

# **SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**

## **SEDAR COMMITTEE**

**Hilton Garden Inn/Outer Banks  
Kitty Hawk, North Carolina**

**December 6, 2018**

### **SUMMARY MINUTES**

#### **COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

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Steve Poland

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#### **OBSERVERS/PARTICIPANTS**

Shep Grimes  
Monica Smit-Brunello  
Rick DeVictor  
Dewey Hemilright  
Tony Dilernia

Dr. Jack McGovern  
Dr. Erik Williams  
Dale Diaz  
Erika Burgess  
Nik Mehta

Other observers and participants attached.

The SEDAR Committee of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council convened at the Hilton Garden Inn/Outer Banks, Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, Thursday morning, December 6, 2018, and was called to order by Chairman Jessica McCawley.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I think the next item on our list is George and the SSC Report, and is that next on our list? All right.

DR. SEDBERRY: Again, the PowerPoint for this presentation, and it's just two slides, is in the late folder, and the SSC report is in the briefing book root folder, and so the SSC, when they met in May, looked at SEDAR activities and provided some guidance, including the suggestion that, for upcoming assessments, that we consider inclusion of a term of reference requesting a continuity run with the revised MRIP data that we talked about the other day using the previous model terminal year and projection timeframe as was used in the most recent assessment for comparison of stock status. We think this will give us insight into management measures, to determine whether they were appropriate, given that the MRIP estimates have changed.

The SSC also looked at terms of reference and schedules for upcoming stock assessments, and the SSC reviewed the terms of reference and recommended SSC representatives for SEDAR 68, which is the scamp research track, and we had a joint webinar with a sub-group of the SSC from the South Atlantic and from the Gulf, a week or two ago, and I have lost track, and, during that joint webinar, we reviewed the terms of reference and the schedule, and the report from that webinar is being circulated amongst that sub-group now, and it will be available soon. We also identified the South Atlantic representatives from the SSC for that joint webinar for the assessment development team and for the stock ID workshop.

For SEDAR 66, the SSC reviewed the terms of reference and schedule and approved that, and, for SEDAR 36, South Atlantic snowy grouper, an update assessment, we suggested adding to the terms of reference to explore sensitivities to steepness values that bracket corresponding SPR values above and below the 26 percent SPR estimated in the last assessment.

The SSC was concerned that the fixed steepness value resulted in an MFMT that corresponded to 26 percent SPR, which they felt was low when compared to similar species. Values of 30 to 40 percent SPR are considered more appropriate for such species and should be included in the sensitivity analysis in that upcoming assessment. There were concerns about FMSY values coming from set steepness values, and the SSC would like to explore alternative MFMT proxies, and I believe that's it.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Are there questions or concerns? Any questions for George? All right. I think we're good, and I don't see hands shooting into the air, and I think we're okay. Thank you for that presentation.

DR. SEDBERRY: Thank you.

MR. GRIMES: I just wanted to make one quick comment, and then the council can do as it pleases, but I have been to all of the SSC meetings for a while now, and I talked about this with George and other members of the SSC, and I think the SSC spends a lot of time talking about whether a particular piece of information constitutes best available scientific information, and my

understanding is that the charge from the council comes out to review this document and make this determination.

It seems to me that the SSC shouldn't really be asked whether each individual little piece of information constitutes best scientific information available, and it seems like it's an over-broad approach, and it know it results in a lot of lengthy discussions with the SSC, in viewing each little piece of information. National Standard 2 requires that conservation and management measures be based on best scientific information available and not that every individual piece discussed be individually viewed as best available.

I think a piece of information -- Not only do I think this, but, I mean, I've seen this among various SSCs. A piece of information can be best available to answer one question, or in one context, and not be best available in another context, and so it seems to me, when the information is applied to some conservation and management measure, or in the development of an ABC recommendation or something like that, it's in that larger context that it should be evaluated as best available scientific information, and so I would encourage the council, perhaps, in the charge to the SSC on these things, to take a step back and not request that specific determination on every little piece, because they do spend a bunch of time talking about it. Thank you.

MR. BELL: That makes sense, and we do rely on them as sort of our science advisors, and that's why we probably have tasked them with some of those things, but I think you're right. In terms of the use of their time, it's a limited amount of time, and you're kind of getting down into the weeds on some of that, and they can spend an awful lot of time in a relatively short meeting, a couple of days, and so that's probably, I think, good advice. Thank you.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Shep, given that observation, it might be good, maybe, on the next SSC agenda, to have you come and talk about that, because the charge that they get doesn't address it at each specific individual piece. It's generally like in stock assessments, and it's going to refer to the stock assessment overall, but you're right that it does sort of creep into every component of the discussions, a lot of times, and it's been a while since there was -- I think McLemore came and talked to the SSC about best science and their role and what the agency does and when it's determined, and we have a lot of new members, and it might help hearing from you that it's okay that they view it in a broader sort of end-of-their-recommendations-type perspective, and it would probably carry more weight coming from you and giving them confidence that that's acceptable from the agency perspective.

