



# **SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**

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Dr. Michelle Duval, Chair | Charlie Phillips, Vice Chair  
Gregg T. Waugh, Executive Director

## **AGENDA** **SEDAR Committee** Sawgrass Marriott Ponte Vedra Beach, FL **PARTIALLY CLOSED**

**Monday, June 12, 2017 – 10:30 A.M. – 12:00 P.M. (Times subject to change)**

Approval of Agenda – Michelle Duval

Approval of March 2017 Committee minutes – Michelle Duval

1. Appointments (*Attachment 1*) **CLOSED SESSION**
2. SEDAR Projects Updates (*Attachments 2a and 2b*)
  - a. Status of projects underway – John Carmichael
  - b. Vermilion Snapper schedule and TOR approval – Michelle Duval
3. Assessment Process and Schedule (*Attachment 3a-e, SSC Report*)
  - a. SEDAR Steering Committee Report of May 5, 2017 – John Carmichael
  - b. Joint Gulf-SAFMC SSC meeting – John Carmichael
  - c. SSC report, assessment priorities and research track – Marcel Reichert
  - d. Committee action: process and schedule guidance – Michelle Duval
4. NMFS Stock Assessment Improvement Plan (*Attachments 4a and 4b*)
  - a. Overview – John Carmichael
  - b. SSC Comments – Marcel Reichert
  - c. Committee action – provide comments for SAFMC response

Other Business – Michelle Duval

Adjourn – Michelle Duval

### **Committee Members**

Michelle Duval, Chair  
Charlie Phillips, Vice-Chair  
Mel Bell  
Zack Bowen  
Chester Brewer  
Mark Brown  
Robert Beal, ASMFC Representative  
Chris Conklin

### **Attachments**

**Attachment 1: CLOSED** Vermilion Snapper Appointments  
**Attachment 2a:** SEDAR Projects Report  
**Attachment 2b:** Vermilion Snapper TORs and Schedule  
**Attachment 3a:** SEDAR Steering Committee Draft Report  
**Attachment 3b:** SEFSC Memo, 3/24/2017, Tilefish assessment request  
**Attachment 3c:** SEFSC Memo, 4/14/2017, Tilefish ageing  
**Attachment 3d:** SEFSC Report, age evaluation resources  
**Attachment 3e:** SEFSC Memo, 4/21/2017, Red Snapper guidance  
**Attachment 4a:** NMFS Draft SAIP  
**Attachment 4b:** Draft SAFMC comments on the SAIP  
**SSC:** SSC Report, April 2017

**Staff:** John Carmichael

# **OVERVIEW**

## **SEDAR COMMITTEE**

### **Agenda Approval**

#### **Minutes Approval – March 2017**

##### **1. Appointments – (Attachment 1) CLOSED SESSION**

**Description:** The Committee is asked to make appointments for the 2017 Standard assessment of Vermilion Snapper. **Attachment 1** provides a list of interested candidates. The assessment will be developed through a series of webinars; no in-person meetings are planned.

**Required Committee Action:** Make appointments for the standard assessment panel.

##### **2. SEDAR Projects Updates**

###### **a. Projects Underway – Attachment 2a**

**Attachment 2a**, an overview of SAFMC SEDAR projects, will be reviewed and changes discussed. Significant changes in ongoing projects include halting work on SEDAR 48, Black Grouper; a delay in SEDAR 50, Black Sea Bass; and change in the process for Cobia back to a SEDAR benchmark rather than the research track.

Because the issues related to SEDAR projects were discussed and acted upon by the SEDAR Steering Committee, at the webinar meeting held May 5, 2017, detailed discussion of specific items and actions is provided under the SEDAR Steering Committee Report topic below.

###### **b. Vermilion Snapper Schedule and TORs – Attachment 2b.**

The Committee is asked to review and approve the schedule and TORs for vermilion snapper. Note that the SSC will not be asked to provide fishing level recommendations until the revised MRIP data are included in 2018.

**Required Committee Action:** Schedule and TOR approval

##### **3. Assessment Process and Schedule**

###### **a. SEDAR Steering Committee Report of May 5, 2017 – Attachments 3a-e.**

The SEDAR Steering Committee met via Webinar on May 5, 2017 to discuss the research track process, receive updates on ongoing assessments, and consider assessment project priorities and scheduling. The Committee discussed ongoing projects, the research track, and the project schedule (**Attachment 3a**). Issues related to ongoing projects will be reviewed during the projects update. The research track and project schedule will be discussed here.

###### golden Tilefish

The Council made several requests to the SEFSC regarding golden Tilefish that were outside the SEDAR process. They are reviewed here due to overlap with Steering Committee discussions. The SAFMC request to conduct an update of golden Tilefish in 2017, in the scheduling vacancy created by the MRIP revision, was discussed. In a March 24 memo (**Attachment 3b**), the SEFSC indicated that because 6-9 months of analyst time would be required for Tilefish, and age evaluations could not be completed in time, the request could

not be accommodated. In response to an SAFMC request made during the SEDAR Steering Committee meeting, the SEFSC agreed to provide a revision of the Tilefish assessment to address the current best science guidance regarding model fitting procedures. Further information on the completion of this effort is expected at this meeting.

