

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

SNAPPER GROUPER COMMITTEE

**Westin Jekyll Island
Jekyll Island, GA**

March 8-9, 2016

SUMMARY MINUTES

Snapper Grouper Committee

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Karla Gore
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Dr. Marcel Reichert
Monica Smit-Brunello
Dr. Jack McGovern
Bruce Buckson

Dr. George Sedberry
Leann Bosarge
Dr. Mike Larkin
Dr. Bonnie Ponwith
Paul Rudershausen

Additional Observers Attached

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

DR. DUVAL: I'm going to go ahead and call the Snapper Grouper Committee meeting to order. The first item of business is Approval of the Agenda. Are there any modifications to the agenda? Seeing none, the agenda stands approved.

The next item is Approval of the 2015 Committee Meeting Minutes. Are there any modifications to those minutes? They were a lot of fun to read, weren't they? All right. Seeing none, the minutes stand approved. Next is the Status of Commercial and Recreational Catches versus Quotas, and Dr. McGovern is going to take us through the commercial catches.

DR. MCGOVERN: Thank you, Madam Chair. We get landings from the Science Center every Friday, and so what's in your briefing book, in Tab 7, Attachments 1a and 1b, are landings from the previous Friday. The landings I show here are updated from what's in your briefing book, and they show landings through March 4 of 2016, and then it compares landings to March 4 of 2015, and also it shows the percentage of the 2015 ACL that was taken and the 2015 ACL and the 2016 ACL. In some cases, it's different, and so I will highlight some of these.

Black sea bass is at 7 percent right now, and then 42 percent of the ACL was met last year. Black grouper, red grouper, scamp, all the shallow-water groupers, they're in a spawning season closure through April, and so there are no landings. 83 percent of black grouper was caught last year.

MR. HAYMANS: If I may, a real quick clarifying question. The year 2015, those are completed landings that we're comparing against, and so the March 4 landings of this year aren't completed landings and haven't been verified, right, versus the 2015, which have been?

DR. MCGOVERN: These are not the final 2015 landings, but they're the landings that we have up to date from the Science Center's quota monitoring system. We'll have final 2015 landings probably in like April or something like that. July.

MR. HAYMANS: Just looking at black sea bass, 42 percent last year at this time, versus 7 percent this year.

DR. MCGOVERN: No, it's 42 percent for the whole year. It's not 42 at this time. This column here is the annual landings for 2015, and so, for example, 326,000 pounds of black sea bass were landed, which is 42 percent of the 780,000 ACL.

MR. HAYMANS: I feel silly now. Thank you.

DR. MCGOVERN: Okay, and so blueline, going to blueline tilefish, this is a species where the ACL was reduced last year to 17,000, 18,000, and we closed it last year shortly after that. That was Amendment 32 and it went into place. The ACL for this year is 26,000, but Regulatory Amendment 25 proposes to increase that ACL, and we're at 29 percent of the ACL right now.

Golden tilefish longline, we're at 81 percent of the ACL. We expect that there's going to be a commercial closure soon, and last year we met 95 percent of the ACL, and it was closed in

February. Golden tilefish hook and line is at 17 percent. We were 1 percent over last year, and it was closed in December last year.

Gray triggerfish has two fishing seasons right now. That was established in Amendment 29, and we're at 61 percent of the first season right now. Looking at a couple of others, red grouper, 19 percent of that ACL was met last year. Scamp, 62 percent. Snowy grouper is a species that the ACL was increased through Regulatory Amendment 20 last year, to 115,000. We were over 9 percent for that ACL. It's been increased to about 126,000 this year, and we're about 26 percent of that. Yellowtail snapper, we closed that in October of last year. We were 2 percent over the ACL. We're at 20 percent so far this year, and landings are higher than they were at this time last year.

Moving down to greater amberjack, Regulatory Amendment 14 changed the fishing year for greater amberjack to begin in March instead of May, and so that fishing year has just started and so we don't have any landings. For the last fishing year, we were 3 percent over.

Vermilion snapper, we're at 85 percent of the ACL. The trip limit was reduced on March 2. Jack asked that we have a breakdown by state for landings so far this year. For Florida and Georgia combined, because Georgia data are confidential, we're at 42 percent of the ACL. 42 percent of the ACL was met by those states. 28 percent of the ACL was met by South Carolina and 30 percent by North Carolina. Last year, we closed vermilion snapper in April. I think that's all I have, Madam Chair.

DR. DUVAL: Thank you, Jack. Could you just repeat those last two percentages? That was for b-liners, right?