MR. BELL: Real quick, in conversations with folks on the SSC, we just -- As council members, we just need to be real focused on what we ask them, just make sure we ask something in a very specific way for something, and sometimes we might ask things that are a little general, and that allows folks to kind of maybe get down into the weeds and spend more time than perhaps they need to, and so I think we just need to discipline ourselves to make sure that, when we ask them things, or we task them with stuff, we're very specific on what we need, and that would be helpful.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Any more discussion or comments on that? All right. Thank you, Shep. Thank you, George. Next up is Assessment Activity Update, and is that next?

MR. CARMICHAEL: The approvals are next and then the update.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right.

MR. CARMICHAEL: The approvals, you have a new Attachment 2 that you received, and the revision to this, and I've shown it on the screen, it addresses the results of the joint SSC webinar between us and the Gulf to review the scamp terms of reference. These were prepared initially by the Science Center leads, and then they went through a planning group, which has representatives of the Gulf and South Atlantic and the Science Center, and then that was reviewed by the SSCs in a joint meeting, so that we didn't have each SSC coming up with some ever so slightly different terms of reference that would then have to be rectified at the council level somewhere.

That is the revision, and it will come up in scamp. The snowy grouper and tilefish things and other are all -- The others that are in here, and I guess it's amberjack, are all good. They haven't changed from what you saw in the original documents, and so a couple of actions that we have to do, and I have some draft motions that we can go through and consider. First, we'll address snowy grouper, the terms of reference, and then we have tilefish terms of reference and schedule, and then we'll have the scamp terms of reference and schedule, and you can address each one individually.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right.

MR. CARMICHAEL: First up is snowy.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Yes, first up is snowy.

MR. CARMICHAEL: The SSC comment that George referenced is shown here, and so that was added to the terms of reference to look at sensitivities around the SPR value.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Are there questions or comments? All right. Would someone like to make a motion to approve the terms of reference?

**MR. POLAND: Madam Chair, I so move to approve the terms of reference for the SEDAR snowy grouper update.**

**MS. MCCAWLEY: It's seconded by Mel. Any discussion? Any objection? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

MR. CARMICHAEL: The next one I will go to and show is the tilefish, and you have the terms of reference for the tilefish assessment. It's got a number of things that will be considered in this model that reflect the discussions of the SSC and you have had regarding that last update assessment. Over the last couple of years, there has been quite a few things raised about that assessment, and so these are noted here as things to be looked at in this standard assessment, and then we have the schedule of events, which comes up as the next page in your document.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Are there questions or comments or concerns? If not, are we ready for a motion? Aren't we on the tilefish motion, Number 5?

**MR. BELL: I move to approve the terms of reference and schedule for the SEDAR 66 tilefish assessment.**

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Is there a second? It's seconded by Steve. Any discussion? **Any objection? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

MR. CARMICHAEL: Then the next one is scamp. The new things that were added, based on the SSC sub-group, are the items shown in italics under some of the terms of reference, and it just fleshes out some of the ideas a little bit, and I think some of it addresses ecosystem and things of that nature that the Gulf folks recommended that we add. There is a lot here, and this is our first research track, and so it goes through all the different stages of the process, from the stock ID through the assessment component.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Any discussion? Any questions?

MR. POLAND: Do these terms of reference also have to go through the Gulf Council?

MR. CARMICHAEL: Yes, the Gulf will be considering these too, and so they have exactly the same version that we have, and so, if you approve them without change, then we would just let the Gulf Council know that that's what you've done, and hopefully they would do the same and we would have one consistent set. If they make some changes, we'll have to figure out some way of running it by you and making sure that you agree.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Are we ready for a motion?

MR. BELL: **Madam Chair, I move to approve the terms of reference and schedule for the SEDAR 68 scamp assessment.**

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. We have a motion. It's seconded by Steve. Any more discussion? **Any objection? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

MR. CARMICHAEL: That concludes the approvals section. The next one is SEDAR Attachment 3, and this is an update on the activities that have been underway that we give you at every meeting. You have a write-up on cobia, and I'm just going to go through this. I am not, obviously, going to read all of this or go through every project in detail, but I am going to hit a couple of things where there is some updates to what you have here in the document, and so cobia is underway and on track and looking good.

Greater amberjack is coming up soon, and we have an issue with data delivery deadlines on amberjack and red porgy, where a number of the commercial and recreational datasets have been late in being delivered to the analysts. This is going to cause some delay in the final delivery of these projects, delay in the analysts getting started, and so there's going to be a delay in the deliveries.

The good news, from the South Atlantic perspective, is that both of those assessments were scheduled to be completed in early summer of next year and to go to the SSC in October, and so, assuming that the deadlines are not missed much more, and the analysts get the data relatively soon, they will be able to complete those schedules, those assessments, so they get to the SSC in October, which would mean, also, the good news is it wouldn't have a rollover effect on to our next round of assessments in the South Atlantic, and so we're hoping that the data can get to the Beaufort team in the next few weeks, early in the next year, so that they can continue on these and

that we'll still get them to the SSC as planned, which is good for us, but I did want to let you guys know about that.

