

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

SEDAR COMMITTEE

**Sawgrass Marriott
Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida**

June 10, 2014

SUMMARY MINUTES

SEDAR Committee

Ben Hartig, Chair
Jack Cox
Charlie Phillips

Zack Bowen
Dr. Michelle Duval
Robert Beal

Council Members

Mel Bell
Anna Beckwith
John Jolley
Dr. Wilson Laney
Chris Conklin

Jessica McCawley
Lt. Morgan Fowler
David Cupka
Doug Haymans
Dr. Roy Crabtree

Council Staff:

Bob Mahood
John Carmichael
Dr. Mike Errigo
Myra Brouwer
Amber Von Harten
Roger Pugliese

Gregg Waugh
Mike Collins
Dr. Kari MacLauchlin
Dr. Brian Chevront
Kim Iverson
Julie O'Dell

Observers/Participants:

Dr. Bonnie Ponwith
Dr. Jack McGovern
Phil Steele

Monica Smit-Brunello
Dr. Luiz Barbieri
Leann Bosarge

Other Participants Attached

The SEDAR Committee of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council convened in the Sawgrass Marriot, Ponte Vedra, Florida, June 10, 2014, and was called to order at 10:40 o'clock a.m. by Chairman Ben Hartig.

MR. HARTIG: I'll call to order the SEDAR Committee. Our first order of business is approval of the agenda. Are there any additions or changes to the agenda? Seeing none; the agenda is approved. The next order of business is approval of the minutes. Are there any changes, additions or deletions to the minutes? Seeing none; the minutes are approved. All right, that brings us to Action Item 3, SEDAR Activities update, which is under Attachment 1.

MR. CARMICHAEL: All right, I'll kick off with our normal update of what has been happening in the SEDAR world for the South Atlantic. The SSC recently reviewed and we'll discuss later at Snapper Grouper Committee snowy grouper, gag grouper, and the wreckfish stock assessments. They reviewed those in April; wrapping those up, which is nice.

Florida is working on an assessment of mutton snapper. It has been a bit delayed and will get to the SSC in October. They are also working on an assessment of hogfish. We expect that to get to the SSC in October and get to you guys in December.

I just direct you to Table 1 here which shows a summary of the different assessments that are going on, what is underway, what type of assessment they are, the terminal data they are going to include, and when it will come to the SSC for review, which seems to provide the best indication of the timing and if it is most important to us here at the council.

A couple things that are underway, black grouper update being conducted by Florida, and we have terms of reference which were reviewed by our SSC. This is a joint stock with the Gulf, so it means the Gulf will be reviewing and approving terms of reference, also. The way we normally do that is we let one group, if they want to add an additional term of reference or something, they can do that without having to go with a bunch of back and forth and just don't change ones that others have put forth.

In the case of black grouper, the South Atlantic is looking at it first. Our SSC reviewed it at their last meeting. One addition they made to the standard update assessment terms of reference that we use was to recommend that the production model be updated as well as the age-structured model. That has been suggested in the version that you have and we offer that for approval. Ben, do you want to do these actions one at a time?

MR. HARTIG: Yes.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Let's stop there on black grouper.

MR. HARTIG: I would entertain a motion to add the terms of reference change for the black grouper assessment from the SSC.

MR. CARMICHAEL: I think you may be able to just approve them as they are shown. I believe that is in there. Yes; in the version that you have the change is added there in the red text, so you can make a motion to approve the black grouper terms of reference as provided.

DR. DUVAL: I would move to approve the black grouper terms of reference that are provided.

MR. HARTIG: Motion by Michelle; Zack second. Is there any discussion? Is there any objection? Seeing none; that motion is approved.

MR. CARMICHAEL: All right, carrying on, the next item to highlight is with the upcoming assessment SEDAR 41 dealing with gray triggerfish. You've approved the terms of reference for these because this project is underway; but in reviewing upcoming amendments, the SSC noted that you are considering changes in the size limit. Those could affect selectivity.

If you make that change, the SSC felt it would be important in projections and considering reference point values; that the changes in selectivity should be considered, the changes potentially from Snapper Grouper Amendment 29. The SSC has recommended adding to Term of Reference 9 an additional item which is highlighted there as Item E that reads, "Gray triggerfish projections should account for changes in selectivity that may result from actions in Snapper Grouper Amendment 29."

MR. HARTIG: We need a motion to approve.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Addition to Term of Reference 9, I think you could call it.

DR. DUVAL: I move that we approve the addition to Term of Reference Number 9 for the SEDAR 41 Assessment Workshop.

MR. HARTIG: Motion by Michelle, second by Jack Cox. Discussion.

MR. BOWEN: John, if you could maybe go into a little more detail on how this upcoming Amendment 29 may change that selectivity; can you elaborate a little bit just for my knowledge?

MR. CARMICHAEL: Well, if you change the size limit, then you change the composition of fish that they keep versus they discard, which then translates into the projections when you go forward and say what are harvested fish and what are discarded fish? Discarded fish obviously don't suffer the same mortality rate as kept fish.

That can also have consequences for yield, because the yield that you get a particular F rate, the selectivity at age is a part of that. Anytime the council changes selectivity by making a size limit, you have various impacts and consequences on the population; and the SSC felt it was important particularly in the projections.

Because there is selectivity that goes into that; that if you changed that for the future, that should be accounted for in the projections, and getting that through the assessment would be better than something that you have to do after the fact.

MR. BOWEN: That being said – and I don't know if you will or even can speak for the SSC – would it be beneficial for the SSC for us to postpone that Amendment 29 or the possible size limit changes of the triggerfish until after the assessment?

MR. CARMICHAEL: I don't know. You change the size limit; you are going to have this impact. The assessment is going to look at the data that is available through 2013, so you are not going to be incorporating the change. That is why they are saying to use it in the projections in looking forward, because they know it is something that may happen in the future. I don't think delaying it; it wouldn't change the fact that this has to be accounted for.

MR. HARTIG: Any other discussion? Would you read it again?

MR. CARMICHAEL: Okay; the motion reads move to approve the addition to gray triggerfish Term of Reference 9 for SEDAR 41.

MR. HARTIG: Is there any objection? Seeing none; the motion is approved.

MR. CARMICHAEL: The next item in our update; the SSC looked at the assessment schedule that we have in the works for 2015. You know there has been an issue with blueline tilefish and consideration of doing a blueline tilefish – some type of assessment sooner rather than later. They had discussions about the timing as well as the type of assessment.

The SSC recommended replacing vermilion snapper update with blueline tilefish. This wasn't just a matter of discussion; there was also some deliberation over the stocks that could be considered and what they felt were the stocks that really should be. They considered the tilefish as well as the vermilion snapper.

It came down to the timing since the last assessment as well as the relative status of the stock; and that is what really led them to make the discussion; but there was some consideration that maybe it was a tough call basically, I guess is the best way to say it. There was a good bit of debate over which one is the most appropriate stock.

It comes down to where the stock is in its status cycle as well; but they felt vermilion snapper was probably the one that could most afford to slip a year. There may be more potential perhaps for increased yield out of the tilefish. They also discussed the type of assessment. There was concern that just an update may not be adequate to address some of the issues that are related to blueline tilefish.

Since there isn't new data, there wasn't really discussion of doing a benchmark; but they are aware that there were a number of issues identified, I would say, potentially with the regional coverage of the data sources that are available, which was discussed during the assessment and discussed by the review panel and discussed further when the SSC commented on it.

They felt doing an update assessment, though it takes a little bit more time, would give a little more freedom to address some of those concerns with the prior assessment. Their recommendation is to do an update and to do it in lieu of vermilion snapper.

MR. HARTIG: I thought it was standard?

MR. CARMICHAEL: Yes, standard, sorry; thank you. Their recommendation is to do a standard and to do it in lieu of vermilion. You think me of all people should be able to keep those straight.

MR. HARTIG: Do we need any action on that?

MR. CARMICHAEL: A motion would never hurt, I suppose.

DR. PONWITH: If you are going to do a motion, do you want to wait for discussion or do you want to talk more about this in context of the other assessments first?

MR. HARTIG: I don't know; let me get Jack. What did you have to say, Jack?

MR. COX: I say let's go ahead and make a motion and then we can talk about it. We need to make that motion that we go ahead and do a standard assessment as soon as possible and in place of the vermilion. I'm making a motion that we do this.