DR. MCGOVERN: Yes, and so far this year, for vermilion snapper, 42 percent of the landings have been from Florida and Georgia combined, 28 percent from South Carolina, and 30 percent from North Carolina.

MR. COX: I just wanted to bring to everybody's attention that last year only 19 percent of the red grouper ACL was caught. The previous year, it was 34 percent, and so that should be alarming to the council and that we have a major problem with the red grouper. This is something that's been on -- It's right in my backyard and I'm hoping that this SMZ site that we selected in North Carolina is going to help rectify some of this, but it's been very concerning, because we have sure not gave up on effort. Thank you.

MR. HAYMANS: Jack, I may have missed your explanation, but hogfish, jacks, and mutton, why are they the same 2015 and 2016, year to date?

DR. DUVAL: Doug, what's your question?

MR. HAYMANS: If I look at landings, and I'm looking at the previous version, but I'm looking at the 2016 landings year to date and the 2015 landings year to date for those four species and they're exactly the same. I am just wondering maybe if that's an error.

DR. MCGOVERN: That must be an error. It's not like that in the version that's projected there. That must have just been an error in what was put together, and I apologize for that.

DR. DUVAL: Any other questions for Jack regarding the commercial landings? Thank you, Dr. McGovern. We'll then turn it over to Dr. Larkin to take us through the status of recreational landings, and this is Attachment 1b in your briefing book.

DR. LARKIN: I'm going to go over the recreational landings. These landings are summarized using MRIP or MRFSS. It depends on how the ACL was defined. Estimates were updated by NMFS SERO to be consistent with the ACL monitoring, because some of the stocks we had post-stratification. Right now, we have data up to Wave 5 of 2015. We're still waiting for Wave 6 to be updated, and we don't have any data at this point for 2016.

This is landings up to Wave 5 of 2015, and still all these landings for 2015 are preliminary. Landings were accrued in MRFSS or MRIP, and, also, it depends on how the ACL was defined, and also headboat landings. I am going to start with the 2014 and then I'll show you the 2015. Here's a list of the -- In this table here, each column is the species complex, the landings, the ACL, the units, the percent of the ACL, and the closure date. I'm just going to highlight the ones that exceeded it.

In 2014, Atlantic spadefish were 455 percent over the ACL. Gray triggerfish, in 2014, were 122 percent of the ACL, and hogfish were 131 percent of the ACL. Then, to continue with the other stocks, you can see porgies were above the ACL in 2014 and snappers and snowy grouper.

Now, to move on to the 2015, with the preliminary data we have, which goes Waves 1 through 5, blueline tilefish actually changed. The ACL changed. We started off with 111,000 and then dropped down to 17,000. I think that was Amendment 32. You can see essentially the ACL was severely reduced in 2015, and when it was reduced, the landings went way over the ACL and the closure date you can see there, over in June. Then golden tilefish, 128 percent of the ACL, and hogfish was also way over their ACL in 2015. Then none of these stocks here you can see are above the ACL, here in this column.

Then kind of the split season ones, greater amberjack, this is the 2013/2014 landings. Greater amberjack, we're at 70 percent. Black sea bass is at 57 percent. Then, to move on to 2014/2015 landings, greater amberjack, we're at 74 percent and black sea bass is at 39 percent.

Then the 2015/2016 landings. For example, greater amberjack goes from March to February. Actually, this one will have March of 2015, and then we'll eventually go all the way until we end up at the end of February in 2016, when we have all the landings. Anyway, greater amberjack was 76 percent and black sea bass were 29 percent.

Now I'm going to show you some tables here. It breaks it down by mode for each year, and so we can see charter, headboat, private, and shore, and then the total in the far column here, and so each year is listed here in the first column. You can kind of see the breakdown and if there's any questions or you want to know the details of the landings by mode by year.

Then in this figure I'm going to show you -- You guys have all, I'm sure, seen this many, many times before, but, still, over on the Y-axis we have landings and then on the X-axis we have the year. In this case, it's the season here. This is 2010/2011. Then each color represents a mode, and so blue being charter, red being headboat, green being private, and then shore, if there is any, which is hard to see, and then the red line is the MRIP effort. The orange line is the headboat

effort. The ACL are the dots. You can see that along here. You can see, like in this case, current landings are below the dot, below the ACL.

Gag grouper, again, you get the landings broken down by mode. I should point out that the other Y-axis over here is the effort, determining the values for the effort. Gag, you can see the landings here in recent years are below the ACL. Then greater amberjack -- I don't have all the stocks here, but just the ones that we've had questions on and the highlight species.