There is some issues with red porgy and the ages, and there may be some -- We're going to do the best we can with what we have, but there's been some discussion of the potential to eventually, maybe, re-age a bunch of the older structures, and it's not something that is going to be able to be done, in all likelihood, for this assessment that we have, and so just know that is -- It will be done exactly the same as it's been done in the past, but there is some thought that maybe there is some way to improve the ages, and that's something that will have to be looked at further, but, as we say, there is always something new on the horizon in these stock assessments and our science. If there is no questions about those two, I will carry on.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Questions? All right. Back to you, John.

MR. CARMICHAEL: That brings us through those two. The Florida folks are working hard on yellowtail snapper, and that's progressing nicely. The MRIP revision assessments, as you've heard, and so the SSC reviewed those, and they're going to have an in-depth review of those on a webinar coming up in January, and then the plan is to be able to be in position to give the fishing level recommendations at their meeting in April.

Then, the tilefish, we've just dealt with those. We have the scamp research track, also giving you an update of what's going on with that one, and it's the bottom of page 3. One issue that's kind of rearing its head on scamp is we wanted to have an ageing workshop, so that the agers in the different areas and labs can make sure they are reading the structures all the same. That was at one point hoped to happen later this year, and then early next year. Then, when the hurricane hit down there in Florida, and Panama City, where the lab is, was pretty heavily impacted, and so that's pushed back into -- Well, actually, at this point, we're not really sure, and it may be potentially late spring before they get around to the ageing workshop.

We don't anticipate that at this point affecting the scheduling of things like the data workshop, but it's probably, in all likelihood, going to affect the availability of some of the age-related data for the stock ID process, and the scamp has a planning team, and so they're going to be talking about that and what it means, but I think, right now, the best course of action is to try to deal with what we have at the stock ID stage and try to continue to maintain the schedule that we have for the data workshop and so to hopefully get this ageing workshop underway.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Basically, the ageing would occur after the stock ID, and is that right?

MR. CARMICHAEL: Yes, the bulk of the ageing, and I'm not even aware if there is any ageing type of information from years past or other studies that might be available. I don't know that we've gotten that deep, in terms of how do we deal with that with regard to the stock ID.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Any questions?

MR. POLAND: John, you're saying that there won't be any ages available for the stock ID workshop, or just those ages won't have recent time periods, because I know, during the cobia stock ID workshop, we did spend a little bit of time looking at ages across the range and that kind of stuff, and that was a pretty important piece of information, or at least we felt like in the beginning

that we needed to evaluate, and my concern would be that, if ages aren't available, then the stock ID workshop might feel like they might want to hold off or not give a stronger recommendation on stock boundaries.

MR. CARMICHAEL: I'm going to turn to Julia, because I know she's been working closely with the age folks. Do you know if anyone has indicated that there is any type of ageing information available?

MS. BYRD: It's my understanding that everybody has been ageing, but they have just started to exchange reference collections, and so it will depend on -- There may be some age data available, but we won't know if folks are ageing the same yet, and so things like looking at variations in growth over spatial scales and things like that probably wouldn't be available for stock ID, and I guess what I will say is the lead analysts for scamp and some of the key kind of age data providers and I are going to have a call next week to kind of discuss this more, and then we're going to have a call with the scamp planning team to kind of answer some of these questions of how critical is this age data to the stock ID process, and so I'm sorry that I don't have more information than that right now, but we're kind of trying to get on top of this, as this kind of issue came up over the past couple of weeks, and I don't know -- Erik, do you know more than I do?

DR. WILLIAMS: No, Julia, and you summed it up as well as I know, too. There are ages that need to be done, but they just need to be compared and see if we're on the same track, in terms of the way they're --

MR. CARMICHAEL: I would guess, if the planning group starts to feel like it's really critical, then we may be coming back to you to see how you feel about getting that addressed and getting the ages in there, and it would be delaying the entire project probably a bit, and so that will be a decision we'll have to make, and I think doing as Julia said, getting that information from those folks, would probably help us make a better decision.

MR. BELL: I guess, in discussing SEDAR and the schedule and things in general, is this the time to bring this up, just related to a heads-up on -- MARMAP is kind of dealing with some shortfalls in budget right now, and they're shifting some folks around and all, and we basically met on this, had a number of people meet, and we'll figure out how to minimize impacts, and MARMAP will do what it needs to do in order to cover staff, but it's just kind of an unanticipated shortage.

We've had to shift some people around, Marcel has, and so some things may not get done as quickly as we hoped, but we're trying to sort of mitigate that and make sure we don't impact the overall schedule, but, at some point, budget shortfalls can result in things maybe being delayed, but we'll try to keep that from happening, as best we can, and folks are working on that, to make sure we kind of have a plan for moving forward and how to adjust, and that's just a heads-up.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, Mel. Back to John.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Thank you very much. No news to report on the snowy grouper or the king mackerel. As we get into 2020, and, here, we're going to shift gears a little bit, over into Topic 5, and talk about what's coming up at the SEDAR Steering Committee. The Steering Committee is planning to meet following the CCC, which is meeting in Charleston, and so it will be Thursday afternoon and Friday of May 16 and 17, after the CCC.

