

OVERVIEW
SEDAR COMMITTEE MEETING
December 4, 2008
Hilton Wilmington Riverside
301 North Water Street
Wilmington, NC

1) Approval of Agenda

Required Action: Approve the agenda

2) Approval of Minutes

Required Action: Approve minutes of September 2008

3) SEDAR 19 Planning (INCLUDES CLOSED SESSION)

SEDAR 19 will assess South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico black grouper and South Atlantic red grouper. Florida FWC will handle lead analytical responsibilities for black grouper and the SEFSC Beaufort lab will handle red grouper. The Data workshop will be held June 22 – 26, 2009, in Charleston SC, the assessment workshop October 5 – 9, 2009, in St. Petersburg FL, and the review workshop January 25 – 29, 2010 in Savannah GA.

The SEDAR Committee is asked to review the participant list and appoint representatives to the SEDAR 19 workshops (**Attachment 1**). In considering SEDAR 19 appointments the Committee is asked to review and consider appointing candidates for the SEDAR AP (**Attachment 2**). SAFMC staff has identified some potential participants that are not currently in the SEDAR pool. The Committee is asked to review these participants for inclusion in the SEDAR pool; this process is similar to that used for other Advisory Panel appointments. Those appointed to the SEDAR pool are then eligible for official appointment to the SEDAR 19 workshops.

The Committee is also asked to review and approve the Terms of Reference (**Attachment 3**), and the project schedule (**Attachment 4**) for SEDAR 19.

Required Action: Appoint participants for SEDAR 19
 Approve Terms of Reference
 Approve Schedule

4) Review SEDAR Planning Schedule

The Committee is asked at each meeting to review the SEDAR planning schedule (**Attachment 5**). Attention is directed to the timing of benchmark assessments, stocks that are scheduled for future assessment, and the schedule of assessment updates. The Committee

should consider whether changes are required to address developing fisheries management issues.

There is an open assessment slot in SEDAR 24 in 2011 that could be filled with another South Atlantic stock of concern. SEDAR 24 currently includes a benchmark assessment for black sea bass. Identifying a candidate stock at this time would allow consideration by the SEDAR Steering Committee at its next meeting in May 2009. Moreover, identifying a stock at this time will allow work to begin on data compilation, especially the evaluation of age structures.

5) **SEDAR Methods Workshops Report**

SEDAR has arranged three methods workshops: an indices workshop that was held in October 2008, a catchability workshop that will be held in February 2009, and a review of Caribbean data that will be held in January 2009. These are part of a planned ongoing series of workshops devoted to particular topics and issues that affect multiple assessments and are intended to improve the performance and efficiency of the SEDAR process.

The Indices workshop addressed issues with CPUE index development and evaluation, with an intent to improve how indices are addressed in SEDAR data workshops (**Attachment 6**). Feedback from participants is overwhelmingly positive. Participants were primarily those federal and state scientists who regularly work with fishery dependent and independent survey data, developed the CPUE indices used in SEDAR assessments, and contributed to SEDAR data workshop indices workgroups. A workshop report will be developed which details standards for development of indices and preparation for data workshops. The success of this workshop led some participants to suggest a similar effort for other data workgroups.

The catchability workshop will address changing catchability and its effects on fishery dependent data (**Attachment 7**). This is a controversial issue that has generated considerable discussion at several recent SEDAR assessment and review workshops. The intent of this workshop is to develop guidelines for incorporating catchability changes in SEDAR assessments and develop general parameters for describing and modeling such changes.

The Caribbean data workshop will focus on reviewing available data sources to identify robust information to support fishing level recommendations and identify species that may be assessed in future SEDAR workshops (**Attachment 8**). Data-poor assessment methods will be explored and applied preliminary to several species.

Future workshop topics will be discussed by the Steering Committee in May. Candidates include natural mortality, developing long-term historical catch estimates, developing guidelines for SSC review and acceptance of SEDAR assessment reports, and addressing additional data workgroups.

6) **SEDAR 17 Report**

SEDAR 17 assessed South Atlantic vermilion snapper and Spanish mackerel. Despite the compressed schedule necessary to accommodate the urgent need for the vermilion benchmark, and earlier concerns with the completion of Spanish mackerel age and life history work, these assessments were completed as scheduled and reviewed by an

independent peer review panel in October. Although the review panel identified numerous concerns with the assessments and questioned the robustness of some of the estimates, they were able to provide advice on stock status.

The assessment reports will be provided to the SSC for review at this meeting.

7) Research and Data Needs from SEDAR 16 (King Mackerel)

Numerous research and monitoring recommendations were put forward by the SEDAR 16 workshops (Attachment 9). Many of these represent areas noted in prior assessments, such as allocation of catches to the two migratory units, concerns with the reliability of reproductive information, and the adequacy of biological characterization information and abundance indices. In addition, concerns over the level of harvest in Mexico and the potential implications of those harvest for both the overall productivity and status estimates of the Gulf migratory unit were raised throughout. The Review Panel also highlighted several analytical and modeling suggestions that could improve the reliability of future estimates and may have applicability to other assessments.

The Committee is asked to review the monitoring recommendations and discuss a process for ensuring continued progress in improving the information available to assess mackerel stocks. Although this item directs attention to the recently completed king mackerel assessment, since many of the needs identified are shared with other SEDAR assessments, the Committee may wish to consider monitoring and research improvements in a broader sense.

8) Recommendations for the next SEDAR Steering Committee Meeting

The SEDAR Steering Committee will meet in May 2009. The SEDAR Committee is asked to discuss general procedural and scheduling items to develop recommendations for the Steering Committee representatives.

9) Other Business

10) Adjourn