

**REPORT OF THE  
JOINT MEETING OF THE ECOSYSTEM-BASED MANGEMENT AND  
HABITAT & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION COMMITTEES  
Charleston, South Carolina  
September 16, 2008**

The Ecosystem-Based Management and Habitat & Environmental Protection Committees met jointly on September 16, 2008 in Charleston, South Carolina.

Roger Pugliese presented recommendations developed at the Joint meeting of the Golden Crab Advisory Panel and Deepwater Shrimp Advisory Panel held on September 15, 2008 in Charleston. The AP recommendations are attached.

Dr. Wilson Laney presented information on the proposed Titan America cement manufacturing project in the Town of Castle, North Carolina. The Committee approved a motion for staff, in cooperation with Dr. Wilson Laney, to develop a draft comment letter for the Council to review.

**The Committee approved the following motions:**

MOTION #1: THE COUNCIL CONTINUE WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE ECOSYSTEM-BASED AMENDMENT AND REFINE IT TO FOCUS ON DEEPWATER CORALS AND EFH REQUIREMENTS FOR OTHER FMPS. FURTHER, THAT THE COUNCIL REAFFIRM OUR COMMITMENT TO ECOSYSTEM-BASED MANAGMENT, AND RETRACT LANGUAGE FROM THE COMPREHENSIVE ECOSYSTEM-BASED AMENDMENT REGARDING THE DEFINITIVE PROCESS FOR THE SAFMC'S ECOSYTEM-BASED AMENDMENT APPROACH.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

**In addition, the committee provided the following direction to staff:**

1. Staff is directed to work with Hal, LE AP and Golden Crab AP to fix any VMS language with respect to the Council's intent to prohibit placement of traps outside of the allowable area. NMFS LE will meet with golden crab fishermen informally. LE AP will meet with the Council in December. Results will be discussed by Council in December.
2. Examine alternative ways, including but not limit to VMS, to get the necessary data and law enforcement capability. Clarify what data, why, how to be used, etc.
3. Change the title of the comprehensive amendment to "Comprehensive Ecosystem-Based Amendment".
4. Add amendments to all FMPS to the CE-BA in order to put a graphical representation of previously described EFH in place to meet requirements of the EFH final rule.
5. Table discussion about one amendment per year and remove any discussion about moving to one document per year from the CE-B Amendment. Keep discussion about ecosystem-based management.

6. FEP & CE-B Amendment will be revised and approved for public hearings at the December meeting with the intent that both documents be approved for formal review at the March 2009 meeting.
7. Letter on project in NC – designation of a preferred alternative is premature; refer to existing EFH & HAPCs; bring letter to full Council for review and approval.

**Recommendations from the Golden Crab Advisory Panel  
September 15, 2008**

Recommendation # 1: Additional area in the Northern Zone should be added to the C-HAPC Allowable Fishing Zone for golden crabbers as soon as continuing research indicates such areas are appropriate.

Recommendation #2: The Council, in collaboration with participants in the golden crab fishery, should explore management mechanisms for protecting the fishery from excess expansion.

Recommendation # 3: Emphasize the willingness and readiness of the golden crab fishermen to participate in cooperative research with scientists and Council. Numerous mutual benefits are expected.

Recommendation #4: Make Alternative 3 a Preferred Alternative along with Alternative 2 for the Allowable Golden Crab Fishing Area.

Recommendation #5: The Council and golden crab participants must quickly address serious concerns about the impact of VMS on the fishery. The concerns center on the fact that in normal conduct of the fishery, the boat is often well east or west of the gear. To avoid violations, the practical effect is a loss of a true half mile of critical fishing area on both sides of the C-HAPC.

**Recommendations from the Deepwater Shrimp Advisory Panel on the CEA  
September 15, 2008**

Recommendation # 1: Move the western boundary of the C-HAPC to the east instead of establishing a Shrimp Fishery Access Area. Approved by AP

Recommendation # 2: Ensure that there is a mechanism whereby a vessel in distress will not be in violation when drifting into the C-HAPC. Approved by AP

MOTION #1: Recommend to the Council to adopt Alternative 1 No Action on establishing Deepwater C-HAPCs (Action 1). Wilson/Solorzano. Motion is withdrawn.