

**SUMMARY REPORT  
FROM THE  
ECOSYSTEM BASED-MANAGEMENT  
COMMITTEE MEETING  
St. Simons Island, GA  
March 7, 2011**

The Ecosystem-Based Management Committee met on March 7, 2011 in St. Simon's Island, Georgia. The Committee was provided an overview of the public hearing comments received on Comprehensive Ecosystem-Based Amendment 2. The Committee discussed changes to the Comprehensive Ecosystem-Based Amendment 2, including development of additional alternatives, and selection of preferred alternatives for all actions. The Committee directed staff to further refine analysis in the document for final approval of Comprehensive Ecosystem-Based Amendment 2 during the June, 2011 Council meeting. An update on SAFMC activities pertaining to ecosystem-based management in the region was provided.

**The Committee made the following motions:**

MOTION #1. ADD ALTERNATIVE 3: MODIFY THE FMU TO INDICATE THAT OCTOCORALS ARE INCLUDED IN THE EEZ OFF NC, SC & GA  
APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

*Action 1: Remove octocorals from the FMU under the South Atlantic Coral FMP*

MOTION #2. MAKE ALTERNATIVE 3 OUR PREFERRED  
APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

*Action 1: Alternative 3. Modify the FMU to indicate that octocorals are included in the EEZ off NC, SC & GA*

MOTION #3. MAKE ALTERNATIVE 1 OUR PREFERRED  
APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

*Action 2: Alternative 1. No Action. Do not extend the FMU for octocorals into the GMFMC's jurisdiction*

MOTION #4. ADD ALTERNATIVE 3: ACL = 0  
APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

*Action 3: Modify the ACL for octocorals in the South Atlantic*

MOTION #5. MAKE ALTERNATIVE 3 OUR PREFERRED  
APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

*Action 3: Alternative 3. ACL = 0*

MOTION #6. MAKE ALTERNATIVE 4 OUR PREFERRED  
APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

Note – This refers to Action 5, the IPT's revised Alternative 4, and selecting Sub-Alternative 4a and Sub-Alternative 4b as the Council's preferred.

*IPT recommendation for revised Alternative 4:*

*Action 5: Alternative 4. Modify sea turtle and smalltooth sawfish release gear based on freeboard height. Fishermen would still be required to comply with all current sea turtle and smalltooth sawfish release guidelines. The design specifications of required gear and the handling and release techniques employed must comply with those described in the NOAA Fisheries Service document entitled “Careful Release Protocols for Sea Turtle Release with Minimal Injury.”*

*Sub-Alternative 4a. Vessels with freeboard height of 4 feet or less would be required to carry and use:*

- *a short-handled dehooker for ingested hooks; or a dehooker for ingested and a dehooker for external hooks*
- *long-nose or needle-nose pliers,*
- *bolt-cutters*
- *mono-filament line cutters*
- *cushion/support device (i.e., boat cushion)*
- *a dipnet*
- *at least two types of mouth openers/mouth gags*

*Sub-Alternative 4b. Vessels with freeboard height of 4 feet or more (and/or using longline gear) would be required to carry and use:*

- *a long-handled line cutter,*
- *a long-handled dehooker for ingested hooks; or a dehooker for ingested and a dehooker for external hooks,*
- *a long-handled device to pull an “inverted V”,*
- *a dipnet,*
- *cushion/support device (i.e., boat cushion)*
- *a short-handled dehooker for ingested hooks; or a dehooker for ingested and a dehooker for external hooks*
- *long-nose or needle-nose pliers,*
- *bolt cutters,*
- *monofilament line cutters, and*
- *at least two types of mouth openers/mouth gags.*

**MOTION #7. SELECT ALTERNATIVE 2 AS PREFERRED  
APPROVED BY COMMITTEE**

*Action 7: Alternative 2. Amend the Coral FMP to designate Deepwater Coral HAPCs as EFH-HAPCs.*

**MOTION #8. SELECT ALTERNATIVE 3 AS PREFERRED  
APPROVED BY COMMITTEE**

*Action 8: Alternative 3. Amend the Sargassum FMP to designate the top 10 meters of the water column in the South Atlantic EEZ bounded by the Gulfstream, as EFH for pelagic Sargassum.*

**MOTION #9. SELECT ALTERNATIVE 1 AS PREFERRED  
APPROVED BY COMMITTEE**

*Action 9: Alternative 1. No Action. Do not designate EFH-HAPCs for Pelagic Sargassum*