



Wilson Laney
rallaneys@gmail.com

THE SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

**FEP II Limited Update aka Lean and Mean FEP
Update Subcommittee aka Food Web Work Group**



Food web working group

The subcommittee/work group was established at the May, 2023 meeting of the Habitat and Ecosystem Advisory Panel meeting. Initial members volunteering were Cherubin, Laney (lead) and Spanik (Page 29, May 16-18 HEAP meeting minutes).

The charge to the work group was to conduct a LIMITED review of the EFH Guidance and Policy documents, with a focus on predator-prey relationships and identifying any relevant literature which had been published after 2016 (date of the revised policy document).

Food web working group

- HEAP subcommittee members were joined by SAFMC staff, Dr. Chip Collier, and Mrs. Kathleen Howington. The team further recruited Ms. Lauren Gentry of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, because of her expertise in South Atlantic predator-prey relationships and her compilation of diet data for species managed by SAFMC.

Food web working group

- The team met multiple times via webinar during 2024 to refine their task and to divide up the workload. They have reviewed and propose LIMITED revisions to: POLICY CONSIDERATIONS FOR SOUTH ATLANTIC FOOD WEBS AND CONNECTIVITY AND ESSENTIAL FISH HABITATS and Users Guide to Essential Fish Habitat Designations by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council
- The limited revisions (which will be reviewed by the full HEAP membership) include a revised and updated food web figure (Gentry), and updated references (both other relevant Council and NMFS documents, as well as additional relevant peer-reviewed literature).



Food web Recommendations

Review edits to the policy

Food web Recommendations

- The working group identified the top 10 prey groups for each Fishery Management Plan by percent by volume in diet in Appendix A.
- The working group recommends further analysis of the information in Appendix A to identify:
 - Total importance of prey or percent overlap across all FMPs
 - Number of times prey species are identified as a top prey item
 - The EFH by life stage of identified important prey
 - Other indicators that a prey item is highly necessary to a species diet
- The working group recommends investigating the integration of the habitat utilized by important prey species into the EFH User Guide for the next 5-year review.



Thank you