

The SEDAR Committee (Committee) had several recommendations to modify the SEDAR Project Schedule. A description below each figure (**Figures 1 – 3**) describes the change. The Committee used information on allocations, (SAFMC Allocation page, **Table 1**) and percent of the private vessel landings compared to the recreational sector landings in pounds whole weight (charter, headboat, private vessel, and shore, **Table 2**) to guide their discussion of the SEDAR Project Schedule.

The Committee recommended delaying assessments that are reliant on recreational landings from private or shore modes until after the MRIP study is completed, potential bias in the survey has been calibrated, and recreational catch estimates have been developed. The Committee indicated that the Florida State Reef State Survey may be able to serve as a replacement for MRIP data for assessments conducted by Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission and Gray Triggerfish.

Figure 1 is the outcome of the May 2023 SEDAR Steering Committee discussion.

Figure 2 includes arrows pointing to where the Committee suggested each project be moved.

Figure 3 is the recommendation from the Committee.

Draft Motion 2: During the SEDAR Committee, the Council will discuss the ongoing						
May 2023 Outcome			STC Approved and Scheduled	STC Approved not scheduled	To be Finalized	Future Request
	1	2	3	4	CMP	FWC
2023		1 - S82 Gray Triggerfish RT	2 - S86 Red Grouper OA			3 - S79 Mutton Snapper Benchmark
2024				4 - S89 Tilefish OA		
		7 - S82 Gray Triggerfish OA	5 - S92 Blueline Tilefish OA			6 - S94 Hogfish Benchmark
2025	8 - S90 Red Snapper RT			9 - Red Porgy OA	10 - King Mackerel OA (Gulf and SA)	
2026		11 - Gag OA	11 - Migratory Cobia?			12 - Black Grouper Benchmark/ MSE
			13 - Snowy Grouper	14 - Dolphin MP?		
2027	Red Snapper OA	15 - Greater Amberjack	16 - White Grunt			
2028	Vermilion Snapper OA					
2029						

Figure 1. The SEDAR project schedule based on the outcome from the May 2023 SEDAR Steering Committee meeting.

Draft Motion 2: During the SEDAR Committee, the Council will discuss the ongoing

May 2023 Outcome				STC Approved and Scheduled	STC Approved not scheduled	To be Finalized	Future Request
	1	2	3	4	CMP	FWC	
2023		1 - 582 Gray Triggerfish RT	2 - 586 Red Grouper OA			3 - 579 Mutton Snapper Benchmark	
2024				4 - 589 Tilefish OA		6 - 594 Hogfish Benchmark	
2025	8 - S90 Red Snapper RT	7 - 582 Gray Triggerfish OA	5 - 592 Blueline Tilefish OA	9 - Red Porgy OA	10 - King Mackerel OA (Gulf and SA)		
2026		11 - Gag OA	13 - Migratory Grouper	14 - Atlantic MP?		12 - Black Grouper Benchmark/ MSE	
2027	Red Snapper OA	15 - Greater Amberjack	16 - White Grunt				
2028	Vermillion Snapper OA						
2029							

Figure 2. The SEDAR project schedule based on the outcome from the May 2023 SEDAR Steering Committee meeting with recommended changes to the schedule based on the Committee’s suggestions.

SEDAR Committee Recommendation				STC Approved and Scheduled	STC Approved not scheduled	To be finalized	Future Request
	1	2	3	4	CMP	FWC	
2023		1 - S82 Gray Triggerfish RT				3 - S79 Mutton Snapper Benchmark	Yellowtail Snapper
2024			5 - S92 Blueline Tilefish OA	4 - S89 Tilefish OA			6 - S94 Hogfish Benchmark
2025	8 - S90 Red Snapper RT						
2026		14 - Dolphin MP?	Atl Migratory Cobia?	13 - Snowy Grouper	King Mackerel OA (Gulf and SA)	12 - Black Grouper Benchmark/ MSE	
2027	Red Snapper OA	11 - Gag OA	7 - S82 Gray Triggerfish OA	2 - S86 Red Grouper OA			
2028	Vermilion Snapper OA	15 - Greater Amberjack	17 - Spanish Mackerel Benchmark	9 - Red Porgy OA			
2029				Scamp/Yellowmouth Grouper			

Figure 3. The SEDAR project schedule based on the Committee’s suggestions. These suggestions were intended to keep stock assessments moving forward that were not likely to be impacted by potential bias in the recreational assessment. Red indicates a project was moved up in the schedule and gray indicates the project has not been considered by the SEDAR Steering Committee.

