

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

FULL COUNCIL SESSION I

**Town and Country Inn
Charleston, South Carolina**

September 11, 2023

Transcript

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Observers and Participants

Other observers and participants attached.

The Full Council Session I of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council convened at the Town and Country Inn, Charleston, South Carolina, on Monday, September 11, 2023, and was called to order by Chairman Carolyn Belcher.

DR. BELCHER: Good morning, everyone. Welcome to day one of the September council meeting. We have a pretty interesting and packed agenda for the week, and so we're just going to go ahead and get started. Do we have any introductions that we need to make, Myra?

MS. BROUWER: (Ms. Brouwer's comment is not audible on the recording.)

DR. BELCHER: Okay, and so we have Michael Lind in from OLE, and then we have somebody else from the Coast Guard sitting in for Cameron too, correct? Okay, and so we have a couple of extra folks today. We'll start out with the oath for new officers, and so, at this point, it's Kerry and Robert Spottswood that will be meeting with Jack, and so Jack.

(Whereupon, the oath is administered to new council members.)

DR. BELCHER: All right. The next item on the agenda is the Adoption of the Agenda. Does anybody have any changes that they would like to see made to the agenda as it's currently set here for Full Council? Seeing none, we will adopt the agenda, and it will stand as approved. Approval of the Minutes from the June 2023 Meeting, does anybody have any additions or changes that need to be made to the minutes from the meeting? So no opposed? Okay. At that point, we will approve the minutes from the June 2023 meeting. The first item on the agenda for Full Council Session I is reports from our different groups, and we're going to start out with the NOAA Office of Law Enforcement, and so Officer Lind.

MR. LIND: Good morning. I'm Michael Lind with the Office of Law Enforcement here in Charleston. Just going right into the slides, from this last quarter, we had 191 opened incidents. To note, of those 191 incidents, sixty-five came from the North Carolina-South Carolina region. Four cases were referred to General Counsel, and those included right whale cases, reporting requirements, and some back-door sales from HMS.

There were sixteen summary settlements issued during this quarter, and they included retention during closures, undersized possession, and lack of descending devices, and then, of the total incidents and total boardings, there were 34 -- 34 percent of the boardings were reported no violations or closed with compliance assistance.

To highlight some of our partnerships, this past quarter, there was a large operation that took place. Although not in the South Atlantic, it was in the U.S. Virgin Islands, but, again, just to highlight some of the partnerships. It included Charleston officers, Miami officers, Savannah, St. Thomas officers, and they conducted joint patrols onboard Virgin Islands DPRN vessels, and then six of the patrols were conducted over three days. They patrolled federal waters and year-round closed areas. One of other ones -- Note the top-left picture there.

One of the other ones, on the top-right, that was a joint operation that took place in the Port of Savannah, and it included, again, South Carolina officers, North Carolina, Georgia, and it also included partners from the FDA and CBP, and they inspected pharmaceutical products, seafood products, and multiple containers were inspected, and shipping documents were reviewed. The

Savannah, Georgia EO later conducted three patrols, as part of that joint operation, and examined, again, more containers. Some of them were placed on hold for the FDA approval and FDA review.

Then some of the outreach during this last quarter is the officer in Miami and the special agent, they set up a booth at the Marine Protector's Event, at the Florida Oceanographic Society in Stuart, Florida. They did educational outreach and spoke about OLE's mission and passed out handouts. They partnered with FWC and the Martin County sheriff. The FWC also had a patrol vessel there on display.

One of the other ones was in Savannah, Georgia. We participated in the Bring Your Child to Work day, and it was part of CBP, or set up by CBP, and we took one of our vessels up there and let some of the children of CBP officers and such just, again, get familiar with the OLE mission, and then, in Corpus Christi, Texas, the officer and the special agent did a TED outreach, a turtle outreach, with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife, the National Parks Service, the U.S. Coast Guard, and the Texas Aquarium, and so that was a big joint event, and that's the center picture on the bottom.

Highlighting some of the partnerships and referrals on the state side, over this last quarter, there were forty-nine referrals from FWC, and those included Magnuson-Stevens violations and cases during the sanctuary closure, sanctuary violations, and then TED cases. From Georgia DNR, there were four cases referred, and they included undersized and retention during the closed season, as well as an HMS case that was referred. South Carolina DNR referred three cases, and that included undersized and lack of descending device, and then retention during a closed season. Then the Coast Guard referred five cases, primarily TED cases, and there was a retention during the closed season and an undersized and possession.

Some of the targeted operations, the FISHNET operation was a collaboration with CBP, and they flagged and inspected containers with fish products with the FDA, and it was all coming through -- It was everything coming through the Port of Miami, and it was a two-week op. There were violations and further investigations for chain of custody forms, failure to submit entry documentations, and then there was a lot labeled as frozen fish that ended up being not frozen fish. There were over twenty containers inspected during that op.

Then EXCLUDER SHOOTER, and that was based out of Georgia, and that was South Carolina, Georgia, and North Carolina officers and a South Carolina agent. There was during the Georgia shrimp opening. They conducted ten boardings, and one minor violation was found, and the weather and sea conditions limited that operation.

The current spotlight, again, talking about some of the operations, there was a heavy prevalence during the snapper opening, the red snapper opening, for the South Atlantic. There was a two-day patrol that was conducted out of here in Charleston, and there were nine vessels boarded during that patrol. Of those nine vessels, there were only four vessels that were found with red snapper, and no violations were documented.

The Cape Canaveral officer got underway with FWC, and they conducted fourteen boardings. They did find one violation for four red snapper over the limit, and then the North Carolina EO, during the opening, did dockside patrols, and no violations were noted, and, again, that was limited due to weather conditions for those two days, and then the mini-season, the lobster mini-season,

once again, weather limited the operation, and they were able to conduct a hundred boardings, and there was a 69 percent compliance rate. Over 400 people were contacted, and 170 hours of patrol. There were six OLE patrol vessels involved, as well as the support staff, and, again, that was partnered with FWC, Monroe County sheriff, and the Key West police department. One of our last slides is the law enforcement hotline, just to highlight that, and any violations, or any information, that is ever wanted to share with us, please call that number, and that's all I have.

DR. BELCHER: Thank you. Any questions? Tim.

MR. GRINER: Thank you for that presentation, and I don't know if this is maybe a question for the Coast Guard, when they get up here, or not, but I was wondering if you could give us more information maybe with any results that you have to share from the joint operation with North Carolina that targeted the snowy grouper MPA, the Operation Grouper Grab.

MR. LIND: I don't have any -- I don't have the statistics from that right now, but I can get that and get back to you.

MR. GRINER: That would be great. Thank you.

DR. BELCHER: Other questions? Okay. Thank you. Next up will be the Coast Guard report.

MS. BROUWER: I am going to see if Lieutenant Box is available to give us that. Cameron, are you there?

LT. BOX: Good morning. Can you hear me?

MS. BROUWER: Yes, and we've got you.

LT. BOX: Good morning. Can I send you the slides? I mean, I can just read off of it, if not.

MS. BROUWER: Cameron, I don't have any slides for your presentation.

LT. BOX: Can I send it over?

MS. BROUWER: We can post it on the website a little bit later, if you don't mind just doing the presentation without the visual at this point.

LT. BOX: Sure. No problem.

MS. BROUWER: Go ahead.

LT. BOX: Good morning. I'm Lieutenant Cameron Box from Coast District VII. It's good to hear the voices this morning, and so I just wanted to give an update on Fiscal Year 2023 living marine resources efforts on the Coast Guard's end. Just going down the line, as you know, last summer, we started what's called the Operation Vigilant Sentry, which is in support of migrant interdiction operations down in Miami and District VII's AOR. However, we have gotten to a more stable point in operations and migrant interdiction operations focus, and so we have been able to do some good living marine resources operations.

More recently, a lot of our assets are still being prioritized to supported, but numbers have drastically become more stable recently, and so, for Fiscal Year 2023, we've done approximately 520 living marine resources boardings. We've done about five marine protected resources requests and actual responses, and we're still getting the Quarter 4 metrics, and that will actually give us the total numbers for Fiscal Year 2023, which will be at the end of this month, if anyone is interested in that later on.

We have a couple of upcoming council meetings, aside from the South Atlantic, and we have the Caribbean Fishery Management Council meeting that will be taking place in December, and Sector San Juan will be supporting that meeting, and then we also have the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary meeting, and that's taking place next month, on October 17, which Sector Key West will be attending.

The last, the previous, Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council meeting, I had Sector Key West attend and provide some emphasis that came from that meeting, and it was regarding record high water temperatures leading to bleaching of coral reefs in the sanctuary, and that was the main emphasis that came from that meeting, and then we had, back in July, a spiny lobster op that we had several different stations leading, and we had Station Key West that conducted eight boardings, with 363 lobsters inspected, with thirty-six hours dedicated, and they had two Coast Guard violations associated with these boardings.

Station Islamorada had conducted fifteen boardings, with sixteen lobsters inspected, with twenty-two hours dedicated to the mission, with ten Coast Guard violations, and there were some other safety violations that were involved in these boardings. Station Marathon conducted twelve boardings, with 144 lobsters inspected, with twenty-five hours dedicated to these boardings, and then FWC had a violation throughout these boardings. They had about five undersized lobster and one illegal crab.

I did want to touch on the inquiry this morning, and the council provided an inquiry regarding closures related to space launches and recoveries, and so I did provide Myra with an email regarding information that needs to be sent to a specific email, and I have it right here in front of me, but I will send it out to you guys, and, that way, everyone can have it, or whoever is the main POC for it, and so, basically, there's a formal process where you will send the request for whatever documentation, specific dates and items, to the Coast Guard Freedom of Information Act, the office that responds to these requests, rather than, you know, District VII producing or sending, you know, estimated numbers, or just, you know, different numbers, just because we have to maintain a neutral type of stance, and so it just has to be -- We just need a formal request. Again, I don't hold that -- I don't own that, the space department, and I'm not trying to hide anything, but I just want to make sure that we do the formal process for it, and that's all I have this morning.

DR. BELCHER: Thank you. Any questions? Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks for that. I was really hoping for that space launch information. In order to make a formal request, do we need to write a letter signed by you, Carolyn, as the chair to make a request for that information?

DR. BELCHER: Myra.

MS. BROUWER: It would be a FOIA request, and so we probably need to -- I'm not familiar exactly with how that process goes, because we haven't done them, but that's basically what we would need to do, and so come up with a specific request the council wants and then go through that process.

DR. BELCHER: Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: So, I mean, do you need a motion to do that, or how do we handle it, so that we can get that information that we talked about at the last meeting?

MS. BROUWER: I think you can probably just give us direction to do that, and we'll get that process started, if that's the will of the council.

DR. BELCHER: Okay, and so we would just put it under timing and tasks. Okay. Any other questions? All right. Very good. Moving on, we'll do the council liaison reports, and my apologies to both Bob Gill and Wes Townsend for not introducing you at the beginning. Bob Gill is going to be giving the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council report.

MR. GILL: Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you for the opportunity to be here. I am delighted. In my previous stint on the council, I was a frequent liaison, and it was one of the highlights of my time on the council. I would like to add my congratulations to the reappointees and the appointee, and I wish you well on your time on the council, and have fun.

The liaison report is in the briefing book, and it's fairly simplistic. I would like to point out two things. One is that we have a new chair that you all, I suspect, know fairly well, and Kevin Anson from Alabama is our chair, effective in January, and the older folks amongst us will recall that he was our chair back eight or nine years ago, and so he's been around the helm.

The other point that I wanted to raise was, as you know, we're reinstating a program to replace SEFHIER, and we wish to do that expeditiously, and we are, as a result of that, creating a new ad hoc AP to help advise us on that process, and we're doing that in an expedited manner, looking for background checks early, et cetera. We do intend to pick that AP at our October meeting, which is roughly a month hence, and, with that, I will be happy to answer any questions. Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

DR. BELCHER: Thank you, Bob. Questions for Bob at this point? Okay. Seeing none, Wes Townsend, who will be doing the Mid-Atlantic report for us, is going to be here a little bit later, and so we'll move him to a little bit later time in the agenda, and we'll move on to the state agency reports, and I'm going to start in the north, and so, Trish, what do you have for North Carolina?

MS. MURPHEY: Thank you, Carolyn. There are several things going on in North Carolina, and probably one that everybody will be interested in is our Department of Environmental Quality has changed all of our email addresses, and so, if you need to email anybody from DEQ, the new domain now is going to be "@deq.nc.gov", but our old ones will work for a couple more years, and so just to let you guys know that.

We had a blueline tilefish state record this June, and it was a seventeen-pound-one-point-nine-ounce blue tilefish, up from 16.8 was the last record, and it was caught off of Nags Head. Southern flounder, and I know everyone always looks forward to hearing about our southern flounder, and we have a commercial season that has been set for pound nets and mobile gear. Pound nets will have a staggered season by area, north to south, and that will start September 15, and our mobile gears will start on October 3, mobile gears being gillnets and gigs and anything else, and, for gillnets, we're doing something a little different. We'll allow gillnets Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. Then our recreational southern flounder season is going to start September 15 through the 29th, and it will be a one-fish bag limit, and fifteen inches.

I also wanted to report that, during red snapper season, we had 130 carcasses that were collected from the carcass program, and that's the most we've gotten in a long time, and so everybody was like, yay, on that, and, also, we went through our fishery management plan annual review. This happens every July, and our commission gets reports on it in August, and it just summarizes all the information and trends and everything that's going on in our independent data, as well as our dependent data, for all our state-managed fisheries, and we are also beginning the development of our oyster and clam fishery management plans, and scoping has started, or, actually, scoping is starting this week and next week.

Then we had a Marine Fisheries Commission meeting last month, and some of the things that happened is, for striped bass, we are looking at a moratorium in the Albemarle and the Roanoke management areas, because that stock is overfished, and overfishing is occurring, and we have very low TAL. We are recommending some rule changes to address regulating conflict in our interjurisdictional borders with the Wildlife Resources Commission, and we set a commercial fishing license cap to 500 from our eligibility pool.

We are continuing to work on the mutilated finfish rule, which that is supposed to help get us in compliance with the Spanish mackerel and king mackerel management changes from depredated fish, and, last, but not least, we had a state-record red hind, at ten-pounds-and-two-point-four ounces, and that was caught forty-five miles off of Beaufort Inlet, and that's really pretty much it for North Carolina.

DR. BELCHER: Any questions for Trish? Okay. Seeing none, we'll move on to Mel. Mel, what's going on in South Carolina?

MR. BELL: Well, first of all, welcome, everyone, to beautiful Charleston. We've arranged for some nice weather, and it could have been a lot worse, depending on what's going in -- Well, what's going on in the Atlantic right now is of no concern for us, and we're fine. Not a lot, and the summer is going well.

MARMAP and SEAMAP, our coastal trawl survey, are hitting their cruises, and they're managing not to break the boat too much. We had some air conditioner problems and some other things, but things are working well. The Lady Lisa is still afloat, and that's good, but she is forty-three-plus-years old, which brings me to the next point, which is that we were able to purchase a replacement vessel, and it's a used vessel, and it's still down in the Gulf of Mexico, and, for those of you at the states, you know, state procurement can be a long, arduous process, and so we're finally working through the state procurement process related to getting at least the phase-one work done on this vessel down in the Gulf, to allow us to bring her back up here for the phase-two work.

The phase-two work is what we still need -- We haven't identified all the funding for, and that could be up to an additional million, or \$1.4, and it's estimated, to bring her up to where we've got the lab spaces, the berthing spaces, the engines, everything we need to allow this new replacement vessel to take us for the next thirty to forty years, or however long she lasts, but it's a steel-hulled vessel this time, and so we don't have some of the lifespan issues that you do with wooden vessels, which is what we ran into with the Lady Lisa, and so that's all promising. We just -- Again, the big issue right now is just coming up with the rest of the funding to complete the phase-two work, to allow us to use this vessel for quite some time to support all the regional work that the coastal trawl survey does, which you would know as SEAMAP, and also MARMAP work as well.

No surprise to the other states, but we're dealing, right now, with some issues related to the shrimp fishery, and it's kind of more economics and market-drive stuff right now, but, since we do have a shrimp plan, that's kind of pertinent to the council, I guess, or at least touches on a council-managed species, penaeid shrimp, and we had a pretty reasonable red snapper fishery, mini-fishery, and the weather was okay, but there are a lot of red snapper out there, and we've had pretty good results from our carcass problem as well, in terms of contributed carcasses.

At more of state-level interest, we're still moving along with our ability to stock southern flounder, and we're still, I would guess, a couple of years off or so for actually putting fish in the water, but we're actually able to spawn and bring them up and, you know, do some of the things you need to do and have the infrastructure in place, and so the flounder stocking capacity is moving along.

Also, on a state level, we've been dealing with blue crab fishery issues for quite some time now, and we're hoping that, this coming session of the General Assembly, we're able to work through some legislative adjustments to our blue crab fishery, since it's fairly unregulated, and so that's -- That will be a priority for next year, and, kind of in both worlds, mariculture -- There's a growing interest in oyster mariculture, as other states have seen, and that's sort of our primary focus, in terms of interest in South Carolina, and an aspect of the fishery which is profitable, and so you may see some interesting growth there, and this is primarily in inshore waters, obviously, and that's about it. Again, welcome to Charleston, and I'm looking forward to having you all out to dinner tomorrow evening, and I would like to see everybody come out, if you can. Thanks.

DR. BELCHER: Thanks, Mel. Any questions for Mel? Laurilee.

MS. THOMPSON: Thank you, and so you mentioned that you had some issues with the shrimp industry that were economic, and we do too, and I was wondering -- I mean, our boats are tied to the dock, and we can't sell shrimp. There are so many imports in all the freezers, and there's so much stuff, that we literally have nowhere to sell shrimp, and are you guys doing anything to help your shrimp industry, or how are you addressing that?

MR. BELL: We're, honestly, at this point, researching it, and trust me that all the states in the Southeast are dealing with the same thing right now, and states are needing to communicate on that as well, and the governors in the Southeast have been approached about that, and so we're all looking at it. Every -- Each state might be a little bit different, in terms of what's going on with their specific markets and what the issues are, but that's still for us to all kind of figure out, what's going on in our individual states, and then what sorts of remedies might be there or available or assistance that we could possibly request, and so it's still kind of early in the let's figure it out, but

trust me that all the southeastern states are aware of that, and folks are working on it as best they can, within the limitations that we have, within the laws.

DR. BELCHER: Laurilee.

MS. THOMPSON: So would some kind of message coming from the council help the situation? I mean, I know farmers -- They get subsidies from the government, and is there -- Is there a way that the fishermen, that can't even sell their product, can be compensated by the federal government, because, if you look at the argument that's been presented by the Southern Shrimp Alliance, it appears that our government has fueled this situation, by giving aid to other countries to help them start their shrimp farms, and so the actions of our federal government have now impacted our industry, and they subsidize farmers, and could they subsidize fishermen, and so would a notification from this council help?

DR. BELCHER: Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: To that, Laurilee, I agree with Mel, and I would say all the Gulf and South Atlantic states are talking about -- Because, you know, we all got a letter, or our governors got a letter, from the Southern Shrimp Alliance, and so I think the short answer is yes, and I think that there is some sort of compensation that should be available, and we're just not sure what it is, and so I don't think it falls under the regular fishery disaster process, and so the letter that we're working on right now is more generic, saying kind of here's a statement of the problem, and help us determine the mechanism, in order to fix the problem and/or offer compensation.

I would say that the ag department had offered compensation in the past, due to tariffs, and it was to the lobster industry, and so I don't know that it's out of the question that they could be compensated, but I just don't know that we know what the mechanism is, and so, since we don't really know the mechanism, I'm not sure whether a council letter would help or hurt, and I don't know, since we're unsure of the mechanism at this point.

DR. BELCHER: Myra, did you have more for that? Okay.

MR. BELL: I agree with Jessica, and I think, at this point, the council -- I think we've got enough input on the seriousness of the issue, and kind of what all is in play, and, as Jessica said, it's -- There should be something out there, but we're just not sure what the right thing is, but, at this point, I mean, I don't think the council kind of weighing-in would be necessarily useful, or worth the time right now, but I think we've got enough -- We've got enough understanding, in the whole Southeast, of the importance of the issue at a high level.

DR. BELCHER: Laurilee.

MS. THOMPSON: But, you know, they're asking for letters from the governors to support doing something, and I don't see where it would hurt for this council to also send a letter saying that we support any efforts, you know, that can be done. This council acknowledging that there is an issue I think is important, even if we don't say a whole lot in our letter, and I think the fact that we recognize that this is a problem that is infecting our shrimp industry, and all over the entire Southeast and the Gulf of Mexico, and I don't see where writing a letter that says we know about this, and we need help, and I don't see where that could hurt.

DR. BELCHER: The only thing that I would ask, and I look at my other contemporaries around the room, is just that, as a state rep, and the request coming through the governor's office, and making sure that whatever we put down does not go contrary to the governors, because, as a state representative, we have to stay under that umbrella, and so that would be the only thing that I would say, that we just have to be certain in how we word that, that we're not looking like we're stepping around what our governors' offices are offering.

MR. BELL: Yes, and part of that is that -- I brought it up because we do have a penaeid shrimp management plan, you know, but the fisheries are really prosecuted at the state level, primarily, and the states are generally the main regulator and all for this fishery, and so -- The emphasis being at the state level, through the governor's office, is fine. Sure, you could write a letter, and my thinking was, one, like Carolyn was saying, and you don't want to get things kind of cross-wired, and then two is who do you send it to? I mean, they're already dealing with the governors and all, and so I'm not sure who you would address the letter to, but certainly at some point, but we do manage -- We do have a management plan for the fishery, and it is important to us.

DR. BELCHER: Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I guess you could wait for the letters coming out of the governors' offices and then follow with a council letter. The Gulf, I believe, is trying to do a letter with all the governors on there, and so that's in progress right now, but maybe wait until, you know, a little bit after that. My understanding is that it would just go to the Biden administration and not to the Secretary of Commerce, per se.

DR. BELCHER: All right. Any other discussion for Mel, or questions for Mel? All right. Moving on, Jessica, we'll go to Florida next.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Thank you, and so a couple of updates from FWC. It seems like it's been forever ago, but ICAST, and so we were at ICAST this year, and it looked like it was another successful ICAST. We had a big Donuts and Descending Devices event again this year, and we really appreciate the South Atlantic Council, and the South Atlantic Council staff, having a booth there and helping with that event. It was a great success, and there were tons of people there, with raffles and giveaways, and there were lots of people in line to understand how to use descending devices.

Also, just like the other states, FWC conducted, during the red snapper season, our typical intensive sampling and monitoring efforts, and, also, you might have seen that we had a hurricane that hit us recently, and so that was a Category 3 hurricane. It went in at Keaton Beach, and our governor recently sent a letter requesting a federal fisheries disaster declaration for that storm.

Then we have some things that we're doing on the state side. We're working on some snook regional management, and you've probably heard me talk about redfish regional management, and so that got through the process last year, and now we're working on snook regional management, to consider same zones around the state for snook, and so that would be nine management areas, like we did for redfish, and then we're also working on some escape ring requirements for stone crab, and so I'll stop there, and I'm happy to answer any questions.

DR. BELCHER: Questions for Jessica? Okay. Seeing none, I will move -- Trish, go ahead.

MS. MURPHEY: This is not a question for Jessica or anything, but I just -- I meant to also let folks know that North Carolina is working on the regional southern flounder stock assessment update, and I just wanted to thank all the states, Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina, for cooperating and collaborating with us, with data and everything, and so I just wanted to acknowledge that and thank you all for that help.

DR. BELCHER: Thanks, Trish. So Georgia, and, in Georgia, we have a new Commissioner. He was sworn-in at the end of August, and his name is Walter Rabon. He's a twenty-plus-year veteran with the state, and he came out of Department of Law Enforcement. He was our Deputy Commissioner through his time, and our previous commissioner has stayed within state service, and he's now the Director for the Jekyll Island Authority, and so we haven't 100 percent lost him, and he just moved into an area that brings him closer to home and family.

Our shrimp season, it was one of our later season openings, and we waited until June 20 to open, and that was predominantly because of the issues, as discussed, with freezer, and freezer loads, that there was a request -- In addition to the fact that the health of this population looked good, and there wasn't any reason that we couldn't have opened the season earlier, but it was just that, with the market the way it was, they asked for a little bit of time to account for that.

Offshore activities, we've been working through the Corps to make sure our PGP permits have been updated, but, meanwhile, we've been working with the Atlanta metro area to get some of their subway cars, and so we've got another deployment of subway cars coming up here soon, and I don't know that we've picked the place yet for them to go, but the Coast Guard and DNR staff have been activity working to get the cleanups to the level that they need to be. We found that there's some things that we can actually cut -- I shouldn't say cut corners, but the idea that there were things that we had taken out before that aren't necessarily items that have to come out, that work well for substrate, and so we've been making some good progress on that, and Atlanta has been really excited about getting some cars down here.

We're still working through our shrimp 2018 disaster funds, and we had to go back to the table, and there were some concerns about how we were determining direct payments, and so we kind of went back to the drawing board and went through and just now resubmitted for that amendment, and we outlined a new approach for that that, right now, has been accepted and seems to be a better mechanism than what we had originally implied, and then, following-up, our last thing was red snapper season, and so we also had folks out there dockside and collecting through our carcass program.

We had 170 otoliths and fin clips collected, and sixty-five came from the dockside, and 105 from the carcass freezers, and so one of our higher years for numbers, and, with that, Georgia has been pretty much plugging along as it normally does. Questions for me? All right. Seeing none, we will move on to the next item on our agenda, which is the Joint Commercial Electronic Logbook Amendment, and so that's Myra.

MS. BROUWER: While I'm looking for my little document that I'm going to put up on the screen, this is Attachments 2a and 2b in your briefing book. Attachment 2b was received late on Friday,

and so that was emailed to everybody over the weekend, and that's the draft codified text for the amendment.

In order to not have to pull up these large documents, I've put together sort of a little easier to look at -- This is not in your briefing book. Recall that this is the joint amendment that we've been working together with the Gulf Council to address electronic reporting for commercial vessels, and so we've been working on this for the past year or so.

You looked at the amendment in June, and so I've put up some bullets there to kind of recap what we've been doing since the June meeting, and so the IPT revised the economic environment sections to address some of the comments that came up at the June meeting and other bits that needed to be updated and revised. We also revised the history of the coastal fisheries logbook program, and so there's a pretty detailed account of how the program was put in place and all the changes that took place over the years, and so we made sure that that was all cleaned up.

We revised the social environment and the social effects sections as well, and then we revised the language for Option 1. Recall this is a categorical exclusion type of document, and so it doesn't have your -- You know, what you're mostly used to seeing, a whole bunch of different alternatives and all that stuff, and so I will get to that revised language here in a second.

We also mainly focused on completing the administrative effects section for the amendment, and there's a lot of estimated costs, and mainly these are costs that are going to be incurred by the agency, and so I will walk you through those tables here in a minute, so that you have a better idea of what this is going to cost. We completed the economic effects analysis, and so the RIR section of that document has been completed, and then, of course, we did a round of public hearings, in late July, for the South Atlantic, and the Gulf did theirs at the end of August, and we transmitted the document to the Southeast Fisheries Science Center for their final review and certification, and so we're at the very end, and what we're going to be doing today is considering this one for submission to the Secretary.

The first thing that I wanted to point out to you was this language for Option 1. This is on PDF page 24 of Attachment 2a, if you want to follow along, and, in the document, it's page 11. The portion that is not highlighted is the current language, which simply says maintain the reporting requirements described above, and that refers to the no action, and so what's currently in place, which, as you know, is a paper logbook, and so the IPT revised the language a little bit, mainly just to make it match what's in the regulatory text, and so you see the highlighted portion is what we are suggesting, and it's more descriptive.

It refers specifically to what's in the regulations, and so, basically, it just says modify the requirements, the reporting requirements, to require that the owner or operator of a vessel for which a commercial fishing permit for South Atlantic snapper grouper, Atlantic dolphin and wahoo, coastal migratory pelagic species, or Gulf reef fish has been issued to maintain a fishing record for each trip on electronic software approved by the National Marine Fisheries Service.

These records will continue to be completed and transmitted electronically to the Science and Research Director no later than seven days after the completion of each commercial fishing trip, and then there's the bit that, if no fishing occurred during the calendar month, then those reports need to be submitted seven days after the end of the month, and then all the information that needs

to be included in the report is indicated on the accompanying instructions, and so, basically, it just lays out that, you know, the only thing that's changing is how the information is submitted. The timing requirement is still the same. I will let you digest that for a second, and, at this point, I have a draft motion here, to make sure that you guys are okay with this revision to Option 1.

DR. BELCHER: Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: (Ms. Marhefka's comment is not audible on the recording.)

DR. BELCHER: Does anybody have any questions or discussion first, before we move into the draft motion? Tim.

MR. GRINER: Yes, and I was just curious, and I can't remember, and have we ever had any discussion whether or not, at some point in the future, that this electronic reporting requirement could go the way of the burden being placed for any cost involved to the industry?

MS. BROUWER: The economic analysis does talk about potential cost savings, as far as timing, and, on some level, postage. I mean, the service does send prepaid postage for the logbooks to be sent, but sometimes they get lost and have to be resent or whatever, and then, you know, as far as the cost for operating the software, you know, it's assumed that, you know, there's going to be potentially some burden for folks that don't have access to an electronic device, but the majority of folks nowadays have an iPhone, or a tablet or whatnot, and so, as far as costs to the industry, it should be very minimal, and it's just going to be a question of people getting used to the different platform to submit, but that's been captured, and, like I said, I'm going to show you some costs that are broken down, but it's mainly costs to the agency.

MR. GRINER: I just think we need to be aware and have some discussion, because, you know, I've seen these costs to the agency, at some point in the future, get passed to the industry, and a perfect example of that right now is what's going on within HMS, where the cost of reviewing data off of an HMS pelagic longline boat is now getting transferred over to the industry, and there is significant costs, and this is something new to them, and so now, all of a sudden -- You know, this is a pretty big burden for them, and I just want to make sure that we've captured that the intent of this is not to, somewhere down the line, this thing to become burdensome to the agency, whether it be software or whatever, and these costs all of a sudden start getting shoved over to the industry, and I just want to make sure that we've had that discussion. Thank you.

DR. BELCHER: Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: I actually do have a question at this point. Myra, if I recall, a couple of months ago, there was some conversation about people that were dually-permitted, with GARFO permits and SERO permits, and, if they reported no fishing to GARFO, it wasn't getting translated to their SERO electronic reporting, and I'm wondering if that has been cleared at this point, because, you know, if you read this option, it's saying the seven-day language, and where does the burden lie, if they're dually-permitted?

MS. BROUWER: So there is still a bit of a disconnect with folks that are choosing to use eTRIPS, the platform that's been approved for use in the South Atlantic and that is being used in other regions, such as in the Greater Atlantic region. There is an issue with the Permits Office, as you

all have heard, that is preventing some of the information that's being submitted through eTRIPS from ending up where it needs to end up, and so the Fisheries Office, the Permits Office, is having to sometimes manually push the information through.

My understanding is they are working to resolve the issue. It is not an issue that has to do with the permitting. I mean, there's always going to be that little bit of, you know, a discrepancy, where the GARFO region has different timing requirements than the South Atlantic, and that was brought to you all early on, to clarify that, you know, the timing requirement is not being changed in this amendment, and so that's going to remain the same way, but this other issue that you're mentioning has more to do with problems, you know, through the permitting side of things that are being addressed, and we'll hear more about it I think on Thursday, about that specific issue.

DR. BELCHER: Okay. Other comments or questions or discussion on this? Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: **I will move to approve the edits in Option 1 in the Comprehensive Amendment Addressing Electronic Logbook Reporting for Commercial Vessels.**

DR. BELCHER: Do I have a second for that motion? Tim. Further discussion? Laurilee.

MS. THOMPSON: Just a question, and so, if the -- Does there need to be language in this proposed language that specifies that those with dual permits have to report to each of their agencies? Does that language need to be included?

MS. BROUWER: I don't believe it does. Like I said, the way we changed it is to make sure it kind of matches up with what's currently in the regulations, but I will look to Monica. I don't believe that it does need to be included. I think it's captured elsewhere in the regulatory language.