MR. HARTIG: Second by Zack. **The motion is replace the 2014 vermilion update with a standard assessment of blueline tilefish. The motion was by Jack, seconded by Zack. Bonnie.**

DR. PONWITH: I know we've got a sketch of a schedule. It has become dynamic with some of the challenges that we faced, particularly the challenge we faced with gray triggerfish and the aging challenges we had with that. Another challenge that is late-breaking news is we are going to be losing a stock assessment scientist from the Beaufort Lab beginning in July.

That person is Lou Coggins, and he was scheduled to be doing the gray triggerfish. We've shifted gray trigger to another scientist; but what that does is puts us a scientist short of being able to do the red grouper update. What that does is puts red grouper into a collection of stocks that had been proposed for 2015, '16, '17, kind of going forward.

If we began the red snapper and the gray triggerfish assessments, the collection that I see are red grouper for an update; the blueline tilefish for an update, now being proposed as a standard, which we can talk about; golden tilefish as an update; and then, of course, the vermilion snapper, which we're talking about the switches.

What would be useful to me is a discussion from the council not just on blueline but blueline in the context of those other stocks; in terms of your notion of the priorities for seeing those stocks through an assessment. That helps to look at it big picture as opposed to one stock at a time and understand what the implications are.

The other thing that would be useful is to look at those stocks and rank them in order of priority so that we get a feel for what our staffing is going to look like in this proposed change. We don't know how long it would take to do a backfill, and we don't know whether we're going to get someone who is junior or whether we get someone who has actually got some – you know, a seasoned veteran that we recruit from another science center. All of that influences what can be done.

What gives us the most useful approach going forward is if we can rank all of those, then we can be a little more responsive, depending upon how this circumstance plays out going into the future. In terms of doing blueline as a standard instead of an update; I think John is right. There

hasn't really been a change in the modeling approach or hasn't really been a change in the data that are available.

There were questions that were raised at the assessment. I think that an update would probably be the most appropriate approach for doing that blueline tilefish. If you do it as a standard, it does open the door to contemplating other changes; but I'm not sure what those changes would be at this point.

DR. DUVAL: Obviously, having I think a standard assessment of blueline is certainly very important to those of us in North Carolina. I'm thinking it would be important to folks in other parts of the range as well. I know just from speaking with Mel that the commercial landings in South Carolina have jumped an order of magnitude last year and this year.

You can speak more to that, Mel, but my understanding is it has been roughly three to four thousand pounds of blueline tilefish in the past; but beginning last year, that jumped to like 40-some thousand pounds; and presumably that is the result of some effort shift due to the golden tile longline endorsements coming online.

That displaced some effort somewhere else or at least that would be my assumption. I think given that all of our information about this species is fishery dependent – and I think the analysts would agree that is one of the shortcomings of the assessment, is that we don't have a fishery-independent index of abundance.

I think given some of the assumptions that folks were forced to make during the assessment and the fact that the model is not spatially explicit; that a standard might allow for exploration of some of those spatial differences; I would hope so. Personally I think this is pretty important, although I understand the limitations that the analysts are dealing with just in terms of physically having the bodies to do this.

MR. BOWEN: Bonnie, I guess more or less to rank these; can you be specific in the species that you want us to consider? I have written down blueline, red grouper, and vermilion snapper. Was there another one that I missed?

DR. PONWITH: Correct, yes, there is golden tile as well and those were the ones that were up. There are other species that were originally listed. Scamp was listed for a benchmark; and red porgy is also listed as a candidate, and that is also a benchmark. But it is a matter of that is certainly more assessments than can be done.

Understanding what is your notion of priority, what your SSC's notion of priority among those species would be beneficial to help us have a clear plan going forward and also to be able to make sure that we've got our biological sample processors from our MARMAP group and from the Beaufort Lab really focused on making sure that we get the processing done in time.

MR. BOWEN: John, can you add to again some of the SSC as far as ranking these; do you have an opinion?

MR. CARMICHAEL: No, the SSC hasn't ranked those. I think we know these are all stocks that most of them have been pushed forward in time; they wanted them done a while ago. Say,

for example, the red snapper and gray triggerfish; that has already got three analysts committed to it. That is one reason why the schedule that you see works out into 2016.

That has taken quite a number of people with the only other thing; so, really, if you look at when you're getting things, for example, we just got through April 2014; so in October the SSC is getting Florida doing mutton, king mackerel done by the guys down in Miami, and Florida doing hogfish in October.

Then you're not getting another assessment to you until October next year; and that is because of basically three people working on red snapper and gray triggerfish and there is someone working on red grouper. That was the four people that we had before. Then the way the timing worked out on these was that when red snapper and gray triggerfish got done, that frees up three people.

I think the idea was, well, two of them could pick scamp and gray snapper. That is October 2016, because the plan was that wouldn't get started until red snapper and gray triggerfish is done. Then you had someone else getting done that could do one of the updates. Then you had someone working on red grouper that could do one of the other updates.

That is why you see these things stretching out into like April 2016 and October 2016. I think blueline is an obvious priority because of all the discussion. Then whether tilefish or red grouper is a priority, I think maybe you guys know better than me. Red grouper is in a rebuilding plan; tilefish is not. That could factor in.

I don't know if we have any indication that the red grouper population is doing better or worse than our rebuilding plan would indicate, which might be something you would wish to consider there. But I think in doing these, you would need to really consider where things slip to. These are obviously the priorities; so if we have to drop a stock because we have lost a person; which one does it become and how far does it go?

Does it mean that scamp and gray snapper get pushed back a little bit further? Red porgy, obviously a long-term priority; it doesn't have a SEDAR number and it doesn't have a start date, because we really didn't know how, say, blueline tilefish was going to work out. You have to keep consistency in the analysts that do things.

You want the person that did red porgy last time to probably be the lead again on red porgy, because they have the intimate knowledge. Those are all the kind of scheduling things that will have to be worked out. I think you guys identify the priorities and get an idea from Bonnie as to which specific slots drop out at various points looking ahead into these future years.

MR. BOWEN: Well, you mentioned we had one analyst for red grouper; but if that got pushed – pardon the term, but if that got pushed back further in time, then that analyst could go to one that we push up in time and have somebody there to do it, correct?

MR. CARMICHAEL: Well, yes, all things being equal, but the challenge that you're dealing with now, as Bonnie said, a loss of an analyst. What that person was going to work on was gray triggerfish, so maybe the person that was going to work on red grouper is now going to have to work on gray triggerfish. You move red grouper ahead to when the person is done with gray triggerfish, maybe.

MR. PHILLIPS: John, I know we've had this discussion on why vermilion was the candidate for getting bumped back; but can you remind me what the other candidates were; and if we're going to be losing the person, is that going to affect vermilion possibly getting bumped back even further? I think it is going to be like 2017 now. I'm kind of trying to see where the crystal ball is going; and if we're going to go over priorities again, I would kind of like to know why we're doing what we're doing.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Well, we're doing these because those are the ones you've identified; and where vermilion would go depends on if you consider it more important than scamp and gray trigger or red pogy, because those are candidates. I think everything that is on there is a candidate to be shifted if you believe that the squeaky wheel right now perhaps lies with blueline and vermilion and tilefish and you want to get those updates.

Then the other big SEDAR scheduling concern has to do with an individual stock assessment slot that is a person; is that one update or lead on one benchmark over a year or can a person over a 15-month period; can they do two updates? That is the kind of slot scheduling thing, and I don't know the answer to that; but that is certainly the kind of stuff that we look at within SEDAR and we try to put things in order and set these start dates and end dates for them.

I think whatever you guys think is the most important now are the ones that we should prioritize upon, and realize that everything that comes after will come after. Hopefully, by the time we're looking at beyond red pogy, there is someone there who is capable of doing an update assessment at least would be our idea. That is a number of years down the road; that is two years away.

DR. PONWITH: I think that is really the point and why for me the most useful format to get this input from you is a ranking of the species that were kind of currently on the list to re-rank them. The reason is because you take something like the red snapper stock assessment; right now we have a beginning date and an end date for it.

We are queued up right now for red snapper and gray triggerfish and ready to go. We have a start date and an end date; but as you know when the review assessment – when the review workshop is over, the next step is to get it before the SSC so the SSC can deliberate on the results and provide their advice on an ABC.

Often associated with that there are follow-on requests for additional projections and additional analyses to help the SSC in those really tough deliberations, so that they've got a product to hand to the council for their decision. The main thing is if we get a ranking of those additional species; how they filter into a schedule is easier to work out than if we just say we want this to start on this date.

