

**FINAL**  
**SUMMARY REPORT**  
**HABITAT PROTECTION AND ECOSYSTEM BASED MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

**Charleston, South Carolina**  
**October 2, 2018**

The Habitat Protection and Ecosystem Based Management Committee approved the agenda and minutes from the June 2018 meeting.

**Atlantic Coast-Wide Discussions: How to address species expansion northwards?**

The three Atlantic coast Councils agreed that a group comprised of each Council's Chair, Vice-Chair, and Executive Director would meet periodically to coordinate on an approach to address stocks as they expand northwards. Due to the rescheduled timing of the meeting as a result of Hurricane Florence, representatives from the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC) were unable to attend due to a conflict with their meeting. The South Atlantic Council's December meeting conflicts with the New England Council's meeting so we will plan to reschedule the joint Council discussion for our March 4-8, 2019 meeting in Jekyll Island, GA. Council staff gave a short presentation to the South Atlantic Habitat and Ecosystem Committee that included outlining how the Coastal Migratory Pelagic FMP was amended to extend jurisdiction through the Mid-Atlantic Council area, and highlighting the Atlantic Councils' MOU regarding management of deep sea corals and the Atlantic coast management of Dolphin Wahoo as examples of how the Councils can work together to solve joint issues. The South Atlantic Council, in 2017, reviewed summarized landings of snapper grouper species in the Mid-Atlantic and New England regions. The Committee requested this information be updated for discussion during the SAFMC December Council meeting. The Committee's initial discussion on priority species identified king and Spanish mackerel and various snapper grouper species (depending on the level of landings). Discussion on this issue will continue amongst the Councils over the coming months. Given Council meeting schedules, the Councils will plan on a joint session during the South Atlantic Council's March and possibly September 2019 meetings.

**Habitat and Ecosystem Tools, Model Development and Regional Partner Coordination**

In lieu of a presentation, the Committee was provided an updated outline of the FEP II Dashboard to highlight developing habitat and ecosystem tools, the developing South Atlantic next generation Ecosystem model and regional partner coordination. Staff highlighted a couple regional coordination issues including an upcoming presentation on the South Atlantic Ecopath model funded by SALCC during the fall SSC meeting with a proposal to establish an SSC Workgroup in cooperation with members and the Ecosystem Modeling Workgroup supporting model development.

The NOAA Fisheries Draft EBFM Implementation Plan for the South Atlantic Region was out for public review. The SA draft plan complements work already underway by the Council through FEP II, FEP Implementation Plan and Two Year Roadmap. Council staff is coordinating comments with the Chair on the Draft EBFM Implementation Plan for the South Atlantic Region

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**Note:** Council staff drafts the timing and task motion based on Committee action. If points require clarification, they will be added to the draft motion. The Committee should review this wording carefully to be sure it accurately reflects their intent prior to making the motion.

**Timing and Task(s)**

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

1. Develop additional summarized information on Council managed species catch north of North Carolina for discussion during December Council meeting.
2. Coordinate with MAFMC and NEFMC and re-schedule the joint session on species expanding north for the March 2019 SAFMC meeting.
3. Work with Habitat and Ecosystem Committee and Council Chair to finalize comments on draft NOAA Fisheries South Atlantic EBFM Implementation Plan by October 12.
4. Others??

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**