DR. BELCHER: Monica.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: No, and I agree with Myra. I do have some things to bring up for the codified text, the regulatory language you'll see, but we can do that at the end of Myra's discussion.

DR. BELCHER: Okay. Any other comments or questions? **Any objection to the motion?** Okay. **Seeing none, the motion passes.**

MS. BROUWER: Okay, and so maybe now is a good time to bring up the draft codified text, and so let me just go find it over here. Okay, and so, as I said, this is Attachment 2b. It was emailed to you over the weekend, and it's also been posted under Recent Documents, and it's also linked on the agenda, but so we didn't have a whole lot of time to review this. As I said, it came in kind of late, and so I wanted to make sure that I brought it up for you all to look at it and that you had it over the weekend, in case you wanted to take a quick look ahead of today.

The way it's laid out, there's a paragraph that addresses each FMP, and there is language for catastrophic conditions, which is repeated under each FMP, where it says basically the agency will make a determination when there is a need to allow fishermen to submit their reports on paper forms, and, as I said, this language up here is where we're trying to kind of match up what's in the document with the way it's explained in the regulations.

I suspect what Monica will bring up has to do with the language under the Coastal Migratory Pelagics FMP, and so I'm just going to scroll down, real quick. For the other ones, it is basically the exact same thing, but it's a little bit different for the CMP FMP, and I guess -- Monica, is this a good time for you to kind of explain that bit?

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: Sure, and I also, after this -- I have two issues, and one has to deal with the catastrophic conditions and the use of paper forms. I believe that the Center may not want paper forms anymore at all, and so, if there were catastrophic conditions, that gives the RA the -- We have, in the draft regs right now, that the RA has the authority to modify or waive reporting time requirements, and so I think that's one thing to think about.

The other one is specific to -- I think you have it up there, right, Myra, and, for coastal migratory pelagics, remember there used to be a lot of different species in the Coastal Migratory Pelagic FMP than there are now, and, right now, we have king mackerel, Spanish mackerel, and Gulf cobia, but, before that, we used to have little tunny and a number of other things, and so, over time, these regulations were just kind of modified to address those things, those other species, and so I am going to propose that we change the codified text now in 622.374 to just make it that the owner or operator whose vessel is issued a commercial permit for king or Spanish mackerel must submit an electronic report.

The only other species, remember, besides king and Spanish, in the FMP is Gulf cobia, and you don't need a permit to harvest Gulf cobia, and so I guess it would be -- It seems, to me, based on the action about modifying the reporting requirements for those who hold commercial vessel permits, it's appropriate to just remove this outdated language. I can bring this back to you, if you want, and I can give Myra my edits to the codified text and then have it brought back to you at this meeting, before the end of the week, and then you can look at it and have a little bit more information in front of you.

DR. BELCHER: Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: That's a good catch, because I was just thinking that I just renewed my permits, and, when you go on the permit renewal page, there's no such thing as a coastal migratory pelagic permit. There's a king mackerel one, and so I could see how that could be confusing for someone, and so I would absolutely be supportive of that.

DR. BELCHER: Other comments? Okay. Seeing none, that would be great, Monica. Thank you.

MS. BROUWER: Okay, and so, moving on to other things, here are the -- There is three table that I'm going to bring up, and these start on PDF page 74 of the main document, and it's page 61 of the document itself, and so the first table shows the annual cost savings that have been estimated to result from the conversion from paper to electronic reporting requirements, and so, as you can see, these are estimates we've obtained from the Center, and so, for the three tables that I'm going to show, you have the activity, the estimated cost, and then the lead agency, and so these are all cost savings that are going to go to the Center, once the program is implemented.

The next table is the estimated annual long-term maintenance and service costs, and so, again, over time, these are costs that are going to be incurred mainly by the Center, and we've got their customer support hours being shared with the Regional Office, and the third table is the initial one-

time costs. Once the program is implemented, this is how much we estimate, or the IPT estimates, it's going to cost to get it going.

I have highlighted items where the councils were included, and that has to do with disseminating the information to the public, and so we included the costs of the six public hearings that were conducted, outreach webinars, and I know we've not talked about this, but there is an expectation that a lot of outreach is going to have to happen, and so I wanted to bring this to your attention, that the councils have been included in that, and then as well as efforts in the Mid-Atlantic and in New England, as Kerry mentioned a minute ago, to reach out to folks that have Southeast permits, but that also have permits in other regions.

There is the estimated total, and then here's where we basically just summarize the net change in administrative costs, and so, for year-one, you can see there's going to be \$157,500 initial costs, but then, over time, there's going to be some cost savings. This is mainly what we've been working on since June. In terms of effects to the industry, to the public, and those were summarized for you in June, and there's nothing really much different than what you saw, and so the next thing I was going to do, unless you have any questions, is kind of summarize what the fishermen had to say, and we have the summary of the public comments, and it's on PDF page 79, document page 66.

We had public hearings via webinar that were held July 25th through the 27th, and we had a comment period open from July 18th through the 28th, and we didn't receive any written comments on the online form or otherwise, but the folks that came to the webinars, a handful of them, did have some comments, and so those are the ones that I have put up here for you.

Overall, in general, everyone is very supporting, and everybody can't wait until this system is implemented. They are aware that it's going to take some time, and I've highlighted, in the bullets, you know, the main observations, or comments, that fishermen -- Concerns that they have, and so they did mention that keeping track of discards will be easier, and there is a recognition that, you know, consolidating the discard logbook on the electronic platform is going to be a benefit.

There was a suggestion to make sure the agency prepares to launch a portal before making the electronic reporting mandatory, and this is because fishermen are concerned that their submitted information is not getting where it needs to go, and so, you know, folks were pretty adamant that having, you know, a portal, where they can interact, sign-on or what have you, to make sure that their information is being captured, was going to be very beneficial, and there is the expectation for them to be assured that their data are safe.

Additionally, there was also the acknowledgement that electronic systems do fail, and so that there needs to be a way to account for those failures. Also, the acknowledgement that electronic reporting will hopefully increase compliance, and there is acknowledgment that, right now, there is a substantial, sometimes substantial, time lag in when people send in their reports, and sometimes until the very end, when their permit needs to be renewed, and so the electronic reporting will hopefully diminish the number of folks that are doing that. It's really not going to be possible anymore once the electronic reporting is in place. That's pretty much a summary of public comments. Does anybody have any questions?

Okay, and so the next thing I have for you is, basically, I've just put in a few bullets in here for the draft rationale that's in the document, and the document is narrative form. They're broken down into several bullets here for you to kind of digest it a little bit easier. We've had this conversation for some time, and I think everybody agrees that submitting logbooks on paper is a cumbersome and slow process, and, also, fishermen have to take the time to prepare and mail the logbooks, causing some delay in when the data arrive, and processing of those data, and the potential for that information to become lost or whatever.

There is, obviously, a cost to transfer paper logbook data to an electronic format, and so e-reporting is going to reduce this cost and benefit management, and so the council is supportive of that. E-reporting will have minimal impacts to fishermen, while providing benefits for management, mainly improved timeliness and accuracy of commercial catch and discard data and improved compliance, and then the benefit to fishermen from increased convenience and ease of reporting and assurance that their information was submitted is beneficial, and so the council fully supports adoption of e-reporting for commercial vessels, and so, basically, that's what I've gathered in our conversations, the conversations you all have had, and so please feel free to add more rationale that you would like to see included in the document.

DR. BELCHER: Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: No additional rationale, but is there a portion of the overall amendment that goes into kind of the dual reporting and having to report for multiple council jurisdictions? Is there a part that gets into that?

MS. BROUWER: There is. There is a description for the overlapping programs, and so we do mention that, you know, the ITQ program in the Gulf of Mexico -- There is going to be some overlap there, but I think we clarify that that is not anything that has to do with what we're doing here, and so those folks are going to have to continue to use their process, and so there is acknowledgment of the various other portions, and we do mention the wreckfish amendment that's in progress, and there's going to be some overlap there, and we also acknowledge the efforts that HMS is undergoing in e-reporting, and so I think we've captured it, but, certainly, if you guys feel that it needs to be explained a little bit more, then let us know, and we can definitely do that.

DR. BELCHER: Other discussion from the group on this? Anything that we missed? Everybody is good with the rationale as it stands? Okay. Tim.

MR. GRINER: I just had one more question. Going back to the way this electronic format works, so will the fishermen be able to export the file for each trip to his own computer, so that he has access to it, regardless of what happens to the software itself, or whether he no longer has access to the software?

MS. BROUWER: I think so. I think that's how it currently works. I am not the expert on eTRIPS, and, you know, mind you, that's one of the platforms that has been approved, and so the idea is that the Southeast Fisheries Science Center is going to issue technical specifications so that other vendors may develop platforms that will hopefully be approved, and then people will have more options, and that's why I think the idea of the portal was brought up by a fisherman, because they wanted to make sure that what you just mentioned is something that can happen, and I think that is the case.

DR. BELCHER: Anyone else? Clay.

DR. PORCH: Just to confirm what Myra said, and, I mean, they can email the report to themselves, and so they can get it through ACCSP.

DR. BELCHER: Thanks, Clay. Anyone else? Again, everybody has confirmed that the rationale covers our intent? Okay. Myra.

MS. BROUWER: Okay, and so, to wrap this up, and I do have a draft motion up on the screen, but, since we're going to kind of regroup on the codified text, I assume this is going to come up later in the week, but just to let you know the next steps, and so the Gulf Council is going to be considering this for approval at their October meeting, and so, you know, we'll have to add the portions are still missing, such as the summary of public comments for the Gulf hearings, which took place just a few weeks ago, and then we'll finalize the document, with the intent of submitting it sometime this winter, and you've seen the timeline, and I think we have, in the timeline, that post-submittal, the agency is still going to have to do a bunch of work to get this off the ground, and so it will probably be early 2025 that we're looking at implementation, and that's all I had.

DR. BELCHER: Thanks, Myra. Anything else for Myra at this point? We'll probably just come back around when we go back into Full Council session to address the codified text discussion. Okay. The next item on the agenda is the East Coast Climate Change Scenario Planning Update from Roger.

MR. PUGLIESE: Good morning, everyone. I think we're going to jump into the East Coast Climate Change Scenario Planning Initiative, an update on where we are and where we're going and an opportunity to dive into some of the potential actions to move this effort forward.

To really touch on the initiative objectives right off the bat, and I think this is important. As I've mentioned in the past, it has roots all the way back to when our council met with the New England and Mid-Atlantic Councils, a number of years ago, and really looked at a two-pronged approach of addressing the issue of potential moving stocks and climate issues from twofold, from a management perspective and from a science and technical data collection perspective.

That's evolved to the coordination through the Northeast Coordination Council and the cooperation of the South Atlantic Council to move forward on the initiative, and the foundation objectives of this initiative were to explore how the east coast governance and management issues would be affected by climate-driven change in the fisheries, really focused on whole stock availability and distributions, the potential for shifting species, and also to advance a set of tools and processes that really provide some flexibility and some robust management strategies, which continue to promote the conservation and resilient fishing communities and address really the uncertainty, and I think, over the last little while, this has really been reemphasized, about where we are in some of the issues and climate change and the impacts of multiple climate actions.

The initiative itself has been evolving over a number of years here, and, having meetings almost weekly of our core team, we facilitated the development from an orientation, to really look at the objectives, to scoping and exploration, really to ultimately build scenarios that were addressing the issues of information, really detailed information to understanding the change, versus very limited,

and then, also, that whole gauge of the actual impacts of these areas being very significant, versus limited, and so that kind of bounded that whole discussion on scenarios and really led into the application phases, which, right now, we're actually looking at those areas and then moving into considerations of action and then into, ultimately, monitoring, which will be beyond the continued discussions.

That really focused on three major areas and key topics, one being cross-jurisdictional governance, and that really focused on the opportunity to identify improvements in structure and representation for governance on the U.S. east coast, guidelines to provide how management responsibility should change, and also improve efficiency and efficacy in joint management plans, the issue of, you know, the complications we know well, the complications of joint activities, versus coordination, and, also, to improve coordination and collaboration among all the different management entities.

The second major area was managing under uncertainty, and this is, again, to better accommodate the uncertainty in the assessment process, and I think we've all seen some of the considerations that are really kind of in our face right now, and we address related management changes, and, also, to increase the flexibility, and I think that's something really significant, the flexibility, adaptability, and robustness of management, that ability to use tools where you need to and ones that are maybe more rapid in accomplishing some of the efforts.

That will bring us to the third major area, which are data sources and partnerships, and, really, it's looking at prioritizing data and information needed for management in this changing environment and funding, more efficiently funding these different efforts, and utilizing the fishing industry. You know, we've had a lot of discussing focusing on direct coordination to try to advance that further, and, also, fostering partnerships for data sharing.

That all brought us to a culmination of this entire effort into a summit meeting that was held this year, and many of you were directly involved in that process, and it was really to bring together and develop a set of potential governance and management actions resulting from the scenario discussions, and that was really used as fodder to understand what the different bounds are and then what different areas you could begin considering, and so we had over fifty fishery managers from all the councils, and the centers, the Northeast Center, Southeast Center, Southeast Region, and Northeast Region. They met together and provided the discussion focus and really facilitated discussions on those three previously-identified key topics.

That has resulted in two major products, one being the detailed summit report and a potential action menu, and I think that's what we're going to mainly focus on today, is to dive into some of the details of that.

The purpose of the potential action menu really was to expand on and clarify and prioritize potential governance and management actions identified during the summit. There was a lot of discussions, a lot of focus, a lot of effort to meet those major areas and then provide some guidance on what actually -- Some tangible actions to advance those. Also, it's intended to be an evolving document, and I think that's a key thing too, is it's really a planning tool to guide development and collective individual priorities and to look at future issues, or ideas, that may arise.

Now this provided the basis from which the group that I mentioned earlier, the Northeast Regional Coordination Council, and then our South Atlantic representation on that, to have a review in May

of this area and to look at, in detail, the discussions of the summit report, but also dive very specifically into the potential action menu and some of the things they were discussing is the adequacy and clear and common understanding of the different actions that were presented, what the actions were, and this is where we got into some ranking of high, medium, or low, or, really, what we identified as a parking lot of areas that may not ever be addressed in this system, and also to look at the revisions to specific next steps in the process and additional groundwork identifying that you really need to address some of these certain issues.

Two of the big outcomes are to create two new standing working groups, one being the East Coast Climate Coordination Working Group, which is really going to be the leadership body that helps this go from conceptual ideas that we're talking here to actually potentially coordination and implementation, either at the individual body or across either multiple or all of the different partners, and those will have one representative from each of the councils, the commission, and the centers and region.

That will meet -- The first time I think is in November of this year, in conjunction with the next NRCC meeting, and they provide the oversight to coordinate the entire effort. The Climate Innovation Workgroup is going to be a staff group, and we still need to determine who is going to be there, but we do have the core team, and that's going to be evolving, or at least facilitating this, until we formally have a Climate Innovation Workgroup named, and, really, it is to provide monitoring of the process and then also some coordination on how to advance some of these different ones, steps needed, activities, and then support the actual coordination group as they meet.

Jumping directly into the potential actions document, one of the things we did was we compiled really just the high-priority action, and listed them by theme, and, also, what I've got in here is they're highlighted in terms of council considerations, and, also, once we get to the end, we'll jump back into these, and then we'll also address some of these specific questions on, you know, if the council supports having staff and advisors, the SSC, and time and effort, in terms of highlighting any of these actions that have been identified, and are any of the actions considered high priority in there?

We've identified some that we think are connected to the council, and are those high priority, or other ones? Are there other actions that really should just be pulled out of there and not as high priority, and moved into say, for example, the parking lot or the medium level? Are any of those other ones needed to be brought to the front, in terms of other focus in either an individual group or the overall group? That brings us into some of the priority action areas, and I'm just going to touch on those, and we'll literally go back into those, and really, under cross-jurisdictional --

MR. CARMICHEAL: I just wanted to say, before we get into the details of going through and looking at each of these items -- Carolyn, I've seen a few people get up, and you might want to take a quick break. We're doing pretty good on time.

DR. BELCHER: Yes, and we're right at five 'til. If we want, we can go ahead and do a ten-minute break and let everybody -- Be back at 10:05.

(Whereupon, a recess was taken.)

DR. BELCHER: One other order, or piece, of business was to introduce Toni Kerns, who is sitting in for Bob Beal for the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. With that, John and Roger.

MR. PUGLIESE: Okay. Let's jump back in. I'm going to quickly touch on some of the high-priority actions and then timing-wise, and then we'll jump back into detail, to be able to get into the discussion on these very specifically, and, just looking at the cross-jurisdictional governance, there are a couple in there that were really relevant to us, looking at reevaluating council committee structure, use of decision-making, and reevaluate the advisory panel representation. This provides opportunities for the coordination group that I mentioned earlier to look at the planning exercises and opportunities to how you advance and review these different components, as well as individual groups, each managed by looking at the AP representations.

Under the managing under increased uncertainty, there were two major potential actions identifying ecosystem-level contextual information, and this really gets to the opportunities to look at different types of quantitative and qualitative tools, to be able to identify and avoid risks, and that's going to be in the weeds with the innovation group, as well as the councils and commission separately, and then, in the streamlining FMPs, there's a couple of key things, and I think we've discussed some of these in the past in general, but it's very specific to climate and NEPA and opportunities to look at streamlining NEPA documents, opportunities to having GC provide consistent recommendations across the councils, and across all the regions, relative to categorical exclusions and supplemental information reports, rulemaking, et cetera. The last under that was really to look at alternative rulemaking approaches and opportunities that can go beyond, I guess, what we have traditionally used.

That brings us to data sources, and two of the areas that were touched on for our region really have to do with expansion of the study fleet to include recreational fisheries and ensure data are used, and this really to identify places where the study fleet and associated projects can actually be addressed and be able to get data access, incentives, and begin to incorporate potentially environmental data, and that's going to be done across all of the different components.

The last was the improve the use of existing data, and this was really to facilitate that ongoing discussion. If you remember, there was a coastwide workshop that was held a while back, and hopefully this is going to be a follow-up to that, to really look at how you would use these datasets across the different regions, refine that information, and make sure that they can be actually incorporated into the process, and I think those were the key areas under the potential action menus, and I just wanted to touch -- We're literally going to go back to these same slides, and get into them in detail, but I wanted to get into just kind of a timing thing.

Some things that have happened to support this entire project is that the report and potential action menu has been distributed. A press release that everybody received really focused on a lot of the highlights on this, and, also, there's a toolkit that has been developed, and it's online, and it's really taking some of the structure of what we did and provided a mechanism, if other individuals want to move forward with that same type of capability, and it even provides presentations, draft agendas, scenario creation worksheets, everything to kind of facilitate a similar discussion, but focused to a very specific issue or area.

The opportunity, which we're doing literally right now, is all the councils and commissions are moving forward with a review of this material, very specifically the action menu, and providing

some input that hopefully is going to be brought forward to the November 7 meeting, the initial meeting of the coordination group, and that will happen, as I said, on November 7. That provides the opportunity then for the councils to integrate, where they see fit, into their planning efforts, and I know some are very specific right now, and some are evolving, and that really provides the foundation for what we're going to be looking at today. What I'm going to do is go ahead and open up --

MR. CARMICHAEL: What we want to do here is just go through the things that were highlighted there. You know, we hit the general tasks, and we've hit the objectives, or the topic, and we'll look more at the tasks and think about what we would like to work on as a council, and so the things that are highlighted, the things that are listed as priorities, were based on the initial review of the items that came out of the summit workshop, and it was reviewed by NRCC back in the spring, and they came up with a triage of things that the NRCC group, with me being there to represent our area, believes are priority items and things that we could potentially make some progress on, and so each group now is discussing these action items, and then the coordination group, that's being newly created, will meet prior to the NRCC in November, and I will be up there and relay our perspectives, you know, where we feel our priority items -- What tasks we as a council want to take on, what things you might want to task your staff with working on, or maybe places where we look at contracting work.

I think, you know, we're aware of that IRA funding opportunity that is out there, and preparing for climate change, and supporting these scenario planning type of activities as part of that, and so that does give us an opportunity maybe to consider some work in supporting some activities, contracts, temporary contracted staff, et cetera, which we might not have been able to do say six months ago, before we got wind of this IRA opportunity.

With that, what we would like to do is go through the items that are highlighted. If you've seen something that is a medium or low priority that you feel that really we should talk about, then it's certainly fair to bring that to our attention as well, and I can take that back to the coordinating group, and I suspect that some others will have some stuff to add to that, also, and so I think, with that, let's just open it up, Carolyn, and we'll go through each of these highlighted boxes and get whatever feedback the council wants to offer.

DR. BELCHER: Kerry and then Jessica.

MS. MARHEFKA: I don't know if we're -- We might be thinking along the same track, but I just wanted to clarify that all of this coordination, and what we're talking about here specifically relates to our sort of east coast partners, correct, and this does not taken into account any sort of shifting boundaries or plans or coordinating that we're going to do with the Gulf Council?

MR. CARMICHAEL: Yes, that is correct. This is east coast scenario planning, and we're really looking at working with our partners to the north.

DR. BELCHER: Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: To build off of what Kerry is saying, you know, when we were at this summit, I had concerns then, and this cross-jurisdictional piece is one of my main concerns, and like how governance would change, and the specific suggestions under this action were as specific as adding people from other councils to various committees, and so, if you think about the current committee structure that we have right now, and think about the joint management plans that we have with the Gulf Council, and, you know, we have a representative here, during the whole week, from the Gulf Council, but that representative doesn't even sit on the committees that deal with the joint management plans, and so it just seems --

I don't know if it's premature, or out of order here, that we are making these considerations for the Atlantic coast, yet we already have a fairly complex structure here with how we're coordinating on these joint management plans with the Gulf Council, and so it just seems -- We all brought this up when we were at this meeting in D.C., that, at least for our council, I don't know how it can work the same as these other Atlantic coast councils, and I guess I have some concerns that the way that we interact with the Gulf will be affected.

If we make changes, it concerns me that we would inadvertently affect the Gulf Council's process, and I just feel like there's lots of details and nuances to this item, but I have a number of concerns about this particular action, or sub-action, in particular, of all the ones that are listed up there.

DR. BELCHER: Trish and then Andy.

MS. MURPHEY: Well, I was just going to say that I had the same concerns that Jessica had talked about, and I just wrote a note to myself here, is I just don't think this is a high-priority action for us, and it may be a medium, but I think what we've got going here is working very well, and so let's not fix what ain't broke, and so that's where I agree with Jessica.

DR. BELCHER: Andy.

MR. STRELCHECK: I will provide a little bit different perspective, and so I see this as a high priority, and it's for the reasons that you both just were stating, right, some of the concerns with regard to what this would look like, what are we talking about, whether we need change or don't need change, and I know, John Carmichael, maybe to put you on the spot, but you were at that NRCC meeting earlier this year, and I believe Mike Pentony in the Northeast was talking about this in kind of greater detail, in terms of proposals with regard to governance structure.

I expect, when we meet in November, this will continue to be kind of a priority-driven discussion for the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic, and how we intersect with them I think is going to be really important, with regard to the conversations on governance. Then, later today, we're going to be talking about the council's response letter to the NMFS draft governance policy, right, and so all of this kind of relates to, you know, the need for, or lack of need for, you know, restructuring, and what does that look like.

DR. BELCHER: Other comments? John.

MR. CARMICHAEL: I think that one thing that would be helpful would be some feedback on, you know, what do you think of when you hear the leadership planning exercise, and is this something where you would be interested, if there was some sort of meeting with a handful of

folks from the commission and the three councils to work on this, because, you know, I think opinions could vary quite a bit.

I don't know that the EDs, or maybe the EDs and chairs alone, are going to necessarily be enough to get into something that gets right at the core of how we do business, particularly since there could be quite a difference of opinion in how we do that, and then we have the commission, which, you know, has come up a lot in these discussions, because we have different ways of working with the commission, and the Mid-Atlantic has different ways of working with the commission, and we have to make sure that they're not left out in the cold, but we also have the Gulf, and I think that's something that, you know, we have to make sure we continue to bring to the fore, that we have to actually be respectful of how we work in our region with our partner to the south, which is not necessarily part of this whole process, and we don't want to get into something that's cumbersome.

I mean, if you guys have some thoughts on how we can make progress on this, because I do think it's -- It was a big topic at the summit, and quite a few representatives there really got into the weeds on this, in those breakout groups, and so I think it's going to continue to come up and be pushed, and so we may want to have a good -- You know, some good suggestions to carry back when this first meeting of this coordination group occurs, as to how we may make progress here.

DR. BELCHER: Tim.

MR. GRINER: Thank you for that, John, and I was -- In my mind, I was thinking the exact same thing, and what is a leadership planning exercise, and who is conducting it, and absolutely I don't think it can be, you know, just the executive directors and council chairs. I think you have to have council members involved. There's a lot of different aspects to this, and so, yes, I think that absolutely there would have to be, actually, a rather large group of council members involved, because it's just -- You know, at least, you would have to have maybe one from each state, but thank you for bringing that up. That was important.

DR. BELCHER: Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I like what John is suggesting, where maybe there is some larger group that talks about this. I think what he is suggesting would involve folks from ASMFC, but also maybe folks from the Gulf, and is that what you're suggesting as well, that, for our particular area, that it really needs to be more southeastern focused? I guess I just -- Can you be more specific about what you were thinking?

MR. CARMICHAEL: I'm thinking maybe we need a good, strong council group, but not excessively large, that perhaps starts to map this out, but then we have to make sure that, within the process, there's ample time to loop back and have full council discussion, is how I'm sort of thinking about it now, and I think maybe, you know, get an initial plan, perhaps, from the more leadership level, and then, when we dig into that initial plan ourselves, I think we have to get good Gulf participation, where we maybe invite the Gulf chair and vice chair, as well as a liaison, and then perhaps, you know, Carrie, the executive director, to come. Then we have some -- You know, where we really get into the weeds on it for what it means to us.

That maybe an efficient way, I'm thinking, as I hear the discussion go on to do it, and so it's sort of a first cut of what the heck does this mean, and then make sure there's time in the process so

that everybody has a chance to then talk about it around the table, and then we would have to go back to, you know, a leadership group of some sort to gather the feedback and see if we can find common ground.

DR. BELCHER: Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: So can you remind me of the timeline, because I know the NRCC meeting is in the fall, and are we expected to have made significant headway on this particular action by that time, and then, I guess, just to kind of build off of that, if we take some of these high-priority items, action items on the list, and we make them say medium, or in the parking lot, and then we take some of the medium items and make them high priority, but we're just one council in this process, and I don't understand the mechanism, or the procedure, for how that would work, and so, to give a specific example, there's a number of items listed in the medium priority that had to do with data collection and permits across different councils and different council jurisdictions.

I felt like, when we were there, when the South Atlantic reps were there, at this climate summit, that those were some of the things that we were wanting to be priority, but we kind of lost out in the voting exercises when we were at the summit, and so we were thinking that the science needed to come first, and figuring out the permits needed to come first, how to work across the SSCs, and all those things needed to come first, yet we didn't have enough votes to get that to the top, and so it stayed in the medium. If we, today, this week, were to flip-flop some of those things, and we're just one council, how does that work in this process? Can one of you all explain that? Sorry to just blow this up.

MR. CARMICHAEL: No, not at all, and I think, you know, you expressed the situation pretty well. My expectation, going into this, would be the first meeting of this coordination group is that we're not expecting that anybody would make progress on any of these actions. Hopefully everybody has had a chance to have a discussion like this and review it and hear -- You know, hear each council's and commission's concerns.

What I do think would probably be a good outcome for that meeting would be some feedback on what the true priorities are, maybe a workplan over say the next three years, which I would think of, to say, you know, what we really want to get on right away, and then some process, and like how are we going to do some of these things, and, particularly, for me, when I think of the how, it's how do we take this giant group, which is, you know, Florida to Maine, and get all these folks together and give everyone a voice and deal with some of these topics, which are really controversial and potentially difficult to manage?

I think we really have a challenge to come up with a process that's going to work and give everybody representation, and then the last part of it is, as you said, there are some topics that I think are very important to us, and so the last thing I would like to be able to go to them with is say, you know, these are some things that we intend to work on, and they may not have been a priority for the overall group, but we as a council -- You know, when I think about our own climate preparedness and becoming resilient and the things that are covered under that IRA, you know, when we can talk about that in more detail, I see that as being a perfect, you know, vehicle for us to be able to make some progress on some of those mid-term projects and priorities that maybe didn't rise up here, but we feel like we can direct our resources, under IRA, toward doing some of those things, and we would just be letting the others know.

This may not have been a topic for everyone, but it's a huge topic for us, and we're going to work on it, and I think, you know, the data stuff is big, and then the -- You know, the climate vulnerability stuff, the ecosystem status reports, where our region is quite a bit behind the Northeast Region, and those are all things that we can get into.

DR. BELCHER: Jessica, to that?

MS. MCCAWLEY: So then, at the end of this discussion, or at the end of this week, relative to this topic, do we need some sort of motion that directs staff to apply for some of this funding, or use some of this funding, in order to work on some of the items that the South Atlantic Council sees as a priority? I guess I'm trying to just take what you're saying and put it into an action for this council, and do you need us, as council members, to say, hey, go seek this funding, and how do we do that, I guess, because I don't fully understand how that IRA funding works. Is there some that is partially set aside for each council and then another pot of funds that has to be applied for? I guess part of it is I'm not understanding exactly the nuances of how the IRA funding works.

MR. CARMICHAEL: To that, there is going to be a bit of funding coming out initially to each council, distributed equally, and I think it's like \$375,000 per council, and NMFS would like to have an idea how we're going to spend that by the end of September, or by the end of the year, depending on how all the timing goes, but they want to get that money out though in the first quarter.

Then there's going to be an additional pool that is competitive across the councils, and the councils asked that that be softened a bit in the competitive nature, but that's been rejected by NMFS, and so there will be -- I forget the numbers, and I think there's twenty, and I think they're giving out three, and so like \$17 million that would be left competitive, and it goes over a number of years, and so this is in the staff report. There's a write-up on this, if you want to look ahead at that, and so what I think would be really good, as far as process-wise, is if we can identify things here, and I think a motion, maybe in Full Council, when I go over the staff report, addressing IRA funding and giving some guidance on ways that you think that IRA funding should be used, and, most importantly, starting off with the initial pot of money that we have.

Then what we would do with that is discuss it at the ExCom budget meeting, and I think get into some more details and look at specific funding amounts and timing and factor it into our budget and what folks can do, and then it would come to the council in December, with hopefully more of a plan as to certainly what we'll do with the initial money, and that's money we can spend over three years, which is super helpful, and then what priorities we may do as far as preparing proposals and grant applications to go after the remaining money and where we think that fits in with our needs, and so it would be sort of a multistep here, and I think starting here with what are some things that we would like to do, and then, on Friday, we think about where do these fit in in IRA.

I think, you know, my first thought on the IRA, the initial amount, is potentially, and this is something that we'll need to discuss, is that we could hire someone temporarily, under a contract, to be kind of point on dealing with a lot of these scenario planning activities, and even potentially, you know, getting either supporting and coordinating or getting into doing some of the tasks that are listed here.

DR. BELCHER: Okay. I've got Kerry, Tom, Trish, Toni, and Andy, and so Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: Just back to the list, and I agree, Jessica, you know, with everything that you said. You know, I sort of came out of the meeting feeling like the redheaded stepchild, if you will, from the Northeast Region folks, and, because of that, I would hate not to be right there when these discussions are happening, as far as reevaluating council and committee structure and things like that, and so I do see why that's a first priority, even if that's not our first priority.

If they're going to go ahead and have those discussions anyway, we need to be there, and I would just hope that, between our leadership and our region's leadership, it is very clear that, you know, we operate differently, because of our Gulf structure and east coast structure, and that we really sort of stand up for what we need, because it was pretty glaring that our needs were very different at that meeting, and that concerns me, moving forward.

DR. BELCHER: Tom.

MR. ROLLER: Thank you. I am going to go back and say how much I appreciate Jessica's comments, as well as Kerry's comments. They captured exactly how I felt leaving, and I hesitate to use the word "frustrated", but what my big take-away -- It was how vastly different our region is, versus the rest of the east coast, and my major concern was that our values and priorities will get lost in that discussion, and I think it's very important, however we discuss going forward, that that's something that is forefront of this conversation, whether that includes the Gulf or whatnot.