That becomes more challenging; because if you do an update adjacent to an update, the timing between the two is conceivably more compressed than if you do an update for an analyst immediately following a benchmark because of some of those additional steps that have to be done before you can close the book on that assessment.

MR. BOWEN: John, I guess you're working the screen there. I've consulted with Jack and we've kind of just rough-drafted a priority list. Maybe we could put it up there and if we have

some ideas from other council members or something, we could discuss it. Are you ready; (1) blueline tile; (2) golden tile; (3) red grouper; (4) red porgy; (5) scamp; and (6) vermilion snapper. Maybe just have some discussion on that priority list.

MR. HARTIG: Are you going to make this as a motion?

MR. BOWEN: No, sir, I just wanted to put it up there and have some discussion and see what my fellow council members thought about the priority list that Jack and I have come up with together. Not a motion yet, just some discussion.

MR. PHILLIPS: I think one of the things we need to consider is do we have something that we have to deal with emergency action like blueline tile? That is obviously high. Then the next things to consider are how long between the updates and the value of the fishery. Red porgy doesn't have the value of vermilion because we've got such a low trip limit as it is rebuilding.

Even though we're catching a significant amount of vermilion, if we bump it too far back down the list and there is a change in the stock status, it makes it that much longer before we can get an assessment and realize it; so if we have to lower a TAC, then we have to lower it a lot more because we've waited this extra timeframe.

If we've got a problem, we want to catch it relatively early. I think it is important that we get the updates on the major value fisheries because that affects the fishermen the most. If you held an assessment back for red porgy for two years and you went from 200 pounds to 150 or 100; it is not going to affect the fishermen or the public's access to that species nearly as much as if you held the vermilion back and you took a 20 percent cut because you found out something was going on that you should have known before.

I would argue that we probably need to make sure our major value fisheries that affect the most people and the most fishermen, recreational and commercial, stay in a timely manner; and then work in the smaller fisheries that we probably aren't going to get major changes in and work those in accordingly.

MR. HARTIG: I appreciate that, Charlie. One of the things I always use to guide me in moving forward is Marcel's report; and to look at how we move some of these species back and look at their trends analysis to see basically how they are doing. I can't remember everything in the last report I saw; but I have heard some problems with red grouper.

I don't know from the North Carolina perspective if that is correct or not, but I have heard some red grouper. I don't remember what the trends analysis in the fishery-independent data was, but red porgy, if my recollections are correct, even though we had a stalled rebuilding in our last update, we did see some indications in the trends analysis that things were getting better and that at least the MPA information was very positive on red porgy.

Some of these things I look at and try and inform what we can put back and what we can't. I'm not sure about red grouper, and you all are the red grouper experts because we don't catch that many of them in South Florida. I don't know how that fishery is operating. How do you guys see red grouper in North Carolina?

MR. COX: Catches are down, that is for sure. Something is going on with the red grouper. I'm not quite sure what is going on.

MR. CARMICHAEL: I did add here in bold on this table and the numbers there in bolder years are when the last assessment was done to give you an idea of the age. The red grouper is the oldest of the bunch.

MR. BOWEN: To Charlie's point; the reason Jack and I put vermilion in this priority list as Number 6 ultimately last – and I can speak from the recreational side – with it now being a year-round fishery and we now can keep the captain and the crew's limit on the vermilion snapper; recreationally we're okay with those limits right now.

I do understand Charlie's point; you don't want to get cut drastically when it does come up. The reason I prioritized it last was because recreationally we are not ecstatic about it; we did like our 10 vermilions, but we can live with what is going on with our limits right now. That is the reason I put vermilion snapper last in the priority list.

MS. BECKWITH: With the Magnuson-Stevens Reauthorization potentially giving us some additional flexibility in how to manage some of these species, hopefully, is there anything on that list that would benefit this council to have additional flexibility in management options? Are we having the same concerns with the golden tilefish data stream as we've seen with the blueline tilefish; and should that kind of push some of these back in the hopes that we'll have more options?

MR. HARTIG: I don't know that there is anything in MSA. Michelle, do you?

DR. DUVAL: Anna, that is a great thought. We really tried at least from the CCC perspective to have some consensus on having some flexibility in ending overfishing "immediately," which I would argue that we don't necessarily do. We take time to put measures in place and unless we actually implement an emergency rule like we did for blueline tilefish, which didn't end overfishing immediately but took a big step towards doing so; but we couldn't really get some consensus on that even though we provided some very I think defined circumstances under which you would allow for, say, three years to phase in ending overfishing.

I haven't looked at the latest house version of the bill. I don't see anything in there at a first blush that allows for that type of flexibility in ending overfishing. I don't imagine we'll see anything implemented before – at least a final bill passed before next year some time; that would be my guess.

MS. BECKWITH: I wasn't thinking so much about the ending overfishing part as some of the alternate ways to deal with some of the recreational harvest rather than potentially ACLs. There is some discussion in those bills about harvest control methods and some different opportunities. For something like golden tilefish where we've got such a small number of recreational catch via the ACLs; will Magnuson Reauthorization potentially give us some different ways of managing that recreational catch that isn't the quota? Does that make sense?

DR. DUVAL: Yes, I understand what you're getting at, certainly.

MR. CARMICHAEL: I would think you could do that without – I don't see how that affects the assessment timing. If you were to change some things like that, you still have projections, you still have a total yield. It is a matter of how you managed that total yield within your management program. You could actually deal with that kind of stuff without having to impact the assessment timing and prioritization.

MR. MAHOOD: There is one provision that is being proposed relative to when a species is considered to be data poor; and that is if it hasn't had a stock assessment in the past five years, which red grouper is approaching that, that would kick it into a different category that would have more flexible management in that because you don't know what the status of the stock is.

Now whether all that type of language will go through, we don't know at this time; but it certainly would affect our priorities of some of our major species; because if you let them fall back into the data poor, then there is language about how the SSC would do the ABC Control Rule. Consequently, it would probably change the management for that species. How that will work out at this time we don't know.

MR. HARTIG: John, I think it would be helpful for you to chime in on some of this. For golden tilefish, we've got an update. What do we expect to get out of that given that our fishery-independent sampling stream has disappeared for a couple of years? It has just been reinitiated to some degree in this last year.

Our concern was that – well, not a concern, but it is really something that we're really hopeful that we have seen a big year class enter the fishery. Is that identified in the data? I don't know how it is identified. We have a way of identifying it now; but can that be incorporated into the update?

Is that something that we can -- looking at the different grades across the landings, we can show you how this year class has entered the fishery last year and this year has now changed a grade. It is progressing through the cohort and through those grades. We have a way to identify it, but is that a way that can be used in the assessment to quantify that to some degree?

MR. CARMICHAEL: Well, yes, I would say absolutely, and the year that is indicated there is the terminal data year. Tilefish, the plan was a 2014 terminal data year, which means if that year class started showing up in the catches last year and is to the extent you are seeing a higher grade this year being 2014; then in our key data, which is the fishery statistics from the fishery operations, we would see that.

I would believe that update with the terminal 2014 would be able to incorporate and should reflect what you're seeing within the fishery. I think that part of the discussions about tilefish over vermilion was which one does it seem like something is happening; and it felt like more was happening in tilefish with that year class. I think that would make sense to be up there at the top of the priorities.

Red grouper, I think the concern is the age as well as is something happening in that fishery that you are not seeing the fish? When you are unable to catch the limits and they are low rebuilding limits, I think that is a concern and it probably is something to look at for red grouper. I believe

that belongs up there. Red porgy as a benchmark, we know benchmarks take an analyst for 18 months from preparing the data through doing all the projections and stuff, as Bonnie mentioned.

That is an issue with the scheduling of folks. There was discussion at the last time of whether or not that should be a benchmark or what. If we're dealing with resource limitation, maybe we revisit that. We decide is a benchmark truly necessary for red porgy particularly if that delays other priorities?

Maybe we need to ask the SSC to really think hard as to whether a standard assessment could allow red porgy to proceed and other things not slip as much. Maybe we get another update able to be done sooner if we do red porgy as a standard as opposed to a benchmark. Maybe there is enough time here now that we could ask the SSC to weigh in on that in October.

Bonnie may know more about the timing. That could be an option she considers; what can you do if red porgy becomes a standard? I think scamp; scamp has been a priority for the SSC for a long time. Marcel in particular has championed this with concerns about scamp and feeling that is a stock that really needs to be assessed. I think that probably needs to be on there.

For the reasons we've discussed, I think vermilion belongs at the bottom. I personally think this is a very good list. It makes sense with what I would suspect the priorities would be. I think we should look at red porgy as another potential time-savings changing that to a standard.

