

# OVERVIEW

## Ecosystem-Based Management Committee Meeting

December 3, 2008

Hilton Wilmington Riverside

301 N. Water Street, Wilmington, North Carolina

The Ecosystem-Based Management Committee needs to: (A) review the FEP, review Habitat & Coral AP comments, review Law Enforcement AP comments, discuss/modify, and approve for public hearings; (B) review the Comprehensive Ecosystem-Based Amendment, review Habitat & Coral AP comments, review Law Enforcement AP comments, discuss/modify, and approve for public hearings; (C) receive a status report on ecosystem coordination; and (D) discuss and approve items for scoping.

### **A. Fishery Ecosystem Plan (Attachment 2)**

Roger Pugliese will present an overview of the Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP). The proposed timing to complete the FEP is as follows:

December 2008	SSC Final Review
December 2008	Committee/Council review and approve for Public Hearings
Jan/Feb 2008	Public Hearings
March 2008	Review comments, modify and final approval of FEP
April/May 2008	Send FEP to Secretary of Commerce

Note: The FEP will accompany the Comprehensive Ecosystem-Based Amendment (CE-BA) through the review and implementation process serving as a “source document” for the CE-BA which will contain the actual regulatory actions. This follows the process used successfully with the Habitat Plan and Comprehensive Habitat Amendment.

The committee will also review the Habitat and Coral Advisory Panel comments/recommendations (**Attachment 3**). The Law Enforcement Advisory Panel will be meeting on Monday, December 1<sup>st</sup> and will provide their comments/recommendations at the meeting.

**REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION:** Provide staff guidance on any necessary modifications and recommend approval for public hearings.

**B. Comprehensive Ecosystem-Based Amendment (Attachment 5)**

The amendment, as currently drafted by the Council, will do the following:

- Amend the Coral FMP to establish deepwater Coral Habitat Areas of Particular Concern; areas being considered are: 1) Cape Lookout Lophelia Banks HAPC; 2) Cape Fear Lophelia Banks HAPC; 3) the Stetson Reefs, Savannah and East Florida Lithoherms, and Miami Terrace HAPC; 4) Pourtales Terrace HAPC; and 5) Blake Ridge Diapir HAPC.
- Create allowable fishing areas for shrimp and golden crab.
- Amend FMPs to comply with the EFH final rule (EFH and EFH-HAPC designations).

Myra Brouwer is attending the 4<sup>th</sup> International Deep Sea Coral Symposium in New Zealand, so Gregg Waugh will present a status and overview of the Comprehensive Ecosystem-Based Amendment. The current document has been developed by an interdisciplinary team of Council, NMFS, and NOAA GC staff. The timing is as follows:

December 2008	SSC Final Review
December 2008	Committee/Council review and approve for Public Hearings
Jan/Feb 2008	Public Hearings
March 2008	Review comments, modify and final approval of CE-BA
April/May 2008	Send CE-BA to Secretary of Commerce

The committee will also review the Habitat and Coral Advisory Panel comments and/or recommendations (**Attachment 3**). The Law Enforcement Advisory Panel will be meeting on Monday, December 1<sup>st</sup> and will provide their comments and/or recommendations at the meeting.

The GMFMC will have to approve the spiny lobster and coastal migratory pelagics (mackerel) portions of the CE-BA given that the EFH items amend those two joint fishery management plans.

Public hearings are scheduled as follows:

- (1) January 26, 2009 in Charleston, SC
- (2) January 27, 2009 in New Bern, NC
- (3) February 3, 2009 in Key Largo, FL
- (5) February 4, 2009 in Cape Canaveral, FL
- (5) February 5, 2009 in Pooler, GA

**REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION:** Provide staff guidance on necessary modifications and recommend approval for public hearings.

**C. Status Report on Ecosystem Coordination**

Roger Pugliese will give an update on ecosystem coordination activities through work on SECOORA, SARM, and the Habitat and Ecosystem IMS.

**REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION:** None.

**D. Items for Scoping**

The following items are being considered for the next Comprehensive Ecosystem-Based Amendment. Scoping meetings will be held during the public hearings for the FEP, CE-BA, and Snapper Grouper Amendment 17 scheduled for January/February 2009 (see list above).

1. Update EFH and EFH-HAPC designations as required by the final rule.
2. Potential modifications to the limited take of octocorals.
3. Potential modifications to the limited take of *Sargassum*.
4. Other items???

**REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION:** Provide staff guidance on items to include and on suggested timing. Approve items for scoping.