DR. BELCHER: Trish.

MS. MURPHEY: So kind of following-up with what Kerry and Jessica both said, I'm sitting here, and the reason I felt like this should be a medium priority to us is that we and the Gulf -- I have not been around a long time, and just a couple of years, but it seems like the South Atlantic Council and the Gulf Council -- They have already figured it out, and maybe we are the example that the more northern states need to see.

Now, I wasn't -- I have not been here for, you know, the years, but my sense is that the Gulf and South Atlantic have been doing a very good job coordinating through time, and, you know, maybe the northern councils, and I think even ASMFC and the Mid-Atlantic, have a pretty good record, maybe, but anyway -- So never mind on that. Anyway, my point being is I guess that's why I don't see this as a high priority, because we're already doing a very good job, but we can present ourselves as the leaders in this to the northern councils, on this is how it's been working for us, and it works well.

DR. BELCHER: Toni.

MS. KERNS: Thanks. John covered a lot of what I was going to say, but I think that, you know, how we took looking at these actions at the commission was to prioritize what we wanted to put in our action plan for the coming year. We'll go back to the coordination group, and, for the issues that are important to us, that require other bodies, we'll hope that those other bodies want to make those priorities as well, but everybody has limited resources, time, and so, obviously, we can't tackle this entire priority list even in the coming year, and so it will be a negotiation, I guess, maybe

is the best word, within that coordination group even, and so I would hope that that group can work with each other to figure out what are the priorities and learn from each other.

I don't think that, in particular, this first action has a lot of solid direction yet, and it quite a large topic, and it's going to be something that's really difficult, and I think that lessons learned from how other bodies work together will be very important to bring to the table to try to get to an end result, which is something that is, I think, a very challenging topic to figure out, but I think the other management bodies are trying to do the same, and it's trying to just figure out what could work in their action plans, and not necessarily use the priorities from here. Some of the things that the commissioners were interested in were in the medium-priority levels as well.

DR. BELCHER: Thanks, Toni. Andy.

MR. STRELCHECK: Thanks. I want to try to pull a couple of threads together here. One, I think, with the Gulf and South Atlantic and the relationship that's been built there with joint FMPs, that has been working fairly well, and certainly, in light of climate change, in light of, obviously, shifting stocks, we are going to be intersecting more with the Mid-Atlantic and New England and the Atlantic States, right, and so the relationship there has been fairly good, right, but how does that evolve over time, and what does that look like? Is there changes that need to be made, and so I think that's just really important, from the governance structure, is to kind of where we head from here, and does the future look different than the current, you know, state of governance.

John mentioned IRA, and I guess a couple of thoughts that I have here is the NRCC, the east coast climate change group, priorities may or may not fully align within the South Atlantic Council's IRA priorities, right, and so there might be things that are being worked coastwide, but then the South Atlantic is going to come in and compete for IRA funds that are very much regionally specific, right, and so I keep that in mind as well, is that we're not necessarily prioritizing workload for the full suite of IRA projects that you might be interested in ultimately, but there are, obviously, opportunities to fill gaps and knowledge and information.

Then the last thing I will mention is, last week, I had a chance to meet with Gulf Council leadership about the ideas that they're starting to come up with for IRA proposals, and some of the work that the Fisheries Service is doing, and so I want to offer up both assistance from the SERO-Science Center climate team as well as any sort of, you know, discussion topics and input, in terms of ideas as you work toward prioritization, and I think it's a really good idea that we build that between now and December and come back with that list of priorities for December.

DR. BELCHER: Other comments? Clay.

DR. PORCH: I just couldn't resist commenting on the point that, you know, the Gulf and South Atlantic are working pretty well on some of these joint management plans, but you don't have to go too far back when it was quite acrimonious, especially think king mackerel, and, in fact, I would say vicious, and so I think it behooves us to get out ahead of this and start working sooner, rather than later.

The other point that I would make is that we're also having related issues on the science side of the house, and so the Northeast Fisheries Science Center and the Southeast are talking more and more about how we're going to collect data differently, because, you know, when you have

something like black sea bass moving up the coast, obviously that's going to affect the allocations, and we need to understand what fraction of the stock is in what waters, and all those sorts of things, and so there's a big lift ahead on the science side as well. Thank you.

DR. BELCHER: Okay. Other comments or discussion from the group? Circling back, John.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Yes, and so, maybe to sort of wrap up this first highlighted box, is it seems like to go up to the coordinating group meeting, and we need to better define what is meant here and come up with a robust process for addressing this that makes sure that each entity has a voice, and has an equal voice, so that, you know, one group is not rolled over by maybe another group that happens to have more states, et cetera, which often happens in the kind of voting that we did at the summit. Then try to come up with a plan and a timeline for how we do this and then make sure that that includes ample opportunity for thorough review at each council and at the commission.

DR. BELCHER: Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I think that John said it there at the end, each council, meaning we would coordinate this with ASMFC and the Gulf, so that we're not operating over here in a vacuum. Okay. Thanks.

DR. BELCHER: Okay.

MR. CARMICHAEL: I think, if that's good, maybe the next one in this theme is looking at advisory panels, and, you know, I just wonder if you guys have any thoughts, or any concerns, on this, and I think this is something that we could do internally ourselves and then just report out to the broader group.

DR. BELCHER: Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I don't have concerns, and I would actually say that we are a little ahead of the game here. We've already been looking at this, and we've been populating our APs with the species that are moving into other regions, and adding people from other areas, and so I guess I would say we've already started this.

DR. BELCHER: Tom.

MR. ROLLER: That's a very good point, and I agree with that, and I believe that we are truly ahead of the game here. We have good representation from other regions on most of our APs.

DR. BELCHER: Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: We don't have to do it now, but I wonder if it might be useful, at some point, to come up with some sort of trigger, or threshold, and I believe there was some sort of trigger in the allocation document, and like that 15 percent number, that we were like where did that come from, and I'm not suggesting that, but, maybe down the road, we have a conversation, as a council, saying, you know, once we see X thing happen to this species, that's a trigger for adding AP members from whatever region that has shifted to, and that's a discussion we could have later.

DR. BELCHER: Trish.

MS. MURPHEY: I was -- I think we do a great job with our AP representation, and I know this also talks about underrepresented and underserved groups, and so, when I was with APNIP, we were kind of dealing with the same thing, getting, you know, underrepresented and underserved groups on our committees, and we began just reaching out to the HBCUs, and those are students, but, if we can get them interested and participating on these APs, they've kind of got built-in mentors on those APs, that maybe that will -- That gives those folks an opportunity to learn more and see, you know, real-life issues and getting out of the classroom and hearing and experiencing real-time issues and just meeting -- You know, meeting their fellow AP members, I think would be a great type of outreach, and to also get them more involved with fisheries. That's just a thought.

DR. BELCHER: Okay. Are there additional comments? Back to you, John.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Okay. Thank you for that, and then I think Roger can scroll on down. The next theme is something I feel like we deal with a lot, managing under increased uncertainty. In some cases, given our uncertainty, it's hard to imagine how much more it can increase, but, you know, some areas have better data, and have had better data than us, and so the first action addresses ecosystem-level information to be considered within the management process, and so really just, first of all, trying to find the information.

The highlighted task that crosses over to individual councils and commissions is identify opportunities to use specific types of quantitative and qualitative ecosystem information to identify and avoid risks. This is where I think things like ecosystem status reports and climate vulnerability analyses are -- They were probably on people's minds when they thought about this using specific information, and the challenge that we face is really not having as much of that information, having, you know, maybe one ecosystem status report, as opposed to annual ecosystem status reports, which is more common in the Northeast.

I will say, as the CCC has discussed the IRA situation and climate preparedness, one of the things that both Carrie and I have raised repeatedly is that we are not in the same situation nationally across the councils, in terms of having access to this information. You know, as much as the councils to our north, the region to our north, may have more than we have in this region, there is actually other regions of the country that have quite a bit more information and are much farther ahead, in terms of actually incorporating even quantitative information into their stock assessments and their management actions, and so we have a long ways to go.

DR. BELCHER: Roger.

MR. PUGLIESE: I think that's pretty critical, because one of the things that has led to a lot of the things even beyond the ecosystem status reports and climate vulnerability analyses are, in the other regions, they've created the analyses that they've got integrated ecosystem assessments, and then, as John has indicated, not only one, but multiple climate vulnerability assessments, or multiple ecosystem assessment reports, and that really facilitates the implementation side of it that we are just beginning to get at, and so I think that's pretty critical, in terms of where we are relative to the other regions.

DR. BELCHER: Other comments from folks? Okay. John.

MR. CARMICHAEL: One idea I've had for trying to get at this is maybe we would have some sort of SSC-led workshop, where we try to identify -- I mean, bringing in state people, kind of like a SEDAR data workshop, maybe, when I think about it, to bring in the states as well to really start identifying the information that's out there, and then that may help us then learn, as we work through this regionally -- You know, regionally work through this group, maybe we learn from the other areas how they're actually implementing and maybe some of the pitfalls they're finding, so we can try and avoid those as we move forward in our region, just trying to get the information and think how we can incorporate it into our processes, like SEDAR and other analyses. That may be something that we can support, getting people together, just to start brainstorming and identifying sources of data.

DR. BELCHER: So one comment I have with that is I think back to what we learned at CMOD, and I think some of it is you don't know what you don't have, until you get an opportunity to kind of come outside of that, and so, I mean, where there might be things on the east coast that we're looking at, there was a lot of things that we saw from the west coast as well, and so I think that is kind of -- Again, how do you integrate all of that, because it's -- Anyone else have comments or questions? Andy.

MR. STRELCHECK: Related to that, and not only what's, I think, in other regions that's being done, but I think what's in the works, or being planned or developed, or what needs to be planned or developed, in the Southeast in particular, and I think there are some things that are underway that maybe the council isn't even aware of, right, and so I go back to the NMFS climate team and some of the work that's happening in the region already, ensuring that you're aware of, obviously, all of those efforts.

DR. BELCHER: Clay.

DR. PORCH: Thank you. I just wanted to add, at this point, we are working on developing a more comprehensive ecosystem status report for the South Atlantic. Also, we just got permission to hire some -- Four different positions for climate-ready fisheries, as part of the climate, ecosystem, and fisheries initiative, and those positions would help us not only develop things like ecosystem status reports with climate indicators in there, but work with the council to figure out things that -- Information we can provide that's actionable, and, like I've said to some of your folks on staff, and ours, we want to get past just the letter-writing stage, and so what information can we provide that the council can then say we're going to take these actions over, and I think that's a dialogue that we need to initiate very soon. We've had some conversations with both the Gulf and Atlantic Council staff about that, and I think this is timely to reinvigorate those conversations.

MR. PUGLIESE: As part of that bigger picture on that, one of the things I think that's also lacking in our region, and I will put the plug in, because it's coming from the CCC habitat workgroup, or the discussions we've had, and it's there also have been habitat assessments done in the other regions, and I think that would help our region, if we did go get that accomplished, so that we had a gauge of how much change is actually going to happen and how that's going to influence our species and fisheries and into the future, because we already have some of those different things,

like mangroves and changes in some of other baseline habitats occurring, and so I think it would be good to encourage, if the resources are available, to also advance that in our region, too.

DR. BELCHER: Do you want to move on to the next point?

MR. CARMICHAEL: The next item is streamlining FMP documentation and rulemaking, and there is a couple of things here that could impact us. The first is looking at NEPA documents, how they can be streamlined, incorporation by reference, different related documents, and there is the categorical EFP or something, I think it's called, the categorical -- Categorical exclusion, which some regions use, and it's something that is being looked at, and then some progress on this, in terms of the general idea of streamlining, is, you know, earlier this year, we initiated some discussions with the regional office, looking at ways to streamline our process to become more efficient, to become more responsive, and "nimble" is a word that's been used.

There's also a group -- There's an NGA group that's been working on this too, trying to look at nimbleness within federal regulations and federal rulemaking, and so I think there's some progress here, and it would be nice to bring that in, and it's good that we are working on it, and so this is another area where perhaps, you know, we can contract with some additional support, through our IRA funding, to make some real progress on the idea of streamlining and maybe identify places where we have bottlenecks and then be able to bring to the councils ways that we can improve those bottlenecks.

I imagine that this probably is a priority topic for everybody, and I know it is for us, and we're always trying to find ways to streamline ourselves, and then the other issue there is, you know, just really working with General Counsel to deal with things like the categorical exclusions, and then the various informational reports, because there is quite a bit of variation in how the Northeast, versus the Southeast, Regions are doing some of this stuff and the way they use these different documents, and trying to get some consistency there and seeing where an area has something that works rather efficiently, maybe with less extensive, expansive, giant documentation required to get to a fishery action, and that could streamline our overall process.

Any additional thoughts you guys have on streamlining would be good, and then the last part of that is also looking at alternative rulemaking approaches, because, you know, there are some regions, like the Greater Atlantic, that have some fairly quick rulemaking things that they do, where it's basically the council makes a motion to say change a catch level at a meeting, and writes a letter, and then the RA is authorized to implement that, and so they can do things like adjusting an ABC without going through anything as comprehensive as our amendments, certainly, or even our framework amendments, and they have a very efficient process, and so that's something else that I think we definitely want to look at, and being nimble, as it's being put, is probably one of the best things we can do to be more climate responsive going into the future.

DR. BELCHER: Trish.

MS. MURPHEY: Trying to get in that nimbleness, you know, some of the things that we do in North Carolina is we build in what we call adaptive management, but it's basically based off some, you know, triggers of some sort. If this happens, then we'll make this management change, and maybe there's something we can build in, either through rulemaking or, you know, working with

the Regional Administrator, but you can build those into the amendment, and so, that way, you can be quicker at making an adjustment to something, if need be.

DR. BELCHER: Andy.

MR. STRELCHECK: I will just say that this is a priority of mine, regardless of it showing up here, right, and my team has actually been working on looking at various options and models, including what John mentioned, the GARFO model, but also the Alaska model, and a few other options. As you well know, we sit around this table, and oftentimes the assessment is out of date by the time we receive it, because of the time lag in data, and then it often takes us one or two years to ultimately implement it, and so the sooner we can react to an assessment, or catch limit advice, the better, and ways we can streamline the process to cut down our workload would be a benefit to us.

DR. BELCHER: John.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Andy, I'm just curious, and do you have any sense, or maybe Rick, of, you know, something we could do to kickstart our efforts toward streamlining our process? I mean, my sense is we have the same people working on that as we have working on everything else, and do we need someone just devoted to this over a year or so, to really dig into all the details and maybe work through everybody's input and ideas?

MR. STRELCHECK: The Gulf Council has been starting to focus on this directly, right, but I reached out to you, because I wanted to pull in the South Atlantic Council and make sure that, where we can, we have alignment. I think the next step is probably going to be some presentations to you, Carrie Simmons, and others, with regard to kind of findings and how we could then integrate this into some of the prioritization planning that the council will be working on over the coming year, and so we'll be working on that.

We're not quite ready yet, and we're still doing some investigating, and, you know, one of the things that is certainly a consideration for me is that we might eliminate some workload on the council's behalf, but it might still fall to the agency for rulemaking and for some of the economic analysis, and so we're trying to be very thoughtful with regard to what's the balance of workload, and how does that shift, because I could see we would free up a lot of your time, which means you're going to be working on more stuff that's still going to be coming into the agency, right, and so how do we balance all of that?

DR. BELCHER: Other thoughts and comments from the group on this?

MR. CARMICHAEL: All right. Theme 3 is data sources and partnerships, and the first thing highlighted here was the idea of a study fleet, and so this is something that came up at the summit. The Greater Atlantic Region and the Northeast Science Center have been using study fleets as a way to get a lot more detailed information on fishing practices, fishing locations, fishery-dependent information, in much more detail than we get normally. That's something that could be expanded say to our recreational fleets, et cetera, and so it's a new idea to us, but it is getting some traction, and I know, you know, Andy and Clay have talked about it, and looking at it and into places in our region that it could help, and so, you know, it's a priority identified by the group, and I also think

it is something that we are working on and recognize as a way to get more information on our fisheries.

As we all know, things like snapper grouper, they're very varied by depth and by latitude, just by how a person fishes, and so we probably do need something like this, that's fairly intensive, to allow fishermen to give us feedback and real information on what it is they're doing.

I think the challenge here would be just with the task, and, you know, how do we identify where it can be used, how we can use it, and incentives is always important for getting people to do voluntarily giving more data, giving you more information, and it's going to take time and energy from them. Getting into the environmental data could be a big thing as well, and that's something that came up even back in our early citizen science efforts, was about just putting, you know, environmental monitors on vessels while they're out there, and, if you have a place to take in that information, you know, you could possibly start receiving all kinds of data from folks, and so it's just a matter of building that infrastructure.

This is one that I would say we are working on, and it's just a matter of how do you actually bring something like this to fruition, and maybe a small-scale pilot in an area or something, or a fishery, could be an opportunity.

DR. BELCHER: Comments from folks on that? Laurilee.

MS. THOMPSON: Well, this is really refreshing, because, you know, for us, the rock shrimp industry has been offering to take scientists out, and we've been trying to give information for decades, and we've been told that, no, you have to like align yourselves with an educational institution or something, and we can't accept data just from fishermen, and so this is like a whole shift, you know, compared to the way the fishermen have been treated in the past, and so I would hope that, if they spend their time and effort, you know, to give data, that it really will be used, because we kind of felt like our input wasn't wanted in the past, and so thank you for this.

DR. BELCHER: John.

MR. CARMICHAEL: So, Laurilee, do you think maybe suggesting that we consider starting with the rock shrimp fleet to come up with a pilot study fleet?

MS. THOMPSON: Sure, if we have a rock shrimp season this year. I mean, so far, nothing has shown up yet. We just had, you know, the best season that we've had in many years last year, but it's so cyclical, and I think it's -- I think that hinges too on the Lake Okeechobee discharges, because they stopped discharging in 2008, and the shrimping got progressively better, year after year after year, since 2018, and then, this year, they started releasing the water from Okeechobee again, and now there's no rock shrimp showing up, and so it's all -- I don't know, but, you know, the fact that now it is -- It looks like they're going to finally listen to the fishermen and accept data from the fishermen, and that's very good, but, yes, sure. If they want to start with the rock shrimp industry, that's fine.

DR. BELCHER: Trish.

MS. MURPHEY: Just another suggestion, as far as identifying a study fleet, and I was actually thinking, you know, there's folks that use the council's Release app, who are your highliners that are constantly and consistently reporting, and they may be the ones to reach out to, to see if they're interested in collecting more detailed information and environmental data.

DR. BELCHER: Tom.

MR. ROLLER: While this is a great idea, and I've enjoyed this conversation, I think we can frame some of this about also looking to use existing technology that we have. You know, one point that was brought up to me in another conversation, which I found actually quite interesting, was someone in the talk of the need for spatial data, and they said, well, why aren't we having groups from areas submit their GPS tracks, or their chart plotters, and I heard that, and then I realized that we're all using the same -- The most current technology uses the same file format now, and so that's actually a very practical way to use -- I know this might be sounding a little bit in the weeds, but my point is that there's data that we're already collecting, right, as fishermen, that could be utilized, and I think that that's something we have to think about.

DR. BELCHER: Other comments? Roger.

MR. PUGLIESE: Just to expand on that even further, I think we've discussed this in the past, I know habitat and different other areas, and opportunities to engage new technologies with some of the larger vessels, maybe a multibeam or whatever, and, I mean, there's possibilities, as resources come down the line, to maybe be able to collect things beyond even what's being traditionally collected with new technology, especially since a lot of those now are -- It used to be where you had to have an individual operating these, and many of these now are self-sufficient, self-operational.

You attach them to the vessel, and they'll be collecting information, and so it's just an -- When you're looking at that whole picture, opportunities exist, and, again, go to some of the technologies used in other regions, and hopefully we can get more applied to our region that have been addressed in others, but that's just to kind of round it off on some real opportunities to be able to -- You know, you've got a lot of effort on the water, a lot of capability on the water, and it's a shame not to do that in both our fishery-independent surveys, expanding those, as well as some of the other partners and vessels that are already on the water.

DR. BELCHER: Clay.

DR. PORCH: I just wanted to remind folks that, you know, when we talk about things like recreational study fleets, we do mean something where it's fairly rigorous program, with sets of protocols in place, and it's not just people send us whatever they want to send us, in terms of data, and I would say that the agency is generally open to receiving information from fishermen, but, you know, it can't -- I'm using a little hyperbole, but it can't just be people, you know, writing notes on pieces of paper and sending us a bunch of stuff and then we try and stitch it together somehow.

There needs to be some protocols in place, making sure the data is representative of the whole fishery, and we've had this conversation before, and, as long as those are met, and in some cases you may need funds for somebody actually to organize all this and put it in a way that we can

actually use it, but, when those conditions are met, we're quite open to using data from both commercial and recreational fishermen.

DR. BELCHER: Any other folks? Okay.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Improving the use of existing data, and so the task here is propose holding meetings to discuss data streams, historical datasets, and it could be utilized to inform decision-making, assessments, and monitoring, and be done across the regions and management bodies, and so I think it's envisioned as each management body would get together and have some sort of meeting.

I think this could maybe fit well with the earlier discussion we had about trying to identify data that's useful for being climate responsive. You know, if we could package these two together, you're looking at data streams, and you're looking at what's available historically and how you could use it, and, you know, it seems like a lot of value added if we look at a couple of different types of data while we do that, the fisheries, environmental, historical, what's helpful for climate, what's helpful for just, you know, improving our data and information in general, and so I think there's a sort of lining up, that we'll need to have some sort of large workshop, with a lot of scientific representation from around the region, with the states and the agency, and maybe some universities that are heavily involved in data collection, groups like MARMAP coming in, and really get down to thinking about what we do know from the past and what do we think we could use from the future.

I see, in a way, it could be -- You know, there was the Atlantic Science Coordination workshop that was held several years ago, you know, sort of diving into that on a regional aspect, and so as a follow-up to that, and then also some of the work that's been done on a smaller scale, looking at things like our surveys.

You know, a few years ago, back right before COVID started, we had a great meeting here in South Carolina looking at independent surveys and how to do like deepwater surveys and stuff, and, you know, I think some similar work to that, and maybe a little bit broader scale, and we may be able to really identify some things that could be useful and make some progress on this, which I think is the first step to doing it. You know, Clay mentioned having more frequent ecosystem status reports, maybe having some more staff to come on and work on some of these climate-related products. You know, mapping out that universe of what's available could maybe really help that effort.

DR. BELCHER: Comments?

MR. CARMICHAEL: Then the last one maybe is a little more close to home, and it's just, you know, at the PET level, IPTs for us, just looking at what's the immediate FEP needs. You know, this could be something that we perhaps do ourselves, and, you know, we're obligated, under the Magnuson Act, to identify the data needs for our fisheries.

You know, we kind of do it, but it's buried through a lot of FMPs, over a lot of time, and, you know, maybe as another potential IRA project, for our own climate preparedness, would be to try and aggregate all of that into one place for our different FMPs, and, you know, see what we're getting and what we're not and where we may have gaps going forward, and, you know, some sort

of comprehensive data collection amendment perhaps could be what it becomes, but it could put all that stuff in a single source, that now you may have to look through multiple FMPs to really get a sense of what we've identified as data needs. By the time you go through, you know, the basic fisheries data, and then the reporting stuff, and then there's climate and habitat data and all that, it's pretty widely scattered.

You know, I think it's something that we could do immediately. You know, that's probably something we could, and then, if we say that -- If IPTs decide there's some real holes, and there's things that we need to specify that we haven't, that would lead to action on behalf of the council, which, when I get to more details on the IRA, that's an important part of it. The agency really wants to see us do things that are actionable, and this may fit into the realm of actionable, and by 2027, and so not just actionable someday, but things that are like in place and implemented by 2027.

DR. BELCHER: Comments from anyone? So that was the last --

MR. CARMICHAEL: I think that might be the last thing, and so, if there's no more thoughts on these, I think the next step then would be what's in some of the other priorities, maybe, that folks think, hey, why aren't we working on that?

DR. BELCHER: Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Yes, that's what I was going to suggest, is could we go to some of the medium items and see which ones of those we might want to pull into our top priority list.

DR. BELCHER: So I will ask the group one higher-level question, since it's part of our overview, but was there anything in those highlighted actions that council members would be less supportive of staff, APs, or the SSC devoting time and effort to? Does everybody feel that those highlights are all things that we would be willing to engage folks into? Everybody is nodding heads, and so the highlighted list will stand as-is.

MR. PUGLIESE: I've got the -- This is the overall potential action plan, and drilled down to the actual medium-priority actions, and we can jump right into it, because one of the first ones, under cross-jurisdictional, has to be the discussions we were just having with the SSC.

MR. CARMICHAEL: There's a lot of things here between the medium and then the parked things, and so if there's, you know, somewhere that you guys want to jump right to, it's probably more efficient than us trying to go through all of these.

DR. BELCHER: Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Let me throw out a couple. What about M4, identify and establish best practices for increasing nimbleness and/or responsiveness in management?

DR. BELCHER: Couldn't that tie in with that one highlighted action that we have relative to the FMPs and NEPA and all of that? Trish.

MS. MURPHEY: I would say the first bullet was kind of what I was talking about, and so to aid in the nimbleness.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Is this something the council would support us, as a staff, making a priority as we -- You know, factoring it into our nimbleness and our climate resiliency and preparedness, that, you know, maybe we try to look where if-then triggers could work in our fisheries, and maybe it starts with some white paper evaluation or presentation to the council on what the heck an if-then trigger is and where they're actually being used, you know, as a first step, and then some places we could brainstorm, at the staff level, to maybe where it could work.

DR. BELCHER: Trish.

MS. MURPHEY: I was going to say you've got these examples here, but I would actually take a look at our North Carolina blue crab FMP as an example.

DR. BELCHER: Other comments from folks on M4? Anyone opposed to it being labeled as a higher priority for us? Okay. Any other items in the medium? Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: There were two others that were in here, but I don't know that the council can do them by ourselves, and so the more adaptable -- Create a more adaptable structure for fishing permits and standardize data collection to break down geographic barriers along the east coast, and then, when I read some of the potential actions under those, one of them has some actions for a council, but the other one is really for the Science Center, and so I don't know that they're actions that we could do, but I will throw those next two out for discussion.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Which topic were these, which theme? Do you remember?

MS. MCCAWLEY: M5 and D4.

MR. CARMICHAEL: So M5 there is the permits. I guess I would look to the agency over there, right, and like what are you all's thoughts on this? Has anybody thought about this, and where could be on permits, because I do think, you know, permits were a big issue, as we've thought about these fisheries moving and different people getting involved, and particularly where you have fishermen who are governed by multiple permit systems and dealing with a fairly complex approach to managing their permits.

I know, when we've gotten into the for-hire, it was an eye-opener to a lot of people to say find out, if they're fishing for bluefish in North Carolina, they need a GARFO permit to go after bluefish, because some people didn't even realize that that were in the for-hire industry, and so, yes, there's definitely some challenges when you have, you know, some of our fishermen, and they've got Southeast permits, and they've got GARFO permits, and they've got HMS permits, and I think that's kind of the crux of this whole situation.

DR. BELCHER: Andy.

MR. STRELCHECK: I'm going to actually look to Jessica, if she could come up and talk briefly about at least some work planning that's underway right now, but, you know, we agree, obviously, with kind of the challenge that you laid out, John, and the importance of kind of having a one-stop

shop for permitting and trying to put some time and effort and money into how we could improve that.

DR. STEPHEN: I've been working with a group of people up the entire east coast, and so from the Gulf of Mexico up to Maine, and we've talked with GARFO, the Northeast Science Center, the Southeast Science Center, HMS, S&T, as well as SERO, and we have a number of kind of actions in the works, and so one of the things we're looking to do is create a vessel permit registry across the entire east coast.

What it does is it allows each of the systems to be maintained separately for what's needed in your region, but then identify the vessels that are crossing over into different regions, and so this has a lot of impacts, and so it's going to be good for the agency, and it will help with one-stop reporting, which we kind of discussed during the commercial, and it will help with climate change, as we're looking at who is moving and how many vessels are actually moving within it. All of these types of projects are really supported by the agency, and we're hoping to have work by the end of the month, if we're funded to do this vessel registry.

DR. BELCHER: Thanks, Jessica. Further thoughts from folks? So looking at D3, or D4. Sorry. Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I was just wondering if that's one -- Once again, I don't know that there's a nexus exactly for the council on this particular one either, but it was one that, those of us that were there at the summit, talked about this one a little bit, and so I just wanted to bring this one up, and then, after this discussion, I have one more.

DR. BELCHER: John.

MR. CARMICHAEL: I mentioned the Atlantic Science Coordination workshop, as it was called, earlier, and I think -- Maybe we could get a progress or a status report or, you know, something requested, and I think Todd led that, but to see, you know, what has come out of it, and has there been any actions, and what's the status, what we can do to help sort of thing, maybe, and that might be good for -- You know, maybe for the December meeting or something, and we can work with you guys on the timing, but it might be good to get a report-out on that, because that may be helping a number of things, and that was certainly the intent.

Then the other thing that gets into this, and it pops up a lot when we start talking about the governance, and it's that thing called that DISMAP, if anyone remembers, but it's a website that reports the information, and it's put together by NMFS, and it's distribution mapping. It's a portal, or a tool, or whatever you want to call it, and the idea is that you can go in there, and you can call up a species, and you can look at graphics to present how the distribution of that species has changed over time.

It's primarily tied back to fishery-independent sampling, and so the first big issue that's near and dear to our hearts is the fact that, well, you can't really look at how many of our species have moved from our region to the Northeast region, because we survey with pots, and they survey with trawls, and so there's an immediate break right there, and so you can't, for example, look at black sea bass distribution on the entire Atlantic coast, and some other species are problematic, like -- You know, the next species I looked at, when I saw this, was Spanish mackerel.

Well, you really don't get anything for Spanish mackerel, and so there's some species that just don't have information, because of the difference in the way the surveys are done, and now this is something that NMFS is aware of, and I raised it at a CCC meeting, and Evan, from S&T, said that they are working on it, and it will take time to knit together different survey methods and different efforts of collecting data in the regions, but they do --

They at least are aware of the problem, and recognize that they need to do that, and I think that's a really great priority, because it really underscores the importance of that barrier between us and the Northeast for data collection, because both groups have just collected data in the way that was most appropriate for their habitats and their fish, and not necessarily in ways that were really compatible across the two regions, and that's going to be a real problem, and it's certainly not anything that's news to Clay and his shop and all those guys and anybody that's worked on our SEDAR assessments that cross regions.

We're all well aware of this issue, but it's just, you know, how do you deal with this, when we've got species that are shifting now, and we're got concerns about shifting governance, when it's really hard to show, well, exactly how has a species shifted, and so I think that really gets at a lot of this, and, you know, this strategy for combining survey methodology gets at that, but I think it's something that I would say that we, as a council, are really committed to, and we recognize the importance of it, and, you know, whatever support we can provide to Clay and his compatriots to the north, in terms of getting this done, we will do.

DR. BELCHER: Clay.

DR. PORCH: Jon Hare, who is my counterpart at the Northeast Fisheries Science Center, and I were there at this workshop, and we pushed language much like this, and so, obviously, we really support it. To the Atlantic coast workshop, the report is out, and we could give a presentation to the council, sort of a progress update, maybe a more thorough update, but I can say a couple of things right now.

For instance, the South Atlantic Deepwater Longline Cooperative Survey that we started a few years ago, it looks like it's going to get picked up by the Mid-Atlantic Council, so that we'll be able to extend the range of that, and we're talking with the Northeast Fisheries Science Center about expanding something like that all the way up the coast, so that we have a consistent methodology to get things like tilefish and blueline tiles, et cetera.

The other thing that's happening, at the same time, is, of course, offshore wind, and that's going to affect the Northeast quite a lot, because they have a major trawl survey, and they're not going to be able to trawl where offshore wind is, and so one of the options is to adopt camera or trap-type methodology, like we're doing for our SERFS survey and that you'll see the update on pretty soon, and so they're looking at expanding that and possibly using survey offshore wind mitigation funds to fuel that, but, again, when you start up a new survey, it takes money, and so we need to figure out where we're going to get the funds to do that, but we are looking at expanding those surveys all the way up the coast, and that would help, especially for things like black sea bass and a lot of these species that are moving north.

