun.

MR. SAPP: If there's not a workaround, then I guess they're off the table anyway, and it sounds like 5 and 6 are our options.

MS. BECKWITH: Right. Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I was going where Art was, because I really like Alternative 2 with the geometric mean. I mean, I like 2 and 3, but 3 just seems way too challenging and not possible, and so that's why I was falling back to 2 as the three-year geometric mean, and I stepped away, and so I did not hear the discussion on why this multiyear option might not be possible.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Chester, and then we'll go back to John to answer the multiyear question.

MR. BREWER: Before this discussion, I liked Alternative 3, just because it was the simplest one, with a multiyear, and I think I still like it, but, in any event, I stand ready to listen to other folks' opinions.

MS. BECKWITH: So, John, do you want to go back through and touch on why Alternative 2, 3, and 4, the multiyear options, might pose some challenges in the next action?

MR. HADLEY: Right, and so the next action is specifically focusing on Alternative 5, which would -- After the trigger is met, you would monitor landings, to see if they were elevated to the point where they would likely to reach the sector ACL. If it looked like that were to be the case, then you would implement, potentially, a vessel limit, a reduced vessel limit, or a reduced bag limit. However, if that wasn't the case, then, potentially, there would be no action at all, and so, under that scenario, if you have -- Say that the recreational sector goes over its ACL two years in a row, and then the AM doesn't go into place the following year, and there is no effective AM in place.

The other side to that argument is that, in that third year, landings were back down to, quote, unquote, normal, and below the sector ACL, but that seemed problematic, and it came up during the IPT discussion that it could be potentially problematic, in that, essentially, you have multiple years of overrun of an ACL, and then nothing goes into place, potentially, that following year, if those landings were to drop back down.

MS. BECKWITH: Yes. Thank you for that, and I was -- It's funny, and it seems like the committee is all over the place. My original thought was I had liked Alternative 4 and 5, Alternative 4 being that you didn't have this -- If you had an overrun in two consecutive years, and it didn't matter what the overrun was, if it was small or big, because I think, with Alternative 2 and 3, you have the potential of a really sort of crazy year of high abundance, just an MRIP-type number getting out of control, and having to sort of work with that number for three years and having that sort of mixed in. Alternative 2 and 3 were ones that I was quite cautious of, actually. Alternative 4 was of interest, and then Alternative 5 seemed like it was fairly straightforward and could be combined with what is in Action 6. I will go to Jessica and then Roy.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Sorry, but I have another question, and I agree with your rationale and your thought process there, Anna, but, back on the no action one, I mean, I know that dolphin is not overfished or undergoing overfishing, and we likely won't have a dolphin assessment, and so I think that that's why the no action -- Making it tied to only if the species is overfished, et cetera, but I could swear that we still have some written like this in the Gulf, and I thought it was allowed, and so I just wanted to ask again why the no action alternative is not allowed here.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Roy, would you like to cover that one as well?

DR. CRABTREE: Well, because, outside of an assessment, the stock is not going to be declared overfished, and there is no assessment scheduled, and so it effectively leaves you with no accountability measure. I mean, quite frankly, I'm not sure how that -- I don't think it ever should have been approved, but I think it went through when we had all these omnibus ACL amendments, and so it slipped through, but that's the problem that I see. It effectively doesn't do anything.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Did you have another comment as well, Roy, or was that --

DR. CRABTREE: Yes, and so, to try to help the discussion move along, I will make a motion to choose Alternative 5 as the preferred.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Is there a second to that?

MS. MCCAWLEY: Second.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. It's seconded by Jessica. Is there additional -- Go ahead, Roy.

DR. CRABTREE: That avoids in-season accountability measure closures, which you haven't wanted, and it does tend to have the effect of, if one sector is way under, and the other is a little over, then it wouldn't trigger anything the next year, and so I think it has some combination of some of the things that you've talked about wanting.

MS. BECKWITH: Thank you, Roy. Chester.

MR. BREWER: I just want to make sure that I've got this straight in my head with regard to Alternative 5. This is for recreational accountability only, and it does not apply to commercial accountability measures, on Alternative 5, and that's my question.

MS. BECKWITH: Yes, and the commercial folks have an in-season closure, with the 4,000-pound trip limit at 75 percent. That is their accountability measure.

MR. BREWER: Thank you.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Is there any further discussion on --

DR. CRABTREE: Bear in mind, Chester, that, because the vast majority of the catch is recreational, and the quota for the commercial is relatively small, if the recreational hits, or goes over, their ACL, there is not a whole lot on the commercial side that's likely to be left to compensate, but, if the recs are under by a couple of million pounds, then nothing happens, but the commercial would still close when they catch their quota.

MR. BREWER: I understand that. I just wanted to make sure we weren't having or instituting or putting in place some sort of quota creep, and I know that the commercial quota is not going to do much to save the recreational folks, if they go over, with any significant extent, their quota.

MS. BECKWITH: Yes, that's correct, and it will not. Is there any further discussion on this alternative, I mean on this motion? **Seeing none, is there any opposition to this motion? Seeing none, that motion carries.**

MR. HADLEY: Moving along to Action 6, this would specify the post-season accountability measure, recreational accountability measure, for dolphin. There again, you have the current accountability measure itself, and that is to reduce the recreational ACL by an overage in the following fishing year and reduce the season by the amount necessary to ensure that the recreational landings do not exceed the reduced ACL.

Alternative 2 would implement a reduced fishing season by the amount necessary to prevent the recreational ACL from being exceeded. Alternative 3 would reduce the bag limit in the following fishing season by the amount necessary to prevent the recreational ACL from being exceeded. Similarly, Alternative 4 would reduce the vessel limit instead, to maintain landings at the

recreational sector ACL. Alternative 5 is the alternative that you discussed last time, at your September meeting, and this is a potential combination of bag limit or vessel limit, with the intent of eliminating, or least prolonging -- Eliminating an in-season closure, or at least prolonging the fishing season, as much as possible.

This alternative would essentially, at the beginning of the fishing year after the trigger is met, the landings would be monitored, and, if landings are projected to meet the sector ACL, you would -- There would be a reduced bag limit and/or vessel limit that would be implemented first, and, if needed -- If a further reduction is needed, then the fishing season would be reduced by the amount necessary to prevent the ACL from being exceeded.

A couple of things to note here, and the action, or the alternative rather, could use a little bit more structure, as far as guidance on how far the -- Particularly if you want to look at a bag limit and vessel limit reduction, and what kind of number should that reduction be, and so looking at what would be the mechanism, essentially, and that would be the bag limit reduced to X number of fish, after which the season would be shortened. The same thing for the vessel limit, and so that's some input, and you can come back to that in a little bit, if the committee does want to approve this for inclusion into this action.

Alternatives 6 and 7 were some suggested alternatives that the IPT brought forward, and these are really -- They are sort of based on the king mackerel recreational accountability measure, and so Alternative 6 would look at reducing the bag limit at the beginning of the fishing year, and, if necessary, shorten the recreational fishing season. There again, a specification would need to be made as far as how low the bag limit would go before you would sort of flip the switch over to a shortened season.

Alternative 7 is similar, in that, at the beginning of the fishing year, you would implement a reduced vessel limit first, and then, if necessary, shorten the recreational fishing season, and, there again, we're looking for specifications on where that switch would be between a reduced vessel limit versus a shortened season, if we wanted to go this route.

There is a summary table here that we could always come back to, and that helps a little bit with comparison between alternatives, but one thing I wanted to take a minute to go over was to look at -- This is a landing scenario looking at the -- Basically, it's a graphical version of the landings scenario that we looked at earlier, and, as part of this, this shows landings, three-year average landings, five-year average landings, and then a maximum landings scenario, and so this gray line at the very top.

It's worth noting that there is approximately a sixty-day delay between the end of a wave for MRIP and when those landings are reported to the Southeast Regional Office, and so when they're sort of in a usable final-ish, if you will, form, but one thing to point out, under this maximum landings scenario, and so this is really 2015 landings, and then what the ACL would have been if the existing -- If the new ACLs were in place, they would have been exceeded in this year, but one thing to point out is you don't have a major departure from the average until about July, and so the end of this wave would be August, and so you're really looking at sometime in September or October before you would realize that these landings have really departed from the average, and so it's something to think about, because the reason that that was brought up by the IPT in discussion is that you may end up -- The committee's concern last time, basically, in the discussion was to try

to prolong and prevent an in-season closure, by potentially implementing a vessel limit and bag limit reduction under Alternative 5, but you may not -- There are some timing issues there, in that it may be almost too late, once it's realized that those elevated landings had occurred, and you may need more of a closure scenario.

The AP discussed this action, and there was a slightly -- A vessel limit would be slightly preferable, compared to the other alternatives being considered. Really, any sort of reduction isn't the most ideal, but that would be slightly preferred, particularly to a closed season, and it was noted that, if vessel limits are implemented, try to maintain limits that are viable for the for-hire fishery component, or the for-hire component of the fishery.

As far as the alternatives and the IPT's recommendations, in the discussion of Alternative 2, it came up that, really, Alternative 2 is looking at essentially delaying an in-season closure to the following year, in that you're looking at shortening the fishing season as part of your accountability measure. It was noted that, as currently worded, Alternatives 3 and 4 would presumably fall between one fish less than the current limit and one fish overall, and so it was kind of a *carte blanche* to make the cuts all the way down to one fish, as they are currently specified, and, if the council doesn't -- If that's not the committee's intent, or the council's intent, then that needs to be specified as well.

As mentioned in Alternative 5, and I went over most of those concerns related to the potential delays in recreational data and sort of the pulse nature of the dolphin fishery, and you get this large pulse of landings in a single wave, and you really don't know about that pulse until potentially sixty days later.

Alternatives 6 and 7, as I mentioned, were similar to the current Atlantic king mackerel AM, and then, last, but not least, for Alternatives 5 through 7, and this is an important point that the IPT discussed quite a bit, if approved for inclusion in the amendment, the committee -- It would be helpful if the committee could specify the minimum reductions that will take place before the season closure is implemented, and so, there again, what's that switch from a reduced bag limit, or vessel limit, to a reduced fishing season? Not doing so could lead to interpretations of the AM that are not necessarily compatible with the intent of the council, and it also jeopardizes the functionality of the AM. Really, the more discretion that is left, the harder it is to wave public notice and comment, since it is not specified to the public ahead of time what sort of reductions will take place if an accountability measure is triggered.

We're looking for a couple of motions here. One, if you're comfortable with including some or all of the alternatives, of the new alternatives that were highlighted in yellow, a motion would be helpful stating to do so. Also, there are several potential alternatives that are included, or that are in the action, or are suggested for inclusion in the action, and so, if there are some alternatives that the committee does not want to consider moving forward, it would be helpful to maybe narrow the range of alternatives a little bit before going out to public hearings, and, also, consider choosing a preferred alternative. With that, I will turn it over.

MS. BECKWITH: Thanks. This dolphin fishery is so unique, and there's not really been times where we have gone over commercial or recreational in two consecutive years, and never for the recreational, but even -- You know, as we started discussing this, the goal was always to recognize that, if you have these years of high abundance, and you sort of jump up one year, it's unlikely that

the same thing would happen in the next year, but it's possible, and so we have to have an appropriate accountability measure in there, and this is going to be, I think the toughest discussion. If we can get through this, the rest should be easy-peasy. Roy.

DR. CRABTREE: For a number of these, it's difficult for me to see how they are, practically speaking, going to work very well, and I'm just not sure the bag limit idea, to reduce the bag limit, would really be workable. Where I come back to is it seems to me that Alternative 2 is the best place to be. If we go over the catch limit, then, the next year, it will shorten the season enough to make sure we don't go over it again, and so you're going to watch probably for a couple of waves of data, and, if it looks like you're going over again, then you would end up with a closure, but that would mean the catches would be up for a while. Anyway, to move the discussion, Anna, I would make the motion to select Alternative 2 as the preferred.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Do I have a second for that? I am not hearing a second. Okay. I guess we need some more discussion. The motion fails for lack of a second. Art.

MR. SAPP: Here in south Florida, over the last ten years, the latter portion of the season has been by far our best, and almost our only, dolphin season, to speak of. I would like to look for anything but a late-season closure, as it would extremely unfairly affect Florida. Thank you.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Are there additional thoughts on this one? I mean, I recognize Roy's concerns about the delayed monitoring and the late information, but it sounds like we could still monitor, as he said, and make that decision based on what they're seeing in the first few waves in Alternatives 2, 3, and 4, and so, if Alternative 2 isn't acceptable, maybe the same idea in Alternative 3 and 4 might work, but we've also looked at those bag limit and the vessel limit numbers, and it's pretty clear that you would have to bring the vessel limits down to pretty small amounts to really impact the catch levels, and so that is a difficult situation. Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, Anna. I like the new alternatives here that we had asked for, 5 and 6 and 7, because, in my mind, if you could get it down low enough, like you're saying, you could prevent the closure, but also the delay in landings sometimes is more than even one wave, I feel like, and so it's just really hard for me to pick a preferred here without seeing how 5, 6, and 7 -- You know, if we could put in some amounts for these Xs, like Alternative 5a and 5b, and it's just hard for me to pick one of these, because I can't fully see it played out, and it's like it's not fully analyzed, I guess, and so it's hard me to choose something, but, in theory, I would like 5 or 6, but I'm just having trouble carrying it all the way to implementation, and I can't fully understand the ramifications.

MS. BECKWITH: Right, and, for Alternative 5 -- Yes, and would you want to -- To me, it sounds like you want to see Alternative 5, 6, and/or 7, and so, if you want to go ahead and put a motion to add any of those in, we can start with that, and then maybe we can talk about adding in some of those numbers.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay, but is the motion actually -- Are these considered IPT edits, and so is the motion to approve the IPT edits, or is the motion to add Alternatives 5, 6, and 7 under Action 6? Let me know which one it is.