One of the things that they have to do is refine the workplan for 2020, and Clay has brought in the concept of looking at how much time is required to prepare the datasets for these different assessments, because data has been such a bottleneck, and he asked the councils to provide information on the scope of work for their assessments that they have in 2020, because there is concern that we may have more data needs in 2020 than can actually be met.

What we've done at the South Atlantic is looked at the assessments for 2020, Spanish mackerel and gag, and looked at the past assessments and the peer review comments and the SSC comments, and we came up with a list of things that would be considered for this assessment and addressing say how many years of data have to be added.

We prepared these two scopes of work for Spanish mackerel and gag, and these were reviewed by the SSC, and they are offered here for you to comment and look at, and the next step is this will be provided to the Science Center early next year, so that Clay can come to the Steering Committee and know how much data work is required with these different projects. If we still have more data work than he has resources, the Steering Committee is going to have to decide how to balance that out. That's just opening that up for any comments you guys have on these scope of work for these two assessments, and, if you're comfortable with those, then we'll go ahead and forward them to Clay and the Science Center.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Comments or questions or concerns? All right. I see heads nodding no concerns.

MR. CARMICHAEL: All right. Thanks. Expect to be seeing these for say next year for our 2021 assessments, to keep working ahead of this and letting the Science Center adequately plan for what we need to have done. Then, bringing it down to the final item at the Steering Committee, here you have the list of priorities that we have for 2019 through 2022, and we have a pretty full slate, and I am happy to report that, since -- The last several years, the South Atlantic has not been making really any changes to the SEDAR schedule, and I think that has definitely helped us keep on track and has helped with the planning process, and so that's been a big step forward, in terms of our planning efforts.

One thing that I do want to note is red snapper has been scheduled for a research track for quite a while, and there was discussion at the SSC about how that assessment should be done and whether the next assessment needs to be a research track and thinking about what a research track does, and, when this was first scheduled, one of the thoughts was to do it as a benchmark, which is what we were using at the time, just for concerns about what has happened while the fishery has been under the very short seasons, et cetera. I think now the thought is, and the SSC supported this idea, is that this assessment of red snapper could probably be done as an operational assessment.

The critical thing for the SSC would come down to specifically what type of changes are going to be made in the model and how we're going to deal with the data challenges and if they're comfortable with providing peer review of that, and, at this point, they think that they are. One of the advantages to you as a council is that you will get the assessment quite a bit sooner. If this is done on the research track process, it's going to start sometime in 2020 and run through 2021, and, realistically, you're probably looking at 2022 before you are making any changes, certainly, or maybe 2022 before you're even getting some of the recommendations from the SSC. The biggest



benefit to you is that you will get red snapper information sooner, and you will free up some resources and capabilities in 2021 to potentially do some other assessment needs that might arise.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I think this also came up earlier in the week, because Roy was asking about it, and it seemed like he was wanting the research track. What you're suggesting is, instead of research track, it would now be under what's called operational, and is that what you're suggesting?

MR. CARMICHAEL: Yes, that's correct. It's under operational, and the way the operational will be is they can include a number of workshops. They can go through whatever the SSC thinks is necessary. The biggest difference is we wouldn't go through the full independent peer review panel, and we wouldn't have as exhaustive of a process, but we could certainly focus in on -- We could have a workshop devoted to the recreational estimates and how to deal with the seasons and then maybe another one devoted to the modeling issues, and we could even set some time aside and maybe have an SSC group that provides some peer review. Our thought on the operational is to make them very flexible, so that we can be efficient and deal with each project as it needs to be.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Let me ask a couple of questions. There's been a lot of discussion about this FWRI data, and, at the SSC meeting, it looked like it was decided that it couldn't be used right now and we had to wait until the next stock assessment to use it, and so could that data be incorporated in there if it's an operational, or is the only way it could get incorporated is a research track?

MR. CARMICHAEL: No, we see that as being able to come in in an operational. I mean, the SSC has looked at it, and they think it's good data. It refines some of their information, and they recommended that it could be included in an operational.

DR. CRABTREE: I missed some of the conversation, but I guess I'm not understanding, John, how you do an operational without doing the research track first.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Well, there's no need that you have to do that. What we're doing is we're changing what we used to call update and standard and combining them under the terminology of "operational", and so we don't expect that every assessment that we've done in the past as a benchmark is going to have to first go through the research track before it then can shift into the operational.

DR. CRABTREE: But how do you come in with a -- So you're talking about an update, effectively?

MR. CARMICHAEL: No, I'm talking about an operational can span the range from a standard to an update.

