



# SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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Trish Murphey, Chair | Jessica McCawley, Vice-Chair  
John Carmichael, Executive Director

## **AGENDA (Revised)** **Full Council Session I**

Lumina Holiday Inn  
1706 N. Lumina Avenue  
Wrightsville Beach, NC 28480

**Monday, December 2, 2024, 10:30 am to 5:00 pm**

**Tuesday, December 3, 2024, 8:30 am – 12:00 noon**

- Call to order and introductions
  - Adoption of agenda
  - Approval of minutes (September 2024)
  - Litigation Brief
  - Remarks from Dr. Cisco Werner, NOAA Fisheries Director of Scientific Programs and Chief Science Advisor.
1. Agency Reports
    - a. NOAA Office of Law Enforcement (*Attachments 1a and 1b*)
    - b. Council liaisons (*Attachment 1c and 1d*)
    - c. State agencies (*Attachment 1e*)
    - d. US Coast Guard (*Attachment 1f*)
  2. Southeast Reef Fish Survey (SERFS) and Southeast Area Monitoring and Assessment Program (SEAMAP) Update (*Attachment 2*) – Tracey Smart, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources
  3. Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Update on Electronic Reporting (*Attachment 3*) – Karyl Brewster-Geisz and Cliff Hunt, NOAA HMS
  4. Southeast For-hire Integrated Electronic Reporting (SEFHIER) Improvement Amendment (*Attachments 4a-4d*)
    - a. Social and Economic Panel (SEP) recommendations – Jennifer Sweeny Tookes, SEP Chair
    - b. Presentation on use of electronic vessel trip report (eVTR) data by the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC) – Jason Didden, MAFMC Staff
    - c. SEFHIER presentation – Jessica Stephen, NMFS SERO
    - d. Overview of amendment – John Hadley & Myra Brouwer

5. Allocations Review for Atlantic Spadefish and the Jacks Complex (*Attachments 5a and 5b*) – John Hadley
6. Headboat Vessel Limits Report (*Attachment 6*) – Chip Collier
7. Council Coordination Committee Report (*Attachment 7*) – John Carmichael
8. Staff Report (*Attachment 8*) – John Carmichael
9. 2025 Stakeholder Engagement Meetings (*Attachment 9*) – Christina Wiegand

**Attachments:**

**Attachment 1a:** NOAA OLE Report

**Attachment 1b:** NOAA OLE presentation (*posted when available*)

**Attachment 1c:** Gulf Council Liaison Report

**Attachment 1d:** MAFMC Liaison Report

**Attachment 1e:** FWC EFP Projects Report

**Attachment 1f:** USCG Brief

**Attachment 2:** SERFS Update Presentation

**Attachment 3:** HMS Update on Electronic Reporting

**Attachment 4a:** SEP Report

**Attachment 4b:** MAFMC use of eVTRs Presentation

**Attachment 4c:** SEFHIER Presentation

**Attachment 4d:** SEFHIER Improvement Amendment Decision Document

**Attachment 5a:** Summary allocations report on Atlantic Spadefish

**Attachment 5b:** Summary allocations report on the Jacks Complex

**Attachment 6:** Headboat Vessel Limits Report (*posted by Nov 27*)

**Attachment 7:** CCC Report (*posted when available*)

**Attachment 8:** Staff Report

**Attachment 9:** 2025 Stakeholder Engagement Meetings Final Plan

**Staff Lead:** John Carmichael ([john.carmichael@safmc.net](mailto:john.carmichael@safmc.net))

# OVERVIEW

## Full Council Session I

**1. Reports (*Attachments 1a-1f*)**

**Description:** Representatives will provide reports to the Council. An update on the Red Snapper Exempted Fishing Permits projects (*Attachment 1e*) will also be provided.

**Council Action:** None

**2. Southeast Reef Fish Survey (SERFS) and Southeast Area Monitoring and Assessment Program (SEAMAP) Update (*Attachment 2*)**

**Description:** The SERFS is a fishery-independent survey that collects data on reef-associated species in the South Atlantic. The SEAMAP is a cooperative program aiming to facilitate the collection, management, and dissemination of fishery-independent data from the waters of the eastern U.S. Dr. Tracey Smart, Coastal Research Section Manager with the SCDNR Marine Resources Research Institute, will provide an overview of data collected through these surveys for a variety of South Atlantic Council managed species.