MS. BECKWITH: I think it would be to add whatever alternatives into this action.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. **Then I would move to add Alternatives 5, 6, and 7 under Action 6.**

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Is there a second?

MR. BELL: I will second that, but that's not why I had my hand up.

MS. BECKWITH: All right, and so is there discussion on this motion? **Is there opposition on this motion?**

MS. BYRD: Sorry, Anna, but I just want to make sure -- People who have your hand raised, if you have objection to this motion, please speak up.

MS. BECKWITH: Yes, definitely. Okay. **Seeing and hearing no opposition to this motion, this motion carries.** Okay. Jessica, I'm going to go Mel and Art and Chester, and then we'll come back and talk about maybe some specific numbers to add to those. Mel.

MR. BELL: Real quickly, I mean, it seemed pretty certain that nobody wanted to take the medicine in Alternative 2, and that was obvious, and so 3 and 4 were sort of the simple things that it looked like we could employ, but then Roy kind of indicated that maybe it's not that simple, and so I had the same concerns with Jessica, and I think we've done the right thing by adding 5, 6, and 7, but I am still struggling with the number, that fill-in-the-blank part there, and I'm not sure when that would happen and how that would happen or if we're supposed to do that now or that would just happen after we've included it here.

MS. BECKWITH: Well, we've included it here, and so it would probably be a good time to say, if we're not willing to see a vessel limit go under thirty, then that should be the number that people will sort of spit out for discussion, and so think about that, and I'll come back to you. Art.

MR. SAPP: I was interested in people are willing to start discussing what X is, and I would call the vessel limit Y, just to separate them a little bit, and X equals, for me, five fish, and Y equals twenty, for a drastic reduction, and see where those numbers take us, if that would be enough, and, if not, then consider going lower, as that still exceeds what numbers we allow on our boat, our charter boat.

MS. BECKWITH: All right. Chester.

MR. BREWER: First of all, I agree with Art. I think five is the right number to put in there, but I was going to, and I can wait to do this, but I was going to make a motion to select an alternative, which would be 6. Excuse me. A preferred alternative, which would be 6. I'm sorry.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Is that a motion? Are we moving in that direction?

MR. BREWER: I will make it. **I just didn't know if you wanted to have some more discussion before you took motions, but, if you feel the time is appropriate, I would like to make a motion that we select, as a preferred, Alternative 6 in Action 6.**

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Is there a second to that?

MS. MCCAWLEY: I will second for discussion.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. The motion is to select Alternative 6 as the preferred in Action 6, which would be -- You would reduce the bag limit first and then shorten the season.

MR. BREWER: Correct.

MS. BECKWITH: In listening to Chester's comments, and Art, the magic number there would be to reduce it to five. Then, if five doesn't do it, then you would have to shorten the season, because whatever number we put in there is sort of the lowest number that we're all willing to go, and I can't imagine that below five would -- People aren't going to be amenable to five, but certainly I can't imagine us being amenable to lower than five, prior to shortening the season, but that's certainly up for discussion.

MR. BREWER: Anna, can I give you some rationale for the motion?

MS. BECKWITH: Sure. Certainly.

MR. BREWER: Okay. In looking at these, it looks like 6 gives you perhaps the best chance of not having an in-season closure, and choosing five fish per person per day -- That's not going to put a terrible crimp in the private recreational folks. The charter folks won't be really happy with it, but, if they've got six people on their charter, that's still thirty fish per trip, and so you're not banging them that hard, and so that's the rationale, is it would -- I think that you're going to see, I would think, the catch come down a decent amount at five fish per person per day, and, of course, that will have to be analyzed, but I do think you would see it come down some amount, and that's the reason that I chose Alternative 6, and I will sign-off now.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Steve, go ahead.

MR. POLAND: Thanks, Madam Chair. I was actually raising my hand to speak to something else, but, now that there's a motion on the table, I will speak to this. I have done these types of analyses here in my day job for some of our state fisheries, and I agree that this type of approach seems admirable, and it seems like it's a commonsense way to go, and, instead of closing it, let's just drop the bag limit, but I've always been disappointed when I've either done those analyses or seen those analyses, and you have to reduce to such a low level that it's inconsequential.

I mean, maybe for this fishery not so much, since there is such a large charter component in those trips compared to the private vessels, and they tend to catch more fish, and so maybe there is more landings there than the analysis would -- Maybe, by reducing to five and twenty per vessel, we might get a little bang for our buck, and I hope so, and so, I mean, I'm interested in seeing this analysis, because I certainly -- You know, I hear Art's concerns, and I agree with them. If it's a post-season thing, a reduced season for the following year, it will disproportionately affect the region. I get that.

My question, and this is just more for some clarification, and you can cut me off, Anna, if you think it's sending us off on a tangent, but I just wanted some clarification back on Alternative 1,

the no action alternative, and just why is that not appropriate any longer, and I assume it's because it's got that overfished language in there, but, if that overfished language was removed, or modified in some way, not tying it to that overfished status, could there be a way that Alternative 1 might be appropriate, basically giving the Regional Administrator that ability to look at the best available science and then determine if a post-season measure is needed, because, I mean, this fishery is a classic year-of-plenty and year-of-scarcity, and so one good year comes every five or six years, and so I would hate to see that trigger something, and then, you know how does that play well with our previous alternative, or preferred alternative, in the previous action to implement post-season accountability measures following the fishing year -- That was just more of a general question, but, if we want to come back to that after we handle this motion --

MS. BECKWITH: Yes, and Jessica had brought that up early on in the discussion, and it is due to that overfished and overfishing, and so that is why. We're not going to get a stock assessment, and so it's just --

MR. POLAND: That was kind of my point. If that overfished language was removed, is there a way that we could modify the language in Alternative 1 to make it work, basically giving the Regional Administrator -- I'm sure Roy could speak to this, but basically giving the Regional Administrator that ability to just look at the best science and determine if post-season are needed or not.

MS. BECKWITH: But, technically, Alternative 2, 3, and 4 do that, because that last sentence in Alternative 2, 3, and 4 gives the Regional Administrator the option, if the best science is available and determines that something is not necessary, to not take that action, in the case where it's high PSEs or that, and so those alternatives were meant to sort of clean that Alternative 1 up and give Roy that ability, but we still need to technically specify something, and I will continue on with the list, but I was going to speak, really quickly, to -- I just want to make sure that we understand that Alternative 6 forces us to drop down the bag limit at the beginning of the season and then monitor and reduce the seasonality component.

That's been one of the concerns, is, because we have these years of high abundance, and we typically don't have a second year, we have the potential to be forcing in an accountability measure in, for mahi specifically, that is not necessary in a second year, and that's why we were looking at some of those multiyear monitoring options in the previous. Just keep that in mind. If we do go with Alternative 6, we are saying, hey, if we go over one year, we absolutely are going to drop down to five, and we're going to see how it shakes out, but, if we find that it wasn't necessary, we don't pick it back up, I guess, until the following year, or does that five stay in until we come in and take another action? That is what is not clear to me.

Roy, can you speak to that specifically? If we would move forward with an Alternative 6 type scenario, we would be starting the season off saying, okay, we're going to drop it down to a five-per-person bag limit, but at what point does that revert to our regular bag limit? Does that require council action, or we don't go over the ACL the next year, and so we automatically go back to the ten and sixty?

DR. CRABTREE: Well, I'm not sure, and I'm not sure if the document is clear about that, and I would have a lot of questions about -- So, if we determine, in the spring say, that we went over last year, and so we hit the trigger, then do you immediately reduce the bag limit to five? I think

the analysis is going to show that you don't get much reduction from reducing the bag limit to five, and so then you would have a closure, and the other thing is, by the time you were sure that you had the landings estimates from the year before, you will already be well into the next year, and so then the bag limit reduction is not going to be in place as long.

I think you would have to specify, somewhere in the document, in the regulations, if the bag limit then goes back up the following year, and I guess my cleanest read on this would be that the bag limit would be five for that year, where the AM was triggered, and then it would revert back to ten at the beginning of the next year, but maybe staff can tell us if the document addresses that anywhere.

MS. BECKWITH: John.

MR. HADLEY: The document itself will address that, and, at the current time, it doesn't, and one of the main reasons being, for 6 and 7, we weren't sure if the council wants to consider this in this action, and it certainly will, but Roy's interpretation of that is, I believe, my interpretation as well, and I believe that's correct, where, essentially, you would have an overrun of the ACL in one year, and the trigger is met the following year, and you would have a reduced -- Say, for Alternative 6, you would have a reduced bag limit. If the ACL, the recreational ACL, or the landings were below the ACL, then, the following year, year-three, if you will, you go back to a normal bag limit of ten fish per person.

MS. BECKWITH: Thanks. I'm going to start back on the list. Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I have a thousand questions. Let me just try to start with Alternative 6, since that's what the motion is about. I am not convinced that five fish is enough to prevent a closure, but I don't know that we know what the number is without seeing some analysis, which then brings me to my follow-up question. On Alternative 5, we had Art trying to suggest some items for -- I'm going to call it X and Y, the bag and the vessel, and I guess I was wondering if we could have multiple options in 5a and 5b that would have these different bag limits, or these different vessel limits, and we could see the analysis.

I am looking back at some of these previous years, and a high year being 2015, but, now that we have FES, I don't really know where the recreational sector would be, and how close they came in these recent years without looking at that, and so I guess I don't mind Alternative 6, but I think just picking the five number might not be enough, which is why I might lean towards Alternative 5, as long as we could specify multiple options to see the analysis on with 5a, and so I'm just going to throw that out there.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. I have a question for Roy and for Jack. I am going to backtrack us a bit. In the previous action, if we had chosen Alternative 4, which is implement post-season accountability measures in the following fishing year if recreational landings exceeded the recreational sector annual catch limit in two of the previous three fishing years, or exceeds the ABC in any one, and, if we had chosen Alternative 4, and then, in this action, gone with Alternative 2, would that be an acceptable accountability measure, and, if it would be, then I would express my thoughts, but I would like sort of Roy and Jack to speak to if that would even be an acceptable combination.

DR. CRABTREE: I don't know if Jack's on the call, and I don't think he is at the moment, and I don't know, Anna. I think you're so overcomplicating this that it's difficult to know what it would mean, and that means I don't know if the agency would approve a lot of these at all. I mean, it won't be my decision, but it's very difficult for me to conceptualize how a lot of these, many of these, are going to work, and I think we're way overcomplicating it, particularly for a fishery that's never even been closed before, and so it's not like this is a real problem that we've had to deal with time-in-and-time-out, but we're setting the ACL equal to the ABC, and we're not doing any in-season accountability, and so it seems to me that you need a strong post-season accountability measure, or I think you're at risk of ending up in a position where you're trying to do something that just isn't going to be approvable by the agency, but it's hard for me to say, because these are as complicated as they are.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. All right. Thanks for that insight. Art, go ahead, and then Mel.

MR. SAPP: Again, Florida cannot get with Option 2 there from the previous action, and I'm a fan of Alternative 5 here, and we see what it would look like with X equals five and Y equals twenty, whichever is less and whichever is more, and drop those numbers down from there, if they have to be. If they want to see something really strong, in Roy's words, drop it to two per person and ten per boat and see if that will do anything. I mean, what could be more strong than that?

MS. BECKWITH: My original thought, to your point, Art, that Florida can't get onboard with Alternative 2, is, if we had gone with the other alternative in Action 5, and you were looking for overages in the recreational fishery in two out of the last three years, the council would then see a trend, and it would sort of forfeit this requirement to have to do something in the next year, because of the variability in the fishery, and, if the council actually saw that there was two years of continuously high landings, then that is not a year of high abundance, and that is a change in the way the fishery is happening, and so it would give the council time to react, while still having an AM in place, but it would give the time for the council to work through a framework and make some changes. That was my point to that particular combination, but --

MR. SAPP: I also did want to speak to, real quickly, the revised MRIP numbers are also giving us some new parameters to work with under, and so I understand that it's never happened before in the recreational sector, but it sure looks like it's a potential and a possibility now, with these revised numbers, and so that's why I feel like we really do have to complicate this and make sure we get it right.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Mel.

MR. BELL: Jessica covered some of what I was going to bring up, and I was just surprised that 6 was appealing to folks, because it says, if necessary, shorten the length of the recreational season, which is what 2 says, is shorten the length of the season, and so I thought folks were trying to avoid that, it seemed, at all cost, and so I was just surprised that 6 was appealing, and I would think that 5, populated with appropriate numbers for X and Y, whatever they are, and, if we can -- Like Jessica said, if we can see some analysis of the range, of two to five, or something, that would be easier to kind of buy, but I would have thought that five would have been potentially more appealing than 6 to folks, and that's it.

MS. BECKWITH: Yes, Mel, and I agree. I was a little bit surprised by that as well. It at least has the option to monitor, even though we recognize that the monitoring is potentially a wave lagging behind. I've got Roy that was in the queue and then Spud.

DR. CRABTREE: Just to say that, I mean, I suspect the way this goes is that the RA would see that it went over, and then you're in the next year, and so you would already be in the spring, and so I suspect the agency would put out a Federal Register notice saying that the bag limit is reduced to five and the fishery will close on such and such a date, and I suspect that the reduction in the bag limit will not have much effect on it, and so -- When you start talking vessel limits, it also is going to get more complicated if you end up with different vessel limits off of different states, because then it's going to have -- Whoever has got the high vessel limit is going to get hit a lot harder.

MS. BECKWITH: Yes. Spud.

MR. WOODWARD: Thank you, Anna. I feel like I am holding a dolphin Rubik's Cube here and trying to figure out how to match up covers, and I never was very good at Rubik's Cubes anyway. One thing that I guess I'm trying to make sure I understand is, if you look at 5, 6, and 7, and it's already been mentioned that they do include language that allows a shortening of the fishing season, but it seems like we're fixated on -- If we put five in for X and twenty in for Y, that that's the number that would be analyzed to respond to the overage, but, as I understand it, the sequence of this would be you don't get a reliable final estimate of the previous year's catch until typically the spring.