As John alluded to, we're seeing it already now, and it's become a problem, in some cases, that, you know, we don't have the -- Our usual data providers aren't going to be able to give us data on a large fraction of the stock, because it's moving further north, and so we've got to figure out how we get data from the states that are further north, and also the Northeast Fisheries Science Center, which does make the stock assessments more complicated, and, you know, we just had, at the SEDAR Steering Committee meeting, that discussion about cobia.

If you look at the recreational catches, cobia has almost completely shifted out of the South Atlantic Council's jurisdiction, and it's primarily off -- The catches anyway are off of Virginia, and so it totally changes the game, and so we are very aware of it, and we're very keen to make the changes. Unfortunately, it's not that there's a huge amount of funds raining down from the sky to help us just set up a whole new survey, and so we've got to figure out how we transition from the survey program that we're implementing now into something like that, that would get at these species distribution shifts.

A lot of good things are happening, and hopefully, in a few years, we'll have something like that, but, again, between offshore wind and IRA funds, we're trying to accelerate the pace that we're using compatible methodologies up the coast, but we definitely can give a more thorough update from that Atlantic coast workshop, and we'll work with council staff on the timing of that.

DR. BELCHER: Thanks, Clay. Other comments? John.

MR. CARMICHAEL: You know, a plug on this, in some of these science topics, is we have been talking with the Science Center, and John Walter kind of initiated this, with the idea of having a number of their staff available in December and giving what's being called lightning talks, to be able to talk about various data programs that they're working on, that you may or may not be aware of, and so what we're really trying to do is coordinate this with our dinner that we normally try to have during the council meeting, where it would be like, you know, dinner with some entertainment, with various folks that come up and give you like a quick, five-minute spiel on, you know, a data collection program, something like, you know, the efforts to collect more deepwater data, or talk about -- You know, maybe this coordination workshop could be something that gets hit on.

The Science Center would bring a number of their people in and have this conversation, and we're thinking maybe give the presentation before dinner, so then people can follow-up and talk with them and that sort of thing, and so we're kind of -- You know, we're kind of excited about doing something a little bit different, and it's going to give the Science Center maybe an opportunity to showcase some of the things that they are doing that we're just not aware of all the time, and so we're trying to put that together. We hope it's going to come together for December and be a pretty interesting activity.

DR. BELCHER: Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: The other one that I would bring up is M7, consider alternative management options, instead of, or in addition to, using stock assessments that directly incorporate environmental or ecosystem parameters within the assessment. This seems like it kind of dovetails in with some of the other ones that we talked about that are in high priority. Once again, it seems

like there's already maybe an existing group that's working on this, and maybe not a specific nexus for the South Atlantic Council, but I would love to hear a discussion on this.

MR. CARMICHAEL: This is one that I think we're certainly trying to work on, in our efforts to look into MSEs, to see if they can be useful, and we've got the MSE underway for dolphin, because that's certainly an assessment-defiant stock, and so, yes, I think, as individual councils, we're working on this, to some extent, and maybe that's why this didn't rise up to the joint effort, and it's something that everyone feels like they're doing on their own time, and in their own ways, and it doesn't necessarily fit itself into this regional, broad look at things.

DR. BELCHER: I guess my comment will go back to what we learned with CMOD, again, is that it seems like it's a fairly -- It's getting purchase in other regions, and, you know, again, as we were going through that meeting, and I'm thinking snapper grouper, you know, and that idea that we're looking at a management unit in addition to all of that, and how do you better manage that approach, as opposed to the looking at the same eleven species, and, I mean, we've got forty-plus other species in that group, and is there a better way to do that and involve the environmental along with it, and so I kind of think that that's -- I think I know where Jessica was going with it. I mean, yes, there's a lot of things that are on the table, but that one in particular, when you see what other regions have really done with it, you know, it's kind of hard to not want to see something like that for a multispecies fishery. Andy.

MR. STRELCHECK: I will note that dynamic reference points are referenced here as well, and we've been having quite a number of conversations internally, and with John and his team, about dynamic reference points, and we've seen, with a number of our species in the South Atlantic, changes in productivity, you know, lower recruitment, and I think it's an opportune time that the council begins exploration of that more extensively, so that we could look at how we would then implement that through the management process, and so I certainly encourage that. John had mentioned, when we talked, about possibly pursuing that as an IRA-funded proposal, and I really like that idea, especially with maybe a joint proposal with the Gulf Council.

DR. BELCHER: Monica.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: On the alternative management options, is there anything that you can pull over, so far, from your management strategy evaluation process that's going on? I know that's an ongoing project, but you might just be thinking about that, to see if there's anything useful.

MR. CARMICHAEL: I don't know if it's to that point yet. I think it might be getting close, but they're still building -- Are you going to report-out on that later this week, or is that an agenda topic? So they're still putting it together, and so it's not quite there yet, but it's getting there.

DR. BELCHER: Clay.

DR. PORCH: I think this is actually a good opportunity for, you know, this council, and the Gulf Council, to even lead the curve on some of this, because some of the models you may be thinking of, like ACLIM in Alaska, we're never going to duplicate here in the Southeast, for a number of reasons. I mean, one, it's hard even now, just to look at the historical data and estimate things like a spawner-recruit relationship, and that's because we started fishing long before we started collecting the data, and so the stocks were already fully exploited, and so you don't have the

contrast in data to estimate stock productivity very well, and that's why we struggle with it so often.

How much more so if the climate is changing in the future, and that means that, if we don't have it now, we're never going to get it, and so that means we need to think about managing in some different ways, and you will probably hear some of that during our scamp discussion, and we made a presentation to the SSC and talking about some different ways to provide management advice.

I think, as things involve with our SEFI initiative, and some of the management strategy evaluations, we'll be talking about everything from empirically-based harvest control rules, which, if that doesn't make sense now, we'll elaborate on it in time, but it's basically things like, if the index goes up, the catch goes up. If the index goes down, the catch goes down, and there's a rule associated with that.

Then all the way up to some cases where, like you've seen with menhaden, we have an ecosystem model, and that's one where you have a species that drives a big part of the ecosystem, and so an ecosystem model can work reasonably well, and, there, you do have multispecies-informed reference points, and so we will be working on incorporating climate information in those same types of models, but, for the most part, we're not going to have climate-informed reference points, and all that sort of thing, simply because the data aren't there, and so we just need to think about robust harvest strategies, in light of climate change, but that's where I think we can really lead the curve, and there's some interesting conversations that we'll have with scamp and ways that we can move forward in the future.

DR. BELCHER: Other comments? John.

MR. CARMICHAEL: I think we'll talk more about the dynamic reference points when we get to scamp, and then the IRA kind of hook there is, you know, there's lots of ways to calculate like biomass-based reference points, or catch levels, dynamically. The challenge is how do we explain what that means to fishermen, and how do we get the SSC informed and get that into recommendations, and do we get that into the management systems themselves, and so, you know, a potential IRA project could be to try and, you know, work through that process and get the SSC, maybe in a workshop, to better understand them and see how it can fit in with their ABC control rule and how they interpret stock assessments and what kind of information they need, and then feed that up to you, so that you can start understanding it, so that we're in a position to actually bring concepts like that into our rebuilding plans, possibly, and our management system, so that we're not, you know, continuing to do things like we've been doing them, where we have twenty-five-year rebuilding strategies set up, and no one thinks that they're probably going to hold water in twenty-five years, because we don't know how many recruits there were last year, and much less how many are going to be alive in twenty years.

Like Clay said, the trouble is that we don't have a good historic baseline, and we struggle to do that all-important stock-recruitment relationship with our historic data, which means we really have an uphill climb to do it to predict the future and how all that is going to change. You know, working through IRA with something that could be actionable, which could impact how we do our rebuilding plans and stuff in the future, and make them more responsive to climate, and more adaptable, could be a pretty good connection and justify us really trying to build that knowledge base, I guess, really between the folks at the Science Center that can do these analyses and those

who have to make recommendations that have to make recommendations from them and then, ultimately, you, who have to make decisions from them.

DR. BELCHER: Other discussions? Roger.

MR. PUGLIESE: This is kind of cross-walking between this and some discussion we had earlier, and I think it would be really good to, if we get to the point of the ecosystem status reports, providing the mechanism that really highlights the types of information we have, the limitations of that, and maybe even eludes to the type of new tools that could be potentially be used, and so, as that system evolves, hopefully it can feed into and provide more guidance to the council.

DR. BELCHER: Okay. Looking back to the group, are there other things, or other points, that you would like to either, A, argue are higher priorities or argue aren't higher priorities? That was kind of where some of our direction was going. Are there things you want to see moved from medium to parking lot, and vice versa, or is everybody pretty much okay with the distribution of points as they currently sit? Okay, and so nobody has any other things they would like to see elevated? If not, with that, I think, unless anybody has other comments for Roger or John on this, I guess we can move on. John.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Not seeing any, I would say that I thank you for the input. I think it's going to make my job a little easier, when I get to the scenario planning workgroup meeting coming up in November, and, you know, be able to really try to come up with a workplan for how we start making this stuff happen, which, you know, when we started on this project, the scenario planning, the Pacific Council had done something similar, and the biggest advice that they gave to us was that it's going to be very difficult to go from sort of your planning part to your implementation, you know, and so we knew that this first stage of it, of getting everybody together and talking about it and coming up with, you know, the summit meeting, and the grand laundry list of things that could be done, was not really going to be the hard part.

It was going to be the part that we're starting now, where we try to go from that and start doing some actual action and implementation, and so, while it may seem that we're kind of feeling our way and not sure what to do, I think that's totally expected, based on the feedback we got from others who were there, and so we went into this with our eyes wide open, and, you know, I think this has been a great first step, and I'm looking forward to that first meeting and, you know, seeing how we continue to adjust this process and respond to what we learn as we go forward, and so thanks, you all, for the input, and it's been really helpful.

DR. BELCHER: All right. I guess the question that I'm going to put to the group, and I'm looking to staff on this, is we're supposed to go into allocation review, and is this something that we want to start now, or do you want to break for lunch early? Okay, and I'm seeing folks are suggesting that we break early. It's twenty 'til, and so I'm going to go ahead, and, just because we're a smidge ahead, we'll give an hour-and-a-half for lunch, and let's aim to be back for 1:00, and, if it's a couple of minutes off, we're on good timing, and so the ideal goal is 1:00.

(Whereupon, a recess was taken.)

DR. BELCHER: I hope everybody had a good lunch. We're going to roll into the next item under the Full Council Session I agenda, which is the allocation review process with John Hadley. John.

MR. HADLEY: All right. Thank you. I'm going to bring up a presentation, but I'm going to be jumping around a little bit, essentially between the three attachments for this, and so there's an overview of your draft allocation review guidelines, or the trigger policy, and then there's also -- Well, it's actually four items. There's the presentation, which is a summary of those documents, and then there's also an allocation website, which I will bring up and introduce as well, and so, without further ado, let me get this queued up.

As I mentioned, this is sort of a three-pronged approach, or a three-pronged issue, if you will, that we'll go over today, looking at the review guidelines, the updates to your allocation review trigger policy, and the website that the council staff has been working on, and, while I'm up here presenting this, I just wanted to mention that this has been a large group effort on behalf of staff, and so there have been many that have contributed to this whole process.

Just as a refresher and kind of a little bit of background, the council has undergone many allocation-review-related efforts over the past several years, and so you've developed an allocation review trigger policy, where you selected indicator and time-based criteria for triggering an allocation review, and this was created in 2019, at I believe the June meeting, June of 2019. Additionally, you've developed an allocation decision tool, and we ran through that in June for yellowtail snapper. You've updated your fishery management plan goals and objectives for both the Dolphin Wahoo and Coastal Migratory Pelagics Fishery Management Plans, and you're also going to be - - Sorry. The Snapper Grouper, rather, Fishery Management Plan, and you're in the process of updating your FMP goals and objectives for the coastal migratory pelagics.

Last, but not least, as we went over in June, and you went over your research recommendations, and there are several in there that could help with allocation analyses, and so the point being that the council has taken various steps over the past several years, but it really hasn't been packaged in one place, and so what's being proposed now is an allocation review -- Updates, rather, to the allocation review trigger policy.

Again, that was formed in 2019, and there's some parts of it that are a little outdated, and so bringing that up to speed, and then a review of your draft allocation review guidelines, and so this is to document and package the council's many allocation-related efforts in one place that's easy to find and also to document the allocations review process in general. Then, last, but not least, there is the allocation webpage, and this is really kind of a clearinghouse that will house all the council's recent related, allocation related, measures and information.

Why is this being discussed now? Why are we bringing this to you? We kind of mentioned this subject at the June meeting, during the staff report, but this is where we're coming back to you with more information, and, really, allocation review guidelines are a way of formally documenting the council's approach to allocations and respond to various federal policy directives and reports on allocations, and so, most notably, there have been policy directives from NOAA Fisheries on allocations, and then, also, there was a report that was developed by the Government Accountability Office, and so the GAO, on a review of allocations in the South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico, and so, really, the Southeast allocations, looking at the South Atlantic Council and those of the Gulf Council.

This report resulted in several recommendations, and many of these recommendations have been addressed. However, if you look on the GAO website, it's noted that the South Atlantic Council has not specified how the council will document its allocation reviews that are conducted outside of fishery management plan amendments, including the basis for its allocation decisions, whether fishery management plan objectives are being met, and what factors are considered in the reviews, and so this is kind of the critique, if you will, that's really trying to be addressed in several of the measures that we'll go over a little bit in the document itself, and so kind of keep that in mind. I wanted to stress that, and that's kind of one of the major points of why this is being discussed at this time.

Last, but not least, as was mentioned, the council has undertaken several allocation-related efforts over the past several years, and it's really beneficial to take a look at some of these every once in a while and make sure that everything is up-to-date and readily available to interested constituents and that it reflects what you really think at this current time.

What will be asked of the council at this meeting is, really, the proposed timeline for action, and we're going to examine this at this meeting, and then we're going to come back to you in December, and so, at this meeting, we'll approve the -- We hope it's to approve updates to the allocation review trigger policy, and I will get into that in just a minute, provide feedback on the draft allocation review guidelines, and then just have an overview of the draft allocation webpage, and, again, I will go over those in much more detail in just a minute.

The idea is to get feedback from you at this meeting, and we'll take that feedback, as staff, and come back to you in December with a more polished final document to hopefully approve, and it will be -- Everything will be updated and good to go after that, and so sort of a two-meeting process.

Right now, I'm going to -- I'm actually going to jump into the allocation review trigger policy and proposed updates to that, and so, if you look in your briefing book, under I believe it's Attachment 4c, and let me bring this up, and, yes, it's 4c. There is a track-changes version of the proposed changes to your allocation review trigger policy, and so, when you look through here, it's a little bit messy, because it is in track-changes, but you can see that many of these changes, and I'm not going to go over each one of them, have been suggested just to make the document flow a little bit better, bring it up to speed and make a few corrections to it. Then, also, there are -- Many of the changes in there are just kind of -- They're wording changes, and they're not really substantive changes, if you will.

Within there -- So there are two exceptions to that. One is your indicator-based criteria for allocations, and so, in 2019, you chose four different indicator-based criteria that would trigger an allocation, and so, if these are met -- The idea is that these triggers are met and the council will formally look at allocations, at least, and not necessarily change them, but take a look at allocations, if they're met, and so the first two really aren't changing. The idea is that, if either sector exceeds its ACL in three out of the five years, or either sector underharvests its ACL by at least 50 percent in three of the five years, those are the first two indicator-based triggers. No major changes are suggested there.

The other two do have slight substantive changes. One, initially it was proposed that, after a stock assessment is approved by the SSC, that would be a trigger to examine allocations, and what's

being suggested here is to add “or a change to catch level recommendations”, just keeping in mind there are several species where you do have updates to your catch level recommendations, but there’s not necessarily a stock assessment, say for example dolphin or wahoo, and so that’s capturing, you know, those situations where a stock assessment isn’t available.

The last indicator-based criteria that was selected by the council in 2019 was, when you get a fishery performance report, you would review allocations at that time. What’s being suggested is that you would review allocations if it is advised in the report, and so, in other words, if your AP says these allocations -- You really need to take a look at them, and they’re not necessarily meeting the needs of the fishery, that’s really -- That would be captured in the fishery performance report, and that would really be the trigger, the reason being we are getting fishery performance reports in pretty good frequency now, and so, you know, if you want to at them, look at allocations, every time you get a fishery performance report, you can certainly do that, but it does take up the council’s time at the table, and also your staff time as well, and so what’s being suggested there is really the trigger would be if your AP suggests that you reexamine allocations for specific species when you get a fishery performance report.

Those are the main changes, and I’m going to jump back into the presentation, and I’m happy to come back to it, and then there’s -- The main changes I should say to the wording, and the substance, and then the last one, and I forgot about the important part at the very end, is this table, and so there’s a table in your policy that has the schedule for when allocation reviews will be scheduled.

There’s the indicator-based criteria and then there’s the time-based criteria that you chose, and it’s sort of a stop-gap measure, where you will at least examine allocations for every species every seven years, and so that’s your current time-based trigger, and, at the time this table was developed, it has the various -- The timing of the various allocation reviews, but it really is out of date at this time. Several of these species you’ve looked at already, or you’re in the process of looking at already, and, really, what we’re trying to do here is take this out of the document and have this document be a stand-alone policy document that doesn’t need to be continually updated.

The idea is that this table, at the end of your current policy, would be housed under the council’s sector allocations webpage, and this is a new webpage that has been developed, and, as I mentioned earlier, this is really supposed to be a clearinghouse for the council’s allocation review measures. As you can see on here, on the right, there are allocation resources, and the idea is to have your updated trigger policy, your allocation decision tool, allocation review guidelines, and fishery performance reports.

If you scroll down, there are some species-based tables that you can see that are basically replacing that part of your policy document and putting it on the webpage, and, really, the idea here is this is easier for staff to update, and it’s also an item that we don’t have to come back to you every time a species has been updated or has gone through a fishery management plan amendment. We’re not coming back to you and saying are you okay with these updates to your policy, and so it really splits that apart, and makes it much more readily available as well, and so you can see, for the different species, it has the species name, the allocations for the commercial and recreational sectors, when the next allocation review is due, and when the past allocation reviews have been performed. Again, this is now on the website, and it currently is in your policy document.

With that said, I'm going to turn it over to the council at this point, to get your feedback, and I will go over the discussion questions very quickly, but we're looking for feedback along the lines of does the council approve the proposed edits to the indicator-based criteria, and so, notably, the addition of a change to catch level recommendations and clarifying when a fishery performance report could trigger an allocation review.

Does the council approve of other general updates to the policy, and so sort of the revised wording, bringing the document up to speed in a little bit more of a polished document, and then, also, removing that table at the very end, with the notion that it will be housed on the council's allocation webpage. Are you okay with keeping the time-based criteria at seven years, or is there a different time period that's desirable, and then sort of a catchall of are there any other comments or edits that you would like to make to the policy at this time.

DR. BELCHER: Thanks, John. Spud.

MR. WOODWARD: Thanks, John. Just maybe as a refresher, why did we pick seven years? I don't remember why we picked that, and I'm sure there was a perfectly logical reason for that, but I'm just curious why it was seven years.

MR. HADLEY: That's a good question, and I had that question as well, when I was looking over this initially, and I went back into the materials that were presented to the council, and into the discussion, and I believe that was -- Seven years was the suggested time interval, to be no longer than ten years, and so that's -- That was essentially that the council chose seven at that time.

DR. BELCHER: Others? Andy.

MR. STRELCHECK: I am thinking about some advice we've gotten from our General Counsel about websites, and so I actually like the idea of posting it to the website, but, from a records standpoint, if there's changes that are made -- The only concern I would have is making sure that that information is saved, so that you have a document, a record, of what the policy was at any point in time and then the date of change.

DR. BELCHER: Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I think seven years is appropriate. I mean, there's other mechanisms where you could end up looking at it in less than seven years, and so seven years are for those ones that usually don't come around as frequently, and I really like the idea of saving it on the website.

DR. BELCHER: Tim.

MR. GRINER: I agree with Jessica. I mean, the seven years really only applies to the unassessed stocks that are really rare-event stocks in the first place, and so I really don't think anything faster than seven years would be necessary.

DR. BELCHER: I will weigh-in on the table, and, as you guys know, I've done a few FMPs, and I kept asking how come we don't change the dates in the table, not recognizing they're hard-wired into that document, and so it's the fact that it is long-standing, and so removing the table may be helpful with keeping it up-to-date. Other folks? Robert.

MR. SPOTTSWOOD: At the bottom of this, it requires the allocation reviews to be coordinated with the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, and has that already been done? Like did they agree on the seven years, or is that something that needs to be discussed with the Gulf Council?

DR. BELCHER: Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I think they just talked about this at their recent meeting, about their policy, and I would have to pull it up, and I think that their policy is a little bit different, and so they have different criteria that trigger it, but I think it said that they would work with the South Atlantic to agree on the timeframe, and do you remember, Bob?

MR. GILL: Thank you, Madam Chair, and so we have the trigger policy, which is different, and we've also set up the timelines, which are considerably shorter, for the most part, than seven years, and I think the longest one is like six years, and the reality is that we haven't started on them yet, and the first one was set for 2024, which may or may not happen, and so, you know, they're a huge time sink, and they suck up a lot of the oxygen in the room, and I'm thinking the practicality of ours may not be as realistic as we optimistically think.

DR. BELCHER: Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I'm wondering if maybe we can make a note that says something like make sure that the Gulf is okay with the seven-year timeframe, and some of those species already have stock assessments, and so like yellowtail, mutton, black grouper, and all of those are going to go through an assessment process, and hogfish, but maybe there is a nexus here to ask them to see if they're okay with the seven years, if it doesn't meet one of those other criteria.

DR. BELCHER: Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: I was thinking in terms of coastal migratory pelagics being one of the only places we will do that, but now you have me thinking about those other ones, but, in theory, if the Gulf wanted to change their allocation in a jointly-managed plan, it would just come to us anyway, and we could choose to act on it or not, and I don't know that we really have to change our policy to match theirs, logistically speaking.

DR. BELCHER: Robert.

MR. SPOTTSWOOD: Yes, and I also just note that there's a requirement that the seven years be reset every time there's a new allocation review, and so I assume, if the Gulf Council triggers one, and they redo one, we will -- Then it will both be reset to that time period, and so it's probably going to happen a lot more often than seven years.

DR. BELCHER: Spud.

MR. WOODWARD: I'm sure we probably talk about this one whenever we develop these criteria, but just to make sure I've got it right, and so we've got -- It says "or closes prior to the end of its fishing year in three out of five consecutive years", and is that the immediately preceding five

years to the period of the review, I mean, or is that a -- Or do you pick some other time interval that's different? I mean, does that need to be very specifically addressed in those indicator criteria?

DR. BELCHER: Can anyone answer that question for Spud? John.

MR. HADLEY: Spud, if I don't answer your question, let me know, but I think it's really up to the council, as far as how you want to specify it, but the seven years is really a stop-gap measure for the species that don't come up very often for a stock assessment, but, related to the five-year topic that you brought up --

MR. WOODWARD: Yes, and it just says three out of five consecutive years, and it doesn't say the years immediately preceding the date of the review, and, I mean, could you go back in history and pull some period of five years that is like five years removed from the date of review, or is it implied that it is the immediately preceding period of five years?

DR. BELCHER: John.

MR. HADLEY: That's a good point, and I think it's implied, but maybe we can specify it in writing, that it would be a running five years, and so, as soon as you have the new year available, then that's sort of a moving five-year time window, if that makes sense, and so, as soon as we have 2023 landings, we're moving that time period up another year and taking a look at those landings and seeing if that trigger has been met. If not, then we're good. If so, then -- You know, if it is triggered, then we'll come to the council with that information, but it's an implied moving table over time, that five-year interval.

MR. WOODWARD: I guess the question, for the council, is it that understood, or does it need to be explicitly stated in the criteria, and I guess there's a couple of ways that you could do it. You know, prior to the end of the fishing year in three out of five immediately preceding consecutive years, or three out of five consecutive years preceding the date of the review, and, I mean, I guess there's a couple of ways you could do it, just to make it clear that that's what your intent is, or, if everybody understands it, but some of us won't be here, and, in fact, a lot of us probably won't be here when some of this happens, and so I'm just curious, and I'm not trying to make it more wordy, but just I think that, the clearer it is for those who inherit this, the better it will be for everybody.

DR. BELCHER: Other comments to that? Anybody have any strong feelings about that? Tim.

MR. GRINER: I think that Spud is absolutely right. I think it needs to be clarified, because, when you just say three out of five years, it could be three out of five any years, but, even though it's implied, I think it would be just a lot clearer if we just spelled it out that it's a running -- You know, it's a running timeframe, and that would be my thoughts.

DR. BELCHER: John.

MR. HADLEY: I appreciate that. We'll come back to you in December with that additional wording, but that's a good point, and, that way, it's clear for future generations, and future council members, what was meant at the time, and so I appreciate that.

DR. BELCHER: Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: So I'm trying to picture sort of how some of these triggers would work, and does it -- Does these triggers mean that a council member, say, could approach the council and say, hey, I noticed that, for shadow shark, the commercial fishery has underharvested their quota by -- Their ACL by 50 percent the past three out of five years, and so I would like to bring up for the council to change, or does it require someone, the council staff or the Science Center, to notify us when that has happened, so that we have to have that discussion, and that's what I'm just trying to figure out.

MR. HADLEY: That's a good point, and the idea for these triggers is that they're sort of automatic, and so, if they're met, then council staff will come to the council and say that this trigger has been met, and here's the information on the species, which I will get into in just a bit, but it's not on the council to bring it up, or it's not on the council members to bring it up, and, I mean, certainly council members are welcome to bring up the topic anytime, but the idea is that it's a measure that council staff will keep up with. If they are triggered, then council staff will let the council know.

DR. BELCHER: Okay. I've got a few hands. Kerry, if it's to that point, and then I will come to Trish, Tim, and Chip came up, too.

MS. MARHEFKA: Well, because I'm just thinking that I'm sure, right now, if we tried really hard, we could probably look at the landings for the past couple of years and find a species or two that one sector has underharvested by 50 percent, and, thus, setting this whole thing in motion, and so is someone in the process of trying to figure out -- Okay.

MR. HADLEY: To that point, if I could, yes, and that's one thing that -- That's one of the reasons for bringing this to the council and making sure it's in good shape, is that I think we're going to stick to these measures a little bit more strictly, and, also, that is also going to be documented in the allocation review guidelines, which is sort of the next piece that I'm going to get into, but those are, you know, excellent points, and, again, the idea is that, if those triggers are met, it will be brought to the council sort of automatically, if you will, and it's really council staff keeping track of it, and not necessarily on council members, but they will be brought forward.

DR. BELCHER: I am going to jump Chip in, to see if he can speak to the process, and then we'll follow-up with Trish and Tim.

DR. COLLIER: So this is one of the reasons that we're developing the SAFE reports, if we're going to have this information on hand a lot more readily, and we can review it, and the plan right now is to look at it every two years, and so it's -- We feel like it's going to be able to come in front of you on a much more regular basis. The other benefit of it is, as we develop the SAFE reports, we know certain things that you guys want to key-in on, and so something like this is something we could definitely bring up as we're reviewing the SAFE reports to you, because it's far too much information to go through the whole piece, or all of it, and we'll probably highlight some certain things, and this could be one of the items that we highlight.

DR. BELCHER: Thanks, Chip. Trish.

MS. MURPHEY: I think everything has been covered, but what I was actually thinking, for Kerry's example, is, if somebody came and said that shadow shark is -- You know, should we be looking at allocation, and wouldn't that also go into the fishery performance report with the AP, and also help address her particular scenario? That was all.

DR. BELCHER: Tim.

MR. GRINER: Well, I just want to make sure -- I mean, we just had a discussion on, you know, managing under increased uncertainty and the flexibility that we need to do that, and so, you know -- I don't want this trigger policy to be the end of itself, so that a council member couldn't come before the council and make a motion that we review an allocation based, not because the SSC changed a catch level, but because we need to manage under these uncertain conditions.

You know, that's the whole point of this climate change scenario, is to be flexible, and we need that at the council level. We can't do it by just some prescribed, pre-prescribed, triggers, and so I think, if we have to -- If that has to go into this document, and I feel strongly that it needs to, but this council needs the ability for any individual council member to bring forth a request to review an allocation and put it to a vote. Thank you.

DR. BELCHER: Other comments? Okay. John, how would you like us to proceed? Does anybody -- Looking at the four questions that are up there, are there any questions that we need to get more on the record for? Okay. Everybody seems to be good to go.

MR. HADLEY: Okay. I certainly appreciate that, and, again, the idea is to gather this sort of feedback, and I appreciate the great discussion, and we'll come back to you with an updated document at your December meeting, and, as long as it looks good for the council, and all the council members are comfortable with it, that's when we would be looking for sort of a motion of approval, and so, right now, just gathering the comments, and we'll make edits accordingly.

What I'm going to jump into -- I'm switching gears here out of the allocation trigger policy and jumping into what is Attachment 4a, which is the document I pulled, and I tried to pull some of the salient pieces out of that document, since it is a twenty-page document, and I pulled different pieces and parts out of it, to try to gather some feedback from the council, but, generally speaking, what you're doing here is specifying how you go about an allocation review, and so, within this, there are several different documents in the appendices, and the idea is that this document will house your updated and revised allocation review trigger policy, which is what we just discussed.

It will clarify and specify your allocation review process, and, again, thinking back to that GAO critique, that's really trying to address that critique in particular, and then, also, it will house your allocation decision tree and tool, through the blueprint document that you have seen before, and so that will be an appendix to the allocation review guidelines.

Really, the idea here is that this serves -- This document serves a way for the council to specify how you are going to conduct an allocation review, and there is essentially certain levels of allocation reviews, and what is discussed in detail in there are two different scenarios that we often see, and one is when there is a stock assessment or a change to catch level recommendations and how the council goes through that allocation review process, and we've done that quite a bit lately, with all of the stock assessments that the council has seen, and developed amendments

accordingly, and then there's the other scenario that's discussed in the document, where there is not a stock assessment or a change to catch level recommendations, and so this is really looking at a scenario say when one of your triggers are met, and when the information is brought before the council and we say here's some information on the species, and do you want to further examine -
- Do you think a further examination of the allocations, or a change to allocations, is warranted.

Those are the two scenarios, and then the last part of this is it clarifies the timing for that time-based criteria, and so it clarifies sort of when the clock starts for that seven-year time period, depending on the council's discussion of allocations.

Keeping in mind those two scenarios, I'm going to start off with the one that the council has gone through quite a bit lately, the allocation review when there is a stock assessment or a change to catch level recommendations, and so this is what you've gone through quite a bit with the stock assessments that have incorporated updates to recreational landings using FES. In this scenario, where you have a stock assessment, or a change to catch level recommendations, the process that's outlined is that there's a fishery management plan amendment that is initiated, and the council will apply the allocation decision tool towards the beginning of the process.

As the amendment is developed, there's additional information that is provided to you on the anticipated effects of the different allocation scenarios, and so these are your bio effects, your social effects, your econ effects, and your admin effects, and, as the council formulates their allocation decisions and rationale, these decisions are captured in the FMP amendment document itself, and so, really, we're looking specifically at what's typically in your Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 of your FMP amendments, and, once approved, the amendment will document the allocation-related analyses and information considered, the council's preferred alternative for an allocation decision, and the rationale, and so this is Chapter 5, which will include how that allocation decision is consistent with the FMP goals and objectives.

That's packaged all together as the FMP amendment is developed, and that document will be made available on the council's website, and so this is really the standard process that you've gone through lately, again, through all of the stock assessments that you have been reviewing for particularly the snapper grouper fishery.

The next scenario, and so we went over Scenario A, and we'll call this Scenario B, and so this is the allocation review when there is not a stock assessment or a change to catch level recommendations, and so this falls outside of that stock assessment scenario and clarifying how you would go about an allocation decision and how that will be documented, and so what is being proposed is that the council would be provided with the following information, to determine if a more in-depth allocation analysis is warranted, and so you will have the FMP goals and objectives, and you'll have what the current allocations are, and the rationale for setting these allocations, the landings and ACL usage by sector for the most recent five years of data available, and the most recent fishery performance report, if there is one available for that species, and so that's sort of the package of information that will be presented to the council.