MR. MAHOOD: John, how does that list compare to where we are right now?

MR. CARMICHAEL: It is pretty darned similar to where you are right now. It doesn't bring in, for example, gray snapper. Maybe scamp/gray snapper goes together as a benchmark there in number five. It puts vermilion down at the bottom, which by bumping it for blueline was what we thought.

It puts blueline up at the top, which is what we thought. It kind of puts tilefish and red grouper I think largely on equal footing. It does bring red porgy up. Red porgy was sometime late 2015 to probably get started; so it maybe makes red porgy certainly a priority in front of scamp. That is perhaps the biggest change I see.

MS. BECKWITH: I have a little anxiety over blueline tilefish, of course. I guess I'm trying to understand for the golden tilefish update – how are we going to see something different than what we're seeing out of the blueline tilefish assessment? We've got data poor, no fisheries independent, reduced data flow coming in to the update; how is that going to be different?

MR. HARTIG: I'll take a shot at it. Going to that assessment, the main question in that assessment was the recruitment and the major uncertainty is in recruitment. They had not seen another recruitment year. Now we have seen it. It answers the recruitment question that really capped the level of harvest that we could have given to the fishermen based on the recruitment information. I think if we can expand on the recruitment information in this next update that we can probably squeeze some more fish out of that fishery based on the uncertainties that will be addressed due to the recruitment issue.

DR. DUVAL: Ben, just to add to that; you are looking at potentially – and we will have some discussion about this this afternoon – of really for blueline tilefish having a de facto closure; whereas, with golden tilefish you do have a fishery. Even though it is similar and your indices of abundance are fishery-dependent only, although golden tile had that longline – wasn't there a fishery-independent index of abundance based on the longline sampling that MARMAP had?

Obviously, that got curtailed and there has been some effort to try to reinstate that. I see that as a big difference between those two species. There wasn't any MARMAP based index of abundance that was available for blueline tilefish. When you look at curtailing your only other data stream, which is really your harvest, you are in a no-win situation.

MR. HARTIG: Our numbers' man has a statement to make.

DR. ERRIGO: Just about the differences between the golden tilefish assessment and the blueline tilefish assessment. The biggest difference is there was an independent index in tilefish; it was the longline index. There was still a lot of uncertainty around that they had to lump years, I think, because that is what it looks like happened.

They lumped years because there wasn't a ton of sample sizes in individual years; but they did have an independent index. The other difference is that in blueline tilefish all the indices that were used covered portions of the range that didn't cover the majority of the landings. There was a very strange dynamic happening in the model; whereas, in tilefish it was more standard.

The indices covered the entire range of the population where all the landings were coming from; pretty standard the way we like to see assessments happen. Whereas with blueline, all the landings were coming from north of Hatteras and south of Cape Canaveral; but all the indices were in between those two places, which is not standard.

MR. CHARMICHAEL: Yes; they are both tilefish, but in terms of the technical issues related to the assessments and how the fisheries interact with the independent data in the species itself, they are entirely different. What you are going to get out of tilefish is golden tilefish is much different than blueline.

As Mike highlighted, blueline is very unique in having that big fishery that developed off of North Carolina that is not covered by the independent sampling; and then having what is much more of a – you know, not really directed fishery it seems throughout so much of the rest of the range with low landings and been relatively low landings for a long time. You have kind of a mismatch issue going on, which is so much the discussion in that assessment was about that. I think in terms of comparing those two; they are vastly different critters in terms of their assessments and their technical issues and their important uncertainties.

MR. HARTIG: I think one thing about the blueline, until you solve the structural problem of the landings north of North Carolina; until you separate that out and assess it as its own area; what we did was we added all that extra catch into the bycatch fishery of the snowy fishery; and then it just took that fishery and really decimated it based on that extra productivity from North Carolina coming in – those landings coming into the bycatch fishery. To me it just never made sense to not do that structural separation. It is a brand new fishery in a brand new area, the productivity is different.

To not be able to separate that out; and until you do that, you will never get a true answer for blueline tile, because the fisheries are just diametrically opposed to each other. One is a bycatch fishery; one is a directed fishery. One occurs in a new area; the other occurs in areas that have been fished as long as snapper grouper have been fished in deep water. To me you absolutely have to, in the next blueline assessment, look at that structural component of the landings if you are ever going to get the right answer for that stock.

MR. BOWEN: Mr. Chairman, I would like to make a motion that we go with that ranking that we have listed on the board.

MR. CARMICHAEL: We have a motion on the floor first, though.

MR. HARTIG: The motion on the floor is to move to replace the 2014 year for vermilion update with a standard assessment of blueline tilefish. Let's dispense with this motion first before we get into any further discussion.

MR. BOWEN: Yes, I forgot about that.

MR. HARTIG: Is there any more discussion on this motion? Mel, was your question in line with this motion?

MR. BELL: It was actually just discussion of blueline.

MR. HARTIG: Okay; is there anymore discussion? **Is there any objection to this motion? Seeing none; that motion is approved.** All right, so where were we with Zack? Zack was making a motion, that's right.

MR. BOWEN: Yes sir. Again, **I would like to make a motion that we prioritize the assessments as the list that is on the board. I would make a motion that we move to establish the species rankings as (1) blueline tilefish, a standard; (2) golden tilefish, an update; (3) red grouper, update; (4) red porgy, benchmark; (5) scamp, benchmark; (6) vermilion snapper, update.**

MR. HARTIG: I've got a motion; second by Michelle. Yes, and the types of assessments are included under those species.

MR. BOWEN: Yes, just as it reads on the board: (1) blueline tilefish, a standard; (2) golden tilefish, an update; (3) red grouper, update; (4) red porgy, benchmark; (5) scamp, benchmark; (6) vermilion snapper, update.

MR. HARTIG: We've got Mel and then Charlie; it was seconded by Michelle.

MR. BELL: What Michelle had said earlier about blueline in South Carolina; if you had asked me a few years ago was that a priority, I would have said no; but it is definitely something going on down there. Our landings are not north of Hatteras; they are reported as off of South Carolina, and this year is going to be it looks like even higher. Something is going on interesting.

MR. HARTIG: To your point, Mel – and it is a good point and it is a good observation – we see the same rebuilding of the stock in Florida based on the snowy rebuilding schedule. You have all that effort that has been depressed over the years based on the snowy fishery, and you have blueline that is responding to that decrease in effort for snowy.

That is the majority of the fishery is snowy for your bycatch for blueline. We see it; we see size and abundance changing in the areas that I fish quite markedly in some areas. That is what you would expect. If you take your major fishery that drives the deepwater complex, snowy, and put a rebuilding plan on that that really reduces effort; you are going to have those other species respond under normal circumstances.

Certainly, that is what we've seen with both blueline tilefish and yellowedge grouper. Both of those species have benefited from the snowy rebuilding plan. It doesn't show up in the assessment, because all of that is masked in all that effort from North Carolina being put into the landings from the south. Yes; there are some questions of ages, relatively low ages in that assessment; and somehow to rebuild that age structure that is going to take some time and some effort.

DR. PONWITH: It was just a question on red porgy. I heard some comment about whether it was worth asking the SSC for advice on benchmark versus a standard. I didn't know whether you wanted to follow through on that or whether you had actually dismissed that and gone solid on a benchmark.

MR. HARTIG: I've got Charlie and then Zack on that, and I want to comment on that as well.

MR. PHILLIPS: That was where I was going. I was going to make a friendly amendment that on Number 4, red porgy, put benchmark/standard/update to be decided once we see what Bonnie's office can do; and once we see the plusses and minuses of which type of assessment we want to do, understanding we don't want to push vermilion too far down the road if we can do an assessment. It is going to be plusses and minuses; but that would be a friendly amendment.

MR. HARTIG: All right, we've got a friendly amendment. Is that okay with Michelle? I see Michelle nodding her head; and maker of the motion Zack is nodding as well. Zack, did you have a comment on that as well?

MR. BOWEN: To that point, I just went to talk to John about amending it before that came about. That was dead on; thank you.

MR. HARTIG: The one comment I have about the benchmark assessments is that since the red snapper assessment, we have had a number of highliners and really good fishermen, both recreational and commercial, participate in our stock assessment process now. We have been getting at the data workshops a lot of good information; and a lot of things have changed

Not major; but we've made some changes based on the information some of these long-term fishermen and good fishermen are bringing to the table in the data workshops. In the case of red porgy, there was a lot of discussion and a lot of heartburn about the way some of the porgy complex was divided in order to figure out what was red porgy, what was porgy in the history of the fishery?

