

OVERVIEW

Ecosystem-Based Management Committee

Sea Palms Resort & Conference Center
5445 Frederica Road
St. Simons Island, GA

The Committee will: (A) review latest developments with Coral Amendment 8; (B) review a draft Coral Memorandum of Understanding; and (C) receive an update on ecosystem activities.

A. Coral Amendment 8 (Attachment 1)

The Committee will receive an update on development of Coral Amendment 8. During the December 2012 meeting, the Committee chose to delay approval for public hearings until staff have received the updated Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) data representing deepwater shrimp fishery activity from 2003-2006. The VMS data representing these years will be integrated into the analysis and will provide a comprehensive assessment of fishery impacts within proposed modifications to the Coral Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (HAPCs). Currently, the VMS analysis in the document represents activity from 2007-2011. Staff will provide an update on the processing and integration of the updated VMS data. Per the Committee's guidance in December 2012, Advisory Panel (AP) meetings have been scheduled for the spring of 2013 in Charleston, SC to review the revised modifications to Coral HAPCs and updated VMS analysis in Coral Amendment 8. The Habitat AP will meet May 7th; the Coral AP will also meet on May 7th; a joint session will be held on May 8th with the Coral and Habitat APs and Chairs of the Law Enforcement, Snapper Grouper and Deepwater Shrimp APs; and the Deepwater Shrimp AP will meet on May 9th. The Committee discussed reviewing AP input before considering approval of Coral Amendment 8 for public hearings at the June 2013 meeting.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: The Committee will discuss the revised amendment and provide guidance to staff as appropriate.

B. Draft Coral Memorandum of Understanding (Attachment 2)

A draft memorandum of understanding (MOU) has been developed between the New England, Mid-Atlantic and South Atlantic Fishery Management Councils regarding the management of deepwater coral resources. The intent of the MOU is to coordinate management efforts, foster continuity and sharing of information between Atlantic Councils in the conservation of deepwater coral resources. The role of the SAFMC would be to serve in an advisory capacity on past experiences and lessons learned with management of deepwater coral resources in the South Atlantic region.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: The Committee is asked to consider signing the MOU; provide guidance to staff as appropriate.

C. Ecosystem Activities (Attachment 3)

The Committee will receive updates on the Southeast Coastal Ocean Observing Regional Association, South Atlantic Alliance, Southeast Aquatic Resource Partnership, South Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative, SEAMAP, Council Ecosystem Tools, and other ecosystem activities. The Committee will also receive an update on the status of the proposed Endangered Species Act listing for 66 coral species.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Provide guidance to staff as appropriate.