

FINAL
SUMMARY REPORT
SEDAR COMMITTEE
SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
September 12, 2023

The Committee approved the minutes from the March 2023 meeting and the agenda for the September 2023 meeting.

SEDAR Steering Committee Report

The Committee was updated on the SEDAR Steering Committee from May 2023. Staff informed the Committee that benchmark assessments were being added to the portfolio of assessment types available for Southeast stock assessments, hybrid meetings would be allowed if the cooperator requested it but cooperators may be requested to provide logistical and financial support, Gag Grouper and King Mackerel operation assessments requests were approved as 2025 stock assessment, and a Red Porgy operational assessment was not added to the 2025 schedule.

SEDAR Projects Update

The Committee was updated on current South Atlantic SEDAR Projects. The Gray Triggerfish Research Track Assessment was originally scheduled for review in December but will be delayed. Red Grouper Operational Assessment will likely be delayed due to a shift from a single stock to a two-stock assessment model or two separate stock assessments. Mutton Snapper will be delayed allowing for calibration of the Florida State Reef Fish Survey with the recreational catch series. Schedules and terms of reference are in development for other SEDAR projects. An interim analysis for Vermilion Snapper, not a SEDAR project, will be provided to the SSC in October 2023.

Statements of Work for 2026 Projects

The Committee reviewed statements of work for 2026 projects. The Committee recommended that the Snowy Grouper Operational Assessment include a modification to add a sensitivity to recreational estimates based on the potential bias in MRIP estimates. The Committee recommended adding a Benchmark Assessment for Spanish Mackerel into the South Atlantic assessment schedule. The Spanish Mackerel Benchmark Assessment would be used to address several issues identified by the SSC and test sensitivity to potential bias in the recreational estimates. The Committee recommended having a Center for Independent Experts (CIE) in-person review for the Benchmark Assessment with a subsequent review by the SSC to develop ABC recommendations. The Committee recommended a CIE in-person review of the Dolphin Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE). The Committee wanted to ensure the MSE included a robustness test of the management strategies to recreational data inputs, an evaluation potential distributional shifts or impacts of climate on Dolphin, and changing fleet dynamics for the commercial sector.

MOTION 1: APPROVE STATEMENTS OF WORK FOR 2026 SEDAR PROJECTS, AS MODIFIED.

For Snowy Grouper and Spanish Mackerel include:

- Develop sensitivities to explore potential impact of bias in recreational landings.

For Dolphin include:

- Ensure the evaluation includes an exploration of the potential impact of biased recreational landings.
- Evaluate potential distributional shifts or impacts of climate on Dolphin.
- Incorporate fleet dynamics for the commercial sector.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

Scientific and Statistical Committee Appointments to SEDAR Projects

Due to changeover in the Scientific and Statistical Committee, new appointments were needed for SEDAR 82 (Gray Triggerfish), SEDAR 79 (Mutton Snapper), and SEDAR 92 (Blueline Tilefish).

MOTION 2: APPOINT KAI LORENZEN TO THE SEDAR 82 GRAY TRIGGERFISH RESEARCH TRACK REVIEW PANEL, APPOINT STEVE TURNER AND FRED SERCHUK TO THE SEDAR79 MUTTON SNAPPER BENCHMARK ASSESSMENT PANEL, AND APPOINT STEVE TURNER AND KAI LORENZEN TO THE SEDAR92 BLUELINE TILEFISH OPERATIONAL REVIEW PANEL.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

Other Business

The Committee was briefed on a potential change of Red Grouper Operational Assessment (SEDAR 86) to a two-stock assessment or two separate stocks assessments. There was concern on how the assessment change could impact the rebuilding plan for Red Grouper; however, the SEFSC indicated a single stock model may not be considered consistent with best scientific available. More discussions on Red Grouper occurred during the Snapper Grouper Committee after the SSC Chair presented the SSCs discussion on the assessment changes.

A second item under Other Business was adjusting the SEDAR Schedule to minimize impacts of potential bias in recreational estimates. Staff presented the May 2023 SEDAR Steering Committee Meeting Schedule Outcome with information on allocation and percent of the recreational catch attributed to private vessels in FES weight units. The Committee recommended several changes to the assessment schedule which are described in the SEDAR Committee Recommended Changes document added under recent materials. In general, the Committee recommended delaying assessments with a high percentage of recreational landings from private recreational vessels be delayed with the exception of Dolphin and assessments being conducted by Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission (FL FWC). The delay in assessments will allow the study on bias in recreational estimates, described during Full Council Session I, to be incorporated in the recreational catch streams. The Dolphin MSE can test the robustness of the management strategies to bias in recreational estimates. The FL FWC assessments are developing a method to calibrate the State Reef Fish Survey to that can provide a timeseries of recreational data during SEDAR 79. The method could be used in subsequent assessments.

MOTION 3: ADOPT THE REVISED SEDAR PROJECT SCHEDULE INCLUDED IN SEDAR PROJECT SCHEDULE RECOMMENDED CHANGES DOCUMENT (FIGURE 3, BELOW) AS THE RECOMMENDED SCHEDULE FOR SOUTH ATLANTIC PROJECTS.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

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

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

Timing and Tasks:

Add Research Track, Operational, and Benchmark assessments along with Management Strategy Evaluation into the glossary.