Then it would be the responsibility of the region to analyze what sort of reduction in the bag limit or vessel limit and/or season would be necessary, and so that takes a little time for them to do it, because it says not below X and Y, and so what that's saying is there's a threshold beyond which people say that, if you reduce the bag limit down to some number, and the vessel limit, then it's impractical for me to fish anyway, and so I'm just trying to understand. This could go well into the following year before you even have any data to react to. If I'm wrong, I would appreciate somebody correcting me.

MS. BECKWITH: No, you're correct, and that's why Roy was suggesting that Alternative 2 would be the cleanest path forward, given how little the bag limit and the vessel limit reductions would have the ability to impact the season length, but it would also give National Marine Fisheries Service the opportunity to monitor those landings and decide if that shortening was necessary. Art.

MR. SAPP: A couple of things I wanted to say. I think that, when the electronic reporting comes in for for-hire vessels, that it's going to surprise you a bit, as to what the actual numbers are, and, also, I believe Chester made a motion to make Alternative 6 the preferred, and Jessica seconded it for discussion. **I would like to make a substitute motion, I guess is the term, that Alternative 5 be the preferred, and maybe potentially move on, if we can get somewhere with that.**

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Do I have a second?

MS. MCCAWLEY: Second.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Jessica seconds. Is there any discussion to making Alternative 5 our new preferred in Action 6? Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I have a question. I am going to bring up what I said before, just to make sure we could do this, and so 5a and 5b -- Can we select multiple -- I am going to say X and Y, and so, in other words, we could see an analysis on a bag limit of two, of three, of four, and five, or two and three and five, whatever it is, and then we could also choose some vessel limits, two or three of those, and that's my first question.

Then my second question is, if we ultimately saw the analysis and this moved all the way through the process, could we just choose 5a, say, as the preferred, or would you be choosing all of Alternative 5, in that you are selecting both a personal bag limit and you have to have the vessel limit, or can you do one or the other? If I need to clarify that second question, I can, but I just have some questions about this.

MS. BECKWITH: No, that's clear, and I suspect that, yes, that they would be able to analyze two or three options for each, and that we would be able to choose, as we always are able to choose, one preferred, even from sub-alternatives, and so they would just have to number them differently, and so it would be Sub-Alternative 5a, 5b, and 5c, and then it would probably be Sub-Alternative -- However they did it for the vessel limits, versus the bag limits, but, John, do you want to speak to that?

MR. HADLEY: Sure. To Jessica's question, it certainly could be one or the other, the way it's structured, or it could be both, and, to your point about potentially looking at a range of fish, we can certainly put that in the direction to staff. Currently, we're looking at examining a vessel limit of twenty fish, and we can look at making that a range, as well as five fish and making that a range for the bag limit reduction, and so I don't know if -- Jessica, you had some numbers there that you put out, and we could always add those here, and the IPT could examine those before March.

MS. MCCAWLEY: That's what I would like to do, Anna, is add some ranges there, and so come back to me when you're ready for that.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. I will go to Mel.

MR. BELL: I think Jessica and I are having a mind-meld, with her questions and concerns about the range and all, and also whether 5a or 5b would be in play, and it sounds like, if they're both in there, then the Regional Administrator can determine -- Use a combination of 5a and 5b to get where you need to be, but the key to this is the numbers that we assign, and the analysis of those would be interesting, and I will also second what Steve was saying earlier, in having done some of this stuff, is that you often find that you can't really get where you necessarily need to be with tinkering with vessel or personal limits. You find yourself perhaps needing to go to the seasonal restriction, but five keeps you away from that seasonal restriction, but, after we do the analysis of the numbers, I guess that's what we might learn.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay, and it sounds to me like, if we're going to put a range into Alternative 5, and we can choose either or both, it doesn't sound like we're going to need Alternatives 6 or 7, which might save the staff, because they equate to the same thing, and so just keep that in mind,

because we might find that we don't need those. I'm going to go to Art, and then we're going to fill in some numbers, and we're going to move on.

MR. SAPP: I agree, and I was all for filling in numbers and moving on, and I agree that 6 and 7 could probably go away, if we can agree with 5 as an option, and I would also like to see -- Can you scroll back up there a little bit, please, John? I would like to see whichever is less and whichever is more, and, just for the boat limit, and say the boat limit is twenty, and the bag limit is five, if it's whichever is less, and you have two people on the boat, the boat limit is then ten, correct? I would like to see that in that examination, and say, for the bag limit, that three, four, and five be the options, and ten, twenty, and thirty, for vessel limit, would be my vote, if there are any other thoughts. Thank you.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. I missed -- The bag limit was what?

MR. SAPP: Bag limit is three, four, and five.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Jessica, do you have any -- Is that okay? Is that a decent range or --

MS. MCCAWLEY: I wanted -- The only one that I would add to that was two on the bag limit, because I'm just afraid we're going to need a small number to prevent a closure, but I also agree that I think Alternatives 6 and 7 can be removed.

MR. SAPP: Am I clear with my whichever is less statement?

MS. MCCAWLEY: I think it's clear, but it's not clear in the direction to staff.

MR. SAPP: I agree.

MS. BECKWITH: Right, and so what you're saying is that, if we were to choose a bag limit of two -- It would be the whichever is less verbiage.

MR. SAPP: Correct. If you've got three anglers on the boat, it would be six fish and not ten fish, at the most restrictive. That's crazy, but we're going extreme here, just to pick a point.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. It will be interesting to see how little that ends up impacting the -- Anyway, we'll see how this shakes out. Okay. That's what we've got for direction to staff, and we're going to vote on selecting Alternative 5 as the preferred. That is a substitute motion. **Is there any opposition to the substitute motion? I am not hearing any.**

DR. CRABTREE: I object, but I am probably the only one, and so I think you could avoid a roll call vote.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. **Is there any other objection?** Speak up. No? Okay. **Seeing none, the substitute motion passes.** It becomes the main motion. **Is there any opposition to the main motion?** Roy.

DR. CRABTREE: Again, I oppose it.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. **Is there any other opposition to the main motion? Seeing none, that motion carries.** We've got the range, and we've got some direction to staff. How about a motion to get rid of Alternatives 6 and 7?

MS. MCCAWLEY: **So moved.**

MR. POLAND: Second.

MS. BECKWITH: It's moved by Jessica and seconded by Steve, and so Alternatives 6 and 7 to the Considered but Rejected.

MR. HADLEY: I just want to make sure that we're holding up to the Roberts Rules here. We have a motion that adds them. I guess that we could overrule that motion, even though it was approved, and is that --

MR. BELL: It was never there, is what you're saying, and so we just did away with something that really wasn't there, because we were going to need to vote on accepting it.

MS. BECKWITH: Well, we did accept it. We did accept to add Alternatives 5, 6, and 7 to Action 6, but then we would be moving them to -- The way I see it is we added them, and we talked about it, and then we decided we didn't want them, and so it's in the record, I guess, or I don't know. If everyone is comfortable with it, then, yes, we are basically overruling our previous motion, but it's not the exact same motion, because we kept Alternative 5, and so I think it's probably okay. All right. Given all that, is there any further discussion on this motion? **Is there any opposition to this motion? Seeing none, that motion carries.** Okay. This will go out hopefully with some analysis.

MS. BYRD: Anna, sorry to interrupt, but Shep has his hand raised.

MS. BECKWITH: Shep, go ahead.

MR. GRIMES: Thank you, Madam Chair. I was just going to say that it seems a little premature to be selecting this as a preferred alternative, and so you're really not -- I mean, you could say that 5 generally is your preferred, but you don't even have the numbers in there yet, and so I would just note that.

MS. BECKWITH: Yes, and we are just trying to give the public something to react to, and, if we have this one chosen as a preferred, then maybe the public will be more -- They will give us some more specific feedback, and we can always change our preferreds after we review public comment and look at the final analysis. Okay. I want to end discussion on Action 6. Let's move on.

MR. HADLEY: All right. Moving along to Action 7, this looks at revising the trigger for the post-season recreational accountability measure for wahoo. Similarly, here, you have the overfished language, where the AM would go into place only if the species is overfished and the total ACL is exceeded. The alternatives here are the same as the -- They're similar to the alternatives that you looked at for dolphin, and so you're looking at Alternative 2 examines the three-year geometric mean of landings in comparison to the recreational ACL. Alternative 3 looks

at the summed total of landings over the past most recent three years, in comparison to the summed total of the recreational ACL.

Alternative 4 is looking at whether or not the -- If the recreational ACL exceeds the -- If the recreational landings, rather, exceed the recreational sector ACL in two of the previous three years or exceeds the total ACL in any single year. Alternative 5 is the trigger being exceeding the total ACL for commercial and recreational combined, and Alternative 6 is the trigger being exceeding the recreational ACL.

I won't spend too much time here, since the alternatives are very much the same, or very similar, and there's a table here that sort of summarizes them and will hopefully be helpful for comparison. The AP did discuss this, this action, and did not choose a single alternative, but, there again, they leaned more towards the multiyear alternatives that take into account variability in the landings, and there is really not a whole lot additional here from the IPT. The overfished language does need to be addressed, and the multiyear alternatives could address some of the data anomalies with MRIP.

It's noted, similarly, that in the alternatives here -- The multiyear alternatives are not necessarily compatible with Alternative 5 in Action 89, and then, last but not least, the multiyear triggers do allow the potential scenario, where, if landings are exceeded greatly -- Or if the recreational landings greatly exceed the sector ACL, you could end up with multiyear accountability measures being in place until that average, or that total sum, kind of comes back down. We're looking for choosing a preferred alternative for public hearings.

MS. BECKWITH: Realistically, we are going into this knowing that wahoo is going to close and we are going to have seasonal -- We are going to have closures, the recreational, and we are going to hit our ACL, and so we are probably going to end up -- At least the council will eventually probably move to some sort of permanent reduction in the bag limit and the vessel limit, but, if we were going to move with our same philosophy we did for dolphin, it would be Alternative 5, and so I'm going to open it up for discussion, and let's throw something out there. Come on, folks. We've got to choose an alternative, a preferred, for public hearing. Let's make it happen. Come on. Anybody? Let's roll one out there. Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I am just going to start the discussion with Alternative 2. I am not married to that one, but I'm just going to start the discussion, but I see that Steve has his hand up as well.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Steve.

MR. POLAND: I was going to go in a different direction, but, I mean, I'm fine with Alternative 2, because I was fine with it with dolphin, but we went a different direction, and so, if Jessica wants to make a motion, or if we want to discuss this a little bit more, but I'm in support of Alternative 2.

MS. BECKWITH: If we go with Alternative 2, we're definitely going to need some examples for public hearings, because I do not think that the public is going to understand what the three-year geometric mean means, and so, if that is the desire, then let's toss it out there and see what happens. Jessica, did you want to make that in the form of a motion, or, Steve, do you want to tell us what your other direction was going to be?

MS. MCCAWLEY: Let Steve go.

MR. POLAND: No, go ahead, Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: No, let Steve go.

MR. POLAND: All right. **I mean, I was leaning towards Alternative 5, just to be consistent with what we did for dolphin, but, again, like I said, I was leaning towards Alternative 2 initially, and so I will move that we select Alternative 2 as our preferred option.**

MS. BECKWITH: I assume Jessica seconds.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Second.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Is there discussion? I see Tony. Tony, go ahead.

MR. DILERNIA: Thank you, Madam Chairwoman. We have something similar in the Mid. We put it in place with black sea bass, in that -- Actually, what happens is, if the stock is not -- If we exceed the ACL, but if the stock is not overfished, and overfishing is not occurring, then there is - - If there is no requirement for any kind of paybacks or anything, for at least two years -- In other words, for two years in a row, if we don't exceed -- If there's no overfishing, and overfishing is not occurring, and the stock is not overfished, we don't have to have an accountability measure, and I'm not sure how that applies, and I think that might apply to Alternative 2, but I'm not sure. Thank you.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. John, and, while you're chatting, can you go through and explain to us what a geometric mean example would be, because I've already gotten a couple of text messages of folks that are just not even clear what that actually means, which is why I suggested we have some examples.

MR. HADLEY: Sure. I just want to make sure that I captured that correctly, and it was Alternative 2 that was the intent as the preferred, and is that correct, Steve and Jessica?

MS. BECKWITH: Yes.

MR. HADLEY: Okay. Cool. I just wanted to double-check on that. As far as examples, I mean, that's something that we could go back and show. I think I would go back and look at probably the -- I believe it was the 2015 and 2016 landings, and maybe 2017, to show -- Those were three years of elevated landings for the recreational sector for wahoo, and they show how this alternative may be triggered and how that may have played out over time, as far as applying it to this accountability measure, and that certainly could be done for public hearings, in general. Since we already have that landings information, we could apply it to this alternative, but we would have to go back and grab those landings.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Mel.

MR. BELL: An attractive feature of doing it that way is it kind of helps smooth out the -- You know, if you have some things going on with the recreational data, where you get a spike or something, it kind of helps smooth that out over a three-year period, and so, I mean, that, I would think, would be attractive to folks.

MS. BECKWITH: Well, okay. Maybe that ends up being a good option for dolphin then in the long run, but I also think that, for wahoo, we're going to have a -- You know, it's not going to be as many spikes as it is going to be just sort of a prolonged -- The ACL does not match the effort out there, and so we're definitely going to have to work to constrain the fishery. Carolyn.

DR. BELCHER: I have kind of been wondering why we're going with the geo, too. This is something that -- I mean, I think people -- The hard part is most people understand what an arithmetic mean is. Even if you don't call it that, it's the average of three years, and my experiences with it is usually when you have some wild swings, but they're usually logarithmic in distance, or there is some degree of multiplication that's going on, and so I'm really not sure why we're looking at geometric mean, and I kind of would like to hear some input from some folks, as to why that's being a substitution for our measured central tendency, or average.

MR. HADLEY: If I could respond to that, I think -- Well, I will let Chip respond, and then I will weigh in.

