



# SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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Ben C. Hartig, Chair  
Dr. Michelle Duval, Vice Chair

Robert K. Mahood, Executive Director  
Gregg T. Waugh, Deputy Executive Director

## Overview Revised

### Protected Resources Committee

September 14, 2015  
The Beach House Hilton Head Island  
1 South Forest Beach Drive  
Hilton Head Island, SC

The Protected Resources Committee will meet to discuss South Atlantic protected species and receive updates on associated regulatory/management actions that the Council should be knowledgeable of when managing South Atlantic fisheries. SERO Protected Resource Division (PRD) staff will report on (1) protected resources-related updates for the South Atlantic region and (2) the Biological Opinion for the Coastal Migratory Pelagic Fishery Management Plan. Council staff will brief the Committee on (3) the draft ESA/MSA Integration Agreement. Following, the Council will be briefed by US Fish and Wildlife staff on the status updates for (4) American Eel, Atlantic Sturgeon, and the Red Knot. The Committee will discuss potential action for each item, provide guidance to staff, and address issues under Other Business as needed.

#### 1. South Atlantic Protected Resource-Related Updates (Attachment 1)

Staff from the SERO Protected Resources Division (PRD) will provide the Committee with an update on protected resources issues in the South Atlantic region.

**REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION:** Provide input on the updates, discuss, and take action as necessary.

#### 2. Coastal Migratory Pelagics Fishery Biological Opinion (Attachment 2)

Through a section 7 formal consultation triggered by the listing of the Atlantic Sturgeon as an endangered species, the NMFS reviewed the Coastal Migratory Pelagic Fishery to determine if the fishery would adversely impact any of the Atlantic Sturgeon distinct population segments. SERO Protected Resources Division Staff will give a presentation on findings for the Biological Opinion for the Coastal Migratory Pelagic Fishery Management Plan.

**REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION:** Discuss and take action as necessary.

3. ESA/MSA Integration Agreement (Attachment 3)

In January 2015, NMFS released a policy directive on ESA/MSA Integration. The directive implemented recommendations from the ESA Working Group, which was convened by the Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee (MAFAC) and the Council Coordination Committee (CCC) to make recommendations on how to improve the involvement of regional management councils in the ESA section 7 consultation process. The ESA Working Group also provided recommendations on how to improve transparency in data used for ESA jeopardy determinations, but these will be addressed by NMFS in a separate document.

Council staff presented a draft ESA/MSA Integration Agreement (**Attachment 3** and **3a**) to the Council in June and incorporated comments. Council and PR staffs are continuing to work on the Integration Agreement. The Committee will discuss items and topics included in the Integration Agreement between the South Atlantic Council and SERO PRD in regards to coordination with and involvement of the Council in section 7 consultations.

**REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION:** Review draft of the Integration Agreement and provide input as necessary. Provide direction to staff on content and timing for the Integration Agreement.

4. Updates on American Eel Status Review, Atlantic Sturgeon, and Red Knot Listing

Wilson Laney, US Fish and Wildlife Service, will give an update on American Eel Status Review, Atlantic Sturgeon, and Red Knot Listing conducted by the US Fish and Wildlife Services.

**REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION:** Discuss and take action as necessary.

**Protected Resources Committee**

Wilson Laney, Chair  
Anna Beckwith  
Michelle Duval

LT Morgan Fowler  
Ben Hartig  
Jessica McCawley

**Attachments**

**Attachment 1:** Protected Resources Updates for the South Atlantic (**2<sup>nd</sup> BB**)

**Attachment 2:** Coastal Migratory Pelagics Fishery Biological Opinion

**Attachment 3:** Draft List of Items for Integration Agreement for SAFMC/SERO PRD

**Attachment 3a:** ESA MSA Integration Agreement with comments from PR Staff