Just to keep in mind, and kind of make this a little bit more tangible, say it is spadefish, and so a situation where we come to you and say that spadefish has met the time-based trigger, and here's the information on spadefish, and so that sort of information would be presented to you. At that time, the idea is to gather feedback from you. If you feel more information is needed, then the

council can direct staff to provide that at a subsequent meeting, and so this would be applying say the allocation tool or any other information that you think may be useful to determine whether you need to take sort of a deeper dive into allocations.

However, you may decide that's not really necessary at this time. If you can see that either sector is not coming close to meeting their allocation, then that's probably an indication that you don't necessarily need to take a deep dive into the allocations at this time, and then you've met your time-based trigger, and the clock resets.

In the scenario where you determine that existing allocations are sufficient, this decision will be captured in three different places, essentially. One is in the committee report where it's discussed, and the other is it will be captured in the meeting minutes, of course, since this is on the record, and then, also, it will be captured in what will be a new document, sort of a brief document, an allocation review report, and, really, this is trying to package all of that information together, and so the idea is the summary decision and rationale will be pulled probably from the committee report, and so it's basically a summary of your discussion, including how the FMP goals and objectives are being met, and so, again, pulling that from the report, and then we'll also package the information that was provided to you for your consideration, and so that list of bullet points on the previous slide.

This allocation review report will be made available on the council's website, and so that's kind of the documentation for when you say the allocations for the species are functioning the way they should, and we don't need to look into them at this point.

If the allocations do need to be revised, then that will go through the typical fishery management plan amendment process, which you're very accustomed to at this point, and that will be the documentation for that decision, if you decide that allocation changes are indeed necessary, and so the last point that I'm going to get into is, again, that timing of when the clock starts for that time-based criteria, that seven years, and you've specified that allocation reviews should occur at least once every seven years, and so is that timing accounted for, and, really, the clock for the next review is proposed as follows.

If there is a fishery management plan amendment involved in the allocation review, then the next review will be scheduled whenever the final rule for that amendment publishes, and so that published date -- That starts the clock for that seven years, and the allocation review will be scheduled automatically seven years after the final rule publishes.

In situations where you have discussed existing allocations, and you determine that they're sufficient at the time, the next review will be scheduled seven years, when that determination is made by the council, and so, essentially, seven years after that discussion is held at the council table, and so those are the two scenarios for the clock, so to speak, and when it begins and to measure that time-based criteria.

That's all I have, and I'm going to turn it over to the council for some feedback on the allocation review process that was presented, the documentation and timing, and so do you have any suggested edits or revisions to the allocation review process, when there is a change to catch level recommendations, and so that situation, again, where we've gone through it quite a bit with many species, and when there is not a change to catch level recommendations, and so say when one of

your allocation review criteria, or trigger criteria, have been met. There's not necessarily a stock assessment, but the council is going to look at existing allocations. Are you comfortable with those two processes?

Does the council have any suggested revisions to the timing of the allocation review, and so you're okay with the scenario on when the clock starts related to the effective date of a final rule related to a fishery management plan amendment, and, if there is no fishery management plan amendment, the clock for those seven years would start after that conversation is held by the council.

DR. BELCHER: Spud.

MR. WOODWARD: Thank you, John. Just a procedural question, and so, in the scenario of no FMP amendment, will the allocation review report be something that has to be formally accepted by the council, like in Full Council, and it's presented, and it's reviewed and it's discussed, and then there has to be a motion to accept it.

MR. HADLEY: That's really up to the council. The way it's been envisioned now, no, but that can certainly change, and the reason being is that this information is pulled from your briefing materials, and then also the committee report, and so it's already information that the council has reviewed, but it's just in different places.

DR. BELCHER: Spud and then Laurilee.

MR. WOODWARD: The reason that I asked that question is it seems like there needs to be something that documents that the council concurred that no change was necessary, and then that also has bearing on when the clock starts, because, you know, if you have a definitive sort of punctuation mark on the review process, then you know that's when your clock starts for your seven years, and so say we accepted a review with no change at the December meeting, then you know that that's December of 2023, is when your clock starts for your next review, and so just a suggestion.

MR. HADLEY: To that point, the idea would be that would be something that would come back to the council at the subsequent meeting, which we can certainly do, but it would be the -- That report would be -- Say you made a decision at the September meeting, and we would come back to you in December, saying here is your report, your decision report, and are you okay with what is written.

MR. WOODWARD: Yes, and I just think it would be important that there's something in the record that says that this -- You have accepted this decision that no change is needed, because, if there's going to be a change needed, then it's going to kick over to an FMP amendment anyway, and then the process continues, but, if it's a no-action decision, it still needs to be documented, I think, through some sort of process.

DR. BELCHER: Laurilee.

MS. THOMPSON: I agree with Spud. I think that you have to have the clock starting somewhere, and so, if we're working on five FMPs, and there's sixty other species out there, does the clock start on the other sixty species that we're not working on FMPs, and then, seven years later, we've

got sixty species that need to be assessed? I think you've got to have a place where the clock starts, and you have to document somehow that the clock has started on shadow shark, and, in seven years, you've got to look at it again, but I think that's important, because, right now, we don't know when the clock is starting on things that we're not working on FMPs for.

DR. BELCHER: Other comments? Andy.

MR. STRELCHECK: I guess it's not fully clear to me, and I think some of the information is combined in the allocation tool, as well as the performance report, but we can't simply make decisions about allocation with landings only, right, and so that's certainly a starting point, but the economic and social information really will need to be brought to us, and clearly defined, to help with, obviously, these allocation decisions going forward.

DR. BELCHER: Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: I guess, to that point, in that a fishery performance report could trigger an allocation review, if something else triggers an allocation review, we should also make sure that that triggers a new fishery performance report, right, and so if, you know, a sector isn't meeting its ACL, we would probably want to go to the AP and try to figure out -- It's not always because the fish aren't out there, and we all know there's a zillion reasons why that could happen, and so that, in my mind, would trigger a fishery performance report.

DR. BELCHER: Trish.

MS. MURPHEY: I agree with Kerry, and that was kind of where I was when we were talking about your scenario, because, that way, you've kind of got those checks-and-balances throughout the process, and so I agree with Kerry.

DR. BELCHER: Other comments? Okay. John, do you have enough for now on that?

MR. HADLEY: That's all I have for now. I certainly appreciate all the input and discussion, and I think we have some good updates to be made, and we'll make those and come back to you in December. Again, I did want to point out that you do now have an allocation -- In case you did want to take a look at the sector allocations webpage, it is linked in your briefing book, under the Full Council I materials. Thank you.

DR. BELCHER: Thanks, John. Okay, and so, moving on down the list, we have the Southeast Reef Fish Survey and Southeast Area Monitoring and Assessment Program Updates from Wally and Tracey Smart.

MS. SMART: I want to thank you, real quick, for the time today, and I know you guys are really, really busy, and so I appreciate getting a chance to talk about this. For those of you who I haven't met yet, my name is Tracey Smart, and I'm the coordinator for our coastal and offshore fishery-independent surveys for the South Carolina DNR, and that includes our two large region-wide surveys that I am going to touch on today.

I also want to start with acknowledging my co-authors on this presentation. Walter Buble, Julie Vecchio, and Amy Zimney did the vast majority of the data analysis and portions of the

presentation related to the chevron trap catch and trawl survey catch, and then Christina Schobernd, Nate Bacheler, and Rob Cheshire at the Science Center and Brandon Runde, who is now with TNC, did the vast majority of the data analysis for the video portion.

I am going to start today with talking about the Southeast Reef Fish Survey, a little bit on the design, our activities through 2022, and then some abundance, length, and distribution for selected species. We have done this version of the presentation in previous years, and then, this year, we've been asked to add on some data from our SEAMAP South Atlantic coastal trawl survey, and so I'll touch on those same elements, the design and activities through 2022, and then, for those, I will just be showing you some abundance and length distributions for a couple of species.

The Southeast Reef Fish Survey, or SERFS, currently, it's funded through three different programs, two of which are housed at South Carolina DNR and one through the Science Center, MARMAP, SEAMAP South Atlantic, and SEFIS. If you want to know the definitions of the abbreviations, they are down there, but I'm not going to read them today. Historically, this was funded purely through MARMAP and through SC DNR efforts, and so, with the collaborations with the three different programs, we've been able to expand spatially, as well as in terms of effort, over the years.

Our chevron video trap sampling that we currently do targets low to medium relief, live or hardbottom habitats, and we cover depths along the continental shelf and shelf break, from fifteen to 110 meters, and our traps have been used consistently in a standardized way since 1990, and they're baited with menhaden, and they sit on the bottom for about ninety minutes, and then they're retrieved, and, since 2011, all traps have been equipped with two video cameras facing in opposite directions. This gives us an estimate of the habitat that the traps are deployed on as well as fish that do not enter the traps.

The universe for this, it's about 4,300 points, standardized stations, throughout the region, from North Carolina to Florida. In 2022, we selected about 1,500 randomly from the entire universe of points, and that's our pretty typical number in effort, and we sample from mid-April to mid-October, and so, in terms of what I'm presenting today, MARMAP and SEAMAP at SC DNR -- Those two programs are primarily responsible for the trap catch industries, as well as life history sample processing and reading, and then SEFIS heads up our video indices, but we do house one combined publicly-available database, at seamap.org, if anyone is interested.

In 2022, we had a pretty typical year, especially for the last ten years, and we spent about eighty-six days at-sea, combined amongst three different vessels. We conducted about 1,900 or so gear deployments, and this included a little over 1,600 chevron video traps, and almost 300 CTD casts for temperature and salinity, to be paired with those trap deployments. We saw about fifty-nine species, over 28,000 fish collected, measured, and weighed, and we also processed a little over 9,000 fish, from twenty-five different species, for life history, and so that includes collecting ageing structures, gonads and reproductive structures, as well as things like fin clips, DNA, and some diets here and there.

Our relative abundance that I'm going to present here today, we're including the chevron trap catch index from 1990 to 2022, the video index from 2011 to 2021, and there is a more recent version of it that came out this week, but I didn't have time to update it, but it is now available, and I want

to remind everybody that 2020 was a very unusual year, and so we don't include any sampling from 2020.

For both indices, we use the zero-inflated negative binomial model, unless it's noted elsewhere, and, so far right now, and for most recent SEDARs, this has been sort of the most appropriate method, and it generally reduces uncertainty in our estimates, and so, for traps, the data is represented in number of fish, with an offset for trap soak time, and, for videos, it's mean count, and this is from videos where we start counting fish, or SEFIS starts counting fish, ten minutes after the trap lands on the bottom, and it's one snapshot every thirty seconds for twenty minutes.

An example of one of the other things that we'll present today is a distribution map, and this is based on the catches only. This is pulled from our nominal catch abundance, and it's divided up in five relative bins of number of fish per trap hour, and so, anywhere where you see red on the map, that's our highest catches. Anywhere that's low is very, very low to no fish, and then, anything that's blank white, we don't sample in that area. These representative bubbles are expanded above what our footprint truly is, just because, if we put them the size of an actual trap on the map, it's too tiny to actually see, and so it's a little bit expanded over what we're doing in reality, and these are from an average from 2017 to 2022.

What the indices will look like, we'll present both the catch index and the video index on the same slides. Those get a little crowded, and so I just want to walk through it, really quickly, and so the catch index will be on the top. This will be presented as normalized to the long-term average, and so we'll have a dashed or a solid line at one, to represent that long-term average, and so anywhere above one is higher than usual, and anything below is lower than average, and it's a skewed sort of estimate of it, where two on the graph is twice the long-term average, but 0.5 on the graph is half of the long-term average, and so you can -- The peaks can look a little bit higher on the top than the values do on the bottom, because of that, and so our index is the black line for the catch, and the gray shading is our 95 percent catch interval, and the red dots are our nominal values for the catch.

For the video, it's a little bit opposite, and so this will also be a shorter timeframe than the catches. As I mentioned, we only started fully outfitting with videos in 2011, and so the video index will be the red dots, and the dotted lines, the red dotted lines, will be the 95 percent confidence interval, and the black dots and line will be the nominal values. They do track really, really closely, and so, if you can't remember which is which, they don't really tell much of a different story.

We'll also present some length compositions, so you can get an idea on sort of where the catches are now from year to year, and where they are now from where they've been, and, again, this is catch only, and we do not currently have lengths from videos, and these are presented in maximum total length, in centimeters, in one-centimeter length bins, and the bubble size on these graphs represents the number of fish per length bin divided by the number of fish in a given year.

We also included a red line, to give you an idea of sort of that trend in the average total length by year, and, for this year, we've added a green arrow, if there's a commercial minimum size limit, so you can kind of see where the catches are relative to some of the management measures in place, and then also a pink arrow, which represents the length at 50 percent maturity for females, and so, again, you can see if the catches are sort of above or below that line. We do have some examples on here where it looks like there's some missing length bins in some graphs, and those are just the

result of converting between fork length and total length and rounding to centimeters, and so it's not truly that we're missing fish, but it's just sort of, you know, because of the math behind the scenes.

A couple of caveats, and this applies both to the traps, the videos, as well as the trawls that I will get to later, and this is not an update of stock status, and that's a much more rigorous process, as you all know, and it may not be identical to indices that have been used in any of the SEDAR stock assessments, or other types of stock assessments, out there. The constraints and stratification units, et cetera, might be different than what we've used in the past, and not all species may have been assessed through the SEDAR process either, and so there may not be anything here to -- From the videos, a lot of these indices have been used in the SEDAR process, and that same video model has been used, although there may be some changes with the most recent updates, for species that haven't been updated recently. I think that's about it.

All right, and so, for chevron video traps, we kind of did these selected species based on rankings of how common they are in the survey, as well as what might be of interest to this group, and so we picked our eight most common species to present today: tomtate, vermilion snapper, black sea bass, red snapper, scup or longspine porgy, gray triggerfish, red porgy, and white grunt. Then we've also selected a couple of the groupers that we catch relatively regularly, scamp, gag, and red grouper, to present.

For tomtate, this is a relatively wide-ranging species, and it's found primarily in sort of our shallower, moderate traps, not so much along the shelf edge, and we don't have a video index for tomtate, but we do have a catch index currently, and, for the last three or four years, they've been right around the long-term average, after a period where they were maybe ten or so years below the long-term average.

Tomtate are a fairly stable length composition, and we often joke that they can be used as a unit of measurement, and we don't get a very wide variety of sizes of tomtate, and their average is very, very stable over time. Currently, tomtate do not have a commercial minimum size limit, and we don't know their size at 50 percent maturity, and so there's no add-ons for this one.

Vermilion snapper, however, is a fairly more regularly-studies species, and they're also very, very widely distributed, pretty much at almost all depths and areas that we sample. Our catch index is shown at the top, and the most recent -- In 2021, it was below the long-term average. In 2022, with the standardized index, it has bounced back up above the long-term average, and it's been sort of fluctuating along that long-term average for the last six or seven years. The video catch actually shows that same sort of pattern, and it's a much shorter timeframe, and so you have a few years below the long-term average, and it bounces back above, with that 2021 point, and, as I mentioned, that's a year behind, just below that long-term average.

Vermilion snapper, we've seen a little bit of change in the length composition over time, where we have a lot more small fish early in the time series, early in the survey. Since then, it's been sort of, you know, just around the twelve-inch -- I'm sorry, and I said centimeters earlier, and I forgot to change that, and these are actually in inches. That twelve-inch length, in total length, which is also right around the commercial minimum size limit, and it is well above the size of female 50 percent maturity, and we actually don't see very many immature vermilion snapper. I think we've caught one in the last ten years.

Black sea bass, unfortunately, it used to be a very wide-ranging species, and they're mostly shallow water, and, unfortunately, our trap catch index has shown, over the last seven, eight, almost ten years now, that they have been below the long-term average, and the video index also shows that same pattern, and, additionally, you do see maybe a little bit more of black sea bass to the north now, and fewer to the south, than we have in the past years.

Their size has changed a little bit over time, not as dramatically as vermilion snapper, but we have seen sort of an increase in that average size that we've been catching in the last couple of years, and that average is sitting just below the commercial minimum size limit, but it is sitting above the average 50 percent maturity for females.

Red snapper, historically in the survey, was not very common, not very widely distributed, and we've seen that distribution increase over time, and, in the last five or ten years, they're pretty wide-ranging, although their center of distribution still seems to be off of Florida and Georgia, but with a little bit more hotspots popping up off of North Carolina more and more. The trap catch index has also shown this, with a major increase in red snapper abundance in the trap catches since about 2010, and it's been sitting pretty high for the last couple of years, well above the long-term average, and the video index also shows this same trend since 2011.

Because of how infrequently red snapper were caught early in the time series, their average catches, or size composition, is very, very noisy, until we really started seeing consistent, high numbers in catches, and relatively frequent catches, and then we've sort of stabilized and filled out that size distribution quite a bit in the last couple of years, and there is currently no commercial minimum size limit, and so I didn't include that on here, but the average size of the red snapper catches in the chevron traps is above the 50 percent mature female.

Scup and longspine porgy, although not usually a targeted species, they are an important component in the ecosystem around this region, and so we included it here. They tend to be a more shallow-water species, more so sort of off of the center of the region, rather than in central Florida, and this is the most recent chevron trap index for scup and longspine porgy, and they have been below the long-term average for about the last fifteen years, but we have seen -- We have seen that the length compositions are fairly stable over time, and we are maybe getting a wider distribution of large scup and longspine porgy, over the last ten or fifteen years, than we have previously, and the length comps have sort of stayed around this long-term average over time.

Gray triggerfish is another one of our very widely distributed species, and they can be in sort of shallower waters, as well as out to the shelf break, as well as in all four states. The trap index has been sort of bouncing around the long-term mean for the last ten or fifteen years, although the last couple of years have been below that long-term average, and the video index mirrors that pretty well, not surprisingly. Our length compositions for gray triggerfish have been pretty stable over the last fifteen or twenty years, and that average total length has been above the minimum size limit, as well as well above the size at 50 percent maturity for females.

For red porgy, and this is a more centralized species in the region, and maybe not as common off of the far reaches of North Carolina and Florida, where we currently sample, and they tend to be in a little bit more deeper water. The most recent trap index, on the top, has shown a pretty steady decline for about the last seven or eight years, and it's been well below the long-term mean, and

the video index has also shown that decline since 2011, especially, you know, relative to what it used to be in the trap catches, and it's a pretty drastic decline.

The average length of red porgy has increased over time, and we've sort of seen fewer and fewer small red porgy, probably consistent with lack of recruitment, as I'm sure you all have heard a few times, especially in talking about the most recent red porgy assessments, and the average is sitting just below the commercial minimum size limit in the last year or two, but it is above the 50 percent female maturity.

White grunt is currently an unassessed species in this region, but one of our more common ones to see in the northern reaches of the survey, and we tend to really see them off of North Carolina, and not so much in Florida, and our trap index has been sort of bouncing around the long-term average for the last ten or so years, although with the last couple of years being below that long-term average, and the video index also shows that same little bit of a dip in the last couple of years. Our average sizes for white grunt have been pretty steady in the last ten years or so, and there is no commercial minimum size limit currently, and our average sizes are well above the average 50 percent maturity for females.

Moving into our three scamp that we're going to highlight today, scamp are fairly widely distributed, and they're found in all four states. They do tend to be a little bit more sort of in the middle shelf, as well as along the shelf break, and our trap catch index shows that, probably for the last fifteen years, they've been below the long-term average, and maybe even a little farther back than that, and the video index, although fairly flat, because it is only the last ten years or so, since they've already gone through that sort of decline based on the catches, and the video index is also seeing the last three or four years being below the long-term average, and so this is a good example of that historical perspective from the longer survey is really useful to have, to kind of really see that contrast for scamp.

Our average lengths, although we don't catch an excessive amount of scamp each year, we do have relatively, you know, well-filled-out length compositions for scamp, and the average total length in the survey is a little bit more variable than some of the other species we've shown today, but the average, for the last several years, have been above the commercial minimum size limit and above the length at 50 percent maturity for females.

Gag is a little less frequently encountered by the survey than scamp grouper. However, we do tend to catch more off them off of North Carolina than any of the other states, although we do see them in every state in the area, and they tend to be a little bit more shallow water than scamp is. Our trap index has been pretty flat since about 2012, and below the long-term average, and the video index has also shown that flatness since 2016, but with a decline between 2012 up to 2016.

Since gag is less-frequently captured than some of our other species, the length comps are a little bit noisier, especially in the years where we don't catch very many, and so there's a lot more variability, but our most recent average for the survey was below both the commercial minimum size limit and the length at 50 percent maturity for females, and the last grouper I will talk about today is red grouper.

This is even less frequently encountered than the other two species of grouper, and we have a bit of a split distribution for grouper in the survey, with really capturing them off of North Carolina

and Florida and not as much off of Georgia or South Carolina. Our trap index has indicated that they have been below average since about 2009, and the video index -- Although it has sort of bounced around the long-term average, this is another one where that long-term trend from the trap catches, that goes back to before the video survey started, is kind of really important for setting up that context, because it really shows that contrast between the last ten years and the previous ten, fifteen, twenty years, whereas the video index doesn't have as much to inform it, and so it's really already showing that decline sort of phase for red grouper.

Again, it's not as frequently encountered, and so our length comps are a little bit noisier than some of the other species, but our last couple years have average lengths above the minimum size limit for commercial and the size at 50 percent maturity for females.

All right, and so that's it for catch and video indices, for what we have to show today. If you have questions about other species, we can try to answer them as best we can, but I just wanted to highlight a couple of the other things that we've been doing in 2022, through the reef fish survey at SC DNR, and we've been working on an expanded version of our short bottom longline survey, including video camera footage, so that we can characterize bottom habitat to look at catch and presence-absence of some of those deepwater species, and we've also been deploying stereo cameras and standardized hook-and-line, so we can look at differences in length of species that are captured on those various gears, and so start getting a better idea of gear selectivity between the chevron traps, cameras, and hook-and-line. Then we've also been deploying some standardized small-mesh trap and small-hook hook-and-line, to try to capture juvenile snapper grouper throughout the region.

Now I'm going to move on to the coastal trawl survey. This one is new for this group. It's been -- Their data has been used in SEDAR stock assessments for king and Spanish mackerel, and so I did want to highlight some of those species that are pertinent to you all today as well, and so this is funded through the SEAMAP South Atlantic program, and it's been going on since 1986, but it was really in an experimental phase, up through 1989, and, since 1990, we've had standardized procedures through the present.

It's a stratified random sampling design, and we have twenty-four latitude-based strata throughout the region, from central Florida to central North Carolina, and these are fixed stations that are randomly selected each year for sampling. Currently, we're using a structure where we have three seasons, spring, summer, and fall, for sampling, and this happened through 2022, and we targeted, last year, 102 stations per season, and so a total of 306 stations in the region sampled, or at least targeted to sample, and we allocate those, to try to minimize variability in the area.

This runs off of our converted shrimp trawler, the Lady Lisa, and this is state-owned, and we run seventy-five-foot Mongoose-type falcon nets, and this is all shallow-water trawlable habitats, and we historically have sorted both nets. In 2020, we had no sampling, due to COVID-19, and, starting in 2021, we've only been sorting a single net, to try to increase efficiency onboard the boat, and so we present abundance in terms of a number of whatever the animal is per hectare towed, and our index is done through a delta GLM standardization, which works really well with this stratified design, and so it's not identical to what's been used in previous assessments, but it does work well.

In 2022, we had a little trouble with finishing surveys in the fall. We missed some strata for Florida and North Carolina, due to weather and mechanical issues with our boat that I will touch on in a little bit, and the distribution of samples, if you're interested in what it is, is in the presentation.

Now I'm going to present five species, three penaeid shrimp and two mackerel species. I know Mel touched on shrimp earlier today, and so we added in our common penaeids from the survey, and so it's a little bit different format, and the same basic caveats apply from the reef fish survey. You know, it's not identical, and it's not stock status, and it's just from the survey itself, and so specific to where we sample and how we sample.

The top panel will have an index of abundance, and the bottom panel will have your average lengths for each species, and so, for brown shrimp, the last probably five years have been above average, and our lengths are pretty stable, although maybe a tendency toward smaller shrimp in the last couple of years. For pink shrimp, the last eight or nine years have been below average, and they're not as common as some of the other shrimp species in the survey, and with the exception of a couple of years that was sort of anomalously high in the survey, we've been below average for pink shrimp for a long, long time. Then a little bit of maybe a decrease in the average length in the last ten years.

White shrimp is our most common shrimp species that we encounter, and our last eight years, or seven years, have been above average, and the last couple of years have been smaller than normal shrimp, compared to say the ten years prior to that, and then our two mackerel species, and I will start with king mackerel, and one of the caveats for our two mackerels is these are primarily age-zero fish. We do get some age-ones and twos, and even up to four, but primarily the abundance patterns are really driven by the age-zeroes in the survey. Normally, for an assessment, we'll cull out some of those older fish, to clean up the index, and we just didn't have time for this presentation.

Our last couple of years for king mackerel, or the last five years, have either been right at or below average, and I would say ten out of the last twelve years have been below average. Our length comps have been pretty consistent for probably the last twenty or twenty-five years, and then, for Spanish mackerel, the last probably fifteen years have been either right at the long-term average or below it, and, again, we have pretty stable length compositions over time.

I just want to make note, in terms of our trawl survey, especially because this is the first time you all have seen the data, we're doing some changes to the survey, and so it will look different next year, including that we'll have a new vessel, and we're working on new procedures and calibration between gear now, and potentially then for the future, and so, with that, I just want to thank everybody, and I'm happy to take any questions.

DR. BELCHER: Thank you, Tracey. Any questions for Tracey? Spud.

MR. WOODWARD: Thanks for that presentation. Just a curiosity question. In terms of trapping behavior of fish, when you end up with one species that becomes like really abundant in a trap, how does that affect other species' willingness to enter the trap? We were sort of looking at each other like why would a six-inch black sea bass ever go into a trap full of red snapper, and it would be like me walking into a lion cage in the zoo, and I'm just curious. I know that's a difficult -- I'm

not going to hold you to it in any sort of quantitative manner, but I'm just -- But, as an observer of that, I'm just curious.

MS. SMART: Well, if you all ever want to fund a project, and so we had tried a few years ago, and Nate Bacheler up at SEFIS had tried this too, and they did internal-facing cameras in the traps, to try to get at that question of who comes in first, and, if a big predator comes in, does that change what some of the smaller species do, and the difficulty with it was that it took so many traps on the bottom to get that one big predator, and get the right timing to work, that we still haven't figured that out, and so it is definitely a to-be-determined.

DR. BELCHER: Laurilee.

MS. THOMPSON: Will this data be able to be used in SEDARs and stock assessments?

MS. SMART: Yes, and so we regularly provide indices of abundance for the three groupers that are presented here, as well as snowy grouper and then red porgy, black sea bass, red snapper, vermilion snapper, and I think -- If you ever want to do white grunt, we've got lots of white grunt data. If it traps -- The video indices have been able -- They've been able to produce video indices for a couple of species that just don't enter the traps very well, and so that's another good alternative, if something doesn't want to enter, or isn't interested in our bait, and then the trawl survey data have been used for the last two SEDAR mackerel assessments.

DR. BELCHER: I've got Robert and then Tim.

MR. SPOTTSWOOD: I was just curious about the boundary that I saw and why the Southeast Reef doesn't cover south Florida and the Keys.

MS. SMART: Part of it is funding. It takes a really -- It's a long drive down there. It's a really long drive down there, and, as far as I know, there isn't a big enough ship to be contracted to do that work that's based in Florida, to sort of ease that pressure of having to drive down there and do it, and so the Palmetto, the Pisces, and the Savannah are all 200-foot-plus ships, with wet labs, because we're also dissecting, you know, hundreds of fish every night, and so finding a platform to do that work on is a bit of a struggle, and then just finding the funding for the sea days to expand either north or south. I personally have concerns about putting traps on oculina, for example, and so I think that would be something that we would have to consider, on what that distribution of actual trap stations would need to look like, if we move down into the Keys, where there are more corals.

DR. BELCHER: To that, Robert?

MR. SPOTTSWOOD: Well, we do have the pretty significant lobster trap program that's going, and I wonder if there's some way we can leverage that, what those guys are doing, but, obviously, it wouldn't be to the same extent, but thank you for that.

MS. SMART: Can you put cameras on them?

MR. SPOTTSWOOD: I'm sure we could put cameras on them.

DR. BELCHER: I've got Tim and then Clay.

MR. GRINER: Thank you for that, and so all the vessels have wet labs, correct, and so I guess the disposition of the fish then -- They're going to the wet lab, and you're dissecting them, and are you analyzing the stomach contents of the red snapper, and, if so, is that data available?

MS. SMART: So we had a graduate student who published a paper in 2021, or 2022, on red snapper diet composition. The trick with red snapper is they eat a lot of fish, and so it comes out as unidentified fish, and so he incorporated DNA barcoding into the stomach contents, to better resolve that, and so that was focused off the North Carolina and South Carolina samples. We just got funding, Wally just got funding, to expand that and bring back red snapper diet studies, using both visual methods and DNA, as well as several of the grouper species, I think three grouper species, and I'm staring at Wally. I think it's definitely a need, and we haven't had funding to do it for several years, and so I'm glad to see that's coming back.

DR. BELCHER: Tim.

MR. GRINER: But the DNA sampling is not ongoing, or we're not at the level where there's any results right now?

MS. SMART: I think we have a better chance of it being resolved within the last couple of years. The critique on that first publication was that it was only North Carolina and South Carolina, and we know Florida is different, or is likely to be different. There's different opportunities for different things to be eaten, and so expanding that spatial component was a big priority for us, and this will give us a chance to do that. I think that's it.

DR. BELCHER: Clay.

DR. PORCH: I wanted to go back to emphasize the response to Laurilee's question, and this is actually a flagship survey for a lot of our SEDAR assessments. I mean, it drives it, and, in fact, you can -- I can look at some of these surveys and tell you whether the stock is overfished just looking at the trends. I mean, when you see a stock that's less than 20 percent of what it used to be in the 1990s, it's going to be overfished, and that's just the way it's going to come out.

The other thing that I wanted to say is that Tracey is right that a big driver of why we don't go south is that we didn't have the funds, and, you know, this is an expensive survey to conduct, and so, recently, we did get an appropriation that increased the funds so that we can at least look at starting to expand, and I don't think we can get all the way down to the Keys, but we can probably get a little bit further south. We're doing the mapping now on the Pisces north, and I think a little bit south, trying to look at how we can expand this survey, but it's mostly a funding issue, because it's a long coast to survey.

The only other thing I would add is that we do have a diver-based survey that we do in partnership with the National Ocean Service and FWC, and that, I think, goes up to Jupiter or so, the Florida Keys up to Jupiter, and so that can kind of take place of it in the extreme south, but we do have that gap that we're looking to fill, and, like I said, we did get a little bit of an increase in funding, and so we're hoping that we can expand at least through part of that.

DR. BELCHER: Chip.

DR. COLLIER: Just to build on what Clay has said, that dive survey is actually going into deeper water than it has historically, and we're working with staff at the Southeast Fisheries Science Center to get out I think to, what is it, ninety feet, where it was previously down to sixty feet, and so we're getting into some of that deeper water, where some of the larger fish might be. To that DNA barcoding question, we do have a seminar series on it, and it's recorded. If you want to see that, it's on our webpage, and I can also send you all the paper that Tracey was referring to.

DR. BELCHER: Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: With all due respect to our southern people over there, I'm curious about expanding north, because, in my mind, that's somewhere we're really interested in, with climate change, of course.

MS. SMART: Yes, and, as Clay mentioned, the funding for next year is to pilot an expansion to the North Carolina-Virginia border next year. It was a little bit more doable, and it's a little shorter drive.

DR. BELCHER: Other comments or questions for Tracey? Okay. Thanks again, Tracey, for your presentation. It's right at about 2:30, and I'm going to go ahead and recommend that we take a ten-minute break before we get into the FES discussion, which is the next item on the agenda.

(Whereupon, a recess was taken.)