DR. CRABTREE: All right. Well, my preference -- I have no interest in an operational or an update. I believe we need a research track, and I believe we need to re-think the whole assessment and start from scratch and do it all over again, and so I have no interest in anything else with red snapper beyond a research track and revisit everything and then do an operational, and that's going to take whatever time it takes, but I believe that's what is needed, or we're going to find ourselves right back in the same mess we've been in for the last several years.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I kind of agree with Roy. I have some concerns, and, once again, the new process is kind of throwing me off a little bit, switching from the term standard and benchmark to operational, but I really would like everything, just like Roy is saying, re-looked at and every assumption questioned and every new dataset looked at and determined if it can be used, and so, yes, I hear what you're saying about, even if we do operational, we can have these little workgroups, but I am kind of leaning towards what Roy is saying on the research track.

MR. BELL: So what is the approximate difference in time for one versus the other?

MR. CARMICHAEL: Years.

MR. BELL: Years?

MR. CARMICHAEL: Certainly years before when you get it. Yes, I mean, a research track is going to take a full twenty-four months, and an operational is going to cover a range. I think I would envision that an operational, even with the number of things we want to do, we would certainly hope that that could be wrapped up in about a year, but it's a pretty big difference in time, but, again, that's the tradeoffs for you guys to weigh, for sure.

MR. POLAND: John, just to help my understanding of this between a benchmark or a research track and operational, how much latitude do you have in these operational assessments to go back and really evaluate some of these assumptions made when constructing the model under the benchmark? To use a car analogy, can you go all the way back to the chassis and rebuild it, or are we just looking at tweaking the fender well or dropping a new engine or what? I mean, what are we --

MR. CARMICHAEL: You know, I think the idea is that you could go down to the chassis in an operational, and the deciding factor would be is the SSC comfortable with providing the peer review of that level of work, and one way to get their comfort is keeping them involved throughout the stages, and, as we said, doing different focused workgroups to deal with data issues, and so I think you could. Now, I don't think that you could take a Volkswagen and turn it into a dune-buggy pickup truck through the same thing. That would be a much bigger change than what you're doing, and so that would probably lean over to research track.

I think, as Roy said, if he wants to start from square-one and reconsider everything, model choices and what's been done and all of the past data, then, yes, that's definitely a research track, and, if the council is thinking of changes of that magnitude, and you're going to be more comfortable going forward on your management basis having that independent peer review, then, yes, you're comfortable with putting the resources that is going to be required into that and accepting the consequences, in terms of productivity on other assessments as well.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I still -- I am leaning towards staying with the research track. I want them to go back and re-look at every single assumption, and I feel more comfortable with the research track, but I am looking around to room to see if people feel different.

DR. PORCH: I personally don't have a strong opinion whether we go research track or operational, but it's more that I'm looking at it from establishing a protocol. For me, I wouldn't

be too excited about doing a research track unless I know there is something new, some new alternative that we really want to explore, is there some new information, I mean radically new information.

Some of the stuff that Luiz presented that the State of Florida did, that could easily be handled within an operational track, and so the question, for me, is whether there is some other fundamental information that would cause us to change the basic model structure, and so, in other words, turn the Volkswagen into a dune-buggy, and I haven't seen a compelling argument that there is, but, having said that, we're doing a research track in the Gulf of Mexico for red snapper, and, in this case, the new information -- It's largely driven by two things.

One is the state surveys that we have, the competing recreational state surveys, and then we have this Gulf-wide estimate of absolute abundance that's going on, where they have a massive survey effort, and we have to figure out how to incorporate that into the assessment, and so we have two big, obvious drivers there, and so the question for you, I think, is do we have equally big drivers that would argue for a research track here?

DR. CRABTREE: Well, I can't compare what we have or don't have in the Gulf, and there may be more drivers there, but what we've had in the South Atlantic is a credibility problem, and that's what has killed us, is no one has felt enough confidence in the assessment for us to get anywhere with it, and so we've been stuck for a couple of years, and my fear is we just come in and make some updates to it, and we're going to not resolve any of those issues, and we're going to come to another impasse.

We have seen fisheries in independent indices that are going up, up, up, yet we're told, even with the fishery closed, that we're overfishing and it can support virtually no harvest. John came in and made a presentation that looked at the number of discards, and it was like every fish in the South Atlantic, almost, is being caught and handled, and that just seemingly is difficult for us to buy, and so I'm looking for how can we get something that can get enough buy-in from constituents and this council that we can make some progress on it, and my worry is, if -- We came in and we asked for a fishery index-based approach to come up with a way to set catch limits, and, in my opinion, we never got what we asked for.

What we got was an update of the assessment, and we never asked for that. We wanted an index-based approach that was independent of the assessment, to try to address this, but you can do these assessments, and you have all the bolts and switches and all the mathematical complexities, but, at the end of the day, if the managers don't have enough confidence in the results to go somewhere with them, we're not getting anywhere, and I just, at this point, don't see how we get the buy-in to the assessment unless we go back under it and look at everything and essentially really do think of completely different approaches in how to do this and hopefully come out with something that we can get enough buy-in to make some progress, and I know that puts a lot of workload issues on it, but, on the other hand, I think spending a lot of time and money to come up with something that is not going to get us anywhere isn't a very appealing way to go either.

