

**FINAL**  
**SUMMARY REPORT**  
**SEDAR COMMITTEE**  
**SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**  
**DECEMBER 4, 2024**

The SEDAR Committee approved the meeting agenda and the September 2024 minutes.

**Changes to the SEDAR Process**

The NOAA Fisheries Southeast Fisheries Science Center (SEFSC) has proposed four changes to the assessment process

1. Eliminate the Research Track approach
2. Eliminate Assessment nomenclature and schedule “slots”
3. Identify and prioritize “Key Stocks”
4. Assess remaining stocks with less intensive approaches.

The Committee was not opposed to these changes but they needed more details on how everything would work together in order to get more throughput in the stock assessment process. There is a need to demonstrate how the update models or interim assessments can lead to providing sufficient information for managing these stocks and reduce time between updating catch recommendations. The Committee requested the SEFSC look into past assessments to see if an interim analysis approach would have been successful in developing catch level recommendations. The tools to conduct interim analysis should be part of the terms of reference and review for future stock assessments.

The Committee expressed concern with the broadening of tools that can be used to develop catch level stock assessments. The Committee requested more details on how and when the different assessment types could be used to provide catch level recommendations and describing stock status. The SEDAR Steering Committee scope may need to be changed so that they provide guidance on how the different approaches can be coordinated to address needs of the different cooperators.

**Identifying Key Stocks**

The SEFSC drafted a preliminary list of 14 stocks that could be regularly updated, with a proposed update schedule of every 6 years and an update model at approximately 3 years. Staff went through potential key stock species, described available information, and frequency of assessments depending on number of assessments and stock status. Concerns were raised by the Committee regarding the extensive number of species in the Snapper Grouper Complex and the significant workload required for assessing these species. It was noted that there are limited resources available to assess all species within the complex and data bottlenecks that would prevent for all stock from ever being assessed.

The Committee struggled selecting key stocks due to uncertainties surrounding which stocks would qualify for an interim approach and which would require assessment outside the SEDAR Process. This uncertainty led to concerns about the number of key stocks to include in the final list. As a result, the Committee requested that staff develop a revised list for their consideration at the upcoming Full Council Session 2.

DIRECTION TO STAFF: BRING ADDITIONAL INFORMATION TO THE JUNE 2025 COMMITTEE MEETING. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION TO CONSIDER:

- DISCUSSION REGARDING SPECIES THAT NEED TO REMAIN UNDER FEDERAL MANAGEMENT
- INFORMATION ON THE MID-ATLANTIC PROJECT ON RECREATIONAL REFORM
- SSC, SEP, AND SEFSC RECOMMENDATIONS ON CANDIDATE STOCKS AND THOSE THAT MIGHT BENEFIT FROM INTERIM OR OTHER APPROACHES