Greater amberjack, again, is broken down by mode, the landings in each column there, and then here's the figure. You can see the landings have changed over time and relative to when the ACLs were implemented. Then mutton snapper, again, you can see the landings there are broken down by mode. Then there's the figure, again, and you can see the landings per year and relative to effort and relative to the ACLs.

Then yellowtail snapper, it's broken up, again, by mode. The figure here, if you want to see the landings broken down by the different modes and what they add up to and are they are above or below the ACL. In this case, below the ACL. Then red porgy is another one here, with the landings broken down by mode. Then the figure here is landings relative to the ACL. I will go a little slower, in case you have any questions, but, if not, I will just keep going.

Vermilion snapper, the landings are broken down by mode there, and then the figure is landings broken down by each year, with the figure here, relative to the ACLs. Then snowy grouper. This is actually landings, in numbers, that would track that ACL, and then you can see the landings here relative to the ACL landings by each year in the figure. Then golden tilefish, this one is also monitored in numbers. Then the figure is here. It's certainly not the most interesting talk, but that's it. Are there any questions?

DR. DUVAL: Questions for Mike?

MR. BOWEN: Mike, great presentation. Thank you so much for putting that together. You know, from what I understand, we have a forty-five-day lag from MRIP. It would be nice, at our next March meeting, if we had the final landings for 2016. I think the first week of March would -- I think there's enough time there so we could see the total landings for the previous year at our March meeting, if it's possible. I would like to see that.

One more addition I would like to that presentation next is scamp. I would like to see the trends, with the graphs that we have for the other species that you showed. I would like to see those for scamp grouper. I think I've raised concerns and questions in years previous about what I feel the stock is doing, and if I had some visuals like the other species, it would help. Again, thank you, and I look forward to next March having our final recreational numbers for 2016 and, in June, I'm looking forward to seeing the scamp graphs up there. Thank you.

DR. LARKIN: I hear you. I guess, to address the scamps real quick, so you're suggesting adding in another table and a figure for scamp as well?

MR. BOWEN: Yes, sir. I feel they're in peril and that would give not only me, but the rest of the council and the public, some visuals to maybe address that. Thank you.

DR. LARKIN: I've got you. Then, yes, I can't speak to the deadlines too much, in terms of -- I know we've switched from MRIP to MRFSS to allow more additional sampling and the adjustment, but I know things have been delayed there, and so I can certainly try to get it sooner, if we can.

MR. BOWEN: I understand that. I mean it's just I feel like at the March meeting, when we're starting off our new calendar year, that if we, as a council, as a whole, could look at the total landings for the previous year that it would be helpful. If we could get that, that would be great. Again, thank you for your presentation.

DR. LARKIN: If it makes you feel any better, we don't have it finalized as of today, but if we did, I would show it to you, but I understand.

DR. DUVAL: Just a quick follow-up to Zack's question. You know the preliminary numbers are available forty-five days after the end of a wave, but when do the final MRIP numbers generally, the corrected MRIP numbers, generally come in?

DR. LARKIN: That's a tough question. There is that forty-five days, but it seems like it has been delayed, I think because of just -- Now, in the Science Center, I feel like -- I will punt to Bonnie, but they have to do more work now. They have to generate two datasets, an MRIP and a MRFSS. I would think the workload, in my opinion, would increase substantially, but that forty-five days has been delayed, and so I do expect to have final -- I would expect it within a week or two.

I know the Office of Science and Technology has the landings, their landings, summarized, but the Science Center does a much more robust method, where they make sure there's a hole filling. If they don't have a weight, they make sure they have thirty samples and other methods, and so they have to do a lot more work. We don't have it yet available, but I can certainly request it and see if they can provide it sooner.

DR. PONWITH: What we've done in the past is MRIP generates the estimates, and part of their process is to create an estimate of converting numbers to pounds. The Science Center also has its own procedures for converting numbers to pounds, and the approach that we use is an approach that we feel is robust for that particular use, our most important use, which is as inputs for the stock assessment.

We recognize that that creates an extra step. It also creates two sets of numbers for pounds, which is never a good thing, and we are in active dialogue with the MRIP folks about unifying that approach, so they're doing it the way we end up doing it at the onset, which creates one set of numbers and one step to land at those numbers. That is in process right now, in discussion with MRIP right now. My personal opinion is I think that would be a superior approach. The last I checked, that's the direction we were heading.

DR. LARKIN: Can I ask a quick question? I think Vivian's workload has increased a bit too, I'm guessing, because now some of our ACLs are still defined in MRFSS and then others in MRIP. I would think Vivian's workload has doubled and is that a fair assumption, that her workload -- The Science Center's workload has also increased because of those two different datasets. Could that also cause the delay, Bonnie?