DR. COLLIER: One of the reasons that we're looking at something like a geometric mean is because when, there are spikes, or significant changes in the catch series, it tends to be on the high side. Therefore, the geometric mean is going to pull down the effect of that high catch estimate, and it's really just to eliminate the effects of potential spikes in the MRIP data, and does that make sense, Carolyn?

DR. BELCHER: It does, but I think, without seeing an example of how much it changes, I think people are going to have a hard time understanding that, because it may be -- Like, if you've got some extreme spikes, it will be pretty obvious what it does, but, when it's not off of a magnitude scale, it may not be as obvious, and it may differ by like one or two, and then the question is really what are you asking for in the difference, and so I think that's where -- There just needs to be some examples, at least, so people can understand that, because it is not something that is common in most people's vernacular, the geometric mean.

DR. COLLIER: Right.

MS. BECKWITH: Yes, and, at least with John, I think he had some examples with that 2015 spike in landings, and maybe that will give an example, with sort of our highest landings on record, and we can reconsider this at the next meeting, but is there any other discussion on this alternative? Does somebody want to see something different? I mean, what's the pleasure, because we don't have a lot of time left, and it's 11:30. **I am not seeing any other hands raised, and so, if there's no additional discussion on this, is there any opposition to this motion?**

DR. BELCHER: I would like to reserve the right and say we should revisit. Just, until people understand what we're looking at with the geometric, I have a hard time saying that's the preferred, when we kind of don't understand really what it's doing.

MS. BECKWITH: Yes, and I agree with you, and I think this is the preferred, recognizing that it's going out to public hearings with some examples, and the public will be able to react to it, and we will be able to revisit this in March. **If folks are comfortable with that, then that motion passes.** We can move on.

MR. HADLEY: All right. Action 8 specifies the post-season recreational accountability measure for dolphin. These are very similar to what you viewed for the post-season accountability measure for wahoo in Action 8. This is similar to what you viewed for dolphin. One thing that's worth noting is, that the way that the current recreational AM is written for wahoo, it includes a reduction in the recreational ACL by any overage, but there's not really another mechanism in there to provide teeth to that reduction, and then there is no specified shortening of the season or anything like that, and so that's one of the issues with the current AM, and, there again, you also have the overfished language as part of the accountability measure, and so kind of two areas that need to be addressed for wahoo.

There again, Alternative 2 is looking at reducing the fishing season by the amount necessary to prevent the ACL from being exceeded. Alternative 3 is reducing the bag limit. Alternative 4 is implementing a vessel limit, and something of note there is you only have a two-fish bag limit, and so presumably, in Alternative 3, you would be dropping down to one fish per person. In Alternative 4, there is no vessel limit currently for wahoo, and so this accountability measure would implement a vessel limit for wahoo.

Alternative 5, very similarly, you would look at a potential combination of a reduced bag limit, a vessel limit, and then, if still needed, a potential shortening of the recreational season. One thing of note is this differs a little bit from what we discussed for dolphin, in that this would take place at the beginning of the year. The way that this was specified at the September meeting, the intent was that this would take place right off the bat, and you're not necessarily monitoring landings for an elevated level.

Alternative 6, we're looking at a combination of a reduced bag limit and a shortening of the season, and Alternative 7 would look at a combination of a vessel limit for a wahoo and then a potential shortening of the season, if still necessary.

There is a table here that sort of summarizes these different AMs, if you want to use that to sort of compare and contrast between the two. Looking at wahoo landings, you sort of have a pulse nature to the fishery. Here again, similar to what we looked at for dolphin, you have this gray line, which shows a max landings scenario, and so the highest landings over the past five years, and you can see that, really, the landings often track fairly similarly, but then you see a spike, where they sort of go off the track away from the average, and so there would be a delay of approximately sixty days from the end of the wave where the spike occurred to when those numbers would start coming in and that data would be available for analysis.

The AP discussed this action and noted that a vessel limit reduction would be slightly preferable, compared to other alternatives, especially compared to a closed season, and consider maintaining the limits that are viable for the for-hire component of the fishery, and it was noted that, as a potential starting point, eight fish per vessel would be recommended as a minimum limit for dolphin, or for wahoo, in the accountability measure.

As noted, the IPT comments are very similar for this one. Alternative 2 seems to delay the in-season closure to the following year. As currently specified, reductions in Alternative 4 would be presumably as low as one fish per vessel, and you could go to zero, but that's essentially a closure, and so there's not a whole lot of wiggle room in the bag limit reduction, for any bag limit reduction. Alternative 5 may not be compatible with some of the multiyear alternatives, and that's something that the IPT can certainly revisit, as preferred alternatives have been selected.

Alternatives 6 and 7 were added by the IPT for the committee's consideration, and, there again, for Alternatives 5 through 7, it would help to specify what sort of reductions would take place before you switch over to a season closure, there again removing some of the discretion in the AM and knowing that leaving too much discretion makes it harder to waive the public notice and comment, since it's not specified to the public ahead of time what's going to take place.

We're looking for actions here to include the new alternatives that are highlighted in yellow, if that is something you would like to do, and also considering narrowing the range of alternatives, since we do have a fairly large range here, and consider choosing a preferred alternative. With that, I will turn it over.

MS. BECKWITH: Thanks. Okay. We'll open up discussion, and I can see us going simpler on wahoo, and I think there's a recognition that the recreational are probably going to bump up against their ACL on a regular basis, and maybe the two-person wahoo bag limit will, in the long run, need to be adjusted, and one way of doing that would be to do that through Alternative 3 and saying, if we hit the -- If we have to implement an accountability measure, it goes down to one per person in the next season.

If it goes back up and then it comes back down, then I think the council will have to make some long-term adjustments, and that would not allow a closure, but it would just have it down to one per person, or, in Alternative 4, if you guys put in a vessel limit, then it wouldn't have a season closure, but you would go in and say we're going to do a maximum vessel limit of six or eight in the following season.

If you guys want to add an Alternative 5, we can discuss some ranges to consider, and it seems like we are not going to be interested in adding Alternatives 6 or 7, and so let's start with does anybody have any interest in adding Alternative 5? If not, then we will just stay and work within Alternatives 2, 3, and 4. I am going to lay that out there one more time. Is there any interest in adding Alternative 5? Okay. I am not seeing any interest in adding any of the additional alternatives. Would someone please --

DR. CRABTREE: Anna, could I -- I'm sorry, but I couldn't get to my hand raising. I don't have any interest in Alternative 5, but another thing you will need to think about with these reduced bag limit AMs is -- You know, most bag limits are enforced at the dock, and I don't believe you will get any of the states -- I would be amazed if, when the federal government drops the bag limit, if Florida and other states are willing to automatically do the same.

My experience is they are not, and they have to go to a commission meeting and go through all the process, and so I think where you're heading towards, with all these bag limit accountability measures, is a disparity in regulations that will just render them ineffective, and I think it's going

to be a problem with dolphin too, and so I don't know what to do about that, but you guys need to address that and think about it.

MS. BECKWITH: That is an excellent point, because North Carolina does automatically complement the federal regulations.

DR. CRABTREE: I guess I would ask Jessica. Is there any chance that Florida would do that, or would you make that a condition of approving this as a council, that you have some commitment, because I don't see how it works otherwise, and most of the fishery is going to be caught in Florida for both of these fisheries, and so maybe Jessica could comment.

MS. BECKWITH: Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Right now, it doesn't happen automatically, but we do bring it to the next commission meeting and discuss it, and, with these -- I will just use the Gulf as an example, and closures on various species, like triggerfish or others, we have been going consistent via an executive order, if not right away, even before a commission meeting, but soon after the commission meeting, or on the day of the commission meeting, and so I don't think that the commission would be willing to put it in to happen automatically, but they have been going consistent with all of these.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Steve and Mel.

MR. POLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. Unlike how we manage the snapper grouper fishery here in North Carolina, where federal changes are automatically updated via the director's proclamation authority, he does not have that delegated authority for dolphin and wahoo. They are managed by the Marine Fisheries Commission rules, and so it would take action by our Marine Fisheries Commission to modify seasons and vessel and bag limits and such, and so it's not automatic for dolphin and wahoo.

MS. BECKWITH: Mel.

MR. BELL: It would be automatic for us, through existing state statute. The federal regs would become law in South Carolina, and I know we're not the major player, but it would be automatic for us, effectively.

MS. BECKWITH: Well, that was also one of the reasons why -- Was it September that I had brought up, when we were talking about bag limits for dolphin, if we did want, at the time, to discuss an action that would have changed the bag limits for wahoo, recognizing that this is going to be sort of the next cobia, and maybe adjusting some bag limits and vessel limits is the appropriate path forward for this fishery, in the long run, before we sort of fall into this problem that we can all see coming. Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Just, also, on dolphin specifically, the commission expressed intent to go ahead and implement proactive state regulations that would be probably more restrictive than what's being suggested here for federal waters, and so, even though we wouldn't have this automatic drop-down on bag and vessel limit, we might already have some existing bag and vessel

limits in place for state waters for dolphin that are more restrictive than the federal regs, and so I will just throw that out there as well.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. I'm not really sure where to go with this one, because I do think that some vessel and bag limits for wahoo are going to need to be adjusted, and there wasn't any desire from the committee to tackle that in this amendment, but I suspect that's something you guys are going to have to tackle in the not too terribly distant future. Mel.

MR. BELL: First, just to clarify where we are, do we have a preferred motion on the table right now?

MS. BECKWITH: No, and I'm still waiting for someone to lay one out there.

MR. BELL: Okay. Well, then I will be glad to, just to move this along, perhaps. **We can discuss it briefly, but, kind of just listening to everybody's discussion on this, I would be willing to move to adopt Alternative 2 as our preferred.**

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Is there a second?

DR. CRABTREE: I second.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Alternative 2 would reduce the length of the following recreational season by the amount necessary to prevent the ACL from being exceeded, and this would certainly put an incentive on the council to consider bag and vessel limits, in order to prevent the ACL. For that reason, I would potentially support this, because I do think that that needs to be tackled. Roy.

DR. CRABTREE: I think this is the best way to go, and the bag limit reduction on wahoo really gets you little or no reduction, and so it's just not going to work for this species, and so I support the motion.

MS. BECKWITH: Mel.

MR. BELL: For the comments that Roy had made, I would agree with that, as well as we've already discussed that the wahoo fishery is a little bit different from the dolphin fishery, in terms of -- I mean, we already deal with seasonal closures, potentially, and so I think this is -- Just given the suite of options, this is probably the one that would work for us the easiest and perhaps be accepted.

MS. BECKWITH: Well, I don't know about accepted, because I think, if you guys don't adjust the -- If we don't adjust the bag limit, or the vessel limit, pretty much in the short term, the potential for the season closure is going to be quite significant, and I don't know what it would shake out to be, one fish versus a two fish, but this is going to be very poorly received by the charter industry, and so I suspect we're going to hear -- I suspect that the charter industry would much prefer to see us move forward with a one-per-person bag limit and a vessel limit of four or six, rather than moving to a season closure. If we have a shortening of the season and maintain it at two fish per person, I think the potential for the season shortening is going to be really dramatic. Steve.

MR. POLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. The possibility of shortening the next season really concerns me, because, here in North Carolina, our wahoo fishery is more of a spring and fall fishery, and so this could certainly impact our charter and private operators up here, and so, for kind of the same reasons why we decided not to go with a similar action for dolphin, citing that it would probably disproportionately affect Florida, and I don't know enough about Florida's fishery, and they might also feel like this will impact them in the fall, and I'm not sure, and I'm sure Art will speak to that, but I would like to investigate modifying the bag limit or the vessel limit, as opposed to shortening the next season.

MS. BECKWITH: Roy.

DR. CRABTREE: Well, I mean, I agree with you that you ought to look at putting in place a vessel limit and a bag limit reduction, and you ought to consider that, but I think you just need to consider doing those, because, when you look at this, it's quite likely that you're going to face closures, but I think trying to tie that into an accountability measure is just a big mistake, and I wouldn't go down that path. I would try to be more conservative and keep the fishery below the ACL.

MS. BECKWITH: Art.

MR. SAPP: This one is actually fair and equitable. Our season starts in the late summer and goes through the end of the year, and then, of course, you've got fish coming back from the Bahamas that happens all through the winter, but it's fair for everybody on this one. If it gets shut down, it hurts us all. Thank you.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. If this is voted up, then I think I would encourage or suggest, and I don't know, but adding something in is mind-blowing at this point, which is why I tried to bring it up in September, but, if we move this forward, and I think not moving forward a bag limit of one and a vessel limit of four, or something like that, is going to be shockingly problematic, unless you guys instantly start a framework to do just that action, but okay. There is a motion on the table to select Alternative 2 as preferred in Action 8. Is there any further discussion? **Is there any opposition? Seeing none, this motion carries.**

When we get to the end of this amendment, I will -- I mean, is there any interest in seeing a discussion, or an action, to consider vessel and bag limits in this amendment, which would cause a problem in timing, or the council might need to consider starting another framework action, but this has a potential to be bad. So, are there any thoughts on that, or should we move on? Okay. Let's move on.

MR. HADLEY: All right. We are kind of switching gears here over to --

MS. BECKWITH: John, I think I saw Mel. Go ahead.

MR. BELL: I was just going to say that we're coming up on 12:00. We can plan on pushing this through 12:30, Anna, and I think we're approaching some of these, which will probably -- One of them may lead to a little bit more discussion than others, but if we can kind of try to push through these in a half-hour, and we'll see where we end up, but I would like to give people at least like an hour for lunch, if we can.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. We should be able to do these in thirty minutes. Let's do it.

MR. HADLEY: All right. Moving along to Action 9, this is an action that would allow properly permitted commercial vessels with trap, pot, or buoy gear onboard to possess commercial quantities of dolphin and wahoo. Currently, the list of allowable gears is automatic gear, bandit gear, handline, pelagic longline, rod-and-reel, and spearfishing, including powerheads, and so, if a vessel has any other gear onboard outside of that list, dolphin and wahoo are not supposed to be possessed onboard.

