

**FINAL
SUMMARY REPORT
SEDAR COMMITTEE MEETING
Jekyll Island, GA
March 6, 2017**

The agenda was corrected to include Chris Conklin as a member of the Committee.

The Committee received an update on ongoing SEDAR projects. Committee members were asked to consider potential participants for the Vermilion Snapper assessment so that appointments can be made at the June 2017 meeting. Terms of Reference for the Vermilion Snapper assessment are under review by the Science Center, and will be considered by the SSC in April and the Council in June. The MRIP revision assessments planned for 2017 will need to be delayed because the calibration and peer review efforts will not be completed until Fall 2017, and there is growing interest in using all three years of side by side survey data (2015-2017) to develop the final calibration and data revisions before revising any assessments.

The Committee reviewed the NMFS stock assessment prioritization tool and recommended the following changes in the SAFMC prioritizations and research plan:

- Add Cobia, Hogfish, and Gray Snapper to the primary data collection species.
- Continue to support a White Grunt assessment in 2021.
- Add Atlantic Spadefish and Silk Snapper to the secondary data collection species.
- Identify Almaco Jack, Lane Snapper, and Wahoo as top priorities among the secondary species.
- Identify Dolphin as a special data collection stock due to its life history and stock unit challenges.
- Provide separate rankings for assessed and unassessed stocks for future assessment priority evaluations.

Dr. Ponwith reported that the Science Center is considering providing annual updates for abundance indices. The Committee supported this effort, discussed age structure evaluations as a remaining impediment to assessment scheduling flexibility, and made a request that the SEFSC provide an evaluation of the resources necessary to clear the ageing backlog and keep ageing operations up to date in the future.

The Committee requested that the SEDAR Steering Committee consider replacing the planned MRIP revision assessments in 2017 with a standard assessment of golden Tilefish. The standard assessment should consider multiple selectivity periods and the most recent best science likelihood fitting approach. The Science Center was asked to consider ageing issues of golden Tilefish, in light of the challenges identified for Blueline Tilefish, and report findings to the Steering Committee at its meeting of May 5, 2017. The MRIP revisions will be rescheduled for 2018.

TIMING AND TASKS

MOTION #1: Move to:

- 1) Request that the SEFSC provide an evaluation of ageing resources for the South Atlantic to consider:
 - a) the resources required to clear the current backlog of age evaluations.
 - b) the resources required to provide up to date age structure evaluations for SAFMC primary data collection species.
 - c) a comparison of current age structure evaluation resources with the resources required to keep age evaluations up to date.

- 2) Request that the SEFSC provide an evaluation of whether the challenges to age determinations for Blueline Tilefish also apply to golden Tilefish, for consideration by the SEDAR Steering Committee, at its May 5, 2017 meeting.

- 3) Direct staff to work with the GMFMC, SEFSC, SERO, and MRIP to convene a joint Gulf-SA SSC meeting to:
 - a) address regional MRIP issues such as excessive catch estimate uncertainty and the challenges of developing estimates for rare occurrence species, and
 - b) consider unit stock definitions as applied in management and stock assessment, with the goal of identifying stocks that require further stock ID evaluations and stocks that have adequate and acceptable definitions to address management and assessment needs.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL