

Habitat and Ecosystem Advisory Panel (HEAP)

Outline: Annual Report on Habitat Activities

Draft October 2023

The South Atlantic Council (Council) approved a Habitat Blueprint in September 2023 which included a new provision where the Habitat and Ecosystem Advisory Panel (HEAP) will develop an annual report on habitat activities in their spring meeting. The HEAP will provide the report to the Council, at the next scheduled Habitat Committee meeting. This report will address habitat and ecosystem conservation activities, including consultations, comment letters, future threats, research needs, and use of habitat policies during the prior Calendar year. The report is intended to provide a mechanism for keeping the Council informed of habitat activities throughout the region, highlighting the use of habitat policies, and providing advance notice of developing issues. Finally, the report should rely heavily on tables, texts and bulleted lists to convey the relevant information efficiently.

HEAP Annual Report Contents:

1. Status of EFH-related comments submitted by the Council, South Atlantic States, and HCD.
2. Update of major regional activities/projects in the South Atlantic.
 - a. Renewable Energy/Wind
 - b. Port Development
 - c. Renourishment, etc.
3. Status of Council Habitat Policy Statements.
 - a. Usage in submitted comments.
 - b. Adequacy of existing statements to current activities.
 - c. Suggestions for revisions of existing policies or creation of new policies.
4. Potential future or developing habitat threats.
5. Regional projects of interest to the Council (e.g.: ...)
6. Coordination between regions.
7. Funding projects/opportunities.
8. Other information of possible interest to the Council.
9. Highlight regional research and monitoring activities supporting EFH and review recommended priorities included in the SAFMC Research and Monitoring Plan. (Should only be completed every odd year).