As noted in Action 1, there's a few IPT-suggested edits that were included to mention the commercial trip limit for wahoo is 500 pounds and that there is a commercial trip limit for dolphin of 4,000 pounds once 75 percent of the commercial sector ACL is reached. Prior to that, there is no commercial trip limit.

Alternative 2 would allow the possession of dolphin and wahoo onboard vessels -- Well, essentially, it would allow a vessel in the Atlantic EEZ that possesses the commercial dolphin wahoo permit and valid federal commercial permits required to fish trap, pot, or buoy gear or is compliance with permit requirements specified for the spiny lobster fishery to retain dolphin caught by rod-and-reel while in possession of those gears that are currently prohibited in the fishery.

A vessel in the EEZ that has onboard other gear types that don't fall within that list would not be able to possess dolphin or wahoo. In these scenarios, dolphin retained by such vessels shall not exceed a range between 250 pounds and 1,000 pounds gutted weight, and, again, this trip limit would apply specifically to when these specified unauthorized gears are onboard, and so trap, pot, and buoy gear, inclusive of the spiny lobster fishery as well.

Alternative 3 is essentially the same thing, but it's for wahoo. Of note, the commercial trip limit of 500 pounds would apply to these vessels that have the prohibited gear, the prohibited fish trap, pot, or buoy gear, onboard.

As a reminder, the initial ask, if you will, for this action occurred from New England lobster fishermen that wanted to continue the historic practice of harvesting dolphin while in possession of lobster pots, and so essentially catching dolphin off of their high-fliers, or potentially between pulling traps and that sort of thing. There is currently an incidental limit in place of 200 pounds for dolphin and wahoo combined north of 39 degrees North latitude. However, this only applies to vessels that do not have the dolphin wahoo commercial permit.

Of note, additional edits were made to account for the committee's guidance in September to include the spiny lobster fishery, and so it essentially includes spiny lobster traps in the exempted gear. The Sub-Alternatives 2a through 2d were included in response to the council's direction to staff to examine that range of between 250 and 1,000 pounds, in 250-pound increments, and then the intent behind Alternative 3 is to sort of split the -- Originally, Alternative 2 and 3 were combined, and the IPT suggested splitting those apart, to make it a little bit cleaner and make it known that the intent is to also include wahoo in this action.

As far as analysis, there is some new analysis that the IPT has been able to come up with, looking at dolphin landings when buoy gear, pot gear, or traps were onboard a vessel, and this covers the entire Atlantic. It's relatively low. Over the past five years of available data, you're looking at approximately 3,000 pounds total over those years. For wahoo, it's much lower, and you're looking at approximately 176 pounds onboard vessels that had pot, buoy gear, or trap gear onboard.

There is also some additional analysis that was compiled looking at dolphin harvest per trip, and looking over the three different logbook programs, and so the coastal fisheries logbook program, and so this is your southeast logbook program, the pelagic logbook form, looking at highly migratory species, and then the vessel trip reports, and so VTRs, from the Mid-Atlantic and New England regions, and so the Greater Atlantic Region.

Overall, the take-home point here, looking that blue column, which is really, and also the gray column, which is really where these vessels will likely fall, most of the trips are landing below that -- That have been observed are landing below 500 pounds per trip, thereby sort of excluding the longline component, which is largely that middle orange pelagic logbook program. For wahoo, similarly, most of your trips are landing under 250 pounds per commercial trip.

The Dolphin Wahoo AP discussed this, and they suggested that there should be consideration of commercial trips for no more than 500 pounds of dolphin. Limits above that tend to go beyond total landings of dolphin on typical rod-and-reel commercial trips. However, they did endorse the idea of allowing vessels with pot, trap, or buoy gear onboard to possess dolphin or wahoo, as long as they were caught by rod-and-reel and the vessels are properly permitted.

As noted last time, there was some problematic language. The state permit language was removed, because there was a question of the ability to require a state permit in federal waters. Additionally, the IPT noted that the higher trip limits for dolphin that are being considered, and so Sub-Alternative 2c and 2d, could provide an additional incentive for current incidental harvest to convert to more of a targeted harvest for several vessels, and this could put additional pressure on the commercial sector ACL. Really, we're looking for two motions here. One, if you're comfortable with the IPT's suggested edits, a motion to accept those edits, and, two, we're looking for a preferred alternative.

MS. BECKWITH: Mel.

MR. BELL: Given that this is kind of a complex thing, and the IPT spent a lot of time going through it, I appreciate their effort. **I would move to accept the IPT's suggested edits to Action 9.**

MR. POLAND: Second.

MS. BECKWITH: Excellent. Is there any discussion? **Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion carries.** Steve.

MR. POLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. I was raising my hand to second, but I will go ahead and start the discussion. I am fine with the 500 pounds, and so Sub-Alternative 2b, and I'm also fine with Alternative 3, allowing that for wahoo as well. **For discussion, I will move that we select Sub-Alternative 2b and Alternative 3 as the preferred management options.**

MR. BELL: Second.

MS. BECKWITH: Excellent. Let's make this an easy one. Is there any discussion on this one? **Is there any opposition to this one? Seeing none, this motion carries.**

MS. BYRD: Anna, Art has his hand raised.

MS. BECKWITH: Art, was that to second, or did you want to chat about it?

MR. SAPP: No, and I was in total agreement.

MS. BECKWITH: All right. Let's do it.

MR. HADLEY: All right. Moving along to the next action, this one looks at removing the operator card requirement for vessel operators or crew to hold an operator card in the dolphin wahoo fishery. Currently, an Atlantic charter/headboat for dolphin wahoo or an Atlantic dolphin wahoo commercial permit is not valid unless a vessel operator or a crew member holds an operator card issued by the Southeast Regional Office or the Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office. Alternative 2 would remove the operator card requirement for the for-hire sector, and Alternative 3 would remove the operator card requirement for the commercial sector in the dolphin wahoo fishery.

I know that we discussed this quite a bit last time, and so I won't go into too much detail, but, really, the only two fisheries that the South Atlantic Council manages where operator cards are required is the dolphin wahoo fishery and the rock shrimp fishery. There has been quite a bit of discussion on the utility of operator cards. Initially, they were put in place to help with enforcement and aid in data collection, and then, also, decrease costs to vessel owners from fisheries violations, if it's really the fault of the vessel captain or the vessel crew, and so helping with some accountability there.

It's been discussed quite a bit and was included in the March 2016 meeting, and the National Marine Fisheries Service Office of Law Enforcement gave a presentation on it, saying that, currently, the operator cards are not being gathered for data, distributing information or for enforcement, to a large extent, and so there's not really -- They are not really being used for their initial purpose.

The AP reviewed this action and supported removal of the operator card requirement for the for-hire and commercial sector in the dolphin wahoo fishery, and they noted, at their most recent meeting, that they still endorse this removal, and we're looking for a motion to choose, potentially, preferred alternatives for this action.

MS. BECKWITH: I am so excited to see this one put to bed. If I could make my own motion, I would, but, Steve, go ahead.

MR. POLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, we've heard a lot about this, and almost unanimous support from stakeholders for the removal of this. **I will move that we select Alternative 2 and Alternative 3 as the preferred options.**

MR. BELL: Second.

MS. BECKWITH: Thank you. Is there any discussion on this? **Is there any opposition?** This one gives me nightmares, because I think we've been talking about this for nine years, and so I think I thought about this at my first meeting on the council, and maybe I will get to put this one to bed at my last meeting on the council. Okay. We're almost there, people. Action 11.

MR. HADLEY: Action 11 would reduce the recreational vessel limit for dolphin. Currently, the daily bag limit is ten per person, not to exceed sixty fish per vessel, whichever is less, except onboard headboat vessels when the limit is ten dolphin per paying passenger. Alternative 2 would retain the daily bag limit of ten dolphin per person. However, it would potentially reduce the recreational vessel limit to between fifty-four and forty fish, and this would -- Alternative 2 applies across the entire Atlantic, and so essentially from Key West, Florida all the way up through Maine. Alternative 3 is very similar. However, it would apply off of Florida only and with the same potential bag limit reduction that would range between fifty-four fish per vessel and forty fish per vessel.

We have a new analysis available for you. This analysis was updated with recent landings and also expanded to show a five-year average, and, as we kind of went over earlier in discussions of Action 1, as noted, most of your trips in Figure 11 look at trips throughout the Atlantic. Many of your trips are landing less than forty dolphin per vessel. However, there are several trips overall, cumulatively, that do land more than forty fish, upwards of sixty fish, per vessel.

When you change that -- This Figure 11 really applies to Alternative 2 and the potential sub-alternatives. Figure 12 looks at Florida only, and so it's the same analysis, looking at a potential - - How the vessel limits apply and how many fish are landed per vessel, and this applies in Florida only, and these aren't necessarily zero, but there are -- At least according to the MRIP data, there are very few trips, for-hire trips, that were observed landing more than forty fish per vessel.

This is the table that we looked at earlier, and it examines the potential reductions. It's looking at the potential reductions across the entire Atlantic region, and you're looking at, between Sub-Alternative 2a and 2d, a range from just under -- Say from 0.7 upwards of 5.7 percent, based on the sub-alternative that is chosen. If you look at only a vessel limit reduction only in Florida, according to the analysis of the available MRIP data, you're looking at substantially smaller reductions, likely reductions, overall.

Very quickly, I wanted to go over some of the AP comments on this, because they have commented on it several times. There was initial support, back at their 2017 meeting, for a forty-fish vessel limit as a step-down, if you were managing towards a recreational ACT. During their August 22 meeting of 2019, they discussed lowering the bag limit for dolphin, noting that some thought it may be acceptable, while others felt that it was not necessary and offered caution, and it was mentioned that, once you give it up, you may not be able to get it back. Additionally, it was noted that lowering retention limits too far could have a notable negative impact on the ability to book charter trips. Therefore, caution should be exercised, if there is a change in the retention limit. This was particularly noted for North Carolina.

While some members noted that a retention limit may be acceptable in south Florida, others felt that changes -- Would be acceptable in south Florida, but others felt that changes should apply region-wide. However, there did seem to be a general consensus that, if the council considers reducing recreational retention limits, consider a vessel limit reduction, but do not change the bag limit of ten fish per person.

At the 2020 meeting of the AP, their most recent meeting, there was support for Alternative 1, no action, particularly in North Carolina, or to just take action in Florida, and, if the limits are reduced, maintain limits divisible by six is preferred. The AP passed a motion supporting Alternative 3b or 3c as preferred in Action 11.

One last thing that I wanted to mention, because I know it's been part of the committee's discussion in the past, regarding that exemption for headboats, or the definition of a headboat, and I went ahead and pulled the definition of a headboat from the CFRs. "Headboat" means a vessel that holds a valid certificate of inspection issued by the U.S. Coast Guard to carry more than six passengers for-hire, and so, essentially, how this -- According to the definition, an inspected vessel would count as a headboat in this area. With that, I will turn it over, and we're looking for a potential preferred alternative before public hearings.

MS. BECKWITH: Thanks, and I pulled up a couple of numbers for discussion, and so Dewey brought this up for me. According to MRIP, in North Carolina, only 13 percent of the North Carolina charter boats catch more than sixty-fish limit, or their sixty-fish limit, and so it's not a huge percentage of our charter boats that catch that many fish, but it's certainly important, and, as we've mentioned, it's sort of an important sales component for them.

In 2017, and Steve pulled some of these numbers up, 1.8 million pounds of mahi were caught in Florida, versus less than 300,000 in North Carolina. In 2018, one-point-five-and-change million pounds were caught in Florida, and right at 500,000 pounds were caught in North Carolina. Then, in 2019, a little under 1.3 million pounds were caught in Florida, with about 450,000 pounds, or fish, and I'm not sure. Wait. Are these fish? It might be fish.

Anyways, the point is the majority of the dolphin catch is occurring in Florida, and so, for those reasons, I know that North Carolina, as we know, will not be able to support a reduction in the bag limit, and I'm not sure how the committee wants to handle it, if we need to break these out by states. Jessica, go ahead.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, Anna. **Under Alternative 3, I wanted to add a sub-alternative option for thirty dolphin per vessel, and I can make that in the form of a motion, if you need it that way.**

MS. BECKWITH: Yes, that would be great.

MS. MCCAWLEY: **Okay.**

MR. SAPP: Second it.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. It's seconded by Art. Is there any discussion?

MR. HADLEY: I'm sorry, Jessica, but can you state that again?

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thirty fish per vessel, is how it's worded in the sub-alternatives.

MR. HADLEY: Thank you.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Is there any discussion on this motion? **Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion carries.** Okay. Art.

MR. SAPP: I just wanted to talk a little bit about the numbers that you all were talking about there that Steve brought up. While I agree that Florida catches the vast majority, and it looks like in the neighborhood of five-times more fish than North Carolina, I would challenge that Florida probably has in the neighborhood of a hundred-times more vessels going to sea and targeting dolphin, and you're talking about 13 percent of the boats that are catching the sixty-fish number up there.

MS. BECKWITH: 13 percent of the charter boats, which is little --

MR. SAPP: 13 percent of the charter boats, and that's what I mean. Exactly. Well, the vast majority of those charter boats aren't going dolphin fishing either though, and the ones that are are doing it. A lot of them are going white marlin fishing, or tuna fishing, or whatever the case may be, and so these numbers can be played with so easily and skewed to make it look less detrimental, and, earlier, we were talking about a million pounds of fish that it would be saving. Think about how many eggs a million pounds of mahi produces, and I think it's quite substantial and well worth trying to save that million pounds. Thank you.

MS. BECKWITH: Chester.

MR. BREWER: This is a question for Jessica. Jessica, why wouldn't you have the thirty-fish limit, or vessel limit, in Alternative 2 as well?

MS. MCCAWLEY: I just hadn't gotten that far. Do you want to make a motion to do that?

