

OVERVIEW

SEDAR Committee

Westin Jekyll Island
110 Ocean Way
Jekyll Island, Georgia

March 6, 2017, 10 – 11 a.m.

The SEDAR Committee will receive (1) updates on SEDAR projects, (2) consider assessment priorities, and (3) provide guidance for the next SEDAR Steering Committee meeting.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: December 2016

1) SEDAR PROJECTS UPDATE

SEDAR 48, Black Grouper: In progress. A benchmark assessment of Black Grouper will be prepared during 2017 with Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission providing the analytical team. This is a jointly managed stock with the GMFMC so both Councils will be making appointments and approving the schedule and Terms of Reference. The SAFMC made appointments and provided approvals in December 2016. Workshops will be held in 2017, including the Data Workshop March 13-17, the Assessment Workshop June 27-29, and the Review Workshop November 14-16. The assessment will be considered by the SAFMC SSC in April 2018 and recommendations will be provided to the Council in June 2018.

SEDAR 56, Black Sea Bass: In progress. A standard assessment was requested to allow consideration of new video data. The Council approved the TORs and made appointments in December 2016. Data through 2015 will be included, with the assessment developed through webinars in mid-2017. The assessment will be submitted to the SSC for review in October 2017 and recommendations provided to the Council in December 2017. Note that the timing of this assessment does not allow including revised MRIP data, so it will need to be revised when revised MRIP estimates become available in October 2017. It is not known at this time whether that can be accommodated within the planned timeline of SSC review.

SEDAR 50, Blueline Tilefish: In progress. A benchmark assessment has been underway since mid-2016. Significant events to date include a recommendation from the June 2016 Age Workshop that age determinations are not reliable and should not be used in the assessment; and a recommendation from the July 2016 Stock ID workshop that the biological stock extends from the Mid-Atlantic through the Gulf of Mexico. Following discussion of the stock ID recommendation, the SEDAR Steering Committee recommended a joint SSC review of the stock ID findings; this review was held October 28, 2016. The Steering Committee recommended a regional leadership level review of the joint SSC findings to provide TOR guidance, conducted during a webinar on November 14, 2016. The Council-Agency leadership group recommended conducting the SEDAR 50 assessment with a Gulf-South Atlantic stock dividing line at the Gulf-South Atlantic Council boundary. The SAFMC passed a motion in December 2016 to modify the TORs in accordance with this recommendation. The Data Workshop was held January 23-27, 2017, the assessment workshop will be held May 23-26, 2017, and the review August 29-31,

2017. The assessment will be considered by the SSC in October 2017 and recommendations provided to the Council in December 2017.

SEDAR 53, South Atlantic Red Grouper: Standard assessment is in progress. A standard assessment was requested to allow consideration of new video index data. The Data Scoping call was held August 8, 2016 and assessment webinars were held November 2016 – January 2017. This assessment will be reviewed by the SSC in April 2017 and recommendations will be provided to the Council in June 2017.

SEDAR 55, South Atlantic Vermilion Snapper: Standard assessment is planned. A standard assessment was requested to allow consideration of new video index data. The terminal year will be 2016 and assessment webinars will be held in late 2017. The SSC will be asked to review TORs in April 2017. Preliminary scheduling provides the assessment for SSC consideration in April 2018 and Council consideration in June 2018.

The Council will be asked to make appointments for the assessment panel, and approve the schedule and TORs, at the June 2017 meeting. Council members are asked at this meeting to provide guidance and suggestions for the TORs and possible participants. Default SEDAR Standard Assessment TORs are provided in **Attachment 1**.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Provide guidance on Terms of Reference and potential participants

MRIP Revision Assessments: Requested stocks for revision assessments are Red Snapper, Red Grouper, Blueline Tilefish, and Black Sea Bass. Revision assessments will include an update of the MRIP data, based on calibrations applied to address the effort survey change. No additional changes or data will be considered, and the terminal year of the assessment will not be advanced. Adjusted data should be available for use in assessments by October 2017. This will allow the Vermilion Snapper assessment planned for late 2017 and all assessments planned for 2018 and beyond to include the adjusted MRIP catch estimates.