DR. PONWITH: Everybody at the Science Center should be getting -- The workload is very, very high. It's very demanding right now. In terms of the relationship of this estimate versus that estimate, I can't say if it's doubled, but I do know that they are under a lot of pressure to get these numbers out, so that they can be used for stock assessments in a short amount of time. We are trying to make that process more efficient.

DR. DUVAL: Thanks for that, Bonnie. It's great to hear that you all have been talking with the folks up at MRIP to try to unite those methodologies.

MR. HARTIG: Mike, thanks again. I always appreciate this presentation. What was interesting to me about it this time is the effort increase in the headboat fleet across the board, except for greater amberjack and black sea bass. The slope of the lines, no matter what the ACL is, are almost identical, if you look at all those slopes, and it doesn't matter whether it's a tropical species or not. I'm wondering about the effort. Go ahead, Bonnie.

DR. PONWITH: If you remember, effort isn't done by species, right? Effort is the same for all. It's an expanded estimate of headboat effort, and then landings are created via the dockside intercepts. That applies that effort times the catch per unit effort to get the multiple that was just the actual landings, and that's why those numbers look so much alike.

DR. LARKIN: Some of them are different, Ben, because either -- Instead of doing a full calendar year, from January to December, I will take like March through April of the next year, or several of them go from like Florida to like I think New York, if I'm doing the dolphin ones, and stuff like that, just to explain why some of them are different.

DR. DUVAL: Thank you, Mike and Bonnie. Go ahead, Mark.

MR. BROWN: They pretty much answered some of the questions I was going to ask, but one of the things that I wanted to ask about is the gag grouper recreational landings that it shows for 2007, 2008, and 2009 for the shore mode. When you have things like that that just kinds of stands out and it's pretty obvious there's an issue there, what do you all do with that?

DR. LARKIN: Before the Office of Science and Technology, before they get released, they will send us the preliminary ones, and we will comb through it and look for any outliers, and have them -- If there's any red flags, we will have them go through and double-check it. Now, back then, we weren't, as far as I know -- I wasn't working for NOAA back then, but I am thinking in gag grouper, we do include the Florida Keys. That could include an estimate from the bridges down in the Keys, and then that could be expanded from the effort.

In the future, we do certainly check outliers and double-check them. Like, for example, the hogfish I know was a big issue last year, but we caught that early and reviewed it thoroughly before it was released, and so we do look for outliers, if that answers your question.

DR. DUVAL: Any other questions for Mike? Thank you very much, Mike. The next item on our agenda is the Status of Amendments, and I think Dr. McGovern is going to probably take us through that.

DR. MCGOVERN: Thank you, Madam Chair. A couple of these we went over yesterday in the Dolphin Wahoo Committee. Amendment 33 is included with Dolphin Wahoo Amendment 7. This is the fillet amendment, and it was effective on January 27 of this year. Amendment 34 is the amendment that is included with Amendment 8 for Dolphin Wahoo, and that revises AMs for a bunch of snapper grouper species and golden crab and it adjusts the allocations for dolphin. That was effective on February 22.

Amendment 35 removes four species from the Snapper Grouper FMP. It removes black snapper, mahogany snapper, dog snapper, and schoolmaster, and it revises regulations for the golden tilefish endorsement, to indicate that vessels that have a valid or renewable golden tilefish longline endorsement at any time during the golden tilefish fishing year are not eligible to fish for golden tilefish using hook and line gear under the 500-pound gutted weight hook and line trip limit. The Notice of Availability for Amendment 35 published on February 5, and the comments are due by April 5. The Proposed Rule published on March 4, and the comments are due on April 4.

Regulatory Amendment 25, the council approved that amendment in December. It's been submitted for secretarial review, and we're developing the proposed rule package in the Region. Regulatory Amendment 25, this would increase the commercial ACL and recreational ACL for blueline tilefish and change the blueline tilefish bag limit to three fish per person per day and increase the black sea bass bag limit and modify the fishing year for yellowtail snapper to start in August.

Regulatory Amendment 16, this specifies areas where fishing could occur with black sea bass pots during November through April of each year, and it enhances gear marking requirements for the black sea bass pot sector. This amendment was recently submitted. It was approved by the council in December, and we're working on the proposed rule package for that as well.

DR. DUVAL: Thank you, Jack. Are there any questions for Jack about the status of amendments at this point? Seeing none, we will move on. We have a presentation from Dr. Paul Rudershausen. Paul is at N.C. State University. This is something that sort of came from the advisory panel. This is the result of cooperative research done by Paul and former council member Tom Burgess. They discussed this at their last advisory panel meeting and this is a presentation that we, at least Paul and I, have been talking about him making to the council for some time now, and so, without further ado, we'll turn it over to Paul.