In addition, the Council requested that the SEFSC provide an evaluation of whether age evaluation issues identified for Blueline Tilefish also affected golden Tilefish. The SEFSC concluded, as stated in a memo on April 14, 2017 (**Attachment 3c**), that the age readings of golden Tilefish are reliable for use in stock assessments.

### Black Sea Bass

The requested delay in completing Black Sea Bass raised concerns excessive lag between the terminal year and Council action. As currently proposed, the assessment will be completed sometime in late 2017 with 2015 data. However, fishing level recommendations will not be requested of the SSC until the MRIP revision is completed in late 2018. Because this will result in basing management actions in 2019 or 2020 on a 2015 terminal year, the SAFMC requested that the Center evaluate whether the terminal year can be advanced to 2016. Due to the need to update all data sources, this change could require delaying a 2018 project.

### Cobia

As detailed in the projects update, Cobia is reverting to a SEDAR benchmark (rather than research track). Stock ID will be evaluated in the first half of 2018, and a Data Workshop could be held in late 2018, resulting in a terminal year of 2017. Note that this timing is inconsistent with the SAFMC request of September 2016 to delay Cobia until 2019 data can be included. However, delaying Cobia until 2020 created considerable concerns with both the ASMFC, which is currently developing a Cobia FMP, and with the fishing public facing ongoing closures.

### MRIP Revisions

The MRIP revision assessments are tentatively scheduled for late 2018. Specific timing cannot be developed until the revised data are available. More information will become available as the peer review process plays out later this year. At this meeting, the Council should consider which stocks should be revised. Initial plans called for revising Vermilion Snapper, Black Sea Bass, Blueline Tilefish, and Red Snapper. Due to the inability of the Red Snapper assessment to provide current management advice, Red Snapper could be removed from this list. Stocks assessed in 2018 should include revised MRIP data, although this is likely to have consequences on project start dates.

### SEFSC Age Structure Evaluation Resources

At the March 2017 SAFMC meeting the Council discussed the critical role that age structure evaluation plays in assessment scheduling, and in particular how age evaluation is potentially a bottleneck that limits overall assessment productivity. The Council requested that the SEFSC report at this meeting on its evaluation of the resources necessary to clear the ageing backlog and keep ageing operations up to date in the future (**Attachment 3d**).

#### **b. Joint GMFMC-SAFMC SSC meeting**

At the March 2017 meeting the Committee approved convening a joint meeting or workshop of the SAFMC and GMFMC SSCs to discuss alternative MRIP estimation methods and stock ID. Both the Gulf Council and the SEFSC have expressed support for the effort. The SEFSC

began developing an organizing committee, as noted in the April 21 Memo (**Attachment 3e**) on red snapper guidance. A subset of SSC members should be considered for the workshop due to budget and timing concerns. Potential workshop dates identified by Gulf and South Atlantic Council staff are November 6-9 and 13-17, 2017, in Atlanta, GA. Planning is underway for an initial call of the organizing committee in late May 2017.

**c. SSC report on assessment priorities and research track (SSC Report)**

SSC Chair Dr. Marcel Reichert will provide the SSC comments on assessment priorities and the proposed research track.

**d. Required Committee Action**

SEDAR Steering Committee

- Provide guidance on the SEDAR research track for consideration at the September 2017 Steering Committee meeting.
- Provide guidance on topics for the September 2017 Steering Committee meeting.

Joint SSC Meeting/Workshop

- Does the Council support conducting the meeting/workshop with a subset of SSC members?
- Does the Council support conducting the meeting/workshop as a Council process, with the SAFMC providing lead administrative support, or should it be conducted by the SEFSC as an agency process.

Assessment Schedule

- Discuss the completion date for the golden Tilefish revision, and consider timing for the next assessment.
- Discuss advancing the terminal year for black sea bass to 2016, and which 2018 projects could be delayed as a result.
- Discuss proposed timing and terminal year for the Cobia benchmark.
- Consider dropping Red Snapper from the MRIP revision list.
- Provide guidance on future priorities – particularly benchmark or first-time assessment stocks.

**4. NMFS Stock Assessment Improvement Plan – Attachments 4a & 4b.**

**Description:** A draft Stock Assessment Improvement Plan is available for review and discussion. Council comments are due on June 9, 2017 (**Attachment 4a**). The SAIP was provided to the SSC for review during its April 2017 meeting. Council staff prepared a draft response, based on comments of staff and the SSC (**Attachment 4b**).

**Required Committee Action:** Provide guidance for SAFMC comments on the SAIP.

**Other Business**

SAFMC SEDAR Projects

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

SAFMC Future Priorities

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