DR. BELCHER: Folks, if we can come back to the table, please, we're going to get started on the FES discussion. Okay. We've got Richard Cody here, from the Office of Science and Technology, and he's going to talk to us about the Marine Recreational Information Program pilot study.

DR. CODY: Thanks, everybody, for the time to speak to you about some recent developments in the FES, and so the Fishing Effort Survey. I'm going to give a brief overview related to our report that we released just in the last few weeks that detailed some recent research findings that we had undertaken.

A little bit of background on the Fishing Effort Survey, and most people are very familiar with it here, but it replaced NOAA's Coastal Household Telephone Survey back in 2018, and, at that time, there were some major concerns about the efficacy of the Coastal Household Telephone Survey. That was a random digit dial telephone survey based on landlines, and landlines were declining at a rate that they're almost gone at this point, and so the respondent profiles really did not match who was fishing, and so that was a huge concern.

Looking at some census-based information on demographics, we were able to show that that was indeed the case, that the respondents didn't really bear that much resemblance to who was actually fishing, and so, in 2018, the FES replaced the telephone survey, and the FES itself is a self-administered mail survey that collects saltwater fishing effort information from responding household residents, and it's based on the U.S. Postal Service's delivery sequence file, and so that's the list of addresses that the Postal Service uses for domestic and business residences.

Then this is matched to angler license information provided by the states under the National Saltwater Registry agreement, and there's a set of memorandums of agreement and understanding with all of the states, the coastal states, to provide that license information.

In essence, the survey itself is stratified geographically and then by license, and so you have -- It's divided by states, and then, within states, it's coastal counties, in most cases, and then, beyond that, you have a matching that's done to households that either are unlicensed or licensed, and so that's how it's done, and we increased the efficiency of the sampling by sampling at a higher rate the licensed households, and so that allows us a greater degree of efficiency with the survey sampling.

Survey respondents are sampled bimonthly, and they provide basic information on the numbers of shore and private-boat trips taken. It doesn't cover for-hire trips. That is covered with the for-hire survey, a separate survey, and they provide this information basically for the past two months, and then also for the past year, and in their state of residence, and so it doesn't take into account trips that they made out of state. It doesn't include those.

Information from non-resident anglers, or trips that are made out of state, is actually obtained in the Angler Access Point Angler Intercept Survey, and so the shoreside catch survey, and then, also, that survey is used to partition out the effort, or allocate effort, among different areas fished, and so the information that we get from the FES is very basic, in terms of what it returns to us.

The last bullet there that I will point out is that we started the program of continual evaluation of sources of error, largely two pilot studies, but also through monitoring of survey performance, and we do this through a variety of different quality assurance measures and metrics that are applied to all of our surveys, and so this is not a one-off pilot study, or set of pilot studies, that we just happened to do in response to concerns from constituents, and this is something that we had a program in place, and this is one of several pilot studies that we've undertaken since the initiation of the development of the FES. We're in double digits, in terms of the number of pilot studies that we've done.

The recent report that released highlighted two study findings in particular, but most of the attention was garnered by the second study, which deals with question order changes, but I will point to another study that's in there, and this has to do with one-month fishing activity questions, and so this was a study where we looked at reducing the wave size, or wave time, to one month from two months, and this study, in addition with the other study detailing question order changes, were really what was highlighted in this survey report, and so the question order changes pertain to -- Well, I will show you the treatments in a few minutes, but, basically, the order of the question on two-month fishing activity versus twelve-month fishing activity.

In the FES, the current design, the two-month question is asked first, and the twelve-month question is asked second, and the reason for that is that the advice from most survey statisticians, at the time we were developing the survey, was that this would improve survey response rates. You're asking an easier question first, and it pulls the angler into the survey, and so then they can, you know, look at what they've done in the last two months and estimate what they've done over the last year, and it's a standard method, really, for improving response rates.

Just a few key points, and I won't go into -- I won't go into the details of the reports. Those are available, and I can pass them along to folks if they're interested, but I will say that the document that published on our website right now contains a published paper by Rob Andrews et al. from Science and Tech that details some of the studies that we've done on what we call bounding, or, if you put additional information into a survey, it can produce more accurate responses.

There's a 2018 paper that I would recommend that people look at, but also then you have the report that's included and a review by some consultants, one from the University of Chicago NORC and the other from Westat in Rockville, Maryland. They have been involved with the survey development since -- For many years.

Anyway, just a couple of points here, key points, for the one-month wave study, and I will deal with this one first. Compared to the FES design, and we had two options, or two treatments, for one-month fishing activity questions. The first asked about a single month, and so, currently, with the FES, we ask about a single wave, and that's a two-month period, and so we don't distinguish between months. We just basically ask people how much fishing they did in the last two months and then tell them which months we're talking about.

Then the second treatment that we looked at was to ask about the two months, but ask about them separately, and so this goes back to the bounding study that I talked about, where you provide additional information that helps bound the answers that are provided by the respondents, and so, when you provide opportunities for anglers to answer questions related to each of the two months in the last wave, there are some benefits there, with that respect, but there are also benefits in getting additional samples, and so, for instance, and I will show a little bit about how the question is ordered, but, generally, what we're doing there is asking about the most recent month first and then the other month, the least-recent month, we'll say, second.

The single-month questionnaire resulted in consistently higher estimates compared to the current FES design, and so, when we asked survey respondents, or when they provide information regarding the numbers of fishing trips that they have taken, if they are asked only about one month, and we don't ask about the second month, their estimates, or the estimates that we get for the numbers of fishing trips, is actually higher, but, when we do provide the two months together, and ask about them separately, we get similar results to what we get for the current FES design, and I think that's important here, because the focus of the attention on the FES has been that the study shows that the estimates are lower, or part of the study shows that, but they can be higher, depending on how you do the treatments.

The limitations of this study, and I will be the first to acknowledge that it was conducted over a six-month period, and it was limited to four states, and so it's smaller sample sizes, and the sample sizes were really based on the minimum needed to achieve a certain level of precision for the answer that we got, and so they were small, relatively speaking, to the current FES.

I know there's a lot on this slide here, but there are three basic treatments, and I have talked about those just in the last couple of slides, but, in the first treatment, you will see here is the regular FES trip questionnaire, and there are two questions, 15 and 16. The first one talks about the numbers of trips taken, shore trips I should say, in the last two months, and then also in the last twelve months, and so that's -- Then it's followed by a question on private or rental boats, the number of trips taken in the last two months and then in the last twelve months.

The two treatments that we used to compare to this current FES design are shown right next to it, and the first one, Treatment 1, basically we separate out the wave, or the two-month period, into two separate months, and so, in this case, it was June and July of 2015, as an example, asking about June 1 and then July 2, and then we ask about the total numbers of trips for the last twelve months, and so those are -- Then the same thing, and we did exactly the same thing without changing the -- For the private or rental boat, without changing the order of the different modes.

Then the last treatment, you will see that we just ask -- It's very similar to the FES current questionnaire design, except that, instead of asking about a two-month collective wave, we are doing a one-month wave, and so it's one month only, and we're not asking any questions on the second month, and so that's basically the treatments that were used, and I've highlighted here, with a little bit of animation, but the second study is related to question order.

This involved revising the order of the question for the pilot, and this resulted in fewer observed reporting errors and illogical responses, and so that, to us, was an indication that this was a more accurate method of collecting data, because you had less errors in the responses that we received from the angling households that responded, and that, coupled with the information that we got from that published study that I mentioned about bounding, including information for the first month and second month and year, helps anglers to kind of partition out the trips into different time periods a bit better, and so that kind of supports the rationale here for the change to the FES survey.

The second point here is the effort estimates were generally lower than the current FES design estimates. For private boat estimates, this ranged from about 20 to 30 percent, although it did vary quite a bit for some of the states and time periods, and then, for shore, the answer is closer to 40 or 50 percent, and so it's higher. There is a bigger change for shore-based estimates than there is for the private boat mode.

The limitations, as I said, which, you know, are common to most pilot studies, is it was conducted over a limited timeframe, a six-month period, and we had a smaller sample size than the full FES administration, and then the study estimates were less precise and varied more by state, wave, and fishing mode, and so there is that to consider in, I guess, setting expectations for any changes in the FES and the differences in the estimates that it might produce.

This is the experimental design for the question order study, and the main point that I want to make here is not so much on the fine detail, but there are four treatments here, and the first one is we ask about shore mode first and then private boat second, and we do two-month first and then twelve-month second, and that's the current FES design. If you go over to Experimental Treatment 2, you will see that the only thing we do there is reverse the order of the modes, and so we do private boat first and then shore, and that's the only difference between those two questionnaires.

The other two experimental treatments, EXP 1 and EXP 3, refer to the order change, where we ask about the year, fishing activity for the year, first, and then a two-month period second, and so, in both of these designs, we changed the order of the mode, and so we ask about shore first, and then private boat, and then we ask about private boat first and then shore, but we do it the same way, and we ask twelve months first and then two months second.

The take-home here is that we looked at a number of different treatments, and it's not limited to just, you know, we changed the order, and we got a different answer, and these two studies, in fact, really form the basis for the next steps in the follow-up study that we plan to conduct. Essentially, we have information that restricts the treatment design for this follow-up pilot study to a combined study, and so the initial study that I reported on looked at question order, and then the monthly change separately, and this follow-up study would look at both of them together.

A few bullets here on follow-up and the next steps, and the revised design, as I said, combines both treatments together, and it would be conducted concurrently with the current FES design, over the course of a full year, something we haven't done in the previous pilot studies, with a larger sample size as well, and, in fact, equivalent sample sizes for both side-by-side studies, and there's a reason for that that I will try to get to as we go through these bullets.

We did receive IRA funding, Inflation Reduction Act, funding at the end of July to conduct the study in 2024, and so we do have funds available that would cover the current plan design. We have run the design by the White House Office of Management and Budget, and they see no major concerns in the response burden that might be issued on anglers and on the design itself, and so things are moving along there, and we're getting final approvals done in time to begin the study.

We have also been working with the contractor, Gallup, on getting the printing done for the additional mail-outs and other components of the survey, and so we're confident that we can get the study established, or begun, by January 1, pending, you know, getting a budget for 2024.

The next study design, as I mentioned, is informed by the previous two studies, but, also, we use cognitive interviewing, which is a process that is used to test questionnaires before they are released, or before they're used, in the field, and so it's done with limited testing, and they're trouble-shot for possible misinterpretations and other types of error. The revised study included both questionnaire changes and increasing the administration of the survey from two months to one month.

The study, as I mentioned, will determine the combined effects, and that, we believe, will allow us to do a more efficient transition, or calibration, process, because we have the -- It's a simpler process to adapt the current calibration model to accept that change, rather than doing them separately. If we were to do it separately, I think we would do a calibration process that is two-tiered, with the first part for several years and then a second part to follow that, and so it wouldn't be terribly efficient. Monthly sampling, I would point out, is a priority for many of our partners, and it would produce more frequent estimates on a shorter respondent recall period, and so that should also help, or may help, with reporting error, when it comes to effort estimates.

Then I think this is the last slide, and so we are working currently on the FES calibration model, and we've used the results of the previous pilot studies as training data for the model, and we're working with consultants right now to adapt that model to do some simulations, or runs, based on the data we have available.

The other thing I will point out is that the data, as soon as it starts becoming available in 2024, we plan to incorporate it into the calibration work, and so we should, in theory at least, following the first month, start putting data into the calibration model, and so we won't have to wait until we have a full year of estimates before we do that, and so that should allow us to report on any findings

related to issues, or concerns, with the calibration process in general. That said, we expect that that will take most of 2025 to complete, assuming that we complete the study by the end of 2024, and, as I said, there is no reason, at this point, that I can see that we can't.

Full implementation of the new version of the FES would occur no earlier than 2026, and it would be dependent on a number of different factors, like successful completion of a follow-up study and the calibration updates and then favorable technical review of those, including the updated transition plan. Generally, that's a plan that we issue to our partners that are involved in the survey, and they will determine if the benchmarking period for the calibration model is adequate or not, but we hope to have information to present to them that we think, at this point, we can expedite things, and we don't need a three year process. We already have a calibration model that's been tested and peer reviewed, and we're just adapting it for additional data.

Then it would also depend on when we could make available the full calibrated historic time series of catch and effort estimates, but we expect to be able to do that following the calibration development and review, and so sometime early in 2026, or mid-2026, at the latest. That's basically it for the presentation, and I apologize for some of the slides, and they had a lot of fine print that is very hard to read, but, if you get a chance, the reports have a little bit more readable information in there.

DR. BELCHER: Thanks, Richard. Questions for Richard at this time? Laurilee.

MS. THOMPSON: So, if there were consistently higher estimates in the efforts, does that mean that there is consistently higher efforts in estimations on dead discards? Does that affect the discards?

DR. CODY: Well, it should affect all the catch. We're not doing anything to change the APAIS component, or the dockside survey, and so, if effort is lower overall, you're dealing with a lower number to begin with, and so it should partition out to lower estimates overall for all of the components of catch, and so I would expect, if this result stays true through the pilot study, and there are a few, you know, wildcards in there. For instance, we are doing this at the same time as we're doing a one-month evaluation, and so, you know, the difference may not be as great as it was in the initial pilot study, or it could be greater, and so I would expect, overall, it should result in lower estimates overall, regardless of the component that you're talking about, and so a long-winded answer, but that's generally what I would expect.

DR. BELCHER: Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: I'm sorry if you answered this, and it's a lot to take in, and so forgive me. I know that one of the variables was some states that were more affected than others, and I happened to be at the Gulf Council meeting when a variation of this was given, and, if I recall correctly, Florida was the state where it wasn't as much as 30 or 40 percent difference, and it was much lower, like 5, and I'm wondering, at some point, if the variations by state are going to be released, so that we can sort of see how we're affected as a group.

DR. CODY: The calibration model identifies state as one of the variables in there, and so it looks at differences between the states, and so we're not going to see a completely uniform change across all the states. It's going to vary by states, and we have some information, from other studies that

we've done, regarding what they call bounding, where you provide some bounds that can, you know, trigger something in the respondent's mind that says, all right, well, I'm only talking about this month, and I'm not talking about that month, and I can talk about those separately, and that indicates that, in states where you have say a more seasonal component to the fisheries, like up north, they may be telescoping in trips from outside a period and into, really, a non-fishing period.

What we've found is that anglers want to report about their trips. They want to tell you that they've made a trip, and the FES is a very simple survey, and so there's a tendency for people to think that, well, what's the point in me returning this survey if I don't report a trip, and so there is a tendency there, and we're trying to, you know, tease that out, but we do see some differential effects between the states.

DR. BELCHER: Are there other comments and questions from the group on this subject? Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Well, I definitely think this is a big deal, and we need to think about how we're going to proceed with various amendments, or our stock assessment schedule, or other things of that nature, in light of this new information, and so, yes, I think we have some things that we need to talk about this week.

DR. BELCHER: Toni.

MS. KERNS: Thanks, Richard, for that presentation. Has MRIP discussed some sort of transition group, or utilizing the transition team, which gives me cringe, because I'm on it, but, you know, the last time we went through this, and I can't remember what part of the transition team we were called, but we spoke to the fact that that was going to have a huge implication on allocations, in particular quota-managed species, and there didn't seem to be an urgent need to respond to those concerns that some of the groups were bringing up, and, low and behold, those changes needed to happen, and all the FMPs needed to be changed, and it has huge implications, and I assume that this will have very similar huge implications, and we need to be able to respond in a timely fashion, as soon as those calibrations come through, and so which means getting on that stuff now and having a very clear, hard, set deadline for all of these processes, so that, as we know we have some big decisions coming up in all of our different councils and commissions, and assessments that are leading up to those, to kind of have a plan through that, and so will there be some discussions of that soon?

DR. CODY: Yes, and there already are. We've have some internal discussions about the need to get the transition team, the national-level transition team, back together for a briefing. We've done briefings to the councils and commissions, and some of the state agencies as well, but I think that group, in particular, because there is state representation, and there is regional representation on it, it focuses on the collective needs a bit better than say working with the Gulf, for instance, because, initially, when we were doing these studies, we had the Gulf in mind, in terms of there were studies that the states wanted to do that would involve changes to their surveys, and there were studies that we wanted to do to make some changes to ours as well, and address some non-sampling and measurement error issues.

The idea was that we would try to coordinate with them, but, obviously, it's gone beyond that, and we felt the need to not wait, but to get this out here, rather than have it be a surprise a year from now, and so I think you will find that, in the next couple of weeks, there will be emails to, you

know, bring the transition team together, and we have set some deadlines for ourselves, in terms of work that we started on the calibration process and the modeling, because we want to get it reviewed and completed before the end of 2025, at the latest, because that gives us the best chance of getting estimates and historical time series recalibrated and getting the survey, you know, on the ground and implemented in 2026. There are some dates, I think, that we can put a stamp on right now, as we have to meet, basically.

DR. BELCHER: I've got Andy and then Mel.

MR. STRELCHECK: I wanted to agree with Toni, and I think it's important that we have a solid transition plan, and I appreciate Richard and team kind of thinking ahead, in terms of how to prepare for this. Kerry, in terms of the report itself, in case you have problems sleeping, it is linked into the presentation, and there does provide the breakdown by state, and so you can look at that at your leisure, but it is -- It's not an easy report to wade through.

The other thing that I wanted to mention, and Jessica brought it up, in terms of kind of next steps and what does this mean, and I thought the Gulf Council did a good job of laying out a couple of good next steps, and one was directing staff to kind of do an inventory of actions that could be affected in the foreseeable future, as well as kind of what the potential exposure to those actions is, and then bring that back at a subsequent council meeting, and the other was working more closely with the Science Center to, I think, understand the implications to the actual science enterprise, and bring that as well back to the council meeting, and I know this will likely be a topic at our SEDAR Steering Committee in October, but I would recommend a similar path for the South Atlantic Council, so that we could have a more in-depth discussion of the implications at the December meeting.

DR. BELCHER: I've got Mel and then Jessica.

MR. BELL: Along those lines a little bit, I agree with Jessica, and it does cause you to pause and consider a lot of things, decision we've recently made and decisions we're making now, and decisions we'll be making in the future, but it sounds like the next couple of years, up until 2026, will be -- You know, until we have the full implementation in place, it will be a little -- I don't know, a lot of question-marks, but, Richard, I do appreciate you being here and explaining it to us face-to-face, and I really appreciate you coming down, but I agree with Jessica.

I think, you know, we've got to give some consideration to this, and, since I wear both a council and a commission hat, like Toni, I'm thinking both worlds, and it touches on a lot of -- A lot of fisheries, a lot of areas, but, as Andy mentioned, I guess, as the Gulf is doing, you know, we're going to have to kind of take some inventory of what are the things in play now, and the things in play in the very near-term, that we're going to have to maybe give some serious thought to. You know, we've, obviously, made decisions about amendments and things fairly recently, and some of those the decisions were made, and so I'm not sure what the implications are there, but it is a big deal, at a number of levels, and a lot of eyes are on us, and so we just need to proceed, you know, carefully and just make sure we're doing the right thing, but thanks for being here, Richard.

DR. BELCHER: Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks. To get at what Andy suggested, I'm prepared to make some motions to start some discussion for a path forward for us, if you're ready to entertain some motions.

DR. BELCHER: John is going to pull them up. Thanks, Richard.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right, and so my first motion is, during the September council meeting, and prior to discussion on each amendment that utilizes MRIP-FES data, the council will discuss the following: 1)the amendment's dependency on MRIP-FES data; 2)any MSA or federal deadlines required to complete the amendment; and 3)if the council is interested in moving forward with the amendment and subsequent timeline or postponing further discussion until the MRIP-FES bias evaluation study is complete.

DR. BELCHER: Do I have a second for the motion? Kerry. Further conversation on the motion? John, and then I've got Andy.

MR. CARMICHAEL: If nobody has any questions, I will say that the reason that it says to postpone is we looked at the Roberts Rules situation, and, when you postpone something, you're expected to postpone until something that you specify, and so it's different than say a motion to table. A motion to table, you discuss it at the next meeting, and you don't debate it, and so a motion to postpone you may debate, and then you will specify when you would bring this action, agenda item, et cetera, back around to you for further discussion.

DR. BELCHER: Andy.

MR. STRELCHECK: I guess a couple of concerns. I think it's important that we discuss this with regard to the actions we're working on, and I'm afraid that we'll really get bogged down, especially at this meeting, if we try to go through each and every amendment and try to respond to each one of these questions. The second component is that Bullet Number 3. In terms of postponing, right, there's legal mandates that we are required to abide by, and we have, obviously, the potential for new science and information, but it's not, at this point, being the best scientific information available, and so the fact that there's a pilot study, in-and-of-itself, it doesn't allow for the council to postpone something that they're mandated to complete, and so I would just caution against including that third bullet.

DR. BELCHER: Other conversation? Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: So a couple of things. I do think that that discussion is important, especially when we hit each one of these species. I agree with you that some of them have timelines and some of them don't, and so let's take an example of yellowtail. You know, what are we going to do with that? It's not overfished, and it's not undergoing overfishing, and do we want to keep moving forward with it, or do we want to put it to the back of the line on a stock assessment, put it behind mutton, behind hogfish and other things, and I have another motion behind this about directing the SEDAR Committee to look at some things and then send something over to the SEDAR Steering Committee, like you mentioned, Andy, but I do think it's important to at least have a discussion on the record about each one of those things, so that everyone understands what that timeline is and what the ramifications would be if we postponed further discussion on that particular species.

DR. BELCHER: I've got Andy, to that point, and then Spud.

MR. STRELCHECK: Yes, and I just want to make it clear that the data and information that's pending, in-and-of-itself, can't solely be the reason for postponement, and certainly there will be some decisions that have to be made that are within your discretion that aren't mandated and that certainly could be justified for postponement.

DR. BELCHER: Spud.

MR. WOODWARD: Thank you. I agree with this. I think whatever time it takes for us to adequately discuss the bullets is time well spent. I mean, the recreational fishing world is going to be looking at us under a microscope, and I think we've got to do our diligence to make sure that we fully understand the implications, as best we can, of moving forward with management actions when we know that there is a bias in data, and I think that's just the least we can do, and, I mean, it's a reasonable response to a situation that none of us really ever expected to happen.

DR. BELCHER: I've got Robert and then Mel.

MR. SPOTTSWOOD: My question would be, if the answer to Number 1 is yes, would the council be setting itself up for a challenge, or otherwise, to making a rule, understanding that some of the data that we're using is incorrect?

DR. BELCHER: That's the heart of the question, I think, for sure. Mel.

MR. BELL: I was just going to say that I think I fully understand where Andy is coming from, and that's where 2, Number 2, is, that we take a look at that and understand the deadlines and requirements and all, but then 3 is our ability to, after we've determined what the requirements are specifically, and we look at that and consider different timelines, and Jessica mentioned that she has another motion related to SEDAR, and so it may involve simply adjusting schedules, or moving things around, and it's a possibility, but 3 feeds off of 2. With 2, you first understand what the requirements are, and then you have some discussion in 3, and you deal with it based on the realities of where you are.

DR. BELCHER: Other comments? Clay.

DR. PORCH: Just sort of as an initial triage, looking at Point 1, the main cases where the amendment might be dependent on this adjustment would be anything to do with allocations, and so, whether it's commercial or recreational or Gulf Council or South Atlantic Council, where you have joint jurisdictions, since the proportion of recreational and commercial is different, but the other things, as I think Richard pointed out in his presentation, like the stock assessments, stock status, that probably won't change much, because the adjustment would be, if it's scaled down 20 percent, or whatever the number is, the adjustment would be the same back in time, and so stock status probably won't change much, and so all that matters is that whatever you're monitoring with is the same scale as what you used in the assessment, and being consistent there is the primary point, but allocations, yes, it would affect, and it means, if you did an allocation now, then it may very well change, you know, depending on the results of this study with the questionnaire and going to one-month waves.

DR. BELCHER: John.

MR. CARMICHAEL: I think, you know, we know that's been one of the challenges we've dealt with on recreational data since the beginning, in terms of using it within this, you know, congressionally-managed Magnuson requirement of hard catch levels across the fisheries, you know, because, when that started, the MRIP program was clear that like they were not intended to be absolute estimate, and they were a relative survey and intended to capture regional trends.

You know, we've seen changes in the survey and efforts made over the years to address that, to try to get the survey, a general randomized survey, closer to providing, you know, absolute numbers that are precise and accurate, and we still struggle to get there, you know, and so, yes, the relative situation is probably not likely to change, just like last time the changes in the MRIP estimates didn't really change many stock status determinations, and maybe some that were on the bubble because of selectivity issues, and depending on how things play out, and there could have been a few slightly tweaked, but, overall, status didn't change.

That's the case here, and the problem is, you know, when you take that and you try to estimate an absolute number of fish in the ocean, and then you try to divide up whatever is allowed to be removed from that number of fish between two different fisheries sectors, and then you have problems with the allocations, and you have one-half of your pie that is, you know, considered to be fairly reliable in absolute numbers and the other which we're saying is probably relative, still relative, and may always be relative, but trying to put those things together into one pie and then split them back up.

That's why the allocations are, you know, definitely going to be a problem, and it's why we still struggle so often with setting these hard catch levels and monitoring fisheries to the hard catch levels, because the survey remains probably, you know, relatively accurate and an excellent representation of trends, except for the really badly-estimated species, but getting that absolute magnitude is expensive, and probably that's the bottom line, is it's just so expensive to get that for so many people, and that's what stands in the way of the program really doing more, and so it's not really -- It's hard to fault the program itself, when it's just not funded to give you that kind of information, but it does put it right square in our lap to deal with it and figure out what management we can do, in light of this realization.

DR. BELCHER: Trish.

MS. MURPHEY: So this may be a stupid question, but, just looking at 1, 2, and 3, suppose we get to 3, and the amendment is highly dependent on those FES numbers, and people are just -- The uncertainty is just too mind-boggling and concerning, and the decision is to postpone, and what happens if we don't meet that MSA deadline, and what's the process with that?

DR. BELCHER: Monica.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: Well, you're supposing a lot of things all at once, as opposed to taking it bite-by-bite, but the Magnuson Act says, and other laws say -- You know, they put out the legal requirements, and you would not be meeting the legal requirements. That's as much as I'm comfortable saying right now, and it really depends on the situation and the facts and everything else, but it's hardwired into the act that you're supposed to meet certain deadlines that Congress

set out in the Magnuson Act, and so, when you don't meet those deadlines, you're not following the law.

MS. MURPHEY: Right, but I guess what's the stick for not -- You know, what's that stick that - - This is a hypothetical, and I was just -- I like what-if, what-if, what-if, you know.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: Again, it depends on the facts and the situation, and potentially the agency might be required to do a secretarial action, where the Secretary takes action according to what the Magnuson Act says, and it really depends on what we're looking at, in terms of what part of the act you're not following.

MS. MURPHEY: Yes, and I'm not suggesting that we do that, but it's just, as we walk through these things, and if, you know, there's some really big pros and cons, and the cons outweigh the pros, and it's just the comfort level is not there to move forward, and so that's just, again, a hypothetical, but I was kind of curious of what's that end result, and so thanks.

DR. BELCHER: I've got Laurilee and then Tim.

MS. THOMPSON: So, if we were doing an update to a fishery management plan, we could go ahead and do like the ABCs and the ACLs and all of that work, but then, when it comes to the allocation discussion, we're supposed to justify whatever decision we make on the allocation, and it seems reasonable, to me, that, you know, we could postpone the allocation, based on the argument that the data could be flawed, and we want to wait to do the allocation discussion until we get better information.

DR. BELCHER: Tim.

MR. GRINER: You know, I think we're really getting ahead of ourselves here. I mean, we're mandated to use the best scientific information available, okay, on all of our decisions, and what we're talking about here is a pilot study that's going to be one year long that resulted from a pilot study that was very, very short and with very few people.

This pilot study is going to take a year, and then they've got to go back and go through some period of time to calibrate that, right, and we all remember how long it took to calibrate FES back to the old telephone survey. A long time, and, in fact, I think, in my mind, we've just now got there, because we still keep going back and forth between the two currencies, right, and so, for now, we need to just move forward with business as usual, and, when this pilot study is done, it's done, and then we can address it, and, when it's calibrated, and it's brought back to us, then it will show what information it shows, but, until then, we just need to continue doing business the way that we're doing business, and act as if this doesn't exist, because Andy is exactly right.

That is data that we can't use, and the SSC is certainly not going to concern themselves with an ongoing pilot study, and so, really and truly, I am kind of not sure why we're even having the discussion. We need to move on with our business the way we do business, whether it be setting catch limits, allocations, whatever, and this pilot study does not provide us with any information that we can make a reasonable management decision based on. Thank you.

DR. BELCHER: Laurilee.

MS. THOMPSON: But then we may be basing our allocation discussions on information that may not necessarily be the best scientific information available.

DR. BELCHER: Tim.

MR. GRINER: We're currently doing that. We're currently doing that.

DR. BELCHER: Kerry, or Monica. I will go to Monica.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: So I think this was a surprising thing, and I think that it wouldn't be unusual for us, initially, to think what are we going to do, and the sky is falling, and we have to figure out what's going on, but the fact is, as Tim said, it is a pilot study, and I think you do have to let the service take the actions, as Richard set out, and then see what happens.

You know, you've got the best scientific information available that the Secretary, or the service, says here's what's available. You do have National Standard 2, which tells you that's what you're supposed to use to make your management decisions on. There is a section in the guidelines for National Standard 2 that states that FMPs must take into account the best scientific information available at the time of preparation. Between the initial drafting of an FMP and its submission for final review, new information often becomes available. This new information should be incorporated into the final FMP, where practicable, but it's unnecessary to start the FMP process over again, unless the information indicates that drastic changes have occurred in the fishery that might require revision of the management objectives or measures.

I really think this is a case-by-case situation for all your different stocks that you're looking at for amendments. There is some of -- You know, you've taken action, and allocation actions, on a number of species that are in the rulemaking process, some of which don't have that high of a recreational allocation, and some of them do have a higher recreational allocation, and so I think it's species-specific, and I think that you should, you know, look at this with each amendment, and with each species as you're going forward, but remember that it is a pilot study, and the final results may be quite different than what the pilot study results are.

You know, when I first heard about this, I too though, oh no, what are we going to do here, but I think that you have to take this as a case-by-case step, and I think it's great that the service is very open about this, in saying, hey, we're telling you that we found this, and we're letting you know, and then we're going to figure out what it means, and, until they figure out what it means, I think you have to stay the course.

DR. BELCHER: Okay, and so I'm putting the directive to the group. What's the pleasure of the group relative to the motion that's on the table? Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: So I would say that we continue considering this motion, because this motion isn't saying we're going to stop work on all these amendments. It's saying that we're looking at each amendment in the context of this new information, and we're going to talk about the deadlines, and we're going to look at all those things together and make a conscious decision, after having that discussion here at the table about what we're going to do, and that will all be on the record, and so, to me, that's saying, hey, we have this new information, and how does it affect

species whatever that we have an amendment in progress, and so, to what Monica is saying -- For example, wreckfish.

I mean, I feel like it doesn't really affect what we're doing on wreckfish at all, and so that would be a quick discussion. You know, we have that discussion real quick and continue the course on that, but I think that we need to do our due diligence here and have this discussion on every one of these.

DR. BELCHER: I've got Mel and then Kerry.

MR. BELL: Yes, and that was my take. It was that we were never saying that, no, we're going to stop, but we're saying this is the method that we would follow to, you know, kind of develop our path forward, and Jessica just gave a good example of one that Number 1 wouldn't be that important, and so it's just the process, and I think, as Andy mentioned, the Gulf was doing something related to assessing what all they've got, but I just viewed this as a path forward right now, and we're still moving, and we're just following an orderly process, and I just saw it as a process to keep things going.

DR. BELCHER: Additional comments? Tom.

MR. ROLLER: I wholeheartedly agree with Jessica's and Mel's comments, and that's the basis of my support for this. It's not that we're going to stop doing anything, but it's that the potential magnitude of this pilot study is just something that we can't ignore, and it makes me uncomfortable, to use a phrase, to do business as normal. If it is great as it possibly could be, we will be forced to go back and address some of these things, and having some of that discussion on the record I think is going to be really helpful, particularly for the stakeholders, which may face reallocations or other such changes.