MR. RUDERSHAUSEN: Thank you, Dr. Duval. I'm glad you ordered me my PhD status on the spot, and so I appreciate that. It's one less thing I get to check off of my 2016 to-do list, is to do my dissertation.

DR. DUVAL: I will tell Dr. Buckel that he doesn't have to worry about any of that any more.

MR. RUDERSHAUSEN: I want to walk you through the results of a study, working with Tom Burgess, and my coauthors, Jeff Buckel and Joe Hightower, in looking at size selectivity by old and new trap mesh sizes in the U.S. South Atlantic commercial bass fishery. Before I get started, I just wanted to acknowledge North Carolina Sea Grant for funding this project and a multitude of other projects that me and Tom Burgess have worked on over the years when he had a black sea bass trap endorsement.

The main motivation for this project is, as you know on the council and in the audience, the traps are the main commercial gear used to harvest black sea bass in the U.S. South Atlantic. Unfortunately, mesh size regulations, to the best of my knowledge, have not evolved with fish size regulations in this fishery, and so our goals in this study that was approved by North Carolina Sea Grant for funding in 2012 and that we collected field data on in 2013, was to determine two things, whether a larger trap mesh size would better match current fish size regulations for this fishery, and then, secondly, to determine whether an optimal trap mesh size could be predicted using simple black sea bass fish shape, or what I'm call morphometry.

I am going to, unfortunately, for better, or probably for worse, have to flip-flop as far as looking at or discussing both black sea bass lengths and trap mesh sizes in both English and metric units. I am really going to focus on a couple of benchmark measurements, and I will try to keep it fairly simple, but mostly I'm going to be talking about black sea bass total length this afternoon in the metric unit.

If you look at the second line of data there, the current minimum black sea bass total length is eleven-inches, as you know, or 279-millimeters. For the sake of brevity and clarity, I will try to keep the discussion of trap mesh sizes, especially since this is how this gear is marketed -- Mesh is commercially marketed in the United States on the English measurement, and so I will try to keep those measurements English, but, just for conversion's sake, it is worth my time to go through the bottom four rows of data on this slide.

The smallest square mesh size on a minimally legal black sea bass, current minimally legal black sea bass, trap is inch-and-a-half on the square, or 37.5-millimeters. The largest square trap mesh size on that minimally legal black sea bass trap is two-inches on the square, or 50.8-millimeters. Then colleagues and I decided to test, and I will walk you through the evolution of how we arrived at testing two new novel mesh sizes that were custom made for this study.

Two-and-a-quarter-inch mesh is 57.2-millimeters, and two-and-a-half-inch mesh is 63.5-millimeters, and please do stop me if you have any questions about these slides as I go through them, because perhaps, especially on the evolution of our thinking, as far as testing different wire mesh sizes, if I lose you, then I quite potentially have lost you for the duration of the presentation.

Here is the major motivation for why we underwent this study. In 1999, as you all know, the council instituted the ten-inch, or 254-millimeter, minimum length limit for black sea bass, and it followed up that size limit for fish with a minimum size limit for trap mesh itself in 2006, mandating or requiring this, what I will call for the remainder of my presentation, the back panel trap type. That is the trap type with five sides of inch-and-a-half mesh and a single back panel side, that is the side farthest from the haul rope, of two-inch mesh.

Then in 2011, as you know, the council adopted the eleven-inch, or 279-millimeter, minimum length limit for black sea bass. That went into inception, of course, July 1 of 2012. What we have is a lot of free space at the bottom of the slide there and now that the minimum size limit commercially for black sea bass has increased to eleven-inches, what's the next step? We went, along with colleagues, and we investigated the potential to increase the minimum trap mesh size to better optimize the selectivity, the commercial selectivity, trap selectivity, of this species.

Just to give you -- This is a pretty slick photo, because it gives you really a snapshot into or a refresher, and it's the trap meshes themselves that are indeed the culling devices of a black sea bass trap, unlike, for example, a blue crab trap that has a stand-alone cull ring. It's the meshes themselves that comprise the black sea bass trap that are indeed the culling devices.

If you have a uniform trap mesh size on all six sides of the trap that are too small for the current minimum size limit for the fish, then you're going to promote a needlessly high percentage of retention of sublegal fish. In contrast, if you have a uniform trap mesh size and it's too big for the current minimum size limit, then there is an unacceptably high, in all likelihood an unacceptably high, escape rate of legal fish from that trap mesh. Again, this photo is emphasizing that it's the trap meshes themselves that are indeed the culling device in this fishery.