That is kind of my thinking, and I am not criticizing the work that anyone has done or anything else, and I know we've got a lot of great scientists working on these, and they've done as good of a job as they can. The SSC has devoted countless hours to it, but, nonetheless, we seem to be unable to make much progress forward on red snapper at the moment.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I agree with everything that Roy said.

MR. BREWER: I am not on the committee, but my thought is that people have kind of gotten used to the idea that red snapper is going to be a fish that they may be able to catch a few days or a week or two out of the year, and they've kind of gotten used to that. We have had a lot of criticism, a lot of criticism, of the science, quote, and so it would be my thought that let's go back and get it right, even if it takes another year or a year-and-a-half to do it.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I agree, and I would like to stick with the research track.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Okay. I just want to make sure you guys understand that it will probably be longer, because, if you look at this table and you look at the 2019 projects that are being completed in 2020, April, September, mid, that is the data that we've been talking about in MRIP and all of that stuff. As you know, everything has shifted back from 2019. At some point, we're going to have to do a catch-up.

In reality, red snapper is probably going to get started very late in 2020, which means run through late 2021 or 2022, and it may be 2023 before you are getting fishing levels from the SSC, and so just keep that in mind. In doing this, we are committing -- We are doing the best that we can, and we're really going to get a robust product out of this, I truly believe, but it will be a pretty big cost to you guys, in terms of how long you're maintaining what you have, and so I just want to make sure that everyone is aware. Don't think, by doing this, that we'll get new numbers from this assessment in 2022, because I don't think, looking at this table in its entirety, that that is actually very likely, and I kind of feel like I need to make sure that you guys know that.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I appreciate that.

MR. BELL: Both Clay and Roy are right. The problem is the public's perception or the desire. I mean, we're under a lot of pressure to do something and do something sooner than later, and so it comes down to do you take the additional time and all of the heat that comes from that, perhaps, to produce a better-quality product that perhaps you have more confidence in, but then, kind of to Clay's point, what is really new in there that is going to give us a better-quality product, perhaps? I mean, maybe between now and then, there is things that develop, but it's a real dilemma, but there is a lot of public -- Nothing new, but a lot of public outcry and anticipation that we're working as fast as we can to resolve this.

Regardless of the results, they may or may not have confidence in it anyway, but it's just kind of a dilemma, but there is a tremendous amount of public perception that we're going to do this and we're going to do it quickly, but Roy is absolutely right, in terms of better quality if you take your time.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I still agree with Roy, and I think that we should go with the research track. Any more discussion on this? Do you have what you need from us?

MR. CARMICHAEL: Yes, I do, because keeping it as a research track is not changing anything, and so you don't need a motion or anything for that, and I think this has been a great discussion of what the council thinks is most important regarding that assessment.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I would still like to, before we get to the next SEDAR Steering Committee meeting, to get the FWC assessments added in here. I only see mutton coming between 2020 and 2022, and I think that we've talked internally, and I think that we are planning on doing some more, and so I would love it if we can add those into the schedule before the meeting in May.

MR. CARMICHAEL: When we go in May, we'll flesh this out into the beyond years, and so like 2022 and 2023, and I think I had some contact with Luiz about getting straight on that.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you.

MR. CARMICHAEL: In dealing with those, I think we dealt with the Steering Committee, and so, unless you guys have any other issues related to the Steering Committee, that concludes the items that I had.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Is there any other business to come before the SEDAR Committee? Seeing none, we will conclude SEDAR.

(Whereupon, the meeting adjourned on December 6, 2018.)

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Certified By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Transcribed By:  
Amanda Thomas  
January 3, 2019