Table 1. Allocations for species included in the upcoming SEDAR Projects Schedule.

Allocation							
#	Species	Commercial	Recreational	#	Species	Commercial	Recreational
1	Gray Triggerfish	43.56	56.44	11	Gag	51	49
2	Red Grouper	44	56	12	Black Grouper	36.88	63.12
3	Mutton Snapper	17.02	82.98	13	Snowy Grouper	83	17
4	Tilefish	97	3	14	Dolphin MP	7	93
5	Hogfish (FKL/EFL)	9.63	90.37	15	Greater Amberjack	40.66	59.34
6	Blueline Tilefish	50.07	49.93	16	White Grunt	31.59	68.41
8	Red Snapper	28.07	71.93	17	Spanish Mackerel	55	45
9	Red Porgy	51.43	48.57				
10	King Mackerel	37.1	62.9				

Table 2. The percentage of the recreational sector landed by private recreational vessels from 2018 to 2022. The recreational landings used estimates from headboat, charter, private, and shore estimates. Headboat estimates came from the Southeast Headboat Survey. All other estimates come from MRIP using FES units in whole weight.

#	Species	Percent	#	Species	Percent	Comment
1	Gray Triggerfish	75	11	Gag	87	
2	Red Grouper	89	12	Black Grouper	92	
3	Mutton Snapper	86	13	Snowy Grouper	25	3 yrs 100% charter/headboat
4	Tilefish	90	14	Dolphin MP	86	
5	Hogfish (FKL/EFL)	99	15	Greater Amberjack	59	
6	Blueline Tilefish	36	16	White Grunt		
8	Red Snapper		17	Spanish Mackerel	38	*Shore = 56%
9	Red Porgy	78				
10	King Mackerel	73				

1 - Gray Triggerfish Research Track Assessment (SEDAR 82 RT)

Stock Status – no previous stock assessment

Research track assessments do not include the most up to date information but are intended to develop the tool to assess a species. The research track assessment for Gray Triggerfish will not provide management advice and estimates of recreational catch will not have an impact on management. The Committee recommended to continue with current research track assessment to develop a stock assessment tool that has been approved for Gray Triggerfish. It was recommended to include sensitivity to potential bias in recreational estimates and consider if Florida State Reef Fish Survey data can replace Florida recreational data from private vessel mode.

2- Red Grouper Operational Assessment (SEDAR 86)

Stock Status – in a rebuilding plan ending in 2028

The operational assessment for Red Grouper is currently on-going. The committee recommended delaying the current operational assessment due to the importance of recreational landings (high recreational allocation – 56%) and a high percent of recent recreational landings coming from private vessels (average 89% of total recreational landings from 2018 to 2022 based on FES estimates). It would be ideal to have a stock assessment to evaluate how the stock performing relative to the rebuilding plan. However, the SEFSC has indicated that there might be two separate stocks of Red Grouper in the South Atlantic region and a single stock assessment for Red Grouper along the coast might not represent best available science. The Snapper Grouper Committee will be discussing potential changes to the stock assessment after the SSC chair presents the SSC's recommendation for SEDAR 86. The Committee recommended moving this assessment to after the Snowy Grouper Operational Assessment in 2026.