The next four or five slides are walking you through our evolution as far as thinking of how did we arrive at testing two new novel mesh sizes, the two-and-a-quarter-inch mesh on the square and the two-and-a-half-inch mesh on the square.

While the total length of black sea bass is the regulatory measurement for this species, it's really not the total length, per se, but it's the body depth that dictates whether any one particular individual is retained by the trap mesh or egresses through that trap mesh to escape, and, of course, that body depth is shown not only in the green line, as far as the picture, but also in the photo. You can see in the photo that fish is trying to escape diagonally through a trap mesh, and the diagonal, of course, is the largest measurement in any one particular square mesh size, and so, again, this mesh is marketed on the square, but the animal is using it to potentially egress, or escape, through a trap on the diagonal.

In a previous study, Jeff Buckel and Scott Baker at North Carolina Sea Grant and myself went ahead and published that simple linear regression relationship between a black sea bass's body depth and his total length. From that relationship, we can then say, okay, for a minimally-legal black sea bass that, once again, is 279-millimeters commercially in this region, what is the predictive body depth, based on that relationship? It turns out to be about seventy-seven-millimeters.

What we can then do with that relationship between black sea bass total length and body depth is compare it against the maximum diagonal opening of two-inch mesh. Again, two-inch mesh is the largest mesh size that comprises this still legal back panel trap type.

When you look at the diagonal opening of two-inch mesh, you have to factor in the gauge of the wire and also vinyl coating, which is common on this wire, and that actual diagonal opening turns out to be about sixty-six-and-a-half-millimeters, on average. What we have, if you focus on the red circles in this slide, what we have is about a ten-millimeter what I will call disconnect between the average body depth of a minimally-legal black sea bass that's 279-millimeters commercially and the diagonal opening of this wire mesh.

We can take this thought process a step further and say, for any particular mesh size we elect to test, what's the 50th percentile, what's the median length, of retention for any one particular black sea bass size?

For example, in the left column on this particular slide, are three different mesh sizes measured and marketed on the square, two-inch, two-and-a-quarter, and two-and-a-half-inch on the square. In the right column, there are three different corresponding median, or 50th percentile, lengths as far as black sea bass retention are concerned for each of these three respective square mesh sizes.

You can see, for the two-inch mesh size, that the 50th percentile length, as far as black sea bass retention is concerned, is about 241-millimeters, which is less than the 279-millimeters commercial minimum length limit. When we then go up to two-and-a-quarter-inches, that 50th percentile of retention is 272-millimeters, roughly, or still less than the commercial minimum length limit of 279-millimeters.

Then, finally, if we decide to look at two-and-a-half-inch wire mesh on the square, that 50th percentile of retention is 302-millimeters, which now is greater than the commercial minimum length limit of 279-millimeters. We can do this for any one particular mesh size.

This kind of concluded our thought process as far as what new wire mesh sizes, square mesh sizes, to test, given the current 279-millimeter length limit. We knew we wanted to bracket the 50th percentile as far as lengths of retention are concerned, but we also wanted to select mesh sizes that we thought would have wider commercial applicability, and so this would potentially entice a wire mesh manufacturer, whoever that would be, to make this stuff for a broader market and not just the market for black sea bass fishers in our U.S. South Atlantic region, but potentially for other applications as well.

We then elected to pursue getting two-and-a-quarter-inch mesh, again on the square, and two-and-a-half-inch mesh on the square made by C.E. Shepherd Company, which is a leading wire mesh manufacturer based out of Houston, Texas.

Then the next step was, after we decided on these two new novel wire mesh sizes, the two-and-a-quarter and two-and-a-half-inch mesh sizes, to test all these different gear types side-by-side in field testing, which we conducted in 2013, and we fished all five trap types simultaneously in the same region. The pool of, quote, unquote, applicants, and that is available fish on the fishing grounds, was, quote, unquote, roughly equal for the five different trap types that we tested. Here at the top half of the slide are the five trap types.

When you're modeling selectivity, you have to have a control trap type whose retention is assumed to be one over the full size range over which you're modeling retention for each experimental trap type, and so we fished with a permit from National Marine Fisheries Service. We fished a trap type with uniform 37.5-millimeter, or one-and-a-half-inch, mesh. That trap had that mesh size on all six sides of the trap.

We fished this back panel trap type, which, again, is the current minimum legal trap type in this fishery, inch-and-a-half mesh, with one side of the two-inch back panel. We fished a trap with uniform 50.8-millimeter, or two-inch, mesh. We fished a trap type with this uniform two-and-a-quarter-inch mesh, 57.2-millimeters. Finally, we fished a trap with uniform 63.5-millimeter mesh, which, again, is that two-and-a-half-inch mesh.