I know Louis, as one, had a lot of heartburn over that. I think red porgy would specifically benefit from bringing in the people who have actually been fishing for this animal for a long time, have had landings over the time series, and would probably change some of the inputs for the red porgy assessment.

That is why on some of these that have not had the benefit of some of the people who have been involved since red snapper, participate in the data workshop process could be very beneficial to a change in updating some of the parameters for red porgy. That is why I'm leaning more to at least in red porgy's case, because it was the first assessment done in the SEDAR process. We have not had an informed look at it from a commercial fishermen perspective.

I think it would benefit significantly from a data workshop where the experts in the fishery were there to make some informed comments and see how that changes the inputs into the assessment. That is the reason I am pretty supportive of a red porgy in particular update; because since there were some controversies when it was first done, is to readdress those and see if we can't get a more informed judgment on how those decisions were made from the first assessment.

MR. COX: I just want to make a quick comment on red porgy. We're really looking forward to the commercial side for an update on it, because we are seeing an abundance of these fish out there and we really expect this will kind of boost the ACL.

MR. CARMICHAEL: To help clarify the slash in the friendly amendment; I think maybe adding additional language to go in this motion, I have suggested and ask the SSC to consider if a standard assessment of red porgy will be adequate to make sure that we will get their insight on this slash. I will consider that part of your friendly amendment. When we get to the vote, I will read the whole thing as it is shown now for Joe.

MR. HARTIG: All right, anymore discussion? John, do you want to go ahead and read it before we vote on the motion?

MR. CARMICHAEL: **Yes, the motion reads move to establish SAFMC species rankings as (1) blueline tilefish, standard; (2) golden tilefish, update; (3) red grouper, update; (4) red porgy, benchmark/standard; (5) scamp, benchmark; (6) vermilion snapper, update; and to ask the SSC to consider if a standard assessment of red porgy will be adequate.**

MR. HARTIG: **Is there any objection to that motion? Seeing none; that motion is approved.**

MR. CARMICHAEL: That took care of our action items on Topic Number 1. I have good news for you, Mr. Chairman; that also really kind of took care of our action items on the next item, which were the SAFMC priorities for 2016 and 2017. I think what we have there, given the uncertainties that Bonnie is dealing with in personnel, is probably as far as we can go in terms of identifying priorities.

MR. HARTIG: Okay, so we've pretty much taken care of Number 2 and part of Number 3 as well; SEDAR Steering Committee Report as when Bonnie told us about the shortage of the assessment scientists in July.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Yes, the Steering Committee met last week actually on Thursday. They wanted to look at the schedule and do some housekeeping essentially. You have hopefully by now received this report in your e-mail; but what I have here is I will show just the summary recommendations of what the steering committee discussed.

One of the first items of business was modifying the operating procedures. We call them SOPPs just like the councils do, because we are a council process. The changes were related to some of the National Standard 2 things, such as dealing with public comment within SEDAR workshops. Another area of change was dealing with our desk reviews.

We've used desk reviews a couple times when projects have fallen behind, but they weren't ever included in our SOPPs, so we recognized desk reviews as a scheduling tool; and also as something that there are assessments in some cases, particularly in the Caribbean, that methods have been used before and it is applying to different stocks so therefore they are benchmarks.

We believe that desk reviews are a really good way to get the independent peer review that we've needed, so we allow desk reviews to come up in other circumstances as well. The committee will look at the SOPPs in detail at their next meeting. It has been a while since they were approved and there may be other things that need to be changed.

I think we'll probably have a discussion at our committee meeting in September, because the next steering committee will be in October. We may open the floor for discussion of the SEDAR SOPPs to get the South Atlantic Council's ideas to move forward. We had a lot of discussion about the assessment summary

This was brought up at the earlier meeting; and the Gulf Council in particular was interested in making some changes. The topic came up initially because of SEDAR staff there was discussion about making some changes more in the other direction toward simplifying the assessment summary; the reasons being that, one, we've kind of moved beyond the SEDAR Review Panel and the SEDAR Report providing that absolute final status determination.

The summaries as they are now include things like what is the stock status? Well, we really don't know until the SSC takes its actions. We created this separation here and this confusion where the SEDAR Summary Report may say stock is overfished, but the SSC may say, well, we apply the definition we have now and the council has changed MSST, and we do a different assessment run; and we average something differently based on our SSC's expertise; and they say we don't think it is overfished or overfishing or what have you.

That has created a problem that we thought needed to be resolved. We also pointed out that the summary that we have is very much just a cursory presentation of results. What has been more useful for this group and for our SSC has been a more detailed summary of technical issues that started back with red snapper where we were asked to do things like FAQs to address the issues that people have.

I think here we talked about Spanish mackerel and Luiz; and I presented quite a bit of information to the council and to the SSC on what really seemed to be going on in Spanish. Now we're having as a matter of course Mike do that for the SSC, and he did that for the gag assessment and addressed the issues.

Here at the South Atlantic we've really felt that is much more useful than that framework assessment summary that we have in the SEDAR Report. We suggested that at the steering committee and kind of put forth the idea that we have an executive summary within the SEDAR Report, which really is kind of a document guide.

An important thing that Ben brought up is it also directs the reader to say there will be further deliberation on this assessment at an SSC; and you will need to see what their outcome is to know the final outcome of this assessment and to make sure people are aware of that; that SEDAR isn't the end word on the status.

Each cooperator should have freedom to do whatever type of assessment summary is necessary for their procedures and their issues that they may have within that assessment and questions that their constituents may ask. Hopefully, we can get agreement in our next meeting of the steering committee in October to settle on this process; but I expect there will be some more debate.

It is an issue in the evolution of SEDAR in making sure that we're clear. We also know with the upcoming program review we will hear more about communication of assessment findings. I think that will help inform what we ultimately do here within SEDAR; a little thing that led to actually a very large part of our discussion at the steering committee meeting.

The other bunch of discussion really centered around scheduling. As you see, there were issues with Gulf of Mexico red snapper and South Atlantic blueline tilefish. The Gulf Council is probably going to have a similar type of discussion as we just held for their red snapper. There seemed to be some disagreement within their different council representatives as to the timing and type of their next red snapper assessment.

The SEDAR has allowed us and each cooperator to work with Bonnie, who is the SEDAR Steering Committee Chair, as well as obviously the Center Director, in resolving these types of short-term scheduling issues as necessary without having to go back to the steering committee and rubber stamp essentially those schedules.

Here we are seeing immediately that was good flexibility to allow, and I think get our schedule back on track as soon as we can. We'll report back to the SEDAR staff all of these findings of these two council meetings and keep the schedules updated accordingly. The other point of discussion was related to Gulf red snapper but applies across the board; and it related to the changes in the MRIP Program.

They changed the intercept survey and there is discussion of a calibration workshop to figure out how to deal with those changes; much as two years ago they dealt with another bunch of changes in the estimation procedure. There is confusion as to whether or not that would require a standard or a benchmark versus an update to incorporate those numbers.

There was discussion at the committee to clarify that. When a program has made a revision or a correction or otherwise adjusted values within a dataset that you've used in an assessment; those can be incorporated through the update process. There is no need to go in and do a standard or a benchmark. That was when we discussed these types; that was the type of thing that was specifically identified as being appropriate for an update. We just wanted to get that in there for clarification. We discussed the staffing changes which we just mentioned.

A bit of new business was discussion of having SEDAR co-host this MRIP Calibration Workshop. We've already begun some planning on that; and what SEDAR would do is get some funding from MRIP to help offset folks travel; and we would help them with meeting logistics and arrangements, which is something we are pretty comfortable with doing and I think will help them get that ball rolling.

We have a place and a date; and we'll to do it in I think it is like the week of September 8, I guess – it is the week after Labor Day in September – and looking at Charlotte as a location. We don't have a venue yet so, of course, that is all pending getting a good spot. We do have agreement that SEDAR will help get that workshop going, because it is important to most of our SEDAR partners to deal with the MRIP data well and to have this calibration take place.

Then the next meeting will be – we had hoped to do it in September, but various conflicts, we're pushed back into October again; looking at October 6 and 7 in Charleston, S.C. That concludes the SEDAR Report; and this will be finalized once the SEDAR Committee meets in October; but what you see now is a draft. It is very rough. Obviously the meeting was Thursday, so that just got put together.