DR. BELCHER: Okay. Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: I am also going to vote in support of this motion, and my rationale is that it does acknowledge to our stakeholders that this is happening, that we're talking about it, and maybe some of it is going to be out of our control, because, you know, we are under a statutory deadline, but, like Tom said, all of that discussion will be on the record, and we're not just sweeping it under the rug, and so I think this is a clear way, and it doesn't say that we're going to stop work. It just says let's talk about this publicly and how we're going to address it, and so I am going to vote in support of this motion.

DR. BELCHER: Spud.

MR. WOODWARD: I continue to support this, for all the reasons that I said before, and, yes, it's a pilot study, but I can't unlimber myself of what I know now, before I knew that, and so, in a clear conscience, I can't just go blindly forward and ignore the fact that we could have potentially an overestimate of 40 percent in some of these effort estimates. I mean, it doesn't -- It makes no sense, to me, to proceed forward with making a decision that you know may end up being wrong. If you wait, when it is possible to wait, legally and ethically to wait, and then make that decision based on the best information you have. I mean, I have always argued that BSIA should mean

best scientific information appropriate, and not always just available, but that's just me, and so I will continue to support this motion.

DR. BELCHER: Tim.

MR. GRINER: I didn't want to act like I wasn't supporting the motion, and I will support this motion, but I'm just saying that, you know, this is either going to turn out to be very short discussions or an exercise in kicking the can down the road and just dragging things out forever on the information that we don't have, and so, you know, I'm all for it, and it's going to be one of the two, a short discussion or an exercise in kicking the can down the road. Thank you.

DR. BELCHER: Trish.

MS. MURPHEY: I just want to make sure that everybody is clear -- Just because I asked that question of what would happen, and it just points out one big giant con in the discussion, but I support this too, and I'm not inferring that we should stop anything, but I just needed to know, and I didn't know what happens, and so thanks.

DR. BELCHER: Spud.

MR. WOODWARD: Assuming that we vote this up and go forward, I do have a question about how we would actually apply this, and it's certainly not to cast doubt on the motion, but, on Number 1, are we going to depend on staff, our own knowledge, the SSC, or who is going to tell us about this dependency? Is that something we think we know enough about, and we can do? I mean, obviously, we don't have the SSC here, and I'm just trying to set us up so that we know how we're going to handle that particular question, when we get to the point of dealing with it.

DR. BELCHER: Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I was hoping that the staff working on the different amendments that we're going to talk about this week can help us answer this question, just like wreckfish, but that's already detailed in the amendment, relative to FES, but I feel like Christina could answer those questions relative to wreckfish, in this example.

DR. BELCHER: Tim.

MR. GRINER: When I read that first one -- To me, it just -- Obviously, it came to mind that, well, every assessed species is dependent upon that data, and so, you know, every amendment that we deal with that's dealing with an assessed species would fall under that category.

DR. BELCHER: Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: But I think it's about a percentage dependence, and think about wreckfish. You know, that's not really super dependent on FES data, and it's primarily a commercially-harvested species, and so I think it's more of a sliding scale, when you think about it for these different species.

DR. BELCHER: Tim.

MR. GRINER: So that would go back to the only sliding scale you could use from that would be who has a greater allocation, because you can't tease out what percentage of that came through the SEDAR process and how that affected the outcome that the SSC decided upon. The only thing you could come back and say was, well, this was the results of the SSC's recommendations, and this is the ABC that we were given, and so how was that ABC dependent upon MRIP, what percentage, and you can't do -- You will never be able to tease that out.

DR. BELCHER: So maybe one way to move forward with that is to try the example of it, because I think that there is more involved in it, and it's not -- Maybe it's just the language isn't perfect, the way that you want it to be, and I think there's a lot of understanding, and like, again, on each amendment, we're talking about the actionable things that we're looking at today, and not all of the things that we have in the hopper, and that's not what we're asking to get wrapped up on the axle with, and so, similarly, with the idea of dependency, how much of a driver -- If we're talking allocation, and it's a predominant recreational fishery, we probably have more reason to want to pause on that than it would be if it was a commercial.

If there's some other data source that is helping inform us that, and we're directly away from a high dependency, or a high reliability, on that data stream, maybe that's another thing, but, again, it's having that conversation, to see if we can convince ourselves that maybe we would be better off to postpone it, and that's, I think, really what the goal of it is. Tim and then Jessica.

MR. GRINER: Yes, and I appreciate that, but what you're saying is you would postpone something because you were dependent upon something that you weren't sure about, but that would impact another sector, who is going to be affected by that postponement, on data that you're very sure about, and I don't think we want to get involved with that.

DR. BELCHER: Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Let me try to give another example. I'm going to go to the Gulf Council for just a second, and so, in the Gulf, Gulf gag, that stock assessment is based on the Florida State Reef Fish Survey and not FES, and maybe, as part of this discussion, since we have some Florida-centric species in the list that we're going to be talking about this week, and we have thirteen species for the State Reef Fish Survey, maybe there's a way that we could have discussions about more dependence on that Florida State Reef Fish Survey than on FES.

The Gulf has already had some of these conversations, even before we knew this recent information, and the same thing with the Gulf red grouper, and they're bringing in the State Reef Fish Survey more, instead of the FES data, and so I think that those discussions are relevant here, if you think about this state data stream, especially for Florida-centric species.

DR. BELCHER: Clay.

DR. PORCH: Yes, and I think, to Jessica's point, if we were talking about going, you know, in a future assessment and moving to SRFS, I think it would be more relevant. I don't know how we would address it, you know, for any of the existing amendments, and so, if you're talking about say doing mutton snapper, or something like that, in SRFS, I mean, that's a relevant point that could be brought up during SEDAR. The step that would need to be taken is to calibrate those

SRFS estimates back in time for the assessment, like was done for gag, and that may already exist, but I'm not sure if it's the same calibration or not back in time, you know, the scaling relative to the MRIP-FES.

DR. BELCHER: Jessica.

MS. MCCAULEY: Yes, and that's already being worked on for mutton, and that was what happened at the assessment workshop a couple of weeks ago, is the discussion of bringing in State Reef Fish Survey data, but let's take yellowtail. I think that there's a relevant discussion this week, and yellowtail -- We haven't used the State Reef Fish Survey data, because we didn't have the data stream at the time on the Atlantic, but maybe the council has a discussion this week to stop work on yellowtail and put it back through the assessment process, and so you would have -- If Florida does it, if FWC does it, you've got mutton, and you've got hogfish, and then black grouper, but they're talking about a third-party doing that, and so then yellowtail could get back in line, behind those other stock assessments, and you could bring in the State Reef Fish Survey, and so, to me, that discussion is relevant to our topic of what to do about the amendment this week, and so, to me, that gets to Number 1, about do we want to try to stop work on this, postpone it, because it's not overfished, and it's not undergoing overfishing, and bring in this other data stream, through a new assessment.

DR. BELCHER: Does that help folks kind of understand? Obviously, as Jessica said, there's another motion behind this, and so this is probably one part of the tier to how we're wanting to look at this, but the thing is that, going in and knowing that there is the acknowledgement of what we've been talking about with the FES numbers, we kind of owe it to the audience to say that we're hearing it, and we have our concerns about it, and let's talk about what we can or can't do in light of this information, and figure out how to move forward, whether it's shuffling tiles around at this point.

I mean, obviously, as we said, there's certain things that we know are going to have to be handled, because of statute, and we don't have any other option with that. Once the clock has started, we have to do certain things, but it's still talking about what the pros and cons are and acknowledging that we recognize that there is this potential fly in the ointment, and I don't want to call it a fatal flaw, but we just know that there's a potential there, and so how do we work around that, without looking like we're kicking dirt over it and moving forward, and I think that's the harder part of that. Other comments from folks? Okay. Then I'm going to call for the vote on the motion. **How many are in support of the motion? How many opposed? Abstaining? Okay. It passed unanimously.** Jessica.

MS. MCCAULEY: All right. I have another motion to get to the stock assessment piece there. **Draft Motion Number 2 for consideration is, during the SEDAR Committee, the council will discuss the ongoing and upcoming projects requested by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, consider the dependency on MRIP-FES, and provide recommendations to be considered at the next SEDAR Steering Committee.**

DR. BELCHER: Do I have a second for that? Mel. Discussion? Andy.

MR. STRELCHECK: To Clay, remind me. The next SEDAR Steering Committee after this one would be then in the spring, and is that right, like the April SEDAR Steering Committee? It typically meets every six months?

DR. PORCH: Yes.

MR. STRELCHECK: So is that your intent, Jessica, to have that long of a timeframe?

MS. MCCAWLEY: Well, do you have another suggestion?

MR. STRELCHECK: I think it would be important to at least bring back some initial guidance to the December council meeting, just to understand what was discussed with the SEDAR Steering Committee, and maybe if not final recommendations.

DR. BELCHER: So we have an October meeting, that's in a couple of weeks, and so it's not April, and we've got -- Go ahead, Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Let me ask you a question, and see if this helps, and so are you suggesting that the October SEDAR Steering Committee is too quick and that, when the SEDAR Committee meets this week, that we would need to make some recommendations and then staff bring those back again to the council's SEDAR Committee and then it goes to the SEDAR Steering Committee? I'm trying to understand the timing.

MR. STRELCHECK: Well, I'm trying to remember if the SEDAR Steering Committee agenda has already been completed and noticed. The way I was understanding your motion is that, at the October meeting, we would discuss this, but then recommendations wouldn't be made until the April SEDAR Steering Committee, but I may be misunderstanding your motion.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I was thinking that -- So we have a SEDAR Committee discussion this week, and so I was suggesting that, during this week, during the SEDAR Committee, we would discuss more of these things, and there's terms of reference in there, and there's timing of all the amendments are in there, and so let's take yellowtail as another example. If we're going to put that back through the process, that would affect the timing of items that FWRI is working on and which stock assessments are in the list for FWRI, et cetera, and so I was presuming that we would do that, start that discussion this week, and then the folks that sit on this council, that are on the SEDAR Steering Committee, would then help with that discussion in October.

DR. BELCHER: John.

MR. CARMICHAEL: The SEDAR staff has already started working on a paper to address this, and I know the Science Center staff is working on this as well, and it's on the agenda, is my understanding, and, you know, a big part of the agenda is also talking about the schedule, and so I think this is going to be useful guidance to Carolyn and I, going to that SEDAR committee, the SEDAR Steering Committee, and thinking about, you know, where can we provide some relief on a schedule that is chronically stretched and, you know, in response to this.

You know, there's a little issue with red porgy out there, and when we do that, and this may give us an opportunity for species like that, to say, you know what, we probably should hold off on

some of those stocks, until we can get updated FES information, and so I think we should discuss this here with our committee and bring it, so that we're informed when we go to the SEDAR Steering Committee in October. It probably won't be the be-all-and-end-all, and there will be more discussion, and we'll have revised SEDAR information and scheduling for you guys in December, and then we'll loop back again to it at the SEDAR Steering Committee again in the spring.

DR. BELCHER: Further comments or discussion from the group? Okay. Seeing none, I will call the question. **Those in support of the motion as written. All opposed. Abstains. That motion passes.** Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. **This is my last motion, I hope, and so this is Motion Number 3, and this is about thinking about the workplan that we discuss each meeting, and the Executive Committee is meeting in October, to talk about the budget and look at priorities, and so this motion would be to direct the Executive Committee, at their October meeting, to reevaluate and prioritize the workload in accordance with the council's actions during the September 2023 meeting, to adjust FMP amendment timelines and South Atlantic Fishery Management Council SEDAR priorities, in light of the recent notification of possible bias in estimates provided by the MRIP-FES program.**

DR. BELCHER: Do I have a second? Mel. Is there discussion? Mel.

MR. BELL: The three of these together are sort of the whole package of what we need to do to consider moving anything forward, and, again, we are moving forward, but it's just all the pieces and parts that have to line up, including the workload for staff, and so I think it's just kind of part of the boxset of things we need to deal with.

DR. BELCHER: Other comments from the group? Tim.

MR. GRINER: I like the way that Mel put that. I mean, I see this motion as just the natural next step from the first two motions. I mean, I almost feel like we don't even need the motion, but, you know, I mean, this will be the natural progression of the first two. I mean, the first two, if you didn't get past those, you would never get to this, but I support the motion.

DR. BELCHER: Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Yes, and I agree with what Tim is saying, but it seems obvious to most of us, but, just to be clear, this is, I think, the intent of what the Executive Committee is going to look at when they look at the workload and consider the budget for the coming year, and so I agree with Tim that this is just regular business, but it's just listing it out here, so it's clear to everybody what the next steps are, what the parts of this package are.

MR. ROLLER: I appreciate the transparency of these three motions, because I think that it's laying forward all -- It's publicly laying forward all elements of the conversation at every level.

DR. BELCHER: Any other further comments or discussion? Tim.

MR. GRINER: Just to be clear, I mean, the council can still look at the workload at December, and this is just giving the committee the change to get this fleshed out, correct?

DR. BELCHER: Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Yes, and it's giving the Executive Committee the direction, and like, hey, Executive Committee, if it's not obvious, we are wanting you to go look at this and consider this when you think about the workload and how to allocate the budget.

DR. BELCHER: Okay. Any other further questions, comments, or discussion on this motion? Okay. Seeing none, I will call the question. **All those in favor of the motion as written. All opposed. Any abstentions?** Okay. **That motion passes as well.** Any other further comment or discussion on this item at this time? Okay. Seeing none, I'm going to go ahead and give everybody a five-minute biological break, and then we will go into the discussions of the governance policy.

(Whereupon, a recess was taken.)

DR. BELCHER: If folks could start making their way back to the table, please. Okay. John is going to go over the NMFS Council Governance Procedural Directive, and so if folks could come back to the table, please.

MR. CARMICHAEL: All right, and so the last topic planned for today is discussion of the council governance procedural directive, and so this addresses MSA Section 304(f)(1), which authorizes the Secretary to designate a council to prepare an FMP, require relevant councils to prepare a joint FMP, and so it's the Secretary's authority to decide basically who is in charge for a given species, or stock, when it comes to setting an FMP.

I'm guessing last May, the CCC was informed that NMFS was pursuing a policy directive to provide some guidance on how they would apply this authority, and so the CCC has had some discussions with it, and there's been some concerns raised with the directive, mainly about, you know, the clarity of the process, the role of the councils, timelines, the information that's available to do it, and, really, what issues are there with the current guidance and approach and how this authority has been applied, and so, really, you know, what's the problem that's trying to be addressed.

All of the councils have been working on this, and the CCC has a letter that will be going in on this jointly, and the comments are due on November 17. This is our last council meeting to discuss it, and so we've got a series of bullets to go through here at this meeting to get your feedback on items that we could potentially include in a letter, and then the SSC has talked about it as well, at their last meeting, and, Judd, did you want to hit a few of the highlights of the SSC meeting? Jeff won't be here until later, but the SSC did provide some good comments on this topic, and so I think Judd was going to try to hit a few of those highlights for you all, because I think it may help, in terms of your feedback on topics we may consider in a letter, and so, once we get that, then I will go through this list of bullets and get your feedback.

DR. CURTIS: Thanks, John. The SSC reviewed this governance policy document at their meeting last week, and I'm just going to go over some of the highlights that they touched upon, and so we gave them a quick presentation, and they reviewed the document, and there was kind of four bullet

points that we asked them to provide some feedback and recommendations on the draft policy document.

The first of those was just to comment on the proposed process to review the geographic scope of a fishery and determination of council authority, and so their feedback for this point was that, you know, there's a lot of things that were not very clear within the policy document, and it's unclear where these numbers, such as the proportions of fishery landings and revenue were derived, and there was not very clear scientific or socioeconomic justification provided for those numbers.

These thresholds for transitions in management were very arbitrary, or seemingly very arbitrary, but the language did provide some flexibility for the application of the rules, and then, also, it was very unclear, procedurally, how these changes would be requested, and so there's no clear role for the council or the SSC that was outlined in the policy document, and, also, it was very unclear who would be monitoring the data sources in the Step 2b of the document.

The second bullet that we asked for feedback was to provide feedback on the application and potential implications of the proposed review criteria, metrics, and data sources described in Section 3, and there was a lot of discussion over kind of recreational data sources at the SSC, and so, as you all know very well, there's substantial recreational fishing in the South Atlantic, and that also has associated high PSEs for a lot of these species, and the South Atlantic relies heavily on these data sources, because of the magnitude of this, and, because of that, that transition in management between these adjacent councils, for many stocks, are dependent on these recreational data sources that have high amounts of uncertainty, which creates additional complications.

Some socioeconomic feedback was obtained, and there was some criticism over how traditional ecological knowledge is gathered, and it's been pointed out that it was extremely vague on how they accomplished that, and there's no explanation of what traditional or local ecological knowledge was, how this information was gathered, and how it would be incorporated. They pointed out that the stakeholder-provided information is extremely valuable, but, without any description of how this will be gathered, analyzed, or evaluated for accuracy, it seems not to provide a concrete or viable inclusion into the process, and the number of unassessed stocks in the South Atlantic is also very substantial, including a high number of data-limited species that have incidentally-caught species, bycatch, or non-targeted species, adding additional challenges.

The third point was we requested them to comment on the potential science and stock assessment implications of this policy. The feedback we got was that, if stock distributions have changed, this may disrupt any ongoing stock assessment processes, delay management advice to the council, as far as revised assessment schedules, et cetera, and it potentially may prevent ending overfishing/and or rebuilding of overfished stocks.

The fact that there is different review bodies, such as the SEDAR or the Northeast Assessment Team, creates additional complexities, and then the stock assessment capacity workloads are greatly different between the different regional science centers and regional offices, which is not fully recognized in the policy, and I think Clay has said, several times, that the Southeast has the most stock assessments of any region, and that was not clearly, or even remotely, taken into account for the NOAA staffing structure in that policy document.

Then, lastly, the fourth point was just any additional comments or recommendations, and just a couple of the highlights here was that the SSC felt this policy would negatively impact not only federally-managed species, but also commission and state-managed species, and that the management could be delayed or disjunct. There was not a clear recognition of the multiple management bodies, which has the potential to alienate stakeholders and contribute to added confusion and resentment, and, ultimately, just the procedure for feedback on when the geographic scope has changed, or when the changes will be applied, are extremely unclear, and the timing was very insufficient in the policy document, and so these points will all be made, or outlined, in the final report from the SSC.

Because it was just reviewed last week, we don't have the final version yet, but, once it becomes available, I will be sure to circulate that, and you can read the full report from the SSC. That concludes my report, Madam Chair.

DR. BELCHER: Thanks, Judd. John, back to you.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Okay, and so the document here is Full Council I, Attachment 7b, and it was in your recent documents distribution, and it just goes through with a number of bullets addressing points within this policy and trying to organize it around the major sections. One of the things about this policy that I have found is that, you know, in first reading it, you're like, okay, a lot of that sounds pretty reasonable, but it's one of those things that it seemed to me that, as you kind of get down into the weeds on it, you start finding a lot more threads that kind of come apart.

I set out to make this fairly -- A brief set of bullets, hitting on major themes, and then I got up to like five pages, or six pages, at one point, and I trimmed it down, back to, you know, five-ish, but it's just that there's a lot of concerns here, as the SSC noted, and as other SSCs have noted, of just the role of the councils, how is the process going to work, how is this information going to be used, and the reality of getting information like this together, which we deal with in our assessments and stuff and know it's not really straightforward.

The idea here, the hope, is that we can go through some of these bullets, and I will sort of scroll through them. If there's something that you're like, you know, I read that, and no way do I want to make that part of our letter, we'll scratch it. If there's other things that you feel like, you know, you didn't even mention this item, and we should add it, then you can bring that up as well, and so then this will lead to -- It will become the framework for a letter that will be provided around for you guys to review, and we'll run it through the chair and vice chair, and then, you know, given the importance of this issue, it's something that I would like to make sure we have time to let all of you look at it, before we finalize it and submit it in November, and so we have plenty of time to work through all that, and we can get some good feedback here today.

With that, I will just kind of jump into the bullets. The first bit here is just hitting some general introduction, you know, big-picture views of it, you know, addressing that -- You know, really agreeing that stability is important, and we shouldn't be making these governance changes willy-nilly, and they shouldn't be knee-jerk type things, and we should really make sure that there is a change in a species distribution, and that's not an easy thing to determine at all, and so this guidance could be important, but also making sure that there is time for the councils and stakeholders on both sides, and so maybe the council is saying you're no longer responsible, and the one that's being told you're going to be responsible, to make sure that there's enough time that

everybody can take part in the process, which has been a concern expressed at the CCC on a number of policies, that they really haven't respected the council process timeline.

Another broad issue is just the lack of detail on the data sources, and how will they be evaluated, and who is going to do it, and what's the Regional Office versus Science Center and councils and SSCs, and what about BSIA, and all of that seems very important to something like that's going to be a database decision. We need to evaluate stock and fishery changes, but they're going to be challenging. It's complicated, and it's really highlighting, as we often do in so many of these letters, the number of data-limited species that we have, the issues that we've had with, you know, lack of adequate, comprehensive surveys across all of our managed species, the recreational component, the uncertainty that's inherent in the recreational estimate, the surprising uncertainty, such as the issue we talked about earlier.

Acknowledging that NMFS has had a process to do this, and the question really is have those processes worked, and has there been issues, and that's something, again, the CCC has stressed, that, you know, we haven't really been told there were problems with the current process, and so what are we trying to really achieve and solve, and some examples, maybe, of where it hasn't worked. Then, in general, it's been difficult to fully evaluate the process, because there is a lack of details and specificity, and you heard some of that echoed in the SSC comments, where they just weren't really clear what was being proposed.

The first section is just a general introduction of what we're trying to do here, and so takeaways from this is the council does support a transparent, orderly, and responsive approach, but questioning whether or not there's enough detail in the process, at this time, to really know that we're achieving that.

Also, it's agreeing that governance should be aligned with species distributions, and I think that's been fundamental in the things that we have done, certainly in working with other councils and working with the commission and bringing other people on our advisory panels, as we discussed earlier today, to try and get, you know, representation across where the species is distributed, but, of course, the challenge is how you come up with rules that are going to be applied to available data, particularly when you're doing it on a national basis, and not result in some type of unintended consequences, because it is really hard.

I looked at some species, just as a little example, and say Spanish mackerel, and we've started getting reports of more Spanish mackerel showing up in places like Massachusetts, off of Cape Cod, into Rhode Island, and so kind of what do we see in the MRIP data, and, well, you know, you can go back, twenty years ago, and see times where states up there had as many fish landed as they did in 2020, or 2022, and so it's really hard to just look at something like that and say, you know, am I really seeing evidence of a shift, and it probably requires some robust statistical techniques applied to the data, and not maybe just looking and choosing a couple of years, and, you know, averages may not cut it.

Section 2 just rehashes the various authority and what's in the Magnuson Act, and so no comments on that, and that's pretty straightforward. Section 3 gets into the process for what's called determining the geographic scope and authority, and so the scope refers to the stock, and so there's a statement in there, which is highlighted, and it says, for most currently managed fisheries, initial determinations were made. Well, you know, the question that I had there is, well, most or all,

because I would think all managed species have a council authority assigned, and so I would think this has been done for all, and so that may be something we just need to have clarified. If there are some that don't have a council lead assigned, I would be real interested in learning more about that, and maybe there's some that should be looked at, to figure out how we would divide this process. Then, again, in the process, just some discussion of the challenges, or inadequacies, in the past assignments, we know what we're trying to solve.

It goes into a number of a, b, and c sections, just providing some detail on how this will be done, when to conduct a review, and so the document states that there will be an evaluation of various pieces of data, and then, if certain things happen, if triggers are pulled, and, again, this is what the SSC was hitting on, then the agency would decide, okay, we need to conduct a review, and so the question here is, you know, how is this going to happen, play out, in a practical sense, and is the agency proposing that they would regularly evaluate things like the distribution of effort in the recreational fishery between say us and the Mid-Atlantic for a species like let's say gray triggerfish, which, you know, seems to be having maybe some more landings, if we listen to what's coming out of the current assessment up into the Mid-Atlantic region.

Would this be regularly looked at? Would they look at commercial landings, and would they look at commercial effort, on a regular and ongoing basis, and that's the real question, because, if so, I think we all know that's a lot of time and energy, to just look at all the species. I mean, we've got fifty-five in the snapper grouper unit alone, and so who is going to be doing all that?

Then, once you get that, there comes the criteria that would indicate a need for review, and so there would be this evaluation, and that would lead to some triggers, and, if certain triggers are pulled, they would say, okay, we need now, at this point, to actually go through and do a formal review of the governance and which council is responsible for this given species, and so this is where the idea of 15 percent was selected, to say, you know, if commercial, I think, value changes by 15 percent, and then recreational talks about effort shifting by 15 percent.

If you think about recreational species, many have high PSEs, and a 15 percent swing, on a recreational fish for us, is nothing. A 15 percent swing on a commercial fish, in a lot of cases, is completely not unheard of. When you factor the uncertainties in there, and you factor what goes on in economics and everything else, things like 15 percent just don't seem to be appropriate for a region like ours, given our data and the regular inherent uncertainty in most of our data sources, and so there's been a lot of attention given to that 15 percent, and I feel like no number has emerged as a leading contender to replace 15 percent, and maybe because every situation is going to be very different. You know, 15 percent in Georgia's bank cod could be millions and millions of fish, but, for us, it could just be, well, we've got two MRIP intercepts this year instead of three, and, you know, that's kind of the realities that we're facing.

There's also a discussion of using a three-year time block, and so, you know, look at maybe landings from 2019 to 2021, and compare them against landings from 2015 to 2017, and see if they've changed, and so some of the concerns raised about that are, well, first of all, a three-year time block may not really be a very statistically-robust metric to apply to extremely uncertain information and that, really, you know, we're talking about species shift, and we may need to look at trends over a much longer time period. We may need to be looking at decadal trends and what's going on in the fishery.

You know, the upwellings, the gyres, El Nino and La Nina, they seem to be lasting longer than they used to, and their impact on the fishery is going to be longer than they used to, and then a big concern there in the last bullet is -- When this was raised at the CCC meeting last, they said, well, these are just the type of examples of the type of information that could be considered, and one of things that we've often run into, in past guidelines like that, is, once something makes its way into guidance that, as an example, you could consider a three-year average, and it tends to be, that years down the road, somebody is applying that, and they read that guidance, and they go, oh, okay, it says use a three-year average.

What gets included as an example often becomes the way, far too often, and so it feels pretty dangerous to set that precedent and put that mindset in there that, you know, a three-year average may be a good way to deal with the uncertainty in the data.

A lot of concerns were raised with sources of the data, another thing echoed by the SSC. You know, I think we understand the difficulties we have in our region with getting accurate spatial information for the commercial fisheries, and particularly for the recreational fisheries, and we don't have much spatial detail in the recreational fisheries. We have the high PSE issues with many species, and many of the sources are really just lacking, you know, and we don't have a lot of vessel location information to rely upon, and we don't have surveys that go across the important boundary between us and the Greater Atlantic Region.

We know, as we discussed earlier, that's really a problem, and, you know, you go through some of these, and like stock assessment was stated to be reviewed as information, and the reality is we've got sixty-seven stocks we manage, and sixteen are assessed, and so that's not going to be a real powerful source of information for a lot of species. A lot of those assessed species lack fishery-independent indices. Even though we have an assessment, we don't have fishery-independent indices to really make those robust assessments.

The biggest issue, as mentioned earlier today on the climate change, is this lack of survey method consistency between the two regions, which the agency is working on, and hopefully someday we will come up with something that's a little more compatible, but the DISMAP program, which was cited, doesn't give you a way to go across this boundary between us and the Northeast, and, as we've worked on this, one of the things that, to me, is quite concerning is that boundary that exists between our region and the north.

The South Atlantic, Southeast, and the Greater Atlantic, as they call it, that exists between Virginia and North Carolina, fish don't really care about that boundary, but yet you're talking about an entirely different NMFS regional office, and you're talking about an entirely different science center and totally different ways of, you know, dealing with information, sometimes different staffing levels, different funding levels, and it's a real challenge.

You know, Clay mentioned the problem with cobia, and that's continuing to shift, and, you know, you're getting into different datasets, and you're getting into different states that you're working in, and, you know, it really is a challenge, and I think we are a council that's poised to potentially have some pretty significant disruptions, but then the Mid-Atlantic could be disrupted as well, if they find some things thrown in their lap that are not familiar to them, that they haven't really worked with, and one of the pieces that's really missing through this seems to be consideration of the impact on the agency's line offices.

It seems to be coming from Headquarters, and I don't know how much discussion they're having with, you know, Clay and Jon Hare about this, but this could be fairly disruptive to efforts to, you know, manage these stocks and assess these stocks, and goodness knows what it does to the different financial relationships and the funding needs of the different offices, and so that's certainly been a concern at the Coordinating Council, as we've talked about it.

One big concern too is that we really lack fishery-independent surveys for the migratory pelagics, like Spanish mackerel, that seem to be most likely to respond to climate change. If you're a fish that's already migratory, it would be pretty easy for you to up and find better conditions to make yourself happy, I think more than something that's, you know, reef-associated or doesn't just migrate nearly as much, and so we're going to need to get information for those if we're going to actually evaluate whether or not a species is shifting, versus whether or not we think fishermen, or a fishery, is shifting.

Fishery-dependent data, also, as we said, has a lot of issues. We don't have a lot of observer programs, and they just haven't been funded in this region to do, you know, observer programs directed towards getting good fishery information, and the MRIP standards, and the logbooks, and, you know, we have issues with the self-reported logbook data for discards and location information. We don't have the VMS information, outside of rock shrimp, and recreational data are uncertain, and then there's the DISMAP issues.

Then the ecosystem status reports are another thing that's been cited that could be looked at, but, as we've said, we kind of lag behind a lot of the other regions in providing this information, and so it just sort of sums up to a situation where there's a lot of ideas put here, and they're the common data sources, and we know they exist for fisheries, but are they really going to be up to the task, and, you know, it's hard not to think of the effort that goes into say a SEDAR stock assessment data workshop process, where there's data scoping and then nine months, six to nine months, of just getting data together into one place and then a week-long evaluation of data and continued follow-up of that data, and that's a lot of work that goes into getting data that are reliable and robust, and so it's mindboggling to think how, you know, you're going to get the similar evaluation of the data in a process like this, to know that you are using BSIA data to make such an important decision, and I think it is an important decision, because it's going to affect constituents, and it's going to affect the councils and everybody. Again, you know, feel free to raise your hand and shout out, any time you have a question or a concern. Otherwise, I'll just keep talking.

Step 2 in this process is determining the scope, and so all the data sources are simply repeated, and so this would be the same set of concerns, and then they get into some additional considerations that NMFS would apply, and, really, the question is, you know, how are these relevant to the geographic scope of the fishery, and so one of them that comes up is how the FMP goals and objectives impact the geographic scope.

The fishery occurs where the fishery occurs. If our FMP goal is different from that of the Mid-Atlantic, how does that impact the geographic scope of the fishery? How does that impact where a fish species actually goes? Then another thing is the need for conservation and management, which, to me, is another question, and, if the fish needs conservation and management, it needs conservation and management, and that's a separate question than where does this fish occur, and so some of those things are just -- I don't know, and maybe they seem a little bit like grasping at

straws to come up with things to put in there to cover the bases, and the real questionable one is management efficiency.

I don't know what that means. Could someone in Headquarters decide that they feel like the Northeast Region, with their categorical exclusions and some of their more timely processes, that have been driven by past lawsuits, and supported by processes to comply with those mandates, and they seem to be more efficient, and so we're going to shift management of the species to the Mid-Atlantic Council, because we think they're more efficient in the Greater Atlantic Region? I don't see another way to interpret this, but I think it's a big question, as to how that impacts where a fish occurs, which is the fundamental question we're facing.

Then there's the process of determination, and they may allow the councils to review the governance decision, suggesting that that should actually be an absolute requirement, and it should not be a "may" thing, and they give us six months to develop a recommendation, and I think that's wholly inadequate.

You know, this problem could affect multiple councils, and they're going to continue changing governance between us and the Mid-Atlantic on a stock, and we probably need time to talk to the Mid-Atlantic, and we need time to come up with our ideas, and they need to come up with their ideas, and we probably need to have a reconciliation of ideas, and then I think the agency's own offices, like the science centers and regional offices, probably need more time to do that as well and so six months doesn't seem to be at all adequate, and they're not giving us certainly enough time to obtain any data, conduct any analyses, and talk to you guys about it, much less to talk to our SSC and our constituents.