This is a thick slide, but suffice it to say that there is two parts to looking at computing the parameters of a selectivity function. The first part is fitting a catch model, and we elected, based

on information criteria, to fit a negative binomial catch model. That fit the data the best, and, again, using the control trap ensures, or modeling the retention or selectivity, if you will, and I use those terms synonymously, modeling the retention of each experimental trap type assumes that the control trap has a retention of one, or 100 percent, across the full size range for which you're modeling the retention of each experimental trap type.

Then we proceeded to model that retention probability as a simple logistic function that's got two parameters, a and b . Then, finally, using those two parameters, a and b , you can, for each experimental trap type, you can calculate what I will call, for the rest of the talk this afternoon, an L50. That is a length at which 50 percent of the individuals, any particular length, that 50 percent of the individuals are retained, and also an L10. That is a length at which 10 percent of the individuals are retained by the gear. We are calling L10, for the purposes of my talk, an approximate size of initial retention for each of the experimental gear types.

Finally, I am going to present this afternoon, in a couple of slides, a mean estimated mass of legal black sea bass amongst the experimental trap types. Again, mass is the unit by which this species is sold in the commercial market, and so we're comparing mean estimate of mass amongst the four experimental trap mesh types and then comparing a mean number of sublegal black sea bass among the experimental trap mesh types.

Now diving into some results. These are modeled catch rates. The observed data are the dots for twenty-four length bins and the predicted data are the lines for twenty-four length bins of modeled catch data, from top to bottom, for the control trap and the back panel trap type. The two-inch trap type is the middle graph. The two-and-a-quarter-inch trap type is the graph second from the bottom, and the two-and-a-half-inch trap type is the very bottom graph of data.

The big take-home message from this slide is, as you would predict, the traps with smaller average mesh size have a greater catch of smaller fish. In contrast, traps with larger average mesh sizes have a lesser catch of those smaller size bins of fish.

This is probably one of the two most important slides that I'm going to show this afternoon, because now this is the retention probability, which at its lowest is zero and at its highest is one. Any logistic function varies from a low value of zero on the Y-axis to a high value of one. This is now the graphed retention probability, from top to bottom, for the back panel trap type, the two-inch trap type, the two-and-a-quarter-inch, and the two-and-a-half-inch trap type.

There is a couple of big take-home messages from this slide. First, let me walk you through the vertical lines. The vertical solid black line in each of the graphs is the current minimum size limit of eleven-inches, or 279-millimeters, commercially. The vertical black dashed line in each of these graphs is the L50, or length at which 50 percent of the individuals are retained.

The first take-home message is this, the median value for L50 of 248-millimeters for the back panel trap type and the median L50 value for the two-inch trap type, which is the second graph, 259-millimeters, those are both less than the commercial minimum size limit of 279-millimeters, and so that's clear indication that these two trap types are retaining a higher percentage of sublegal individuals than the other two trap types.

As far as the two novel gear types, or two novel experimental trap mesh sizes, the two-and-a-quarter-inch trap mesh size, that's Panel C, and the two-and-a-half-inch mesh trap size is Panel D. Those meeting L50, or, again, the length at 50 percent retention for each of those two gear types, are then greater than the minimum size limit of 279-millimeters.

The other take-home message that I'm going to throw at you, and I will come back to this in about three slides, is the confidence, the statistical confidence, that we have about that median estimate of L50, which, again, is the vertical black dashed line in each of the graphs. The statistical confidence is lower for each of the gray lines that is wider around that vertical black dashed line, and so if you compare that median L50 value, the black dashed line, and the gray dashed lines, the statistical confidence about that, that for the back panel trap type, that's less than for the other three trap types.

That's clear indication, and this is one of my big take-home messages this afternoon, but that's a clear indication that the sublegal individuals that could otherwise escape out of two-inch mesh on this back panel trap type, there is a high percentage of sublegal individuals that are not finding and escaping through that back panel two-inch mesh before the trap is pulled. It does appear, and I will come back to this in about three or four slides, that the mixed mesh trap is not optimizing selectivity compared to uniform trap mesh sizes in this fishery.

If you want to further convince yourself above and beyond the last slide that there may be a better or, in my opinion and definitely the opinion of my coauthors as well, that there's definitely a better trap mesh size that will optimize selectivity, given the current minimum size limit of 279-millimeters, this slide should hopefully do it.