MR. HARTIG: That is quite all right. Are there any questions for John about the Steering Committee Report? Seeing none; our next agenda item is Overview of the South Atlantic Fishery-Dependent Workshop.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Fishery-Dependent Workshop; we went to the SSC and asked them about the workshop that we talked about. This has been developing and evolving over time as we started to talk about fishery-dependent sampling. There was discussion about the SSC that said, really, because it has become an inventory to determine what data are available, what parameters are collected in various datasets, who has the data; surprisingly enough, no one really knows all of this for all of the different datasets, particularly when you get into some of the historical information, which can be very useful when we're trying to do an assessment and get an idea of long-term productivity.

The SSC felt that really that should be expanded to include fishery-independent data as well. There were also various fishery-independent data sources that maybe exist but we're not aware of it. Anyone that is familiar with the shrimp data, really, essentially data inventory workshop that we're doing; Julia Byrd had created a really neat Excel tool with buttons and such where people can enter information about their data.

It has proved very effective and has allowed us to amass a lot of metadata essentially about different datasets quickly. Our thought is we would apply that to our other fishery data. Obviously, when you're dealing with bycatch, there is some information in that which will cross over, but we want to focus that on looking at our various finfish fishery data and get a good inventory out of it.

At this point we would really like to get some idea of if we have the budget to do that and when we could do it, and who would participate on the planning committee. We've got a couple SSC members; and I would be working with those guys. If anyone has anyone else in mind that they think they would like to have on the planning committee, let us know. Importantly, the timing

will determine when things happen. In looking at the schedule and what we've just discussed, I expect this would be a sometime in 2015 type project.

MR. HARTIG: We'll turn to Bob and ask about funding.

MR. MAHOOD: I think we will be able to handle it in the budget we have right now. Yes, we can move it. Obviously, everybody in the world can't come.

MR. HARTIG: No, obviously.

MR. MAHOOD: We'll keep it under control and go ahead and move forward. I think the main thing is finding the time to do it. The schedule for the rest of this year is pretty hectic, but we'll work on that.

MR. HARTIG: Yes, I think John mentioned 2015, Bob, as probably the year it is going to happen in. We're going to move ahead and I am very happy that is going to go forward, because it has been something I've been very interested in. I'm glad it has expanded as well. We should get quite a bit out of it, I'm hoping. Are there any other questions?

MR. CARMICHAEL: The only other issue was of the planning and organizational committee; and this comes from the SSC. Obviously, I'll be involved. We would like some cooperation from the Southeast Center just to serve on the committee and help organize the workshop. There was discussion both as someone from the assessment group and perhaps the headboat program, someone from the TIP program also from SEFSC.

We had three people from the SSC agree to serve, George Sedberry, Churchill Grimes – well, interestingly, Chip Collier, so that may need to change based on things we've heard. I would like someone from the ACCSP, because they are so involved in data and I think they would help us in terms of the planning in SEDAR, because I mentioned what she had done with shrimp, just been a great job, and obviously SEDAR is intimately involved in all of this.

She is typically the coordinator of South Atlantic Projects. Again, this would be the planning committee and these guys would help with determining what the terms of reference are and what type of materials we might want to get together; maybe people that we need to have come speak and deal with the process; not participants, but most of them would likely be participants.

I think at this point it would be good to hear from Bonnie maybe of some folks from the SEFSC that could be involved. If you agree with maybe having someone from ACCSP, direct me to contact Mike Cahall and find out who he might have that could help us out with the planning and organization.

MR. HARTIG: Well, to the point of ACCSP, I think it is critical. I don't know if the timing is right to ask you, Bonnie, who you have available to do that yet. It is pretty early in the process; but if you have any input, please.

DR. PONWITH: I think for the planning committee, you are looking specifically – yes, I think having a center person on the planning committee is helpful just from the standpoint of helping to select dates that don't end up conflicting with some of the other major events that we have;

and also then to make sure that we've got a good conduit of communication from the planning committee down to people who would be potentially affected. Off the top of my head, a good candidate would be Steve Turner for this; but I need to consult and make sure that we can fit this in. He would be the ideal candidate.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Yes; it addresses those items, so timing some time in 2015. Bob says good for the funding. We've got a couple planning committee people doing it. I'll look for Bonnie to verify and work with her before the next meeting and verify that; and the same with ACCSP, get those names finished by the next meeting.

MR. HARTIG: All right, anymore comments about the Fishery Dependent/Independent Workshop?

DR. DUVAL: I guess maybe just for the committee, as we're discussing this, to consider a means – you know, once we have the spreadsheet of all the data that are out there and the metadata, to consider a means for keeping that updated. There is always new research that is being done. I think we want to make sure that if there are new studies, it would be useful to our stock assessment efforts that there are some mechanism or process to sort of annually review that database and update it.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Yes, duly noted.

MR. HARTIG: All right, moving, along; South Atlantic Assessment Peer Review Process Overview.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Okay, as you guys know, we developed a peer review process and we recently applied that to wreckfish; and that came to its endpoint in the SSC technical realm at least at the last meeting. As part of reviewing that assessment and considering the overall approach, we asked the SSC to review that peer review process and think about some things that work, some things that didn't, other tweaks that we need to make to it.

The one thing that really struck me in terms of trying to manage that process and dealing with the logistics was we got into a bind with timing in terms of appointing reviewers and considering the review process and doing the terms of reference and actually getting the report to the SSC. We had to forge a little bit ahead of you guys in terms of identifying reviewers and held a special SSC conference call to deal with the administrative aspects.

One thing I suggested was we should consider terms of reference much earlier in the process, maybe even when the SSC does its initial review of the proposal and consider what they think would be an appropriate review process in timing and identify a schedule for approving the terms of reference and making appointments, which I think is easy enough to work into it.

The SSC noted a couple other things. One of the major points of discussion was identifying that they didn't feel the assessment followed the process explicitly. There was a lot of discussion, for example, about the extra kind of assessment-like workshop that was held. It was not really clear at first whether they felt this was an issue with the process or a deficiency in the assessment or whether it was positive.

Through the discussion, a number of the SSC members pointed out that while they didn't think it felt that it was explicit; that type of workshop was not explicitly allowed, it was part of the earliest discussions all along. They really felt that all the extra things added to the process and did not detract from them or negate it in any way.

They were very pleased with the steps and the role that they had in it and the amount of communication which went into there. No one suggested making any specific changes. I believe overall the committee felt leaving those aspects of the proposal process as it is were good; because it gave some flexibility to an individual could ask for a different workshop, an extra workshop like the assessment one we did for wreckfish, and the council and SSC could weigh that and consider it, and decide if they wish to participate.

Therefore, they really did not recommend any specific changes, although they did again have the discussion of the confidentiality requirements, which was an issue throughout and continues to be an issue in dealing with wreckfish. We simply cannot report the recent landings by terms of pounds per year because they are confidential.

That was really the biggest problem that we dealt with. I had a number of things that were highlighted in Attachment 5, in particular things to change. I guess it would probably be best if we go ahead and pull the policy document up; but just addressing like the timing things and such that I had mentioned there.

The National Standard Guidelines, when we wrote this were draft and now they will be final, so a simple modification there is highlighted to delete that word "draft". This is really just editorial. There were some changes in the SSC's memorandum, changes there and then highlighted the different things about the two weeks review time.

I thought that word there was confusing for completed work, because the peer review process applies to – it is implied that the work is completed. Then the appointment process shall be similar to that used to appoint participants to the SEDAR Review Workshop Panel. That is something that was stated, but then a clarification suggested that reviewers; do they or do they not need to be members of the Council's SEDAR AP? That is definitely a council level policy issue to consider. Yes; that is the extent of the changes.

MR. HARTIG: I guess some of this can be taken care of by approving what the SSC has changed, but not all of it, because there is a question about the last one, right, John, reviewers need or not be members of the Council SEDAR AP.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Right, and if my recollection is correct, apparently the highlighting went crazy. This is the item that is different in terms of this Number 4 and it is "SSC provide guidance on the peer review approach that is appropriate for this project; and depending on project timing and SSC meeting schedules, the SSC may consider reviewers, review timing, and review terms of reference at this time."

That specifically states the SSC could consider review aspects sooner. As it is now, it would take several meetings. With the SSC meeting twice a year, we could continually end up in these types of binds that we did with the wreckfish. I think allowing them and directing them to

consider that earlier in the process would help that logistical challenge we had in this last one. If you support that change, then we'll discuss being members of the AP is a big thing.

MR. HARTIG: I'm lost at the moment.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Attachment 5 in the Peer Review Process. Go down to Number 4 and Part 2, the Proposal Review; it is on Page 3, the bottom of Page 3.