**Council Action:** None

**3. Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Update on Electronic Reporting (*Attachment 3*)**

**Description:** Staff from the Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Division of NOAA Fisheries will deliver a presentation on the proposed rule, published on September 6, on Atlantic HMS electronic reporting requirements. The proposed changes aim to streamline and modernize reporting through electronic reporting and consolidation of reporting deadlines, expand electronic logbook reporting to additional commercial and charter/headboat vessel owners, and collect additional information from dealers through existing electronic reporting mechanisms. It is expected that these changes would create consistency with NOAA Fisheries' efforts in other fisheries and augment data necessary for fishery science and management. Comments on the proposed rule are due by January 6, 2025. The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council submitted [comments](#) on September 12, 2024.

**Council Action:** Offer comments and provide guidance on submitting a letter on the proposed rule.

**4. Southeast For-hire Integrated Electronic Reporting (SEFHIER) Improvement Amendment (*Attachments 4a-4d*)**

**Description:** At the September 2024 meeting, it was noted that NOAA Fisheries cannot validate the data collected through the current SEFHIER program until reporting compliance improves. The Council requested additional feedback from the agency, including the level of compliance necessary for validation to take place and for data to be subsequently used in management. The Council also modified the draft purpose statement for the developing amendment to include gathering of economic data for the recreational for-hire industry.

To inform further development of this amendment, the Council sought feedback from the Social and Economic Panel (SEP) of the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) and from the SSC itself. Feedback and recommendations from the SEP will be delivered. Since a portion of for-hire vessels also have permits in the Mid-Atlantic region, the Council is interested in how electronic Vessel Trip Report (eVTR) data are used in management by the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC). Jason Didden, MAFMC staff, will deliver a presentation on this topic. Following these presentations, Dr. Jessica Stephen, Branch Chief of the Limited Access Privilege Program/Data Management Branch at the NOAA Fisheries' Southeast Regional Office, will provide a presentation addressing items the Council requested in September.

**Council Action:** Review/modify the range of actions and alternatives in the amendment considering the information provided. Consider items for feedback from the For-Hire Reporting AP and whether to approve the amendment for scoping. If approved for scoping, determine when and where scoping hearings would be held in 2025.

**5. Allocations Review For Atlantic Spadefish and the Jacks Complex (*Attachments 5a and 5b*)**

**Description:** In September 2024, the Council reviewed current sector allocations and other relevant information for Atlantic Spadefish and the three species that make up the Jacks Complex (Almaco Jack, Lesser Amberjack, and Banded Rudderfish) in accordance with the Council's Allocation Review Policy. Council staff developed a summary allocations review report based on the Council's discussion. This report will serve as documentation of the allocations review until these species are again up for review at a future date.

**Council Action:** Review and approve the allocations review reports for Atlantic Spadefish and the Jacks Complex (Almaco Jack, Lesser Amberjack, and Banded Rudderfish).

**6. Headboat Vessel Limits Report (*Attachment 6*)**

**Description:** In June 2024, the Council requested a report be prepared to examine headboat vessel limits for South Atlantic managed species for discussion at the December 2024 meeting. The impetus behind this request came from discussions regarding the recent modifications to the vessel limits for gag and black grouper in Snapper Grouper Amendments 53 and Regulatory Amendment 36. Additionally, the Council received public comment indicating that vessel limits are highly impactful to the headboat component of the for-hire industry.

**Council Action:** Review report and determine whether additional information is needed and potential management action.

**7. Council Coordination Committee (CCC) Report (*Attachment 7*)**

**Description:** Council staff will summarize discussions that took place during the October 2024 CCC Meeting in Washington DC.

**Council Action:** None

**8. Staff Report (*Attachment 8*)**

**Description:** Council staff will brief the Council on activities since the September 2024 meeting.

**Council Action:** None

**9. 2025 Stakeholder Engagement Meetings (*Attachment 9*)**

**Description:** Council staff is working to develop a plan for holding stakeholder engagement meetings along the south Atlantic coast, meeting fishermen in their communities. The goal of these meetings is to build relationships with fishery stakeholders by engaging them in an informal setting that allows for two-way conversations. Building and maintaining relationships and momentum for participation in the management process require consistent interaction with stakeholders over time, so staff intend for these types of meetings to become a regular part of the Council's engagement efforts. Staff will present an updated planning document for the meetings, including information on the first round of meetings scheduled for 2025 in North Carolina and Georgia.

**Council Action:** Review planning document and provide input on the overall meeting structure and topics and scheduling for the 2025 meetings.