## Council Staff

### SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

#### Executive Director ✓

Gregg Waugh  
gregg.waugh@safmc.net

#### Deputy Director-Science & Statistics ✓

John Carmichael  
john.carmichael@safmc.net

#### Deputy Director-Management ✓

Dr. Brian Chevront  
brian.chevront@safmc.net

---

#### Fishery Scientist ✓

Myra Brouwer  
myra.brouwer@safmc.net

#### Admin. Secretary/Travel Coordinator

Cindy Chaya  
cindy.chaya@safmc.net

#### Purchasing & Grants

Kimberly Cole  
kimberly.cole@safmc.net

#### Fishery Scientist ✓

Dr. Chip Collier  
chip.collier@safmc.net

#### Outreach Specialist

Kelsey Dick  
kelsey.dick@safmc.net

#### Fishery Biologist ✓

Dr. Mike Errigo  
mike.errigo@safmc.net

#### Fishery Economist ✓

John Hadley  
john.hadley@safmc.net

#### Outreach Specialist

Kathleen Howington  
kathleen.howington@safmc.net

#### Public Information Officer ✓

Kim Iverson  
kim.iverson@safmc.net

#### Administrative Officer ✓

Kelly Klasnick  
kelly.klasnick@safmc.net

#### Senior Fishery Biologist ✓

Roger Pugliese  
roger.pugliese@safmc.net

#### Outreach Specialist ✓

Cameron Rhodes  
cameron.rhodes@safmc.net

#### Accounting

Suzanna Thomas  
suzanna.thomas@safmc.net

#### Citizen Science Program Manager ✓

Amber Von Harten  
amber.vonharten@safmc.net

#### Fishery Social Scientist ✓

Christina Wiegand  
christina.wiegand@safmc.net

#### SEDAR Coordinators ✓

Julia Byrd-julia.byrd@safmc.net  
Dr. Juie Neer-julie.neer@safmc.net

#### Administrative Officer ✓

Mike Collins  
Mike.collins@safmc.net

✓ LCDR. Jeremy Montes  
U.S. Coast Guard  
909 SE 1st Ave.  
Miami, FL 33131  
(305)415-6788(ph); (305)710-4569(c)  
Jeremy.J.Montes@uscg.mil

Stephen Poland  
NC Division of Marine Fisheries  
PO Box 769  
3441 Arendell Street  
Morehead City, NC 28557  
(252)808-8011 (direct); (252)726-7021 (main)  
Steve.Poland@ncdenr.gov

✓ Art Sapp  
2270 NE 25th St.  
Lighthouse Pointe, FL 33064  
(954)444-0820 (ph)  
artsappsafmc@gmail.com

Deirdre Warner-Kramer  
Office of Marine Conservation OES/OMC  
2201 C Street, N.W.  
Department of State, Room 5806  
Washington, DC 20520  
(202)647-3228 (ph)  
Warner-KramerDM@state.gov

✓ David Whitaker  
720 Tennent Street  
Charleston, SC 29412  
(843)953-9392  
david.whitakersafmc@gmail.com

✓ Spud Woodward  
860 Buck Swamp Road  
Brunswick, GA 31523  
(912)258-8970 (ph)  
swoodwardsafmc@gmail.com

Dr. Jack McGovern

Rick Devictor

Nick Mehta

Shep Grimes

Monica-Smit Brunello

Dr. Erik Williams

Erika Burgess

Dale Diaz

## 2018 Council Members

### SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

#### CHAIR

Jessica McCawley  
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation  
Commission  
2590 Executive Center Circle E.  
Suite 201  
Tallahassee, FL 32301  
(850)487-0554 (ph); (850)487-4847 (f)  
Jessica.mccawley@myfwc.com

#### VICE-CHAIR

Mel Bell  
SCDNR-Marine Resources Division  
P.O. Box 12559  
217 Ft. Johnson Road  
Charleston, SC 29422  
(843)953-9007 (ph); (843)953-9159 (fax)  
bellm@dnr.sc.gov

Robert Beal  
Executive Director  
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission  
1050 N. Highland St.  
Suite 200 A-N  
Arlington, VA 22201  
(703)842-0740 (ph); (703)842-0741 (f)  
rbeal@asmfc.org

✓ Anna Beckwith  
1907 Paulette Road  
Morehead City, NC 28557  
(252)671-3474 (ph)  
AnnaBarriosBeckwith@gmail.com

✓ Chester Brewer  
250 Australian Ave. South  
Suite 1400  
West Palm Beach, FL 33408  
(561)655-4777 (ph)  
wcbafmc@gmail.com

✓ Dr. Kyle Christiansen  
150 Cedar St.  
Richmond Hill, GA 31324  
(912)756-7560 (ph)  
christiansensafmc@gmail.com

✓ Chris Conklin  
P.O. Box 972  
Murrells Inlet, SC 29576  
(843)543-3833  
conklinsafmc@gmail.com

Dr. Roy Crabtree  
Regional Administrator  
NOAA Fisheries, Southeast Region  
263 13th Avenue South  
St. Petersburg, FL 33701  
(727)824-5301 (ph); (727)824-5320 (f)  
roy.crabtree@noaa.gov

Tim Griner  
4446 Woodlark Lane  
Charlotte, NC 28211  
(980)722-0918 (ph)  
timgrinersafmc@gmail.com

✓ Doug Haymans  
Coastal Resources Division  
GA Dept. of Natural Resources  
One Conservation Way  
Suite 300  
Brunswick, GA 31520  
(912)264-7218 (ph); (912)262-2318 (f)  
haymanssafmc@gmail.com

✓ Dr. Wilson Laney  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
South Atlantic Fisheries Coordinator  
P.O. Box 33683  
Raleigh, NC 27695  
(919)515-5019 (ph); (919)515-4415 (f)  
Wilson\_Laney@fws.gov



**SEDAR**

- ✓ Jessica McCawley, Chair
- ✓ Mel Bell, Vice-Chair
- Robert Beal
- ✓ Roy Crabtree
- ✓ Tim Griner
- ✓ Doug Haymans
- ✓ Steve Poland
- ✓ Staff contact: John Carmichael

**SHRIMP**

Mel Bell, Chair  
Steve Poland, Vice-Chair  
Chris Conklin  
Doug Haymans  
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LCDR Jeremy Montes  
Roy Crabtree  
David Whittaker  
Spud Woodward  
Staff contact: Chip Collier

