

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

SEDAR COMMITTEE

**Westin Jekyll Island
Jekyll Island, GA**

March 8, 2016

SUMMARY MINUTES

SEDAR Committee

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Dr. Mike Errigo
Kim Iverson

John Carmichael
Mike Collins
Dr. Kari MacLauchlin
Amber Von Harten

Observers/Participants:

Dr. Bonnie Ponwith
Dr. Jack McGovern
Dr. Marcel Reichert

Monica Smit-Brunello
Erika Burgess
Dr. George Sedberry

Other Participants Attached

The SEDAR Committee of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council convened at the Westin Jekyll Island, Jekyll Island, Georgia, Tuesday morning, March 8, 2016, and was called to order by Chairman Michelle Duval.

DR. DUVAL: We are going back into the open portion of our SEDAR Committee. We have already approved the agenda, we've approved the minutes, and we've made our closed session appointments. The next item on the agenda is Steering Approvals, and this deals with SEDAR 50 for blueline tilefish.

MR. CARMICHAEL: We have a schedule for SEDAR 50, which will be the blueline tilefish assessment, benchmark assessment. The highlights are the data workshop in October of this year, a series of assessment webinars through April of 2017, and then the review workshop in May of 2017. That would mean it would be available, as it is now, anticipating regular scheduling of SSC meetings, that would go to the SSC in October of 2017, and you would get recommendations in December of 2017.

At that time, obviously we'll have to coordinate with the Mid-Atlantic and consider if we do some kind of joint SSC review of this, in which case that would give us maybe some flexibility, if that were perhaps done in the summer, depending on council meeting schedules, and maybe it got to you earlier. At this point, we would like approval of this schedule. Then the next step would be, in June, to bring you the participants and the terms of reference.

DR. DUVAL: Just a question. Would the SSC be seeing terms of reference at their upcoming first week of May meeting for review?

MR. CARMICHAEL: Yes, they will.

DR. DUVAL: I would entertain a motion from the committee to approve the schedule for SEDAR 50.

MR. HARTIG: **I move that we approve the SEDAR 50 project schedule.**

DR. DUVAL: Motion by Ben. Is there a second? Second by Chris. Any discussion? **Any objection? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.** The next item of business is the SEDAR Activities Update.

MR. BOWEN: One quick question. Are we going to have council observers at this blueline assessment like we have had previous, or no?

DR. DUVAL: Yes, and that will be what we'll be considering in June, would be appointing folks to the data workshop and approving terms of reference and all that good stuff.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Just a few things to update you on of what's been going on with SEDAR related to the South Atlantic. If you recall, last summer we had a data best practices workshop, and there was a recommendation to convene a data best practices working group, which will keep the recommendations from that workshop up to date and take action on implementing some of the procedural recommendations that came from that workshop.

Appointments were made, and planning is now underway to have the group's first meeting. It will be a conference call in April at some point, and that's being worked on right now. As most of you are well aware, SEDAR 41 is nearing its conclusion. The review workshop will be next week in Charleston. The SSC will get that in May, and you will receive recommendations in June.

There is also an update underway for tilefish. That's also scheduled to be available to the SSC in May, and so they will be reviewing three assessments in May, meaning you will get fishing level recommendations for three species in June.

The black grouper is a SEDAR 48 benchmark. It's being done by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission. Due to various issues, primarily some personnel struggles in keeping positions filled, they have asked to delay that from August of 2016 to spring of 2017. That will be taken to the SEDAR Steering Committee for final approval at the next meeting, which is, as of yet, unscheduled, but likely to be perhaps in May or early June. That's something that we'll be talking about with the Steering Committee.

The MRIP revisions, if you will recall, we talked about the revision assessments to reflect the new MRIP estimates and the effort survey changes which are now underway. There was discussion at the Steering Committee about having candidate stocks for SSC consideration in May. At this point, and I will look to Bonnie maybe for some guidance, but I know, working with the folks at the Beaufort Lab on this SEDAR 41, which is quite a challenging project, as you know, and we're also working on the NMFS Stock Assessment Prioritization Application, which both of those are obviously more time consuming and time critical than this assessment coming up in the latter half of 2017. Bonnie, correct me if I'm wrong, but I don't think a whole lot of progress has been made, perhaps, on figuring out which stocks are most appropriate for revisions.