Stock ID and Meristics Workshop: Postponed Indefinitely. The Data Best Practices workshop in 2015 recommended a workshop devoted to addressing Stock ID and meristics issues for upcoming assessments. Initial planning began in 2016 for a workshop and independent peer review in 2017. However, due to budget concerns for 2017, this workshop was cancelled in December 2016. Stock ID for upcoming research track assessments of Scamp and Cobia will be addressed through the Research Track Process

2) LONG-TERM ASSESSMENT PRIORITIES

In December 2016 the Committee received a report on the SSC's application of the NMFS Stock Assessment Prioritization Tool (**Attachment 2**). An opportunity was requested at this meeting for the Committee to review the Tool application and scoring recommendations. Staff developed a white paper addressing long-term assessment considerations as a companion to the prioritization Tool (**Attachment 3**).

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Provide guidance on long term assessment priorities and take action as necessary.

Discussion considerations:

- Should the priority stocks list be changed?
- Does the Council prefer to devote SEDAR capabilities to keeping existing assessments up-to-date, or to assessing all managed stocks?
- What factors should determine target assessment frequency?
- What stocks should be regularly assessed with intensive, quantitative, age-based methods?
- Which unassessed stocks should be made a priority for research and data collection to support future assessments?

3) SEDAR STEERING COMMITTEE GUIDANCE

The SEDAR Steering Committee will meet Friday, May 5, 2017 via webinar. Primary topics of discussion will include the research track process and assessment schedule.

Research Track: The goal of the research track step is to develop and peer review a robust assessment tool, and then to apply that tool to the most recent data through an operational assessment that will be prepared following review and acceptance of the tool developed through the research track. In September 2016, the SEDAR Steering Committee recommended implementing the research track process as soon as possible, based on suggestions that the change in process will increase assessment productivity. Therefore the research track approach will be applied to Scamp and Cobia in 2018. Draft guidelines will be reviewed by the Steering Committee in May and September 2017, while final SOPPs changes will be considered once these initial applications are complete and the process adequately evaluated.

Research Track Highlights:

- 3-part process similar to existing benchmark approach (data, assessment, review stages.)
- Council will approve TORs and schedules and appoint participants.
- Data Workshop to Review Workshop duration of approximately 12 months.
- The Review Workshop will be scheduled later in the process, to allow relaxing of deadlines.
- Unlikely to include the most recent data.
- Will not provide management advice.
- Management advice will be provided in an Operational Assessment (similar to an update) that will include the most recent data and will be prepared soon after the Research Track assessment concludes.
- The Operational Assessment will typically include changes and improvements resulting from the peer and SSC reviews.

Schedule: The SEDAR Steering Committee will review assessment project timing for 2018-2019, and consider preliminary assessment projects for 2020 and beyond.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Provide guidance for the next Steering Committee meeting and take action as necessary.

OTHER BUSINESS

ADJOURN

Table 1. SAFMC Assessment Projects Summary, 2017 – 2020 approved projects.

1. MRIP Revision Stocks: Red Snapper, Red Grouper, Blueline Tilefish, Black Sea Bass

Plan Year	SEDAR #	Stocks	Approach	Terminal Data	Assessment Complete	Lead Agency
2017	50	Blueline Tilefish	Benchmark	2015	October 2017	SEFSC
	55	Vermilion Snapper	Standard	2016	April 2018	SEFSC
	56	Black Sea Bass	Standard	2016	October 2017	SEFSC
	48	Black Grouper	Benchmark	2015	January 2018	FL FWCC
	R	MRIP Revisions ¹	Revision	2016	June 2018	SEFSC
2018	B	Yellowtail Snapper	Benchmark	2016	Spring 2019	FL FWCC
	RT	Scamp, Gulf + SA	Research Track	2016	Mid-2019	SEFSC
	RT	Atlantic Cobia	Research Track	2016	Mid-2019	SEFSC
	S	Greater Amberjack	Standard	2017	Jan 2019	SEFSC
	S	Red Porgy	Standard	2017	Jan 2019	SEFSC
	B	King Mackerel	Benchmark	2016	Mid 2019	SEFSC
2019	S	Snowy Grouper	Standard	2017	Late 2019	SEFSC
	S	Spanish Mackerel	Standard	2017	Late 2019	SEFSC
	S	Gag	Standard	2018	Early 2020	SEFSC
2020	O	Scamp, Gulf + SA	Operational	2018	Late 2020	SEFSC
	O	Atlantic Cobia	Operational	2019	Late 2020	SEFSC

Table 2. Currently identified future assessment priorities.

YEAR	STOCK	TYPE
2020	Red Snapper	TBD
	Tilefish	Research Track
	Red Grouper	Update (Operational)
2021	White Grunt	Research Track
	Gray Triggerfish	Research Track