3 – Mutton Snapper Benchmark Assessment (SEDAR 79)

Stock Status – Not overfished nor experiencing overfishing

The benchmark assessment is for Mutton Snapper on-going. The Committee was briefed on the plan for Mutton Snapper based on discussions at the Data Workshop for SEDAR 79. It was recommended to consider the Florida State Reef Fish Survey data to develop calibration with current MRIP estimates. Incorporating a this additional information will require a slight delay in SEDAR 79. It was recommended to continue with the benchmark assessment since the majority of recreational landing for Mutton Snapper come from Florida and the Florida State Reef Fish Survey can be used to develop an estimate of recreational catch on both the Gulf and South Atlantic.

4 – Tilefish Operational Assessment (SEDAR 89)

Stock Status - Not overfished nor experiencing overfishing

The operational assessment is expected to start later in 2023. The recreational allocation is 3% of the total ACL. Since the recreational sector is such a small component of the overall ACL, it was recommended to move forward with the operational assessment.

5 – Blueline Tilefish Operational Assessment (SEDAR 92)

Stock Status – Not overfished nor experiencing overfishing

The operational assessment is expected to start in 2024. The recreational allocation is 49.93% of the total ACL. However, landings from private recreational vessels averaged 36% of the recreational harvest from 2018 to 2022 based on FES values. The survey of charter vessels is conducted differently than private recreational vessels and has not been identified to have the bias that was described for shore and private vessel modes in MRIP. Due to the relatively low contribution of private recreational vessels to the total landings, it was recommended to move forward with SEDAR 92 as scheduled.

6 – Hogfish Benchmark Assessment (SEDAR 94)

FLK/EFL Stock – Overfished and Overfishing was occurring based on last assessment

FLK/EFL stock is in a rebuilding plan is expected to end in 2027. Hogfish is a species included in the Florida State Reef Fish Survey. Recreational estimates would follow the same process as SEDAR 79 (Mutton Snapper) to calibrate the Florida State Reef Fish Survey to recreate the full recreational time series. The Committee did not recommend changing the timing for the assessment.

The GA-NC stock is not included in SEDAR 94.

7 - Gray Triggerfish Operational Assessment (follow-up on SEDAR 82 RT)

Stock Status – not currently assessed will follow the Research Track Assessment.

The allocation of landings to the recreational sector accounts for 56.44% of the total ACL. The private recreational mode averaged 75% of the recreational landings from 2018 to 2022 based on FES landings. Since the landings from private recreational vessels accounts for a significant portion of total landings and the potential for bias estimates based on the pilot study, the Committee recommended delaying the operational assessment until the follow-up study on the impact of survey design and monthly sampling has been calibrated with current recreational estimates to produce a time series of recreational catch. The Committee recommended moving the operational assessment to 2026.

8 – Red Snapper Research Track Assessment (SEDAR 90)

Stock Status – Overfished and overfishing is occurring based on SEDAR 73.

Red Snapper is a rebuilding plan through 2044. SEDAR 73 indicated the stock is expected to rebuild prior to 2044. Research track assessments do not include the most up to date information but are intended to develop the tool to assess a species. Revised recreational estimates would be available for a follow-up operational assessment. The Red Snapper Research Track is scheduled to allow the incorporation of the South Atlantic Red Snapper Research Program. The Committee did not recommend changing the timing for the assessment.

9 – Red Porgy Operational Assessment

Stock Status – Overfished and overfishing is occurring based on SEDAR 60.

Red Porgy is in a rebuilding plan through 2047. Red Porgy has not rebuilt in previous rebuilding plans. The SEDAR Steering Committee will be approving the schedule for 2025 stock assessments at their October 2023 meeting. Currently, Atlantic Migratory Cobia and Red Porgy are being considered for a slot in 2025 due to limited capacity at the SEFSC. Based on recent conversations with Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, the Atlantic Migratory Cobia can move forward which means the Red Porgy

Assessment will be delayed. SAFMC representatives on the SEDAR Steering Committee have indicated the delay in Red Porgy would be acceptable to get a Cobia assessment completed.