MR. HARTIG: How much of that is new?

MR. CARMICHAEL: Item E is new.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: John, it looks like there is a lot that has been added to Number 4 under Section 2 for proposal review. Previously it said the SSC will provide a written memorandum detailing their review of the proposal, which is still in there. Then there was only one more sentence that stated, "Any deficiencies noted shall be clearly stated along with proposed methods of resolution."

What the SSC has done is proposing to add Items A, B, C, D, and E – let's see if there is an F – yes, and F, which really kind of specify what kind of items ought to be considered by the SSC and given back to the person who is submitting the proposal. They just went into a lot more detail of items to be considered, which looked to me like a good idea. What they've done is they've added to the current peer review document and added all those items in that ought to be considered every time you have a situation like this one from a third party.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Yes; those things are mentioned as things that should be addressed, so it kind of pulls that back in. Thanks for looking back at that original and setting me straight there. Yes; these things are added to provide more detail on what should be in that report. If I think back, I think there was some discussion when they first did that as kind of saying, well, what should this report address?

DR. DUVAL: I think all those additions are good. I'm assuming that we would need some kind of motion to approve those edits as suggested by the SSC; and just the one outstanding question is whether or not any reviewers need to be members of the Council's SEDAR AP.

MR. CARMICHAEL: I suppose if you address that and you decide if it is need or need not; that we could approve everything at once; or if you want to do it bit by bit, approve everything but that.

DR. DUVAL: Who are the reviewers again for wreckfish?

MR. CARMICHAEL: The reviewers were two SSC members and a Science Center person; so it can be various people.

DR. DUVAL: In that case we really didn't have anything to worry about. This is really more of a precautionary type of thing to ensure that they are part of our approved process, and we've checked all their credentials and all of that.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Yes; I think that is one thing that it does, yes, it lets you go through that process of evaluation and vetting. SEDAR is kind of different in being recognized as a body that exists and gives advice to the council. Maybe when we pick reviewers for things, it is just the council; and outside of SEDAR, as we've done for many years before SEDAR, maybe you didn't need to go through that; but certainly it seems like you probably needed to go through some type of process to consider conflict of interest, if nothing else, based on the new National Standard issues about conflict of interest and having to get that for everyone.

DR. DUVAL: I would certainly be happy to make a motion to approve the changes suggested by the SSC, including that reviewers need to be members of the Council's SEDAR AP, if they are not already. I saw Monica had her hand up, so I would like to hear what Monica has to say about that.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: It is a question I have of John. It says currently under the peer review process, the peer review will be conducted by a panel of reviewers appointed by the council. Was the idea that the question, really; reviewers need or need not be members of the Council SEDAR AP? Was the SSCs idea that they wanted reviewers to have it be more broad, so that they didn't need to just be from the SEDAR AP and it could be others?

MR. CARMICHAEL: I think it was more of a technical question as to whether or not they should be members of that AP, considering that people that serve on everything within the SEDAR workshops, the various SEDAR workshops, all have to be members of that AP. They were questioning the council as to whether or not this was required. I don't think that they had a strong opinion either way on the individuals; because they recognize that you can add people to the SEDAR AP as you need to in response to particular needs within an assessment.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: My next question then is would you just remind me of the current situation we have when we have a stock being assessed through the SEDAR process. When we get to the reviewers, they are members of – are they members of an AP? They are, right, of the SEDAR AP?

MR. CARMICHAEL: Our reviewers now are usually an SSC member, or two or three, and three people from the CIE. Those who are on the CIE are not members of our AP, but they do have otherwise recognized status by being appointed by the CIE, which is administered through the agency. We know that the CIE people, as part of their administration, they do the conflict of interest screening and all that as required by OMB.

Those two groups of people are essentially covered. We could appoint outside reviewers – additional beyond the SSC; the council could appoint them. My expectation would be now that if you did so, that person would likely need to be part of the SEDAR AP as well. I think everyone that serves as a panelist in any way in a SEDAR workshop are either of the CIE or they are on our SEDAR AP.

MR. MAHOOD: Yes; I think John is right; the fact is we just about have to put them on the AP.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: That is what I was thinking, too.

MR. HARTIG: Is there any more discussion. Did we get a second on that? Second by Jack Cox. Is there anymore discussion? The motion is, John?

MR. CARMICHAEL: Move to approve the suggested modifications to the peer review process and to indicate that peer reviewers need to be members of the SEDAR AP.

MR. HARTIG: Is there any objection? Seeing none; that motion is approved. Is there anything else in peer review?

MR. CARMICHAEL: That is all.

MR. HARTIG: All right, that brings us to our last item, unless we have other business, review of 2014 Research and Monitoring Plan.

MR. CARMICHAEL: This is an annual task that we undertake to review, and then we'll submit to the agency the research and monitoring priorities for the South Atlantic. Some of the things we've added over the years; a lot of the general content is very similar to what we've been doing for a number of years. We've added this section at the top, though, I think last year or the year before that highlights the different issues within a particular year just to bring some of these to the forefront.

The text that you see here highlighted is additional things added from the version for last year. For example, the top highlighted issue and which is an issue around this table all the time is SAFE reports and requesting that we be provided SAFE reports; that they include OFL and MSY; and added to that an evaluation of the management program, including whether ACLs were met or accountability measures triggered and addressing the reasons for such.

Also adding that reporting the results of independent monitoring should also include fishery-dependent monitoring statistics as highlighted and asking to get this information by June 1, so just continue efforts to get more information back on the status of our fisheries. Then I'll move down to the other highlighted item.

This is where we've been in support of MARMAP and increased funding and also now expanding to the SEFIS program. An important thing there is our request has been that the video monitoring data should be available by June 1; and so added language there as highlighted the council requests that an annual report on the SEFIS program be provided in writing by October 1 of each year for review by the council and SSC.

Similar to what Marcel the last couple of years has been providing you guys, a report of MARMAP, and then MARMAP and SEFIS on the overall CPUEs and what their sampling effort has been. The video data is also very important in there, so I would like to have information on that included as well.

We recently had a workshop with the Science Center folks to talk about SEFIS and dealing with video indices. The first time we'll be using it is coming up in the red snapper assessment. There was discussion at that workshop as well about the need to put information out even from the video indices on a regular basis, much as Marcel has been doing for the trap indices. This is just highlighting that and reiterating that support.

The next section has been added, and it really just addresses the fact that it has been going on and submitting these since September 2007; and the concern that there is just not really getting a lot of progress in some of these core issues. Certainly, as we've always discussed the SAFE reports is something and that the council is going to continue to ask for these. I think that is what the council has expressed to us at least at the staff level.

Continuing to ask for the SAFE reports so you get the information that you need to manage your fisheries; and that is expanding as noted above in dealing with ACLs and AMs and knowing when they are met and when they are not. Then there are some slight changes in some of the deliverables and the things asked for in terms of the reports that we get.

Just really details on what is highlighted up above, getting information on the ACLs and ABCs, and whether or not AMs are met, primarily falling under our top priority, which is essentially the SAFE reports. I believe that is where all the changes occur. We've got the priority stocks that we've identified.

Maybe at some point this will be discussed more probably in the SSC Report, but we had a discussion of priority stocks and trying to get a prioritization workload management process at the SSC meeting. At the same time there is a national effort which came out at the CCC meeting.

Rick Methot came and participated in our workshop at our April SSC meeting and filled the committee in on the national efforts to provide guidance on how to prioritize species for assessments. As a result of that, the SSC didn't make specific recommendations on a council process for prioritizations and would wait and see what comes out of the national effort and what guidance they provide.

We expect that to be forthcoming; and then I expect that obviously to lead to some changes in the future in what our list of priority stocks are. At this point that is a work in progress and we'll see where it goes. That summarizes where we stand pretty good, Mr. Chairman, and see if there are any specific questions.

DR. DUVAL: I guess just one thing to note in Appendix 2 under priority stocks; I'm wondering if we should remove blue runner from the secondary data collection species since we've removed it from the complex.

MR. CARMICHAEL: That has been removed from the management unit; yes.

DR. DUVAL: Mr. Chairman, do you need a motion to approve the South Atlantic Research and Monitoring Prioritization Plan as modified?

MR. HARTIG: Yes.

DR. DUVAL: Then I would make that in the form of a motion.