MR. BREWER: **I would be happy to make that motion, the motion that we add a sub-alternative -- Would it be 2f or just a sub-alternative under Alternative 2 of thirty fish per vessel.**

MS. MCCAWLEY: Second.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Is there any discussion on this motion? **Is there any opposition to this motion? Seeing none, that motion carries.** Roy.

DR. CRABTREE: Well, it seems likely to me that where you're going to wind up on vessel limits and bag limits is you're going to do something different in Florida than you do off of North Carolina, and I don't know where Georgia and South Carolina fall into that, and my opinion is bag limits and vessel limits in the recreational fishery are going to be ineffective if you don't have consistent state and federal regulations, and so I know some states automatically adopt, but I think it's going to be key to understand where Florida is heading, in terms of where they're looking at setting the bag limit in Florida state waters and what they are intending to do there to try and stay

on the same page in the EEZ and in state waters of Florida, because I'm just not sure -- You know, most of the enforcement, like I say, will be at the dock, and how is enforcement going to know which one applies?

I think that's going to be a problem, and I really think the whole issue with state compatibility, when you talk about dolphin AMs, is going to be huge, if you ever do trigger some kind of closure or something, and it's going to be quite a controversy, and I just think that's going to be a real issue, and so conservative bag limits make sense to me, and, if Florida wants to go towards a conservative limit in Florida state waters, then that's where I would go in the EEZ off of Florida and try to stay consistent.

MS. BECKWITH: Jessica, is that why you were adding that thirty? Are you guys thinking that's going to be what you put in your state waters?

MS. MCCAWLEY: I don't know that we know yet, and I would say that it's early in the discussion with our commission. We have heard a number of folks saying that they are willing to go down to thirty, but we don't have a draft rule prepared for commission consideration yet, and so it's hard for me to say that it's definitely thirty, or definitely forty, or maybe it's twenty-five, and I really don't know. I just know that they want to implement -- Or, actually, they said consider, and so I don't want to get out in front of the commission, but they want to consider proactive regulations for state waters, and they talked about bag limits, vessel limits, and size limits.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. I've got Art and then Dewey.

MR. SAPP: I actually bumped it on accident, but I do believe that Florida is going to get well ahead of federal regs, but I would like to see universal federal regs throughout the region.

MS. BECKWITH: Dewey.

MR. HEMILRIGHT: Thank you. What percentage of the mahi in Florida are in state waters and were recorded by MRIP? I was just curious, and does anybody know that answer? Thank you.

MR. HADLEY: I am not sure, off the top of my head, and I imagine it would be fairly low, and I know that it's certainly possible, and probably happens quite a bit in south Florida, but I don't know the percentage, off the top of my head.

MR. HEMILRIGHT: Thank you.

MS. BECKWITH: I've got Chester.

MR. BREWER: In answer to Mel's question, or at least somewhat of an answer, Mel, those fish tend to be in deeper water, and they tend to be a Gulf Stream fish, and about the closest the Gulf Stream gets to our shores, unless -- Barring something exceptional, is about four miles, and so the vast, vast, vast majority of those fish are caught in federal waters.

MS. BECKWITH: I don't know if maybe Tim or Steve would be interested in Alternative 2 being for Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina, and specifying those three states. I am a little bit concerned that North Carolina is going to get manhandled into something that we have been very

opposed to, and, if we can adjust Alternative 2 to include those three states, and possibly add an alternative for consideration in North Carolina and north on its own, then that might be worth taking out to public comment, so we get that, but that's -- Mel, go ahead.

MR. BELL: Thanks. I was thinking the same thing, but I wasn't sure, at this point, in where we are with the process that we could do that, but I know -- I mean, I think South Carolina, in terms of our fishery, from the input that I have received, wouldn't have a problem with going to a lower vessel limit, but, again, we're not a major player, in terms of driving the effects that we might be looking for, but the way it is established right now is it's sort of Florida, or everybody, and I certainly can't speak for Georgia, and, I mean, that -- If we could do that, that would be fine, but I was wondering -- We're kind of too late in the game to add or modify a complete alternative, and I notice that we're adding sub-alternatives, and maybe we can.

MS. BECKWITH: Well, and the other option would be for Alternative 2 to have the sub-alternatives of the individual states, and so we could pick by Florida, North Carolina, Georgia, and South Carolina, recognizing that it would probably be Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, if you all agreed, but North Carolina needs to have the option to make its own decision on this one. John, what would be the path forward?

MR. HADLEY: If you wanted to add those alternatives, I think a motion stating that would be the best path forward, and then the IPT will take that back and work on the analysis.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Would anyone like to verbalize some kind of motion to that point? Shep.

MR. GRIMES: Thank you, Madam Chair. I was just going to give you a note of caution moving forward on this. Throughout the history of Magnuson, the agency has lost a number of cases where decisions were overturned because they were based purely on what I'm going to call political compromise, or policy compromise, and it seems to me that, if we need some reduction in the bag limit, and we can articulate why -- We have heard some justification for why Florida only, but, when we're breaking this down where each state gets to pick what its own bag limit is, based on the opinions expressed of the state, that's getting dangerously close, I would say, to being just based on political compromise, and there's a lot of legal vulnerability associated with that.

MS. BECKWITH: Thanks, Shep, for that. You know, my view is, based on the information that's been provided to us, Florida alone would do very little in reductions, and I, at least on behalf of North Carolina, don't feel that any bag limit reduction is necessary, and so, if North Carolina is opposed to this action, and the majority of any potential reductions is coming from North Carolina, if I were not chair of this committee, I would probably move to add this entire action to the Considered but Rejected, but I haven't seen any desire to do that.

We were clear, I think from the beginning, that this was not something that North Carolina was interested in doing, and it was a Florida-centric thing, that they were working with their state-waters issues, and I also want to be cognizant that the rest -- Given that we do have an ACL increase, it seems incompatible, and I have yet to hear an argument that makes it compatible for North Carolina to have to take a bag limit reduction when it has an unequal ability to damage our charter industry, under COVID and all the other situations that we're having, and so I can't support that, but I don't see a way forward. Roy and then Jessica.

DR. CRABTREE: Well, I mean, I don't disagree with anything Shepherd just said, but the reality of this is that you have to have some consistency in the state/federal regulations in recreational fisheries, or it just turns into chaos, and accountability measures are not effective when states won't comply with them, and I have watched fishery management plans unravel and fall apart over this very issue, and so the process of working things out with what the states will go along with is inherently a political process that you have to deal with in this.

My recommendation to you on this action would be to pull it out of this amendment, because I don't think you're prepared to move this forward on the timeframe you're on. I think you're going to have to see a little more definitive answer from Florida as to where they're going to go on this and what they're willing to live with, and then I think you're going to have to deal with trying to achieve consistency with the state bag limits, and I think I heard Jessica say they might change the size limit and other things, but I just think, if you let this turn into a maze of incompatible regulations, it's going to be a mess, and I don't see how you're going to figure this out until then.

What I'm hearing is North Carolina doesn't want to do a reduction to begin with, and so it's mostly Florida, and we're going to have to work out some accommodation between Florida and the council to keep this on track, and so, to me, I just don't think you're going to be ready to move this action on the same timeframe as the rest of the amendment.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Is that a motion?

DR. CRABTREE: No, and I want to hear what the rest of you think, and you can make the motion, Anna. I'm not the one who is going to have to deal with any of this. You folks are.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. I've got Jessica, Steve, Tim, and Mel.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, Anna. It just gets a little frustrating for me to hear how North Carolina can't support a vessel limit reduction, and I understand why, but when I hear statements like it would damage the fishery in North Carolina, I would go back to dolphin charter sales were a really important component for Florida, and I would say, by eliminating charter boat sales, which Florida was voting against for this fishery, I would say that damaged Florida's fishery and the way that we operated, and so I'm just going to put that out there, that there was some things that Florida didn't want, and we lost the vote on that, and so I'm just going to throw that out there.

MS. BECKWITH: I hear you. Steve.

MR. POLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. I knew we were going to get back into the sale for for-hire boats and stuff, and certainly, if we decide to take this action out, we could potentially bring this action and that action up in another amendment and discuss it further, because I get what Jessica is saying.

I feel like North Carolina has articulated well our opposition to this, and, like I said earlier, I just have a hard time taking this back to my stakeholders and convincing them that a reduction in their vessel limit is needed and warranted, when there's really not a biological reason to point to to support this. **So, with that, I will make a motion to remove this action from the amendment.**

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Do I have a second?

MR. GRINER: I will second it, for discussion.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. I heard Tim second. Okay. I will open up discussion for that, but I will start with Tim, who was next on the list. Tim.

MR. GRINER: Thank you, Madam Chair. I was thinking along the same lines as Steve there, but, also, back to Jessica's situation there, if you drop this whole action, can Florida not just pick this up on their own and achieve the exact same thing as Alternative 3 would in the first place? To me, it definitely seems like it's a Florida issue, and so we have separated things out in the past, based on the regional differences.

I mean, we just did it with red grouper, and so I think there is some validity for Florida's needs, but I'm just wondering if we can't just eliminate this action here and make life simpler for us, for the council, and Florida is going to do something one way or the other. I mean, the writing is on the wall there, and so I think we -- I really would be supportive of taking this out, and let's see what Florida comes up with, and then, if we have to pick something back up later, we can do that. Thank you.

MS. BECKWITH: Let's just note that it's 12:30, and this is such a contentious issue. Mel, what would you like to do?

MR. BELL: Well, I didn't raise my hand to -- I think we need to kind of come to resolution, obviously, on this vote right now, but, I mean, we're taking a completely different approach here, to take this thing out. I mean, I had another motion in mind, but let's maybe -- We've got a motion, and let's deal with the motion right now.

MS. BECKWITH: All right. Is there anybody that feels the need to speak that hasn't said anything that hasn't been said? I've got Art and Chester, and so let's keep it short, so we can take a vote. Go.

MR. SAPP: I don't want to support taking this motion out, and I agree that North Carolina has articulated it well, but I just don't believe it makes it right. I don't think that they're on the right side of this one, but I will stop it there, just to try to hustle us along.

MS. BECKWITH: Chester, go.

MR. BREWER: I just want to say that -- Steve said that his constituents would be livid if we go to thirty fish, and I've got to tell you that our folks down here are the ones that have been pushing, and we're talking about recreational fishermen, to take it down to ten fish per person and thirty fish per vessel, and they've been pushing hard for it, and so I think that the optics involved in this, when we've been working on it this long, and we have people who are very concerned about the state of dolphin -- To say, oh, well, we're going to kick this down the road and put it into a different amendment, to be seen god only knows when, is really, really bad optics.

MS. BECKWITH: I hear you, and I would just remind you that Florida can set those limits, as we've discussed, in state waters, and so it's not taking it completely away. Roy.

DR. CRABTREE: Well, I don't like any of this, the way this is going, but it seems to me that, to move forward on this and then have Florida do something completely different, makes no sense, and so I don't know what else to do with it. I think you can be clear to constituents that we're going to deal with this issue, but we need to do it cooperatively with Florida and come to some understanding about the rules off of Florida, and, to me, it's a foregone conclusion that you're going to be different on Florida than you are on North Carolina, but to just move one way and then have Florida do something completely different, then you're going to be coming back in and redoing it all again, or it's just not going to work, and so I don't have a better solution to it at this point.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. John, can you take a roll call vote on this one, please?

MR. HADLEY: Yes, I can. All right. I will start with Art.

MR. SAPP: No.

MR. HADLEY: All right. Chester.

MR. BREWER: No.

MR. HADLEY: Chris.

MS. BECKWITH: Chris, if you're there, we can't hear you. We'll come back to you at the end.

MR. HADLEY: All right. Anna, really quickly, I wanted to make sure that you meant this sort of roll call vote and not a, quote, unquote, official one, where John Carmichael would -- Is this what you were thinking of?

MS. BECKWITH: Yes.

MR. HADLEY: Great. All right. Moving along, Tim.

MR. GRINER: Yes.

MR. HADLEY: Steve.

MR. POLAND: Yes.

MR. HADLEY: Spud.

MR. WOODWARD: No.

MR. HADLEY: Carolyn.

DR. BELCHER: No.

MR. HADLEY: Mel.

MR. BELL: No.

MR. HADLEY: Kyle.

DR. CHRISTIANSEN: No.

MR. HADLEY: Roy.

DR. CRABTREE: Yes.

MR. HADLEY: Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: No.

MR. HADLEY: Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: Yes.

MR. HADLEY: Lieutenant Copeland.

LT. COPELAND: Abstain from voting.

MR. HADLEY: Tony. I am not hearing from Tony. We can come back to him. Dewey.

MR. HEMILRIGHT: Abstain.

MR. HADLEY: All right. Then Rick Bellavance is not currently on the committee webinar. **The motion fails four votes in favor and seven votes opposed.**

MS. BECKWITH: Chris never came back to vote, did he?

MS. BYRD: Also, Tony has his hand raised.

MR. DILERNIA: If you could make my vote an abstention, I would appreciate it. Thank you.

MR. HADLEY: Okay. **That's with three abstentions.**

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. It is -- **So the motion fails.** It's 12:40. Mel, how would you like to --

MR. BELL: We're basically right where we started forty minutes ago, and I think folks may be suffering from a little bit of low blood sugar. Let's go ahead and break in a second. Just hang on for one more thing. Then we'll come back at 1:30 to try to just pick up -- We can pick up, and we had one more action, which shouldn't be that big of a deal, but we'll come back into Dolphin Wahoo at 1:30, and try to keep it brief, and, in the meantime, we'll kind of have some discussion about how to deal with 11, maybe, but, before we go, I need to turn this over to John for an announcement, or some important business.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Thank you, Mel. I just want to take a few minutes here and recognize one of our own. Brian, our Fisheries Social Scientist, who became Deputy Director for Management over time, is retiring at the end of this year, and we just wanted to take a few minutes here this week and give him a little recognition, and we can't do as we normally would, because of COVID, and so we're going to do the best we can.