10 – South Atlantic King Mackerel Operational Assessment

Stock Status – Not overfished nor experiencing overfishing

King Mackerel are an important recreational species with 62.9% of the total ACL allocated to the recreational sector. Private recreational vessels averaged 73% of the total recreational landing from 2018 to 2022 based on FES estimates. The Committee recommended delaying the operational assessment until the follow-up study on the impact of survey design and monthly sampling has been calibrated with current recreational estimates to produce a time series of recreational catch. The Committee moved the King Mackerel Operational Assessment to 2026.

11 – Gag Operational Assessment

Stock Status – Overfished and overfishing is occurring based on SEDAR 71

Gag are an important recreational species with 49% of the total ACL allocated to the recreational sector. Private recreational vessels averaged 87% of the total recreational landing from 2018 to 2022 based on FES estimates. The Committee recommended delaying the operational assessment until the follow-up study on the impact of survey design and monthly sampling has been calibrated with current recreational estimates to produce a time series of recreational catch. The Committee also suggested adding in Florida State Reef Fish Survey for private recreational vessels. The Committee moved the Gag Operational Assessment to 2026.

12 – Black Grouper Operational Assessment or Management Strategy Evaluation

Stock Status – Not overfished nor experiencing overfishing based on SEDAR 19.

Black Grouper have not been assessed since 2009. Black Grouper are an important recreational species with 63.12% of the total ACL allocated to the recreational sector. Private recreational vessels averaged 92% of the total recreational landing from 2018 to 2022 based on FES estimates. The project was recommended to start in 2026 at the May 2023 SEDAR Steering Committee meeting. Black Grouper is a species included in the Florida State Reef Fish Survey. Recreational estimates would follow the same process as SEDAR 79 (Mutton Snapper) to calibrate the Florida State Reef Fish Survey to recreate the full recreational timeseries. Both the MRIP revised estimates and state calibrated estimates should be available in 2026. The Committee did not recommend any changes to the schedule for Black Grouper.

13 – Snowy Grouper Operational Assessment

Stock Status - Overfished and overfishing is occurring based on SEDAR 36 Update (2020)

Snowy Grouper are in a rebuilding plan by 2039. The recreational sector accounts for 17% of the total ACL. The private recreational mode averaged 25% of the total recreational landings from 2018 to 2022 based on FES. The operational assessment is expected to start in 2026. The Committee did not recommend a change in the timing for operational assessment.

14 – Dolphin Management Strategy Evaluation Management Procedure

Stock Status – No previous stock assessment

Management strategy evaluation are different than stock assessments and can evaluate if the management strategy is robust to changes in the estimates of recreational catch. Because the MSE can explicitly test this assumption, it was recommended to move up the review MSE. The MSE was recommended to have review by the Center for Independent Experts earlier by one year.

15 – Great Amberjack Research Track Assessment

Stock Status – Not overfished nor undergoing overfishing

Due to moving other assessments back, the Greater Amberjack Research Track Assessment was moved back in the assessment scheduling.

16 – White Grunt Research Track Assessment

Stock Status – No previous stock assessment

White Grunt have been listed as a species to be assessed since early in the SEDAR Program (2001). There are at least two stocks of White Grunt in the South Atlantic region. Due to this being a newly assessed species and multiple stocks, it was recommended the assessment use two assessment slots as a research track assessment. The Committee recommended removing White Grunt from the project schedule.

17 – Spanish Mackerel Benchmark Assessment

Stock Status – Not overfished nor undergoing overfishing

Spanish Mackerel were recently assessed in SEDAR 78. The SSC identified several issues to be addressed in an upcoming assessment (see SEDAR A03 from September 2023 Meeting). A benchmark assessment could be used to work through some of the issues. The recreational sector accounts for 45% of the total ACL. The private and shore recreational modes averaged 94% of the total recreational landings from 2018 to 2022 based on FES. The Committee did not provide guidance on when the benchmark assessment should be attempted. This assessment could be conducted in 2027 replacing White Grunt Research Track assessment.

Yellowtail Snapper was added as a species to consider replacing MRIP data with Florida State Reef Fish Survey Data.

The Science Center representative also noted that the time that was freed up from moving these stock assessments back could be used to work on some of the topics such as the Regime Shift Working Group and Dynamic Reference points.