DR. PONWITH: We have definitely got more work to do on getting that list. It's a confluence of a lot of important things happening. That prioritization process is really crucial, and you know that it's an important discussion that's going to be happening with the SSC to help prepare us to discuss it again at the SEDAR Steering Committee. Refresh my memory, but we were targeting when to have the list of candidate species for the update?

MR. CARMICHAEL: We had talked about in May at the SSC, but I really think, as you said, the prioritization, and, also, the SSC has a pretty full agenda, with a number of things for May, and I just think it might work better all around if we could do that in October. It might mean a little bit of delay in getting the specific list of species to the SEDAR Steering Committee, but I think that's okay, because each council will have ample opportunity to discuss the species within its area that are going to be assessed through these revisions in later 2017.

I think if the council, for example, were to have species in December of this year, I think that we would still be able to keep on track, because we know what these assessments are going to be like. It's just a matter of figuring out which are the best species.

DR. PONWITH: What I will do is I will check in with our folks between now and full council. The process for making those recommendations to the council shouldn't be overly elaborate. There were a set of criteria, and the criteria included sort of the importance of the fishery and the degree to which the calibrations influence the recreational side of the landings.

What I will do is I will touch base with our folks and get a realistic take on whether we could have that in the spring. Even if the SSC is not able to fully discuss them, having them within a briefing book to be able to look at, I think that would be valuable. Between now and full council, I will get a take on where we are on that and report back to you in full council.

DR. DUVAL: Thanks for that, Bonnie.

MR. CARMICHAEL: The assessment prioritization is also underway, as I mentioned, and I've been working with Eric and the folks at Headquarters who work for Rick to come up with an application of that to a representative group of South Atlantic stocks. We've got twenty-some stocks that we looked at, and taking all the ones that have been assessed and then representative unassessed stocks and just making sure all the complexes are covered and that sort of thing.

Our goal is to make some preliminary scorings of those criteria that were in the prioritization plan and have them reviewed by the SSC and considered. One of the things that is necessary will be getting some expert judgment on things like recreational importance. We'll talk with the SSC about the best way to do that. Obviously there needs to be some involvement and feedback from fishermen through APs or something, and that's something we will discuss.

Then the Steering Committee, as I said, we don't have a meeting scheduled. We talked about meeting in late spring or early summer to talk about the prioritization tool. We need to decide if that needs to happen now or if that can wait until perhaps our face-to-face meeting in October and give everyone a chance to really vet this fully. That is the update. Any questions on SEDAR business?

MR. BROWN: I would just like to say, on record, that I've been part of the SEDAR 41 process since the very beginning, and that it's my opinion, just from watching the progression of this assessment, that the standard for assessing some of the models has been -- They've used the BAM model, and I just feel like the BAM model has failed us in SEDAR 41 and that we need to actually look at other alternatives for evaluating the red snapper through the stock assessment and not rely on one specific model. I know that other ones were presented, and I understand that, but it just seems like the BAM has always been the standard and that things are kind of leaned toward that in order for us to do an evaluation.

DR. DUVAL: I guess I will just remind folks that the review workshop for SEDAR 41 has not yet occurred, and so I would hope that concerns about the model selection and items of that nature would be brought forward by the review panel. Mark, I know you've been heavily involved in SEDAR 41 since the beginning, and I definitely appreciate your perspective. I think I just want to remind the rest of the committee where we are in the process, and that is definitely the job of the review panel to bring forward any critiques of model selection and data treatment and that sort of thing.

MR. BROWN: I'm excited.

DR. DUVAL: Great. Any other questions for John? Is there any other business to come before the SEDAR Committee? If not, then the committee will adjourn.

(Whereupon, the meeting was adjourned on March 8, 2016.)

Certified By: _____ Date: _____

Transcribed By:
Amanda Thomas
March 25, 2016

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**South Atlantic Fishery Management Council -
March 2016 Council Meeting
Jekyll Island, GA**

Date: Tuesday, March 8, 2016

Committee: SEDAR

(OPEN SESSION)

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Tue 8 MAR 16

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