

FINAL
SUMMARY REPORT
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
DECEMBER 2020

(MEETING HELD VIA WEBINAR)

The South Atlantic Council's Executive Committee met via webinar on December 10, 2020. The Committee approved the agenda and minutes from September 2020.

Executive Director Annual Performance Evaluation – CLOSED SESSION

The Committee met in a closed session to conduct the annual performance evaluation of the Executive Director. The Committee also received a legal briefing during this session.

2021 Draft Budget Review

The Committee approved the final 2020 budget and the draft 2021 budget during a meeting held on November 12, 2020. Budget motions from that meeting will be brought before the Council for consideration during the Full Council session of this meeting. An updated budget, including guidance from the November 12 meeting, was reviewed at this meeting.

The Committee received a request from the Southeast Regional Office (SERO) to allow SERO to hold back some of the 2021 Council funding to support additional permit system upgrades. This is considered a means of transferring unspent travel funds, resulting from COVID impacts on Council operations, to SERO to support the permit system. Members noted that the Council has many unmet needs that have built up over past years due to budget shortcomings, and that the Council imposed significant funding restrictions over the last few years to stay within its budget. It was also noted that, because no funding for 2021 has been received and the federal budget has yet to be approved, the Council does not know the funding situation for 2021. The Committee recommended that it could not support a funding transfer at this time.

Kelly Klasnick went over revisions to the 2021 Activity Schedule. The revisions provide greater detail in the 'other meetings' section, including items such as Liaisons to other Councils, CCC activities, and Council workgroups.

The motions below were approved by The Committee at its November 2020 meeting:

MOTION 1: APPROVE THE FINAL 2020 OPERATIONAL BUDGET AS PRESENTED.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION 2: APPROVE THE DRAFT 2021 OPERATIONAL BUDGET AS PRESENTED AND MODIFIED.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

2021 FMP Workplan

The Committee was provided an updated workplan that addresses the excessive workload expected to start in March 2021. The overload was resolved primarily by refining the expected discussion time at 2021 meetings and adjusting the timelines by skipping consideration of some amendments at some Council meetings. The skipped meetings allow time for SSC and AP discussions on the amendments.

The revised workload includes opportunities for new items to be added to the workplan. Placeholders were added for projects to start in September 2021, March 2022, and September 2022. The Committee proposed starting a Dolphin Wahoo amendment to address the longline fishery in September 2021. Other priorities added to the list for future consideration include addressing the Mutton Snapper assessment in 2022 and considering changes in Wahoo possession and vessel limits. Further discussion will be held at Full Council to determine how best to address the Wahoo changes. The Council will continue to review this workplan at each meeting and revise as necessary, based on progress toward completing ongoing amendments and addressing other activities that arise.