I think this is just another example of where there seem to be these totally unreasonable timelines being put upon the Magnuson system, which is not fast, but it is supposed to be open and transparent, and, if we try to make it too fast, then we're going to lose that.

The third step we come to in this process would be the designation, and so this is where NMFS would say, okay, this is now how we're going to designate authority for managing this given species, and there's just some confusion in there about the steps that they specify in 2d above, versus 3a, and they're very similar, and they use the same timeline, and it's not clear if it would be the same six months or another six months, but, again, the same issue.

Six months just is not enough, and it does come across as fast-tracking, and it would seem to me that we need at least a year to evaluate, and maybe another year to develop a cooperation plan, particularly if we were dealing with something that extends maybe from our southern boundaries and involves the Gulf Council, as we deal with our Coastal Migratory Pelagics FMPs, and, if they impose a more stronger role of our northern councils for something like Spanish mackerel, in which case we maybe have a three-council, or four-council, FMP, and then we also have the commission involved in CMP management, and so I can't imagine say four of us getting together and working out a cooperative management deal in the course of six months, and so I think we really need to come out strongly to say this needs to have legitimate and realistic timelines.

There's a few other things that are listed then, that other stuff will be considered, and, again, you're seeing more like language like the efficiency, responsiveness, adaptability of management, and I'm not sure how that's relevant. Cost, cost is just there, and what is the cost? Is it the cost to the

agency, the cost to the council, or what about cost to the constituents, and how we will recover those costs?

If you shift the species from the Southeast to the Northeast, are they going to take money away from Clay and redirect it to the Northeast, because they're going to say, oh, this is a new species that I've got to manage? I don't know. Are they going to take money away from us and redirect it to the Mid-Atlantic? Nobody really knows.

Then we get into the comparative effectiveness of existing examples of single versus joint council management in other fisheries, something they say that should be considered, but I really think this is something that should be done now, and we probably should have done this before we even talked about doing the policy guidance, and are there better management processes? Identify some, and we may go and pursue them on our own, because we have a wide range of ways that we've worked with our council to the south, in the Gulf, and the councils to the north, as well as with the commission.

There is some presumptions that are put in there, and it's saying, you know, presumably, if this happened, this is how the agency would respond, and one of them talks about directed recreational fishing shifting for species, and the reality is I can't imagine how they're going to establish directed recreational effort for an individual species. It's very difficult, and we don't believe that most of the preference information that is expressed with MRIP is overly reliable, other than for a few, you know, high-value species in the target species, and we know that, most of the time, people tend to say that they target the glamorous species and catch the common species.

Very few people -- You know, I remember looking at this in North Carolina, and a lot of people say they're going out inshore fishing, and they're targeting drum and flounder and speckled seatrout, and 90 percent of them are catching spot, and nobody says they're really targeting spot, for the most part, other than a few people, you know, seasonal, but, for the most part, that's sort of the case in most of your preference stuff. We've seen the preference for red snapper go up just because people talked about it, and you saw the same thing with cobia. You know, people tend to respond to social media and sportsmen's magazine articles, and they say, oh, that's what I'm targeting, and everybody else is, but they catch the same things that are common, and so it's just, you know, totally unrealistic, I think, to think that you're going to be able to use recreational effort for a species to establish that, you know, the fishery is shifting.

Then there is the issue about landings revenue, and it may not really be where species occur, and it could just be where fishermen happen to come back and land their fish, and not necessarily where, you know, revenue is accruing to a state or a port, and it may not be where the guy actually went out and caught the fish.

There was some request for feedback on a presumption for the fishery-dependent data, but, really, that's kind of difficult because of, in our case -- You know, our shifts are going to come between the Southeast Region and Greater Atlantic Region interface, and we don't have fishery-independent data that crosses there. Nothing in the presumptions addresses where the stock is actually located, which I think is a concern, whereas the whole point about this making sure that, you know, the management is aligned with where the stock occurs, and so, overall, the presumptions don't even up being particularly informative. Tom.

MR. ROLLER: I just want to point something out here, and I appreciate your comment. You know, you said, to resolve decisions being made on alternative information, the commercial value rather than the actual fisheries distributions, and this goes back to some of the climate change workshop discussions we had. In the Southeast, we're just so different than New England, and we are so different than the Mid-Atlantic, because that we're the biggest recreational region, and I think that gets lost in the translation. I don't know, looking forward, how we better translate that into fisheries management, but it's something that we need to reiterate, at least from here in the Southeast.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Thanks for that, Tom, and I feel like sometimes they feel like, at the national level, maybe we're a broken record, constantly reminding of that point, but it is a very important point. Then the last step in this process then becomes the transitioning, and so there is where a decision has been made to change governance, and they lay out some steps, in terms of transitioning, and so I imagine this would be us giving up authority for some species, and say the Mid-Atlantic taking it over, and they address things like transferring knowledge.

You know, I just want to highlight that's not really trivial. We've seen the issues when you start dealing with changing of stock ranges, and, again, you know, the example here being Atlantic cobia, and it's not just our knowledge. It is the Science Center's knowledge, and it's going to be the Regional Office's knowledge, and there's a lot of people involved in that, and it's not a small thing, and it's probably not going to happen within a short period of time.

You know, then you have the idea of like the other example being Spanish mackerel, where the SSC raised concerns about it being BSIA, because of the admission they're not fully including some of the fishery-independent data from the Greater Atlantic Region, and that's just because these fisheries are changing, and the processes are slower to adapt to that, and we find out that information is available, and you've got to go and develop new pathways and new relationships to get that information, and so there's really nothing, you know, trivial about trying to deal with this, and particularly trying to deal with these fish that don't care about our political boundaries.

I also want to highlight the importance of the permit changes, and, you know, we talked about permits earlier, and we talk about permits a lot. We've been dealing with permit issues for years, and solutions are still on the horizon, but, you know, the fishermen really do struggle with this whole permit situation, particularly those that are permitted in multiple areas, and then many of these items, almost all of them probably, are going to require some kind of funding, and that's not something the agency has been really awash in, and so one concern is are we going to do more harm than good to the resource, because, instead of funding going to data collection, it's going to go towards some transitioning plan to change authority for a species, or to put us in a position of doing more joint management plans, and we know how difficult all of those are.

These are the main concerns that I've highlighted in this. You know, like I said, if there are any that you think are totally off the mark, and we shouldn't include them, but, again, it's something that seemed like maybe it's not that bad, but, as you get into it and start thinking about how it would work in practice, particularly for us, particularly with the fact that we are the boundary of a region, two NMFS regions, I think it's very different than say the Mid-Atlantic and New England, and they are at least within one NMFS region, covered by one NMFS science center, similar data collection methods being applied across that region, and so some of these issues probably aren't going to be as severe with them.

Then the other case is, you know, when we deal with the Gulf, and potentially in a position of having to deal with multiple councils and multiple jurisdictions, it's going to be very difficult, and so there's a lot of council concern about this. The agency has continued to push ahead, and the concerns raised before have not been well received, necessarily, around the CCC table, to put it lightly, and wouldn't you say, Carolyn? Yes?

So we expect this to continue to be maybe a point of contention between the agency and the CCC, as it plays out, and so that's the bullets. Any additional thoughts or big-picture items that you guys want to add, it would be much appreciated.

DR. BELCHER: Thanks, John. Trish.

MS. MURPHEY: So my thoughts on this, and this was even during the CCC meeting that I thought this governance policy was awfully simplistically and not well thought of and thought through, and, granted, I know you kind of can't figure out a process until you've gone through it once, because you're going to find that you missed this or this, but this seemed way too simplistic, and I think the bullets that John went through kind of demonstrate -- Or does, and it's not kind of, but it does demonstrate the simplistic approach that the agency has taken.

One of the main things that jumps out at me, and I think we talked about this at the CCC meeting, and I still don't see it, is public input and public stakeholders being included. I mean, I went through and found several places where there could be opportunity for the public to be part of it. Step 2, determine the geographic scope of a fishery, I think that would be very important stakeholder input, and additional considerations, and it's like public input that I think is important. Then again in Step 3, to get public comments, and then, in Step 3, where it sounds like NOAA Fisheries makes that determination of what, you know, the councils are -- Who is responsible, and it does seem to then dump on the councils to get the public input, and it seems, to me, that the agency should be responsible for that.

Again, there is places for public comment and stakeholder input that is missing, and then one last question that I had, in Section 3, where it says that the most currently managed fisheries initial determinations of geographic scope and designations of council authority for preparing management plans has already been completed, and I would like to see that, and how did you go through that process? You know, what was the process? I mean, it sounds like the result is status quo, which is fine, but I would like to see the documents on how you went through that process, because then maybe that also will help, you know, better understand the policy we have right now, but I just think there is a lot of detail that's missing in this, and we really need to go back and really think a lot about especially -- I think our SSC and John's review of this I think demonstrates it, and it still needs a lot of work. Thank you.

DR. BELCHER: Other comments? Andy.

MR. STRELCHECK: Thanks, John, for the thorough review of the policy and the input. I am going to speak with kind of my NMFS hat on, rather than my council hat on right now, and I think one of the things that you laid out, kind of in the early comments, was just the need for the policy, right, and I think there's maybe some fundamental disagreement between the council, or councils, and the agency with regard to the need for the policy.

I think, as you went through your comments, you know, one of my reactions to this was there's a lot of detailed comments specific to this actual policy, and what I think would be most beneficial to the organization is I think it's important to capture these comments, but what would you want the policy to look like? What's the constructive input that you would provide back to the agency and, you know, things you would discourage us from considering as part of this governance policy, things that you feel like are missing. I think you have a lot of that, but just kind of reframing it in a more positive, constructive tone I think could go a long way in terms of helping to improve the policy.

DR. BELCHER: Other comments at this point for John? John.

MR. CARMICHAEL: You know, would it be an appropriate -- Would you feel that it would be uncomfortable to include something in there about making sure that there is a role for the regional offices and science centers that are going to be impacted, you know, because I agree that it would be good to try and say what we would like. You know, I certainly think we would like a process that better engages the councils, that better engages our advisors, that gives us adequate time to work with, you know, our neighboring councils, and I think that's probably the most important part maybe that is realistic about the data and trying to get this stuff together.

I think certainly I would like something that doesn't put you, or Clay's staff, in the position of having to monitor certain things in a fishery on an ongoing basis to decide if you have to change, you know, governance, and I feel a lot more comfortable with it if we're like, you know, you do a stock assessment, and you've decided that there's a change in the stock distribution, and, well, then that certainly seems like a time, but, you know, the work is covered at that point, and so things like that are what I have in mind, and your comments are well received, but, you know, as far as you guys having a role, and I don't know if they're giving regional offices, or science centers, a chance to independently comment on this, or would it be helpful to, you know, stick up for you guys and say that we really think that you deserve a place in the process?

DR. BELCHER: Andy.

MR. STRELCHECK: Anytime there's a national policy like this being developed, it's shared with the regions and the science centers for input, and so we do provide our perspective. The challenge is, obviously, the Southeast Region is one of five regions around the country, and the Science Center is one of six science centers, and you even mentioned it earlier, and, I mean, there is certainly differences just amongst regions, and the need might be greater or less, depending on what you region you sit in, and I think we can all agree that we don't want an overly cumbersome process, and we want it as clear as possible.

With that said, I mean, I think, you know, a number of your comments also resonated with me in terms of the details we're lacking in terms of how the decision was made, and those aren't things that typically get captured in a policy, but obviously could be strengthened with more rationale and information provided for the governance policy.

DR. BELCHER: Other comments at this point for John and things to consider besides what he has mapped out? Seeing none, all right, and it is ten to five, and we're actually ten minutes ahead

for the day. We will start back up tomorrow morning at 8:30 with the Mackerel Cobia Committee, and so we are going to go ahead and recess for today and reconvene in the morning.

(Whereupon, the meeting adjourned on September 11, 2023.)

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Certified By: _____ Date: _____

Transcribed By
Amanda Thomas
October 20, 2023

Council Session I
Monday, September 11, 2023
8:30 AM - 5:00 PM

COUNCIL	Attended
Dr. Carolyn Belcher, Chair	✓
Trish Murphey, Vice Chair	✓
Mel Bell	✓
Gary Borland	✓
Tim Griner	✓
Judy Helme	✓
Kerry Marhefka	✓
Lt. Cameron Box	

COUNCIL	Attended
Jessica McCawley	✓
Tom Roller	✓
Andy Strelcheck	✓
Laurilee Thompson	✓
Spud Woodward	✓
Robert Spottswood, Jr.	✓
Robert Beal	

SAFMC STAFF	Attended
John Carmichael	✓
Dr. Chip Collier	✓
Myra Brouwer	✓
Julia Byrd	✓
Dr. Judd Curtis	✓
John Hadley	✓
Kathleen Howington	✓
Allie Iberle	✓
Kim Iverson	✓
Kelly Klasnick	✓

SAFMC STAFF	Attended
Michele Ritter	✓
Roger Pugliese	✓
Ashley Oliver	✓
Dr. Mike Schmidtke	✓
Nick Smillie	✓
Suzanna Thomas	
Christina Wiegand	✓
Meg Withers	✓
Julie Neer	
Meisha Key	✓

OTHER	Attended
Rick Devictor	✓
Shep Grimes	✓
Dewey Hemilright	
Dr. Jack McGovern	✓
Lt. Patrick O'Shaughnessy	
Monica Smit-Brunello	✓
Dr. John Walter	
Kristin Foss	✓
Karla Gore	
Nikhil Mehta	✓
Thomas Newman	
Jessica Stephen	✓
Paul Townsend	
Walter Buble	
Tracey Smart	

OTHER	Attended
Richard Cody	✓
Earl "Sonny" Gwin	
Wes Townsend	✓
Michael Lind	✓
Kristin Foss ✓	✓
Jessica M.	
Bob Gill	✓
Toni Kerns	
Clay Porch	

Attendee Report: SAFMC September 2023 Council Meeting (9/11/23 - 9/15/23)

Report Generated:

09/18/2023 08:42 AM EDT

Webinar ID

284-120-835

Actual Start Date/Time

09/11/2023 07:41 AM EDT

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4 hours 1 minute

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110

Attended

89

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Staff Details

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Yes	Not applicable for staff	Council	South Atlantic	administrator@safmc.net	Organizer

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Attendee Report: SAFMC September 2023 Council Meeting (9/11/23 - 9/15/23)

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09/18/2023 08:53 AM EDT

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284-120-835	09/11/2023 11:43 AM EDT	5 hours 6 minutes	154	122	214

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Attended	Interest Rating	Last Name	First Name	Email Address	Role
Yes	Not applicable for staff	Council	South Atlantic	administrator@safmc.net	Organizer

Attendee Details

Attended	Interest Rating	Last Name	First Name	Email Address	Registration Date/Time
Yes	44	Anderson	Stacey	stacey.anderson@myfwc.com	09/11/2023 01:39 PM EDT
Yes	34	Appelman	Max	max.appelman@noaa.gov	09/06/2023 10:54 AM EDT
Yes	37	Bailey	Adam	adam.bailey@noaa.gov	09/11/2023 08:30 AM EDT
Yes	37	Baker	Scott	bakers@uncw.edu	09/11/2023 02:27 PM EDT
Yes	54	Barbieri	Luiz	luiz.barbieri@myfwc.com	09/11/2023 09:19 AM EDT
Yes	94	Batsavage	Chris	chris.batsavage@deq.nc.gov	09/06/2023 10:13 AM EDT
Yes	37	Beaty	Julia	jbeaty@mafmc.org	09/11/2023 02:33 PM EDT
Yes	67	Bell	00Mel	BellM@dnr.sc.gov	09/05/2023 05:23 PM EDT
Yes	93	Bianchi	Akan	alan.bianchi@ncdenr.gov	09/11/2023 03:04 PM EDT
Yes	32	Bianchi	Alan	Alan.Bianchi@deq.nc.gov	09/11/2023 09:40 AM EDT
Yes	50	Binion-Rock	Samantha	samantha.binion-rock@noaa.gov	08/31/2023 08:07 AM EDT
Yes	35	Blosser	Brooke	brookeb@scccl.org	09/11/2023 02:21 PM EDT
Yes	41	Bogdan	Jennifer	jennifer.bogdan@myfwc.com	09/11/2023 12:59 PM EDT
Yes	38	Box	Cameron	boxcameron06@gmail.com	09/06/2023 07:05 AM EDT
Yes	38	Brantley	William	william.brantley@deq.nc.gov	09/11/2023 08:24 AM EDT
Yes	69	Brouwer	Myra	myra.brouwer@safmc.net	08/18/2023 10:33 AM EDT
Yes	39	Bunting	Matthew	matthew.bunting@myfwc.com	09/11/2023 08:19 AM EDT
Yes	45	Byrd	Julia	julia.byrd@safmc.net	09/08/2023 09:36 AM EDT
Yes	43	Calay	Shannon	Shannon.Calay@noaa.gov	09/11/2023 10:08 AM EDT
Yes	61	Cody	Richard	richard.cody@noaa.gov	09/11/2023 01:12 PM EDT
Yes	44	Coggins	Lew	lewis.coggins@NOAA.gov	09/07/2023 05:03 PM EDT
Yes	37	Cross	Tiffanie	tiffanie.cross@myfwc.com	09/11/2023 01:13 PM EDT
Yes	68	Curtis	Judd	judd.curtis@safmc.net	09/11/2023 08:17 AM EDT
Yes	45	Dancy	Kiley	kdancy@mafmc.org	09/11/2023 10:22 AM EDT
Yes	90	Dancy	Kiley	kileyjd@gmail.com	09/11/2023 04:37 PM EDT
Yes	45	DeJohn	Frank	frank.dejohn@myfwc.com	09/11/2023 02:15 PM EDT
Yes	56	DeVictor	Rick	rick.devictor@noaa.gov	09/11/2023 08:37 AM EDT
Yes	57	Dyar	Ben	dyarb@dnr.sc.gov	09/11/2023 01:51 PM EDT
Yes	48	Farnell	Paula	paula.farnell@deq.nc.gov	09/11/2023 09:25 AM EDT
Yes	44	Finch	Margaret	walkermf@dnr.sc.gov	09/01/2023 09:19 AM EDT
Yes	38	Flowers	Jared	jared.flowers@dnr.ga.gov	09/11/2023 09:48 AM EDT
Yes	39	Foss	Kristin	Kristin.foss@myfwc.com	09/11/2023 08:31 AM EDT
Yes	44	Franco	Dawn	dawn.franco@dnr.ga.gov	09/11/2023 11:55 AM EDT
Yes	51	Gentry	Lauren	lauren.gentry@myfwc.com	09/05/2023 04:39 PM EDT
Yes	33	Glazier	Edward	Edward.Glazier@noaa.gov	09/11/2023 03:18 PM EDT
Yes	36	Gloeckner	David	david.gloeckner@noaa.gov	09/11/2023 09:07 AM EDT
Yes	57	Gore	Karla	karla.gore@noaa.gov	09/11/2023 08:35 AM EDT
Yes	46	Govoni	Beth	beth.govoni@deq.nc.gov	09/11/2023 01:08 PM EDT
Yes	36	Griffin	Aimee	aimee.griffin@myfwc.com	09/11/2023 01:42 PM EDT
Yes	92	Guyas	Martha	mguyas@asafishing.org	09/10/2023 08:24 PM EDT
Yes	33	Haymans	Doug	doug.haymans@dnr.ga.gov	09/11/2023 03:11 PM EDT
Yes	36	Heffernan	Katie	katie.heffernan@mail.house.gov	09/05/2023 04:41 PM EDT
Yes	40	Helies	Frank	frank.helies@noaa.gov	09/11/2023 08:07 AM EDT
Yes	89	Helmey	Judy	judyhelmey@gmail.com	09/11/2023 08:14 AM EDT
Yes	57	Huber	Jeanette	jeanette.huber@myfwc.com	09/11/2023 10:01 AM EDT
Yes	37	Iverson	Kim	Kim.Iverson@safmc.net	08/28/2023 12:29 PM EDT
Yes	33	Juliano	Jocelyn	jocelyn.juliano@sceagrants.org	09/11/2023 08:40 AM EDT
Yes	88	Kalinowsky	Chris	chris.kalinowsky@dnr.ga.gov	09/11/2023 12:02 PM EDT
Yes	65	Kean	Samantha	samantha.kean@myfwc.com	09/11/2023 02:18 PM EDT
Yes	64	Kersting	Anne	anne.kersting@noaa.gov	09/11/2023 10:17 AM EDT
Yes	61	Key	Meisha	meisha.key@safmc.net	09/11/2023 01:52 PM EDT
Yes	39	Kittle	Christine	christine.kittle@myfwc.com	09/11/2023 01:11 PM EDT
Yes	100	Klasnick	01Kelly	kelly.klasnick@safmc.net	08/30/2023 12:18 PM EDT
Yes	53	Knowlton	Kathy	kathy.knowlton@dnr.ga.gov	09/11/2023 08:26 AM EDT
Yes	72	LaRoche	Kelcie	kelcie.laroche@myfwc.com	09/11/2023 09:20 AM EDT
Yes	96	Laks	Ira	captainira@att.net	09/11/2023 11:46 AM EDT
Yes	57	Larkin	Michael	Michael.Larkin@noaa.gov	09/11/2023 01:32 PM EDT
Yes	48	Lazarre	Dominique	Dominique.Lazarre@noaa.gov	09/11/2023 08:48 AM EDT
Yes	37	Lee	Max	maxlee@mote.org	09/07/2023 11:43 AM EDT
Yes	39	Lind	Michael	michael.lind@noaa.gov	09/11/2023 09:15 AM EDT
Yes	75	Lorenzen	Kai	klorenzen@ufl.edu	09/11/2023 02:45 PM EDT

Yes	90	M Borland	Gary	gborlandsafmc@gmail.com	09/11/2023 08:14 AM EDT
Yes	92	Mackesey	Brendan	brendan.mackesey@gmail.com	09/11/2023 03:38 PM EDT
Yes	93	Marhefka	00Kerry	kerryomarhefka@gmail.com	09/11/2023 08:31 AM EDT
Yes	78	McCoy	Sherylanne	sherrim@wildoceanmarket.com	09/11/2023 09:51 AM EDT
Yes	68	McGovern	Jack	John.McGovern@noaa.gov	09/11/2023 08:30 AM EDT
Yes	91	McWhorter	Will	wdmcwhorter@gmail.com	09/11/2023 03:30 PM EDT
Yes	78	Mehta	Nikhil	nikhil.mehta@noaa.gov	09/07/2023 12:55 PM EDT
Yes	40	Menzel	Terri	terri.menzel@myfwc.com	09/11/2023 03:49 PM EDT
Yes	63	Merrifield	Jeanna	jeannam@wildoceanmarket.com	09/11/2023 10:08 AM EDT
Yes	33	Moore	Jeff	Jeffrey.N.Moore@ncdenr.gov	09/11/2023 03:53 PM EDT
Yes	44	Muffley	Brandon	bmuffley@mafmc.org	09/11/2023 10:44 AM EDT
Yes	79	Murphey	Trish	trish.murphey@deq.nc.gov	08/28/2023 11:26 AM EDT
Yes	93	Neer	Julie	julie.neer@safmc.net	09/11/2023 11:47 AM EDT
Yes	97	Newman	Thomas	thomas.newman03@gmail.com	09/06/2023 09:27 PM EDT
Yes	89	O'Malley	Rachel	rachel.o'malley@noaa.gov	09/10/2023 09:43 PM EDT
Yes	54	Oliver	Ashley	ashley.oliver@safmc.net	09/06/2023 08:39 AM EDT
Yes	90	Pikula	Kyle	bkpikula@yahoo.com	09/11/2023 01:23 PM EDT
Yes	46	Porch	Clay	clay.porch@noaa.gov	09/11/2023 09:32 AM EDT
Yes	41	Ramsay	Chloe	chloe.ramsay@myfwc.com	09/04/2023 09:12 AM EDT
Yes	75	Rathke	David	execdir@resiliencyflorida.org	09/10/2023 12:22 PM EDT
Yes	63	Records	David	david.records@noaa.gov	09/11/2023 01:31 PM EDT
Yes	91	Reding	Brandon	redingb@dnr.sc.gov	09/11/2023 02:04 PM EDT
Yes	38	Reichert	Marcel	mreichert2022@gmail.com	09/11/2023 02:31 PM EDT
Yes	100	Ritter	Michele	michele.ritter@safmc.net	09/11/2023 07:45 AM EDT
Yes	84	Roller	00Tom	tomrollersafmc@gmail.com	09/11/2023 08:35 AM EDT
Yes	36	Sabo	Mary	msabo@mafmc.org	09/11/2023 02:59 PM EDT
Yes	92	Salmon	Brandi	brandi.salmon@deq.nc.gov	08/31/2023 08:34 AM EDT
Yes	94	Sartwell	Tim	tim.sartwell@noaa.gov	09/11/2023 02:58 PM EDT
Yes	53	Sauls	Beverly	bevsauls1@gmail.com	08/31/2023 09:42 AM EDT
Yes	34	Schwaab	Alexandra	aschwaab@fishwildlife.org	09/06/2023 09:02 AM EDT
Yes	93	Seramur	Mark	mark.seramur@saltwaterinc.com	09/11/2023 01:41 PM EDT
Yes	92	Seward	McLean	mclean.seward@deq.nc.gov	09/05/2023 12:25 PM EDT
Yes	68	Sinkus	Wiley	sinkusw@dnr.sc.gov	09/11/2023 01:08 PM EDT
Yes	67	Smit-Brunello	00Monica	monica.smit-brunello@noaa.gov	09/07/2023 03:36 PM EDT
Yes	34	Spanik	Kevin	spanikk@dnr.sc.gov	09/11/2023 01:07 PM EDT
Yes	50	Spurgin	Kali	Kali.Spurgin@MyFWC.com	09/11/2023 08:03 AM EDT
Yes	33	Sramek	Mark	Mark.Sramek@noaa.gov	09/11/2023 07:23 AM EDT
Yes	91	Stam	Geoff	grstam@att.net	08/31/2023 09:20 AM EDT
Yes	42	Stemle	Adam	adam.stemle@noaa.gov	09/05/2023 11:24 AM EDT
Yes	92	Sweeney Tookes	Jennifer	jtookes@georgiasouthern.edu	09/11/2023 02:42 PM EDT
Yes	55	Sweetman	CJ	Christopher.Sweetman@MyFWC.com	09/06/2023 08:29 AM EDT
Yes	39	Takade-Heumacher	Helen	helen.takade-heumacher@noaa.gov	09/11/2023 12:17 PM EDT
Yes	66	Thompson	00Laurilee	thompsonlaurilee@gmail.com	09/11/2023 08:36 AM EDT
Yes	41	Travis	Michael	mike.travis@noaa.gov	08/30/2023 12:23 PM EDT
Yes	79	Turner	Steve	scturner160@gmail.com	09/11/2023 02:35 PM EDT
Yes	44	Vara	Mary	mary.vara@noaa.gov	09/11/2023 10:23 AM EDT
Yes	80	Vecchio	Julie	vecchioj@dnr.sc.gov	09/11/2023 10:51 AM EDT
Yes	49	Waine	Mike	mwaine@asafishing.org	09/11/2023 02:31 PM EDT
Yes	68	Walsh	Jason	jason.walsh@deq.nc.gov	09/05/2023 04:22 PM EDT
Yes	70	Walter	John	john.f.walter@noaa.gov	09/11/2023 08:17 AM EDT
Yes	82	White	Shelby	shelby.white@deq.nc.gov	09/07/2023 10:59 AM EDT
Yes	58	White	Geoff	geoff.white@accsp.org	09/11/2023 09:54 AM EDT
Yes	42	Williams	Erik	erik.williams@noaa.gov	09/06/2023 08:36 AM EDT
Yes	51	Withers	Meg	meg.withers@safmc.net	09/11/2023 08:34 AM EDT
Yes	48	collier	chip	chip.collier@safmc.net	09/11/2023 08:20 AM EDT
Yes	78	griner	tim	timgrinersafmc@gmail.com	09/11/2023 09:19 AM EDT
Yes	90	poston	will	will@saltwaterguidesassociation.org	09/11/2023 03:52 PM EDT
Yes	51	sandorf	scott	scott.sandorf@noaa.gov	09/05/2023 04:52 PM EDT
Yes	42	stephen	jessica	jessica.stephen@noaa.gov	09/11/2023 08:36 AM EDT
Yes	99	thomas	suz	suzanna.thomas@safmc.net	09/11/2023 07:08 AM EDT
Yes	93	white	geoff	Geoff.Kir.white@gmail.com	09/11/2023 03:13 PM EDT
No	0	Aines	Alex	aaines@oceana.org	09/08/2023 11:02 AM EDT
No	0	Baker	Marion	marion19@ufl.edu	09/10/2023 04:40 PM EDT
No	0	Benevento	Tony	43tonyb@gmail.com	09/07/2023 03:43 PM EDT
No	0	Berry	James "chip"	chip@chipberry.com	09/05/2023 06:11 PM EDT
No	0	Bradshaw	Christopher	christopher.bradshaw@myfwc.com	09/10/2023 09:04 PM EDT
No	0	Bublely	Walter	bublelyw@dnr.sc.gov	09/11/2023 09:26 AM EDT
No	0	Buckson	Bruce	bcuckson@aol.com	09/07/2023 08:59 AM EDT
No	0	Cimo	Laura	laura.cimo@noaa.gov	09/10/2023 05:06 AM EDT
No	0	Clinton	Haley	haley.clinton@deq.nc.gov	09/11/2023 09:05 AM EDT
No	0	Corbett	Ellie	Ellie.Corbett@MYFWC.com	09/06/2023 11:14 AM EDT
No	0	Cox	Derek	decox@sfwmd.gov	09/07/2023 09:51 AM EDT
No	0	Crowe	Stacie	crowes@dnr.sc.gov	09/10/2023 08:13 AM EDT
No	0	E Brown	Julie	julie.e.brown@noaa.gov	09/07/2023 03:11 PM EDT

No	0	Gahm	Meghan	meghan.gahm@noaa.gov	09/05/2023 02:42 PM EDT
No	0	Hadley	John	john.hadley@safmc.net	09/11/2023 11:38 AM EDT
No	0	Horn	Calusa	Calusa.horn@noaa.gov	09/11/2023 01:54 PM EDT
No	0	Hudson	Joseph	jhud7789@twc.com	09/05/2023 04:52 PM EDT
No	0	Hugo	David	david.hugo@safmc.net	09/11/2023 09:39 AM EDT
No	0	Kappos	Maria	maria.kappos@myfwc.com	09/06/2023 03:32 PM EDT
No	0	Karnauskas	Mandy	mandy.karnauskas@noaa.gov	09/11/2023 09:49 AM EDT
No	0	Kumar Ghosh	Bijoy	bkgghoshbuet7@gmail.com	09/05/2023 04:39 PM EDT
No	0	Malinowski	Rich	rich.malinowski@noaa.gov	09/11/2023 09:37 AM EDT
No	0	Masi	Michelle	michelle.masi@noaa.gov	09/11/2023 08:38 AM EDT
No	0	Owens	Marina	marina.owens@myfwc.com	09/06/2023 08:15 AM EDT
No	0	Pierce	Brett	Brett.pierce@bluefindata.com	09/11/2023 11:04 AM EDT
No	0	Privoznik	Sarah	sarah.privoznik@noaa.gov	09/07/2023 02:44 PM EDT
No	0	Ralston	Kellie	kellie@bonefishtarpontrust.org	09/11/2023 10:06 AM EDT
No	0	Smart	Tracey	smartt@dnr.sc.gov	09/11/2023 08:55 AM EDT
No	0	Stewart	Mark	mstewar@gmail.com	08/31/2023 10:22 AM EDT
No	0	Wagner	Warren	whwagner@southernco.com	09/01/2023 08:31 AM EDT
No	0	White	Shelby	shelby.white@nc.deq.gov	09/06/2023 09:58 AM EDT
No	0	mroch	ray	ray.mroch@noaa.gov	09/11/2023 09:21 AM EDT