

## SEDAR SAFMC Projects Report

June 2017

### SEDAR 53 South Atlantic Red Grouper, Standard - COMPLETED

**SEDAR Contact:** Julia Byrd

**Summary:** The South Atlantic Red Grouper Assessment was changed to a Standard in order to consider inclusion of the SERFS video index. A Data Scoping webinar was held in August 2016 and Assessment webinars were held from October 2016 through January 2017. The final Stock Assessment Report was disseminated 22 February 2017. The assessment was considered by the South Atlantic SSC in April 2017 and recommendations will be provided to the SAFMC in June 2017.

### SEDAR 48 Florida Black Grouper, Benchmark - HALTED

**SEDAR Contact:** Julie Neer

**Summary:** A benchmark assessment of Black Grouper was scheduled for 2017 with Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission providing the analytical team. This is a jointly managed stock with the GMFMC so both Councils made appointments and approved the schedule and Terms of Reference. The SAFMC made appointments and provided approvals in December 2016. The Data Workshop was held March 15-17, 2017 in St. Petersburg, FL. A variety of issues were identified during the data stage of this process and the FWC recommended to halt the development of the assessment at that point. A Data Workshop report will be prepared, documenting the state of the data through the post-DW webinar. The Steering Committee supported the FWC recommendation during its May 5, 2017 meeting.

### SEDAR 50 Atlantic Blueline Tilefish, Benchmark – UNDERWAY

**SEDAR Contact:** Julia Byrd

**Summary:** A benchmark assessment has been underway since mid-2016. Significant events to date include a recommendation from the August 2016 Age Workshop that age determinations are not reliable and should not be used in the assessment; and a recommendation from the June 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 science and management leadership level review of the joint SSC findings to provide TOR guidance, conducted during a conference call 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 Process will be a combination of an in-person workshop on May 23-26, 2017 and a series of webinars held between April and July 2017, and the Review Workshop will be August 29-31, 2017. The assessment will be considered by the South Atlantic SSC in October 2017 and recommendations provided to the Council in December 2017.

### SEDAR 56 South Atlantic Black Seabass, Standard – DELAYED

**SEDAR Contact:** Julia Byrd

**Summary:** A standard assessment was requested to allow consideration of new video data and to reconsider the use of length and age data. The terminal year is 2015 and the assessment will be developed through a series of five webinars held between February and August 2017. The assessment was originally scheduled to be complete at the end of September 2017, to be considered by the South Atlantic SSC in October 2017 and recommendations provided to the Council in December 2017.

Just prior to the May 5, 2017 SEDAR Steering Committee meeting the SEFSC analytical team requested a 6 week delay in the delivery date to offset delays in data delivery. During Steering Committee deliberations it was noted that the delay will push SSC consideration to April 2018, creating further lag between the 2015 terminal year and Council action (expected in 2019 based on this schedule). In addition, 2016 data are largely available now and could potentially be added without delaying availability beyond April 2018. Finally, due to the ongoing delays in providing MRIP data, results with revised data, suitable for developing management recommendations, will be available for SSC review in October 2018 at the earliest. The Council will discuss advancing the terminal year at the June 2017 meeting.

### South Atlantic Vermilion Snapper, Update – UNDERWAY

**SEDAR Contact:** Julia Byrd

**Summary:** A standard assessment was requested to allow consideration of new video index data and to reconsider error distributions for fitting age and length composition data. The terminal year will be 2016 and assessment webinars will be held in late 2017 and early 2018. Preliminary scheduling has the assessment complete in March 2018 which would provide it for SSC consideration in April 2018 and Council consideration in June 2018. The SAFMC will be asked to make appointments for the assessment panel and approve the schedule and TORs at the June 2017 meeting.

The SSC discussed the timing of MRIP revisions, and recommended proceeding with this assessment as scheduled, to allow adequate time for other issues to be resolved. The assessment framework can be reviewed in April 2018 as scheduled, but fishing level recommendations would not be considered until October 2018 when the assessment is revised for the calibrated MRIP estimates.

### Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic Scamp, Research Track - PLANNING

**SEDAR Contact:** Julia Byrd

**Summary:** A Research Track assessment was tentatively scheduled to start the first quarter of 2018. Delays in developing the Research Track concept, along with the impact of the MRIP revision delays on other high priority assessment updates, led the Steering Committee to delay starting this assessment until 2019.

## Atlantic Cobia, Benchmark -- PLANNING

**SEDAR Contact:** Julia Byrd

**Summary:** A Research Track assessment was tentatively scheduled to start the second quarter of 2018. During Research Track process development, SEFSC assessment teams recommended conducting Cobia as a SEDAR benchmark assessment due to the complexity of the assessment and uncertainty regarding stock structure. The Steering Committee supported this recommendation in May 2017 and shifted cobia to a benchmark with stock ID resolution prior to the data workshop.

The process will begin in early 2018 with a stock ID resolution process following the steps developed by the Steering Committee in October 2017. The steps are, in order: Stock ID workshop, Independent Peer Review with CIE reviewers, SSC review of all affected entities. Finally, if necessary due to changes in stock structure that cross management jurisdiction, assessment TORs will be developed by a joint sub-committee of the affected SSCs/Technical Committees. In the event of further disagreement, final resolution will be provided by regional SEDAR Cooperator leadership (Council, Commission, Regional Office, Science Center).

## South Atlantic MRIP Revision Assessments – DELAYED

**Species:** South Atlantic: Red Snapper, Red Grouper, Blueline Tilefish, Black Seabass

**SEDAR Contact:** South Atlantic: Julia Byrd

**Summary:** 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. Revision assessments were initially scheduled for development in late 2017 for SSC review in April 2018. Due to delays in the calibration process and recommendations from the calibration team to include the full 3 years of side by side survey, the revised MRIP data are now expected to become available in mid-2018. Revision assessments of those assessment completed in 2017 and early 2018 will be developed in late 2018 once the updated data are available.