Brian came to us from the Division of Marine Fisheries after being a university scientist and being an Army soldier and member of the Army Band, and he came to the DMF, and that's where we first got involved with Brian. You see him there holding a nice cobia, as they say, and Brian and I used to have a lot of great fun battling over the thermostat, when we shared neighboring offices back on Arendell Street in Morehead City.

In 2004, Brian became an SSC member representing the North Carolina DMF. As you see, he rapidly moved up, and he became a council member in 2007, and then, in 2011, he joined the council staff, and he's one of the few people I know of who has been an SSC member, a council member, and a council staffer, and particularly in that order, which is interesting.

Brian is always great fun at our Tuesday staff meetings, and he's just been a great member of the staff, and everybody truly enjoys Brian, and we're going to be very sad to see him not part of us every day, but we've had, as I said, a lot of great times with Brian over the years, from cooking classes to fishing trips to hanging out at various meetings and dinner and such after meetings, and so just a few shots here of Brian over the years and some of the things that we've done as staff and some of the great places Brian has been, traveling around in planes and enjoying coconut milkshakes.

You never who you will run into on a plane sometimes, when you have a council member sitting nearby you, and you go, hey, somebody I know, and, Brian, I had to get in a shot of the lovely Saliv8. In case you all don't know, Brian is a sportscar fanatic, I guess, and he has a great little Honda that he has kept on the roads, and I'm sure he will be terrorizing the streets of Fort Lauderdale soon enough, when he's off retiring.

Brian, as you know, is seen at a lot of meetings, and we are going to miss his face, and we're going to miss his humor, and we're going to miss his great spirit in getting us through challenging days, and long days, and tough issues. One of our big events every year, as staff, is the Christmas party, and Brian has been just full of surprises when it comes to ugly sweaters, and even ugly hats, and you really never know what he's going to show up with every year at Christmas to put a smile on everybody's face. Another little-known thing about Brian is he is a great tuba player, and, every year, he plays in a concert in Charleston called Tuba Christmas. Brian is down in there in the crowd in Charleston and playing his tuba, which is a really great concert every year at Christmas.

Brian, we just want to say keep the music playing, and we're going to miss you, and enjoy all the best in your retirement, and so that will conclude my presentation, and I will let everybody know that we will be inviting Brian back to some event later in this year, when COVID allows us to all get together, and give him a proper sendoff in person, and so thanks, everybody, for cutting into your lunchbreak, and feel free to reach out to Brian and offer your best wishes in retirement. Thank you.

MR. BELL: Brian, thanks so much. I apologize for the format here, but we're all living with this right now, and so thanks again. Folks, I would like to come back at 1:30 still, and so that's forty-five minutes for lunch, and hopefully you don't have to go anywhere. I'm in my kitchen, but that's the plan, and we'll come back at 1:30, and we'll reconvene Dolphin Wahoo, and maybe stay in that just a little bit, and then we'll move on to try to get back onto the agenda with Mackerel. Thanks.

(Whereupon, a recess was taken.)

MR. BELL: Anna and John Hadley, whenever you can get set up, and, Anna, what I think I would recommend doing is if we can come back into Dolphin Wahoo and perhaps deal with Action 12, and we might get that done before we have a hard stop here in about thirty minutes, if that sounds good to you.

MS. BECKWITH: Yes. That sounds excellent, and we can come back and battle out Action 11 later on, and so, yes. let's move forward to Action 12.

MR. HADLEY: All right. Anna, I'm ready whenever you are. Should we move along?

MS. BECKWITH: Go for it.

MR. HADLEY: Okay. Action 12 is the last action in Amendment 10, and it would allow filleting of dolphin at-sea onboard for-hire vessels in the EEZ north of the Virginia/North Carolina border. Currently, this is not allowed, and dolphin must have heads and fins intact. There are some exceptions for fish from the Bahamas, but fish harvested from the Atlantic EEZ may be eviscerated, gilled, or scaled, but must otherwise remain in a whole condition.

Alternative 2 would exempt dolphin from the regulations requiring heads and fins to remain intact, and, there again, this only onboard for-hire vessels north of the North Carolina/Virginia border. There are two potential additional requirements, if dolphin are filleted at-sea under this alternative. In Sub-Alternative 2a, the skin would need to remain intact on the entire fillet of any dolphin carcass, and two fillets would equal one fish. It would be the equivalent to one dolphin, and this would be used for enforcement of bag limits.

As a little bit of a reminder, a refresher, on where this action came from, it was added in response to a request from the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council that the South Atlantic Council consider this exemption in the waters north of Cape Hatteras. The suggested regulations associated with that were requiring a one-by-one-inch piece of skin remain on the fillet, the crew must retain the racks or frames of each fish, for bag limit enforcement purposes, and the crew must be able to present two fillets, which are equivalent to one fish, additionally for bag limit purposes.

The request stated that the action originated from a joint law enforcement/for-hire workshop, with attendees from the U.S. Coast Guard, the NOAA Office of Law Enforcement, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, the Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office, and Highly Migratory Species. This committee specified that the action should only apply onboard -- By this committee, I mean the Dolphin Wahoo Committee, specified that the action should only apply onboard for-hire vessels in the waters north of North Carolina, the North Carolina/Virginia border,

and, there again, with the specific skin and fillet requirements mentioned. No racks would need to be retained.

As a little bit of a refresher on some of our AP recommendations, the South Atlantic Council's Law Enforcement AP reviewed the initial request from the Mid-Atlantic Council at their May 2019 meeting and provided input on this, and the South Atlantic Council's Law Enforcement AP noted that the Mid-Atlantic Council's request would indicate that law enforcement officers would need to count and match racks and fillets, which may be burdensome to boarding officers. The exemption on filleting fish -- It was really noted that the exemption on filleting fish brought from the Bahamas is effective on fish caught outside of the EEZ, and the fish being considered under this action would be landed from the U.S. EEZ, and it could add a considerable burden to law enforcement officers, if implemented in U.S. waters, resulting in more time spent in enforcement and during boardings, as well as add to some regulatory complexity.

The Law Enforcement AP noted that law enforcement would need guidance to address a possible scenario where fish are caught or filleted north of Cape Hatteras, but landed south of that line, where the exemption on filleting at-sea would not apply. There again, that has been moved a little bit to the north, to the North Carolina/Virginia border, in this action. However, if adopted, the proposed regulation needs to be specified for the entire region, in order to be enforceable.

It was noted that, in North Carolina, it is unlawful to possess filleted fish onboard a vessel while engaged in fishing for any species of finfish that is subject to a size or harvest restriction without having the head and tail intact, with some exceptions. The Law Enforcement AP felt that there was no compelling reason to request an exemption on mutilated fish only for dolphin and that a one-by-one piece of skin would not necessarily be adequate for proper species identification. The Law Enforcement AP passed a motion recommending that no filleting of dolphin be allowed in the EEZ off of the Atlantic.

The Dolphin Wahoo -- Switching APs over to the Dolphin Wahoo AP, discussed this action at their meeting in October, and they had a different view on it. The AP felt that allowing filleting of dolphin at-sea would also be useful in the South Atlantic region, and it would help with minimizing turnaround time between half-day charters, particularly in the south Florida area, where they target dolphin successfully on half-day charters, and as well as help with cold-storage capacity and preserving harvested fish. They also noted that many fishermen in the South Atlantic region face long runs, similar to those in the Mid-Atlantic, and, if there was an issue on bag limit enforcement, the racks of filleted fish could be required, to aid in enforcement of bag limits and size limits.

As far as the IPT discussion on this, it was noted that the action could provide economic benefits to the for-hire sector, for-hire trips landing numerous dolphin in the Mid-Atlantic and New England regions. However, it was also noted that the dolphin ACL is tracked in weight, and allowing filleting at-sea in the Mid-Atlantic and New England regions would reduce size and weight measurements from dockside intercepts.

Filleting at-sea is allowed for some federally-regulated groundfish and flounder species in the Mid-Atlantic and New England regions. However, it is not allowed for other species, such as golden tilefish, blueline tilefish, or HMS species. Filleting of dolphin at-sea may encourage additional harvest, since less cold-storage space would be required to preserve fish until they get back to the

dock, if filleting could be allowed at-sea, and there would be less time and hassle at the dock if fish could be filleted under way on the way back to port.

Finally, it was noted that filleting dolphin at-sea onboard for-hire vessels could encourage the desire for similar regulations in the South Atlantic region, if it's allowed in the Mid-Atlantic and New England regions, for other sectors, including the private recreational and commercial sector, and for other species under other FMPs. We're looking for a motion here, or some discussion on the action, and choosing a preferred alternative for public hearings. With that, I will turn it over.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Great. What's the pleasure of the committee? Would anyone like to suggest a preferred? Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Anna. I think that I want to suggest Sub-Alternative 2b as the preferred.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay, and not Sub-Alternative 2a and 2b, but just 2b?

MS. MCCAWLEY: Well, I'm open to some discussion on that. It sounded like law enforcement wanted that, and it sounded like the AP didn't, and I'm just a little confused about what to do about 2a, but I definitely would like to suggest 2b, because this will match up with what's in place for the Bahamas, and I just think that this will be easier, for consistency.

MS. BECKWITH: Right, and, if I'm not mistaken, the skin remaining intact on the entire fillet is also what would be consistent with the Bahamas regulations.

MS. MCCAWLEY: If it is, then I can choose both Sub-Alternatives 2a and 2b. I couldn't remember about the skin part for the Bahamas.

MS. BECKWITH: Yes, definitely. Do you want to go ahead and do that as a motion, and we'll see if we can get a second?

MS. MCCAWLEY: I sure will. **I move that we select Sub-Alternatives 2a and 2b as the preferred under Action 12.**

MS. BECKWITH: Thanks. Can someone shout out a second?

MS. MARHEFKA: Second.

MS. BECKWITH: Thank you, Kerry. Okay. It's now open for discussion. Roy.

DR. CRABTREE: I can't support this. NOAA Law Enforcement has strongly opposed this, and the prosecuting attorneys have strongly opposed it. I don't know how you're going to explain that it's okay in the north to do this, but not down here, and it just seems to me that, if we allow this, then I don't know how it doesn't spread from there, and so my preference is not to do this at all, and so I can't support it.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Mel.

MR. BELL: Something similar. I have issues with it, I know, from the enforceability standpoint and all, and, plus, it was suggested that perhaps this might spread, in terms of folks wanting to do it elsewhere, and you're heard from the AP report that it has already spread, in terms of the desire that that might be useful down here as well, and so I'm not really for the whole concept, myself.

MS. BECKWITH: All right. Thanks for that. Brian Chevront.

DR. CHEUVRONT: I just wanted to clarify for you, because the question was asked, but, yes, the skin must remain intact on the entire fillet on dolphin carcasses brought back from the Bahamas. That is currently what's in the regulations.

MS. BECKWITH: Yes, and I have that discussion still burned into my brain. Chester.

MR. BREWER: Thank you, Anna. I've got the fillets from Bahamas burned into my brain as well, and I know realize that, even though I was a huge proponent, it was a mistake, and so I am worried, or was worried, about the spread, and now we're seeing it happen. Tony made a good argument in favor of this, and that was that they wanted to clean their fish and have them ready for the customers to take off the charter boat when they got back to the dock, but, here, we're really only talking about dolphin.

MS. BECKWITH: Chester, we lost you, buddy.

MR. BREWER: Okay. United Healthcare started ringing me, and they call me about three or four times a day, now that I'm on Medicare, but, anyway, and that made me lose my train of thought, but what I was going to say is Tony made a very good argument about this was something that would help them a lot, because then they would be able to go ahead and clean the fish and have them ready for the customers to take off the boat as soon as they got to the dock, and that's a good argument, but we're only talking here about dolphin and not the other fish that they might catch, and I don't know how many dolphin they catch and how much of a benefit it actually would be. I tend to think that, however much benefit there is, it would be far outweighed by the mischief that could come about by opening this trick box, and so I can't support this, and I would be happy to make a motion to name Alternative 1 as the preferred.

MS. BECKWITH: The floor is yours, if you want to make that substitute.

MR. BREWER: All right. Fine. **I would like to make a substitute motion that we select Alternative 1 in Action 12 as the preferred alternative.**

MS. BECKWITH: Can some shout out a second, please, if we're got some interest?

MR. WOODWARD: Second.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Spud seconded. Now we are discussing the substitute motion, and I had Spud next on the list.

MR. WOODWARD: Thanks, Anna. A lot of what I was going to say has already been covered, but, as I mentioned earlier, when we were talking about mutilated fish, this sets up a direct conflict with state law, because you would be bringing in fillets absent any means for dockside

enforcement, as well as creel survey clerks to get any information off the fish, and so I cannot think the -- Tony made a persuasive case, and, if we didn't have to deal with all the other consequences, it would be simple, and we would approve it, but there are a lot of negative consequences that could come quickly, and some could come later, that, to me, outweigh the benefits. Thank you.

MS. BECKWITH: Thank you. Tim.

MR. GRINER: Thank you. I agree with Spud. I think this is real slippery slope, and the snowball gets rolling, and there is just too many unintended consequences of it. I do think it has some merit, but I just think it's too slippery of a slope, and, from hearing everybody say they can't catch many dolphin, and they're not big ones, it shouldn't take long to take care of them at the dock.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Tony, do you want to try and bring us back from the abyss?

MR. DILERNIA: Thank you very much, Madam Chairwoman. First of all, let me remind the council that this recommendation came out of a workshop that was attended by NOAA Law Enforcement, the GARFO office, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, and many of the state law enforcement agencies, and it was a recommendation that came out of that workshop, and so clearly there has to be -- There is some miscommunication or whatever at the agency level, as far as the Office of Law Enforcement is concerned, because the folks who attended the workshop did not have any serious reservations regarding this request.

