

FINAL
SUMMARY REPORT
SECAD COMMITTEE
SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
Sept 15, 2026

The Committee approved the agenda for the September 2026 meeting and minutes from the March 2026 meeting.

1. SEDAR Steering Committee July Meeting Updates

The SEDAR Steering Committee convened via webinar on July 20, 2026. Agenda topics for this meeting included updates on current and future SEDAR projects, reviewing various SEDAR processes and operating procedures, and other administrative items. Council staff provided a summary of the pertinent topics from the steering committee meeting and relevant outcomes, including the discussion on the independence of cooperator appointees for the SEDAR peer review process and the CIE review prioritization process.

2. Assessment Updates and SEDAR Schedule

Council staff presented the SEDAR schedule for the South Atlantic stocks and provided status updates on current and upcoming stock assessments and management strategy evaluation projects:

- SEDAR 90: South Atlantic Red Snapper – The S90 assessment panel recommended that the revised MRIP-FES and calibrated Florida State Reef Fish Survey recreational data timeseries both be finalized before submission to the CIE review workshop. This would result in postponing the review workshop from its originally scheduled date in December 2026. The Council supported the assessment panel’s recommendation to delay the review workshop to ensure the inclusion of completed and finalized recreational catch timeseries in the assessment. The SSC is scheduled to review the stock assessment in April and provide catch level recommendations to the Council for June 2027.
- SEDAR 94: Florida Hogfish (EFL/FLK) – A review workshop was completed in July 2026. The assessment will be reviewed by the SSC in Oct 2026 during which they will provide catch level recommendations for the Council to review in December 2026.
- SEDAR 104: Dolphin MSE – A CIE review workshop was completed in July 2026. The MSE will be presented to the SSC in October and to the Council in December 2026.
- SEDAR 108: South Atlantic Black Sea Bass – Assessment development is ongoing but awaiting revisions to the MRIP-FES recreational data timeseries. A review workshop is anticipated for early 2027 followed by SSC review in April that will provide catch level recommendations to the Council in June.
- Black Grouper MSE – A joint subgroup of South Atlantic and Gulf SSC members is scheduled to review the first iteration of the operating model for the Black Grouper management strategy evaluation at their October 2026 meeting. SSC recommendations on model development and next steps for the MSE process will be presented to the Council at the December 2026 meeting. The Council stressed the importance that candidate management procedures for the MSE be developed in consultation with stakeholders and Council members.

The Council also approved the list of future requests for stock assessments for 2028 and 2029 – Red Porgy and Greater Amberjack are scheduled for 2028, and Tilefishes and Scamp are scheduled for 2029. The Council discussed future requests to the SEDAR schedule for 2030 and proposed Gray Triggerfish and Red Snapper be considered for assessment by the SEFSC, and Yellowtail Snapper and Mutton Snapper be considered for assessment by FL-FWC for 2030.

3. ABC Control Rule Stock Risk Ratings

Council staff presented a summary of the ABC Control Rule stock risk ratings and reviewed the preliminary score recommendations and feedback from the Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel and SSC for Florida Hogfish, Gag, and Black Grouper. The Council discussed and finalized the stock risk rating scores (see Appendix), which resulted in the final stock risk ratings:

- Gag Grouper: High
- Black Grouper: High
- Florida Hogfish: High

4. Terms of Reference for Upcoming Assessments

Council staff presented the terms of reference for the upcoming assessments of South Atlantic Red Grouper, South Atlantic Snowy Grouper, and South Atlantic Vermilion Snapper. The Committee made the following minor revisions to the terms of reference for these assessments:

- Explicitly add the Florida State Reef Fish Survey to recreational data collection in terms of reference for Red Grouper and Vermilion Snapper.
- Include RELEASE data length compositions in the terms of reference for Red Grouper

MOTION 1: APPROVE THE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR SOUTH ATLANTIC RED GROUPE, SOUTH ATLANTIC SNOWY GROUPE, AND SOUTH ATLANTIC VERMILION SNAPPER. ALLOW THE COMMITTEE CHAIR TO APPROVE ANY SUBSEQUENT EDITS RECOMMENDED BY THE COMMITTEE.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

5. Standardized Bycatch Reporting Methodology

Council Staff provided a presentation on the planning, objectives and timeline for the Standardized Bycatch Reporting Methodology (SBRM) Review. The SBRM document will be reviewed by the SSC during their October 2026 meeting and presented to the Council for review during the December 2026 Council meeting. The Council provided guidance on the development of this document and approved the plan, objectives and timeline.

6. Southeast Reef Fish Survey Update

South Carolina Department of Natural Resources Staff presented the annual trends report through 2025 on the regional fishery-independent surveys conducted in the South Atlantic. These surveys include the MARMAP/SERFS Chevron-Video Trap Survey, Coastal Trawl Survey, and South Atlantic Deepwater Longline Survey and provide information on the distribution, abundance and length of selected South Atlantic species managed by the Council. The Council discussed the annual trends report and commended SCDNR and their partners on the extensive work accomplished.