MR. HARTIG: Seconded by Charlie. **The motion is to approve the research and monitoring prioritization plan as modified. Is there anymore discussion? Is there any objection to that motion? Seeing none; that motion is approved.** Nice job, John. Is there any other business to

come before this committee? I have one thing, and I think it is pretty important, is that amberjack has been off the assessment schedule for quite some time. I think it is eight years now we haven't had an update on the amberjack fishery.

Although the fishery seems to be doing okay through the entire timeframe that we haven't had an assessment for; I think it would be prudent to try and get amberjack back on the schedule as soon as possible based on our priorities that we have already set for the interim. I'm just putting amberjack on the radar that we need to put that species in the queue.

MR. BOWEN: To the point of amberjack; for the for-hire sector in Georgia, the amberjack has saved us over the last couple seasons. It has been amberjack everywhere, just for the record. You can't get away from them.

MR. HARTIG: Yes; and there is a migratory pattern change in amberjacks that needs to be looked at. We don't see them near to the degree that we did back in the heydays of the fishery. I am getting increasing reports just from north Florida and your area, as you've just said, that they are seeing a lot more amberjacks to the north. There may be something going on with that stock and this change in migration patterns. Let's see if we can get to that maybe in the assessment. Okay; no more business; we will adjourn the SEDAR Committee.

(Whereupon, meeting was adjourned at 12:15 o'clock p.m., June 10, 2014.)

Certified By: _____ Date: _____

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July 7, 2014

South Atlantic Fishery Management Council 2013 - 2014 Council Membership

COUNCIL CHAIRMAN:

Ben Hartig
9277 Sharon Street
Hobe Sound, FL 33455
772/546-1541 (ph)
mackattackben@att.net

VICE-CHAIRMAN

Dr. Michelle Duval
NC Division of Marine Fisheries
3441 Arendell St.
(PO Box 769)
Morehead City, NC 28557
252/808-8011 (ph); 252/726-0254 (f)
michelle.duval@ncdenr.gov

Robert E. Beal
Executive Director
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries
Commission
1050 N. Highland St., Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 20001
703/842-0740 (ph); 703/842-0741 (f)
rbeal@asmfc.org

Mel Bell
S.C. Dept. of Natural Resources
Marine Resources Division
P.O. Box 12559
(217 Ft. Johnson Road)
Charleston, SC 29422-2559
843/953-9007 (ph)
843/953-9159 (fax)
bellm@dnr.sc.gov

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

Zack Bowen
P.O. Box 30825
Savannah, GA 31410
912/398-3733 (ph)
fishzack@comcast.net

Chris Conklin
P.O. Box 972
Murrells Inlet, SC 29576
843/543-3833
conklincc@gmail.com

Jack Cox
2010 Bridges Street
Morehead City, NC 28557
252/728-9548
Dayboat1965@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

David M. Cupka
P.O. Box 12753
Charleston, SC 29422
843/795-8591 (hm)
843/870-5495 (cell)
palmettobooks@bellsouth.net

LT Morgan Fowler
U.S. Coast Guard
510 SW 11th Court
Fort Lauderdale FL 33315
morgan.m.fowler@uscg.mil

Doug Haymans
Coastal Resources Division
GA Dept. of Natural Resources
One Conservation Way, Suite 300
Brunswick, GA 31520-8687
912/264-7218 (ph); 912/262-2318 (f)
doughaymans@gmail.com

John W. Jolley
4925 Pine Tree Drive
Boynton Beach, FL 33436
561/732-4530 (ph)
jolleyjw@yahoo.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); 202/736-7350 (f)
Warner-KramerDM@state.gov

Dr. Wilson Laney
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
South Atlantic Fisheries Coordinator
P.O. Box 33683
Raleigh, NC 27695-7617
(110 Brooks Ave
237 David Clark Laboratories,
NCSU Campus
Raleigh, NC 27695-7617)
919/515-5019 (ph)
919/515-4415 (f)
Wilson_Laney@fws.gov

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

Charles Phillips
Phillips Seafood / Sapelo Sea Farms
1418 Sapelo Avenue, N.E.
Townsend, GA 31331
912/832-4423 (ph); 912/832-6228 (f)
Ga_capt@yahoo.com

*BONNIE POWERS
MONICA SMIT-BRUJELLO
PHEL STEELE
JACK MCGOVERN
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(Continued)

South Atlantic Fishery Management Council Staff

Executive Director

✓ Robert K. Mahood
robert.mahood@safmc.net

Deputy Executive Director

✓ Gregg T. Waugh
gregg.waugh@safmc.net

Public Information Officer

✓ Kim Iverson
kim.iverson@safmc.net

Fishery Outreach Specialist

✓ Amber Von Harten
amber.vonharten@safmc.net

Senior Fishery Biologist

Roger Pugliese
roger.pugliese@safmc.net

Fishery Scientist

✓ Myra Brouwer
myra.brouwer@safmc.net

Fishery Biologist

✓ Dr. Mike Errigo
mike.errigo@safmc.net

Fisheries Social Scientist

✓ Dr. Kari MacLauchlin
kari.maclauchlin@safmc.net

Staff Economist

✓ Dr. Brian Chevront
brian.chevront@safmc.net

Science and Statistics Program Manager

✓ John Carmichael
john.carmichael@safmc.net

SEDAR Coordinators

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

Administrative Officer

✓ Mike Collins
mike.collins@safmc.net

Financial Secretary

Debra Buscher
deb.buscher@safmc.net

Admin. Secretary / Travel Coordinator

Cindy Chaya
cindy.chaya@safmc.net

Purchasing & Grants

✓ Julie O'Dell
julie.odell@safmc.net

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South Atlantic Fishery Management Council Meeting

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Tuesday, June 10, 2014

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Rusty Hudson RCS AST	386-289-0948	rusty@ast.com	32120-9351
Grethea Marti	252 696 5641	Marti1639@er.com	NC -
Ken Stamp TO/PT	202-392-9522	kstamp@oceanfish.org	MD
Dick Brann CCA	910-544-5245	dbrann55@gmail.com	
Jimmy Hall SFA	386-542-1351	Hill338@fish.com	
Leda Dunmore		LTDunmore@parks.org	

South Atlantic Fishery Management Council
4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201
North Charleston, SC 29405
843-571-4366 or Toll Free 866/SAFMC-10

Tue June 10, 2014

74	Stewart, David	dstewa11@uwyo.edu	263 min
73	colby, barrett	bcolby3@cfl.rr.com	195 min
72	denes, james	jamesd156@yahoo.com	181 min
70	Farmer, Nick	nick.farmer@noaa.gov	1 min
69	daniel, louis	louis.daniel@ncdenr.gov	24 min
66	Mehta, Nikhil	nikhil.mehta@noaa.gov	365 min
54	Harrison, Robert	tunaprowler1@embarqmail.c...	133 min
53	Lee, Jennifer	jennifer.lee@noaa.gov	496 min
53	Lamberte, Tony	tony.lamberte@noaa.gov	305 min
49	raine, karen	karen.raine@noaa.gov	271 min
49	Records, David	david.records@noaa.gov	323 min
43	Hudson, Rusty	dsf2009@aol.com	316 min
42	Bademan, Martha	martha.bademan@myfwc.com	354 min
41	holiman, stephen	stephen.holiman@noaa.gov	268 min
40	DeVictor, Rick	rick.devictor@noaa.gov	361 min
39	blough, heather	heather.blough@noaa.gov	376 min
37	Sedberry, George	george.sedberry@noaa.gov	388 min
36	McCoy, Sherri	sherrim@wildoceanmarket.c...	273 min
34	Young, Erik	eyoung77@uw.edu	90 min
31	sandorf, scott	scott.sandorf@noaa.gov	424 min
29	michie, kate	kate.michie@noaa.gov	289 min
29	Bresnen, Anthony	anthony.bresnen@myfwc.com...	368 min
29	vara, mary	mary.vara@noaa.gov	325 min
29	Neer, Julie	julie.neer@safmc.net	183 min
29	Byrd, Julia	julia.byrd@safmc.net	441 min
27	Eich, Anne	annemarie.eich@noaa.gov	208 min
27	Knowlton, Kathy	kathy.knowlton@gadnr.org	180 min
26	Baker, Scott	bakers@uncw.edu	115 min

26	Herndon, Andy	andrew.herndon@noaa.gov	274 min
26	Clemens, Anik	anik.clemens@noaa.gov	210 min
25	Gore, Karla	karla.gore@noaa.gov	228 min
20	Pugliese, Roger	roger.pugliese@safmc.net	0 min
-499750	Takade-Heumacher, ...	htakade@edf.org	-24835241 min