

**Final**  
**SUMMARY REPORT**  
**SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**  
**Full Council Session I (Closed Session)**  
**March 3, 2025**

The Council met in Closed Session on Monday, March 3, 2025, and discussed the following items:

**Advisory Panel Policy and Law Enforcement Background Checks**

The Council considered options for expanded law enforcement background checks for advisory panel applicants. The Council currently requests law enforcement background checks for advisory panel applicants through NOAA Fisheries Office of Law Enforcement that only considers federal fishery violations. The Council reviewed information available through the state marine fisheries agency law enforcement background checks and criteria used by individual states within the Council's jurisdiction to establish eligibility to serve on a state advisory group. The Council also reviewed the background check approach used by the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (GMFMC). Captain Scott Pearce, Law Enforcement Advisory Panel chair, provided comments from the LEAP on background checks.

The Council recommends requesting state law enforcement background checks for SAFMC advisory panel applicants to identify state violations for federally managed species. The Council requested guidance from NOAA General Counsel on additional background information that may be requested of advisory panel applicants, for consideration at the June 2025 meeting.

**Other Business**

The Council discussed representation of members from adjacent Councils on committees. Representatives of the Mid-Atlantic (MAFMC) and New England (NEFMC) Fishery Management Councils serve as members on some committees but seats have not been allotted to the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council. The South Atlantic Council does not have representation on any committees of other Councils. Both the MAFMC and GMFMC are represented by liaisons to each South Atlantic Council meeting, and having additional representation on committees can be a source of confusion. Additional and valuable input on fisheries issues from adjacent Councils, particularly those along the Atlantic Coast, will continue to be provided through designated representation on advisory panels. After discussing these issues within the context of the role of its committees, the Council agreed to discontinue committee membership for representatives of the MAFMC and NEFMC on South Atlantic Council committees. Because the NEFMC does not have a liaison to SAFMC meetings, the NEFMC position on the Dolphin Wahoo committee will be converted to a liaison position (non-voting).

The Council made the following recommendations for consideration during open session:

**MOTION 1: APPOINT THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUALS:**

**Shrimp Advisory Panel Liaisons**

Appoint Sonny Gwin (MD) and Pat Geer (VA) as liaisons to the Shrimp Advisory Panel.

**Snapper Grouper Recreational Permitting and Reporting Technical Advisory Panel**

Appoint Sean Wilms with FWC's Florida Wildlife Research Institute to the advisory panel.

**SEDAR 90 (South Atlantic Red Snapper) Appointments**

Appoint the following persons to the SEDAR 90 Data Workshop: Anna-Mai Christmas-Svajdenka, Julie Simpson, Julie Dingle, and Paul McLaughlin.

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

**MOTION 2:** Remove representatives from other fishery management councils from SAFMC committees and create a liaison position for the Dolphin Wahoo Committee for the New England Fishery Management Council (non-voting), effective with the June 2025 Council meeting.

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

**DIRECTION TO STAFF**

- Continue to coordinate with NOAA General Counsel regarding questions addressing further law enforcement disclosures that may be added to the SAFMC advisory panel application form.