Let me point out that, in the Mid-Atlantic region, we allow the filleting of fish at-sea, and so the common fish that would be caught alongside the mahi would be perhaps bluefish, which we allow filleting of, and we currently, inshore, allowing the filleting of summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass, and so this is one of the few fish -- Well, other than the tunas, it's the only fish, and striped bass, that we would not be able to clean.

Again, very often, we catch the mahis four hours, or five hours, offshore, for a headboat, and the crew is cleaning fish on the way in, but then they have to put the mahi aside, and then you get to the dock, and if you had even let's say a hundred mahi, at three minutes each let's say, that's 300 minutes, and that's five hours for people waiting around to get their fish to go.

Unlike the South Atlantic, we do not have fish cleaning services dockside, which you folks all do, and we're willing to retain the racks and leave the skin on. Mahi fillets are easily identifiable compared to the other fish that we catch in the Mid-Atlantic region, and so it is a practice that's common. The filleting of fish in the Mid-Atlantic area is a common practice, and we're asking that you recognize what is our common practice and let us be able to cut these fish at-sea. Thank you very much.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Thank you, Tony. Mel.

MR. BELL: I was just going to say that law enforcement was -- I think our own AP, the council's AP, input, and, again, as Spud pointed out, in South Carolina, we don't allow the sale of fish that have been treated like that, and, indeed, our guys have to run -- Some of them are fifty or sixty or seventy miles offshore, and they've got that long run as well, but I have never really had anybody approach me or say that they had to do this, and I'm not sure about the dockside cleaning

differences, but, anyway, I have just never been a fan of this one, and I think that certainly it would be hard for us to support this until our own fishermen -- You can't do that here, and that's it.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Is there anyone else that would like to speak, before we vote on this? Okay. **Seeing no hands, is there any opposition to this motion? Hearing no opposition, this motion carries.**

MR. DILERNIA: Madam Chairwoman, I'm a member of the committee, I believe.

MS. BECKWITH: Yes, you are. That's why I was --

MR. DILERNIA: If the motion is to go with Alternative 1, no action, I am in opposition to the motion.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. **The motion carries with one opposed.**

MR. HEMILRIGHT: Two opposed.

MS. BECKWITH: **Two opposed.** Okay. **The motion carries with two opposed.** Okay. Is that record clear?

UNIDENTIFIED: Anna, we've got a few more hands.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Here we go. We might need to take this one to a roll call. I've got Shep and Roy.

MR. GRIMES: Thank you, Madam Chair. I understand you're just approving this for public hearing, and you will see it again, and you can make this decision later, but I was going to suggest that, instead of keeping the no action as your preferred alternative, should that be where you stay, that you just remove the action to Considered but Rejected. Thank you.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Roy.

DR. CRABTREE: That was going to be what I was going to ask too, is do you want to just move this to Considered but Rejected and save staff the time of analyzing it.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Chris.

MR. CONKLIN: I was just going to say that I would be opposed to it as well. I do like being able to find a way forward, despite the Pandora's Box or whatever, but these folks obviously know their area a little bit better than we do and how their fishery operates, and, otherwise, they wouldn't have come to us asking, and so I tend to be more of a statesman than you think, or, anyway, but I'm standing by.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. For the record, I've got Chris, Dewey, and Tony opposed so far. Tony, go ahead.

MR. DILERNIA: I can't see why you would want to take this out. You're going to public hearing, and so why would you take this out? Send it out to public hearing. If you get a major opposition to it after public hearing, then, when it comes time for the final action, you can eliminate it then, but I think it's a bit unfair to take it out before you even go to public hearing, and so I would suggest, or I would recommend, that it stay in, and let the public speak to you about it. Thank you.

MS. BECKWITH: That's a reasonable path forward. Chester.

MR. BREWER: I had lowered my hand. I don't have anything else.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. **So the final is the substitute motion passes with three in opposition, Chris, Dewey, and Tony.** It now becomes the main motion. I am going to assume, unless I hear otherwise, that the same three are opposed to the main motion, for the record, Chris, Dewey, and Tony. If that's not the case, speak up.

DR. COLLIER: Anna, it might be good to go through the roll and just make sure it is clean on what people are voting for.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Go for it. We are voting on the main motion.

MR. DILERNIA: Could you please state what the main motion is, Madam Chairwoman?

MS. BECKWITH: Yes. **It's to select Alternative 1 in Action 12 as the preferred alternative.** That was a substitute motion, and it's now the main motion.

MR. DILERNIA: Alternative 1, which, again, removes it.

MS. BECKWITH: That just makes no action, and so it's the same discussion. It was the substitute motion, and the substitute motion passed, and so it is now the main motion. If we approve this main motion, it then becomes our preferred to go out to public hearings, unless someone removes it from the document, but, based on your request for us to maintain it for public hearings, that will likely happen. Is everyone clear? We are voting on the main motion to select Alternative 1 in Action 12 as the preferred. Okay. Call the roll, please.

MR. HADLEY: Okay. Art.

MR. SAPP: I am voting yes, as long as it goes out to public comment. I don't want to see it disappear entirely.

MR. HADLEY: All right. Chester.

MR. BREWER: Yes.

MR. HADLEY: Chris.

MR. CONKLIN: My main vote on the main motion is just like it was before.

MS. BECKWITH: Which is no.

MR. CONKLIN: Sorry.

MR. HADLEY: All right. Tim.

MR. GRINER: Yes.

MR. HADLEY: Steve.

MR. POLAND: Yes.

MR. HADLEY: Spud.

MR. WOODWARD: Yes.

MR. HADLEY: Carolyn.

DR. BELCHER: Yes.

MR. HADLEY: Mel.

MR. BELL: Yes.

MR. HADLEY: Kyle.

DR. CHRISTIANSEN: Yes.

MR. HADLEY: Roy.

DR. CRABTREE: Yes.

MR. HADLEY: Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Yes.

MR. HADLEY: Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: Yes.

MR. HADLEY: Lieutenant Copeland.

LT. COPELAND: Abstain.

MR. HADLEY: All right. Tony.

MR. DILERNIA: No.

MR. HADLEY: Dewey.

MR. HEMILRIGHT: No.

MR. HADLEY: All right. **The motion passes with ten yes and four no and one abstain.**

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. As otherwise noted, this will stay in at the moment, until we pass through public hearings. All right, Mel. I think that takes us through our short-term goal, and it is 3:44.

MR. BELL: You did that with a minute to spare. Well done. Keep in mind that we're going to public hearing with this in March, and we wouldn't be recommending final action until June, and so there can be some more discussion on the entire amendment. So, having said that and got that done, what I would like to do is go ahead and adjourn, and we'll set up for public hearing, and then we may get some more feedback at public hearing regarding Amendment 10, and then, depending on how fast the public hearing goes, if we have a little bit of time, perhaps we can come back after public hearing and pick up Amendment 10 again, particularly Action 11, and so we'll just see how that goes, and so whatever we need to do to shift over to public hearing mode, let's do it now.

(Whereupon, a recess was taken.)

MR. BELL: What I would like to do is -- If you can make that happen, if we can shift back to council mode, and I would like to go back to Anna and John Hadley and Dolphin Wahoo for a little bit, and we can maybe try to finish something up, and it wouldn't take too long, and then maybe even actually finish earlier than we have been, and we'll see.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Thank you. I will let John get organized for a moment.

MR. HADLEY: All right.

MS. BECKWITH: Coming back to Action 11, it sounds like there might be a path forward that is becoming clearer, and I believe that Spud might have an alternative to share with us for consideration.

MR. WOODWARD: Yes, ma'am, I do. **In the interest of hopefully moving things forward and not further complicating it, I will make a motion that we add an alternative that includes the same content as Alternatives 2 and 3, but substitutes in South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida where Florida is included, and I guess that's in Amendment 3.**

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. This would add an additional alternative for consideration that has South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. That would give us the entire suite of options to consider of Florida only, a Florida/Georgia/South Carolina, and then an entire east coast option, for our consideration. Do I have a second?

MR. BELL: Second.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Mel seconds. Would anyone like to speak to this motion? While hands are going up, I would support this motion, and I think this would give us the entire suite to consider,

with some additional analysis, and, really, including the additional vessel limit of thirty that Florida added earlier would give us an opportunity to dive a little bit deeper into what this means for each of the regions and let us have a little bit more productive discussion in March, and I would suggest that, if this passes, that we don't pick a preferred for this one and allow this to go out to public hearings without a preferred, and hopefully some of that additional analysis would occur prior to the public being able to see it, and so I'm going to let John Hadley speak, in case he had something for clarification, and then I will go back to Mel.

MR. HADLEY: Just a point of clarification, so this goes back to the IPT correctly. This alternative would have the same sub-alternatives as the others, and it would just include Georgia, Florida, and South Carolina, and so essentially what will be a thirty through fifty-four vessel -- Thirty through fifty-four potential vessel limit, and is that correct?

MS. BECKWITH: Yes, that is correct. Mel.

MR. BELL: This kind of fills the gap here with what I was talking about earlier today, in that we didn't have that option, and so I think, as Anna pointed out, and Spud gave the motion, it does give us sort of a full suite of options. I am not so concerned, right this moment, about a preferred, and so, in March, we'll be coming back at hearings, and then we were looking to go for final action in June, and so I think, as we mentioned, it gives us some time to do further analysis and crunch numbers and gain additional public hearings, and so I'm fine with that approach, just myself, personally, and this being kind of a way to move forward at this meeting.

MS. BECKWITH: Thank you, Mel. Spud.

MR. WOODWARD: Thank you, Anna. Mel said some of what I was going to say, but I also support us not choosing a preferred, and, in what may be a failed attempt to add a little levity, I think I might can help with some of the analysis, because I checked today, and, according to MRIP, during 2019, the recreational fishery in Georgia landed a whopping seventy pounds of dolphin.

MS. BECKWITH: Oh my.

MR. BELL: You'll be a big help.

MS. BECKWITH: Well, I'm glad to know that everyone is doing their part. Okay. Is there any further discussion on this motion? **Is there any opposition to this motion? Seeing none, that motion passes.** I would say we quit while we're ahead.

MR. BELL: All right. Well, that was the last bit of business that we needed to kind of clean up with this particular amendment, and so, if you have no other business for Dolphin Wahoo, then we can conclude the day and actually knock off early.

MS. BECKWITH: I don't have any other business. I feel like the letter from Florida was considered in part, and maybe not in its totality, and so I would defer to Jessica, if she wanted to bring any portion of that discussion up, now that we're done with Amendment 10 and have a few minutes. Otherwise, that's really up to -- I would defer to Florida on that one. Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: You guys have a copy of the letter, and I spoke to some of the items in there during this discussion of Amendment 10, and also there were pieces in there that were about reducing or eliminating longline harvest of dolphin, and so I would just throw that out there, and Chester might want to add more to it, but you guys should have a copy of the letter, if you have any questions for me.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Chester.

MR. BREWER: Just so you all know, I had nothing to do with that letter. I loved it, but I didn't have anything to do with it. I think that we need to delve into the longline issue, but it's not going to be as simple as saying, okay, well, we're not going to longline dolphin, or not have a directed longline fishery for dolphin, in the South Atlantic, because, as has been mentioned earlier today, this is an international fishery.

Some of the bigger players, and one might even want to call them offenders, is Venezuela, who we can't do anything with Venezuela, other than perhaps call out maybe some A-10s, and that might be a little drastic, but then there are people -- There are people that come within the jurisdiction of the United States that don't come within the jurisdiction of the South Atlantic Council who also are hitting dolphin really hard with longlines, and so we need to do, really, more of a comprehensive look at this, and I think it was wise, Anna, to kind of pull this out and say let's -- This is important enough, or complicated enough, or whatever you want to say, to have it stand on its own, and I will be -- I was planning on bringing this up in the Executive Committee, that we get it in line to be looked at, and maybe set forth some questions that certainly I have and start setting forth the directions that we might want to go in to try to resolve what I see as a big problem.

If it's not a big problem now, I think it will be in the future, and it's something that is vitally -- That particular fishery is vital, vital, to the State of Florida and to the South Atlantic, and so maybe not so much torture, but it is vital in Florida, and so that's my thoughts on it, and I will bring it up in the Executive Committee that we will have tomorrow.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Tim. I'm assuming I'm skipping John Hadley because we dealt with that, but, John, did you have something to add?

MR. HADLEY: I don't want to derail the conversation here on the amendment, but we did have one more item, to approve it for public hearings, and we can handle that at the committee level or during Full Council, and that was my last comment.

MS. BECKWITH: Great. Thanks. Tim.

MR. GRINER: I'm not going to say a lot about it, but I did want to just say that, yes, we're already talked about scheduling something like this once in Executive Finance, and we can bring it up again, and we'll talk about it there, but I do have a special place on this item on the timeline for us to take a look at, and so we'll get to it then, but I really don't see this as a pressing issue right now, as compared to what we've had on the timeline and have been kicking down the road for a long time, including the electronic logbooks for the commercial sector, but, yes, I look forward to talking about it. Thank you.

MS. BECKWITH: Quite frankly, my personal view is it's less of a potential problem than not dealing with the wahoo bag limit or vessel limit is going to turn into, and so there's definitely some tasks that are yet to be done. Is there anybody else, any other business, to come before Dolphin Wahoo? Okay, and so it sounds like we've got one more motion to approve, and so I need a motion from someone to approve all actions in Dolphin Wahoo Amendment 10, as modified, for public hearings, to take place before the March 2021 meeting. Who would like to make that motion?

MS. MCCAWLEY: **So moved.**

MS. BECKWITH: Thank you. I heard Jessica, with a second by Spud. Is there any additional discussion? **Hearing none, is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion carries.** That concludes the Dolphin Wahoo Committee.

(Whereupon, the meeting adjourned on December 9, 2020.)

Transcribed: _____ Date: _____

Transcribed By
Amanda Thomas
January 25, 2021

SAFMC December Council Meeting

Attendee Report: (12/07/20 - 12/10/20)

Report Generated:

12/11/2020 08:00 AM EST

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Actual Start Date/Time

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