

**FINAL**  
**SUMMARY REPORT**  
**HABITAT PROTECTION AND ECOSYSTEM BASED MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**  
**SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**  
**Via Webinar**  
**December 8, 2020**

The Committee approved a revised agenda and minutes from the March 2020 meeting.

**Coral Amendment 10**

Roger Pugliese provided an overview of the Coral Amendment 10 options paper on possible establishment of a Shrimp Fishery Access Area (SFAA) along the eastern boundary of the northern extension of the Oculina Bank CHAPC to address a previous request from the rock shrimp fishery to provide access to historic fishing grounds. Anne Deaton, Habitat Ecosystem AP Chair; Jocelyn Karazsia, Coral AP Chair; and Mike Merrifield, Deep-Water Shrimp AP Chair, provided comments and recommendations on options for scoping Coral Amendment 10. The Committee approved the following motions:

**MOTION 1: MOVE THAT WE CHOOSE OPTION 2A AS PREFERRED.**

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

**Option 2.** Create a Shrimp Fishery Access Area (SFAA) along eastern edge of northern extension of Oculina CHAPC.

**Option 2. Alternative 2a.**

SFAA boundaries based on coordinates presented by fishermen as part of March 2014 public comment.

<b>Alternative 2a SFAA (2014)</b>		
<b>Point</b>	<b>Latitude</b>	<b>Longitude</b>
1	29.725	-80.2634
2	29.58102	-80.2502
3	29.56872	-80.2644
4	29.49025	-80.2544
5	29.29213	-80.1728
6	29.183	-80.1442
7	29.05973	-80.1246
8	28.90697	-80.0898
9	28.81013	-80.0728
10	28.5	-80.017

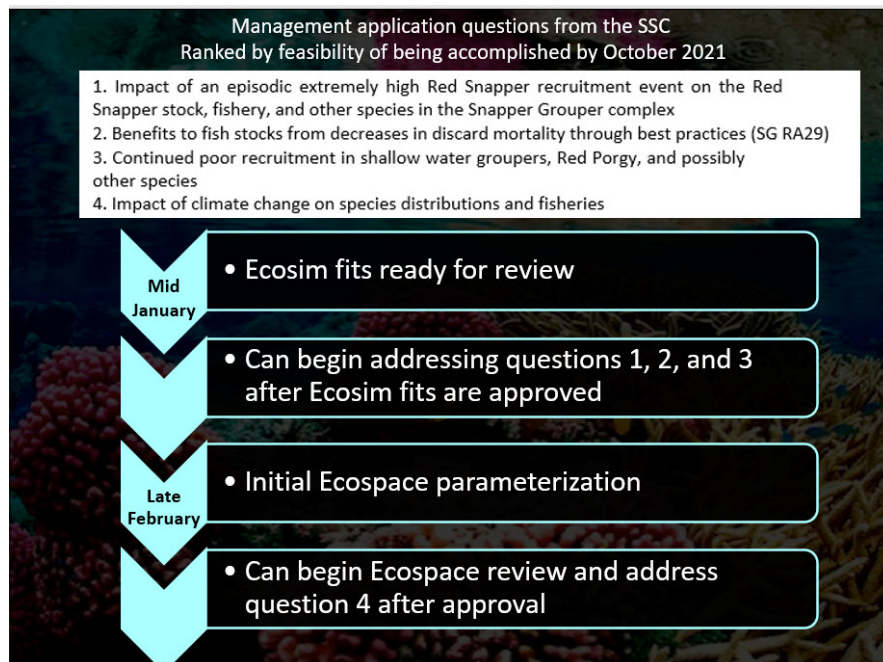
**MOTION 2: APPROVE CORAL AMENDMENT 10 FOR SCOPING AT THE MARCH 2021 COUNCIL MEETING.**

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

### **Ecopath with Ecosim (EwE) Model Development and Review**

Luke McEachron, FWRI, provided an introduction on the development of an EwE model (and Ecospace) and application to support fishery management. Roger Pugliese introduced the development of the South Atlantic EwE model and Lauren Gentry, FWRI, provided an overview of the South Atlantic EwE model, potential application to SA issues and possible timing. Anne Deaton, highlighted Habitat and Ecosystem AP member comments and recommendations. Genny Nesslage, SSC Chair, presented the South Atlantic EwE model review and SSC recommendations from the October 2020 meeting. The SSC endorsed the review as presented and including the recommendation to establish a standing Ecosystem Model Workgroup to support future model development and application. The Committee expressed support for the SA EwE Model Team to work with the SSC Ecosystem Model Workgroup to complete Ecosim review and, working with the SSC Chair, establish a process to address 1 or 2 of the priority questions noted below (the priority questions were presented to the SSC and ranked by the SA EwE Model Team).