**SNAPPER GROUPER**

- Jessica McCawley, Chair  
Mel Bell, Vice-Chair  
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Kyle Christiansen  
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Wilson Laney  
LCDR Jeremy Montes  
Steve Poland  
Art Sapp  
David Whittaker  
Spud Woodward  
Mid-Atlantic Liaison:  
✓ Tony DiLernia  
✓ Dewey Hemilright  
Staff contact: Myra Brouwer

**SOPPs**

Chris Conklin, Chair  
Chester Brewer Vice-Chair  
Anna Beckwith  
Doug Haymans  
Jessica McCawley  
Staff contact: Gregg Waugh

**SPINY LOBSTER**

Jessica McCawley, Chair  
Chester Brewer, Vice-Chair  
Kyle Christiansen  
Chris Conklin  
Roy Crabtree  
Tim Griner  
LCDR Jeremy Montes  
Art Sapp  
David Whittaker  
Staff contact: Christina Wiegand

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Last Name	First Name	Email Address
Abeels	Holly	habeels@ufl.edu
BENNETT	PAULITA	pbennett-martin@oceana.org
BROUWER	MYRA	myra.brouwer@safmc.net
Bailey	Adam	adam.bailey@noaa.gov
Baker	Scott	bakers@uncw.edu
Bianchi	Alan	Alan.Bianchi@ncdenr.gov
Bonura	Vincent	SailRaiser25C@aol.com
Brennan	Ken	Kenneth.Brennan@noaa.gov
Bublely	Walter	bublelyw@dnr.sc.gov
Burgess	Erika	erika.burgess@myfwc.com
Byrd	Julia	julia.byrd@safmc.net
CLARKE	LORA	lclarke@pewtrusts.org
Cheshire	Rob	rob.cheshire@noaa.gov
Coleman	Heather	heather.coleman@noaa.gov
Conklin	Chris	conklinsafmc@gmail.com
Cox	Jack	dayboat1965@gmail.com
Culpepper	Anna	anna.culpepper@myfwc.com
DeVictor	Rick	rdevictor@yahoo.com
Diaz	Dale	Saltwaterlife@live.com
Dixon	Michael	mike@engelcoolers.com
Driscoll-Lovejoy	Ruth	rwhite2@pewtrusts.org
Elliott	Kelley	kelley.elliott@noaa.gov
Estes	Jim	jim.estes@myfwc.com
Fenyk	Cynthia	cynthia.fenyk@noaa.gov
Foss	Kristin	kristinfoss@gmail.com
Foster	Dean	dfoster@pewtrusts.org
Gerhart	Susan	susan.gerhart@noaa.gov
Godwin	Joelle	joelle.godwin@noaa.gov
Gore	Karla	KARLAGORE@GMAIL.COM
Guyas	Martha	martha.guyas@myfwc.com
Hart	Hannah	hannah.hart@myfwc.com
Helies	Frank	frank.helies@noaa.gov

Hemilright	Dewey	fvtarbaby@embarqmail.com
Hudson	Rusty	DSF2009@aol.com
Knowlton	Kathy	kathy.knowlton@dnr.ga.gov
L	I	captaindrifter@bellsouth.net
Laks	Ira	captainira@att.net
Larkin	Michael	Michael.Larkin@noaa.gov
Lindh	Ryan	nativetrade@bellsouth.net
Matter	Vivian	vivian.matter@noaa.gov
McGovern	John	John.McGovern@noaa.gov
Mehta	Nikhil	nikhil.mehta@noaa.gov
Neer	Julie	julie.neer@safmc.net
Petersen	Andrew	andrew@bluefindata.com
Phillips	Charlie	ga_capt@yahoo.com
Pierce	Brett	brett.pierce@noaa.gov
Pugliese	Roger	roger.pugliese@safmc.net
Pulver	Jeff	Jeff.Pulver@noaa.gov
Ralston	Kellie	kralston@asafishing.org
Reicgert	Marcel	Reichertm@dnr.sc.gov
Rock	Jason	jason.rock@ncdenr.gov
Sapp	Art	artsappsafmc@gmail.com
Seward	McLean	mclean.seward@ncdenr.gov
Shirk	Jennifer	jls223@cornell.edu
Smart	Tracey	smartt@dnr.sc.gov
Surrency	Ron	captronacc@gmail.com
Takade-Heumacher	Helen	htakade@edf.org
Travis	Michael	mike.travis@noaa.gov
Whitaker	david	David.Whitakersafmc@gmail.com
Wrege	Beth	beth.Wrege@noaa.gov
dick	kelsey	kelsey.dick@safmc.net
gloeckner	david	david.gloeckner@noaa.gov
iverson	kim	kim.iverson@safmc.net
malinowski	rich	rich.malinowski@noaa.gov
sandorf	scott	scott.sandorf@noaa.gov
thomas	suz	suzanna.thomas@safmc.net
vara	mary	mary.vara@noaa.gov