### **Habitat and Ecosystem Program Blueprint**

Staff provided an overview of Council habitat and ecosystem mandates, Habitat Protection and Ecosystem Based Management Advisory Panel responsibilities and function, conservation and management action supporting habitat conservation, regional partner coordination, online information including the FEP II Dashboard and tools supporting long-term conservation and Ecosystem Based Fishery Management in the region. The Committee discussed development of a Habitat and Ecosystem Blueprint and establishment of a Habitat and Ecosystem Blueprint Development Team to discuss scope of and process to develop an overarching document.

**MOTION 3: COUNCIL ESTABLISH A HABITAT AND ECOSYSTEM BLUEPRINT DEVELOPMENT TEAM**  
**APPROVED BY COMMITTEE**  
**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

**Habitat and Ecosystem Advisory Panel Reports**

Anne Deaton provided an overview of over-arching agenda items covered over multiple meetings (October 2019, April 2020, and October 2020) of the Habitat Protection and Ecosystem Based Management Advisory Panel. Major areas addressed included:

- Coordination with BOEM representative on the AP on energy development focusing on supporting renewable energy and the developing Kitty Hawk wind project.
- Updates on ongoing research and newly mapped and characterized deep water coral ecosystems and support for presentation on comprehensive research activities and support for an ecosystem approach in future conservation efforts to protect newly discovered resources.
- Technical presentations characterizing sand shoal habitats, the science behind established dredge windows and recent research on impacts of beach renourishment to support climate-informed revision to the Council's Policy Statement on Beach Dredge and Fill, Renourishment and Large-Scale Coastal Engineering.
- Provided input to NOAA researchers developing NOAAs SEFSC South Atlantic Climate Vulnerability Assessment and the South Atlantic Ecosystem Status Report. The Panel was encouraged with the recent progress and supports completion of the drafts so additional guidance can be provided to support the Councils' needs.
- Continued support for implementation of FEP II and input on state, federal and local efforts supporting actions in the FEP II Roadmap update.

The Habitat and Ecosystem Panel, during in-person meetings, routinely engage members informally through breakout sessions and other in person activities which are affected with the necessary move to the present meeting format.

**FEP II Roadmap Update**

Review and discussion of the FEP II Roadmap was deferred to the next Committee meeting.

**Timing and Task(s)**

**MOTION 4: ADOPT THE FOLLOWING TIMING AND TASK(S):**

1. Prepare Coral Amendment 10 for scoping during the March 2021 Council meeting with the intent to approve in June 2021.
2. Work with SSC Chair to establish membership of the SSC Ecosystem Model Workgroup.
3. Coordinate with SSC Chair, the SA EwE Model Team and the SSC Ecosystem Model Workgroup to complete Ecosim review and schedule webinars/workshop and timing necessary to complete 1-2 priority applications of model by October 2021.
4. Facilitate SA EwE Model Team initial parameterization of SA Ecospace component of SA EwE with future review and guidance provided by the SSC Ecosystem Model Workgroup.
5. Staff provide guidance and priorities on mapping/characterization of South Atlantic deepwater coral ecosystems.

6. Staff facilitate scheduling (based on Council input) for online public seminar on NOAA Deep Sea Coral Research and Office of Exploration and Research Mapping and Geomorphic Characterization of Deep Sea Coral Ecosystems in the South Atlantic Region. – AFTER MARCH 2021

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION: MOVE OVERSIGHT OF EWE MODEL DEVELOPMENT TO THE SSC AND SUPPORT A WORKSHOP TO EXPLORE APPLYING IT TO THE QUESTIONS OF INTEREST

APPROVED BY COUNCIL