The top panel of data is mean estimated mass of black sea bass amongst the four experimental trap mesh traps. From left to right, it's the back panel trap type, the two-inch, the two-and-a-quarter-inch, and the two-and-a-half-inch. The big take-home message, again, just solely focusing on that top graph, is, in pairwise statistical testing, there was not a significant difference in catch rates between the back panel trap type and each of the three larger experimental trap types.

In contrast, the bottom graph there is mean numbers of sublegal black sea bass, and, in this pairwise testing, we found a significant difference in numerical catch rates of sublegal individuals between the back panel and the two-and-a-quarter-inch traps and also between the back panel and two-and-a-half-inch traps.

If you want to further convince yourself that there's a better trap that would optimize selectivity, this could also serve as notice to you. This is quite a simple result, but a potentially eye-popping result. What I have here is legal -- Each of these columns adds up to 100 percent, but what I have here is two categories, legal versus sublegal individuals, for each of the four experimental trap types that we fished in this study. From left to right, again, it's from smallest to largest trap mesh sizes. It's the back panel trap, the two-inch, the two-and-a-quarter, and two-and-a-half.

You can see roughly equal percentages of legal versus sublegal individuals for the back panel trap type. When we go to that two-inch trap type, about two-thirds of the individuals are legal. When we go to the two-and-a-quarter-inch trap type, about 95 percent of the individuals are legal, and then when we go up to the two-and-a-half-inch trap type, almost all the individuals, 99.8 percent

of the individuals, are legal, and so a big reduction, percentagewise reduction, in sublegal catch as you increase the average trap mesh size.

This is another important slide, because hopefully it will convince you, and it's going to take me a while to walk you through this slide, but hopefully, at the end of it, it will convince you that a lot of researchers, myself included, asked for more data to kind of rehash the same study, or to reframe the study, but essentially do the same thing. Hopefully, at the end of the slide, I will convince you that this study does not need to be repeated in the future, and so let me put that in different words.

Given future fish size regulatory changes in this fishery, the council does not have to advocate, nor does it have to condone, funding of another study to see what the optimal trap mesh size needs to be. It can simply use this relationship that has now been accepted for publication into the *Journal of Fisheries Research*.

What I have plotted on this slide is this. I have total length of black sea bass on the Y-axis, and I have the center-to-center mesh size plotted on the X-axis of this graph. Again, the center-to-center measurement is how this gear is sold, even though the actual opening is less than that, based on the gauge of the wire itself.

What I then have plotted in the black line is the predicted minimum size of retention of black sea bass. What I have plotted in the gray line is the predicted minimum size of retention of black sea bass, again, for any one particular trap mesh size, but now assuming, as the reviewers of our fishery research publication pointed out, that black sea bass, and Tom Burgess and myself and other folks involved in this fishery can point out, that black sea bass will attempt to squeeze vertically, compress their body depth, through a mesh to try to egress from black sea bass traps.

That gray line is assuming that a black sea bass, on average, will compress itself to try to egress from the trap through one of these meshes to about 93 percent of its original body depth, and that 93 percent is looking at other teleost species that are caught with traps and other types of bottom gears.

What we found, in plotting these two lines, the black line, what I will call the uncompressed line, and the gray line, the line of compression, where black sea bass will squeeze themselves through, is that our original predictions of L50, the median size at retention, or the 50th percentile length as far as black sea bass retention is concerned, turned out to be initial sizes of retention. We thought we were predicting, going in and arriving at mesh sizes to test, we thought we were using an L50, and really what we were using was an initial size of retention, or an L10 value.

The L10 values are plotted right on top. They fit nicely right on top of the black line. The L50 values that we arrived at from our selectivity model, or our retention model, if you will, are the gray symbols, and they fall right on top of that compressibility line.

I told you a few slides ago that I was going to come back to the fact that the back panel, or mixed mesh trap that's the current legal minimum trap mesh configuration in this fishery, does not optimize selectivity, and this is further evidence of that. The three largest trap mesh sizes are plotted as either black or gray circles.

The back panel trap L10 and L50 values are plotted as the black and gray squares, and, because they don't fall on that line, that's further proof, again, that sublegal, some sublegal, individuals, compared to uniform trap mesh sizes -- Some sublegal individuals in the back panel mixed mesh trap are not able to find and/or escape through that back panel before the trap is hauled.

Chip Collier kindly provided me some effort data for the U.S. South Atlantic bass fishery, and so I thought it was an informative exercise to go through estimating, based on our catch data, our catch per unit effort data, the number of fish that would be discarded, and, correspondingly, discarded dead. The number of fish being the number of black sea bass, of course, discarded and discarded dead by the minimum legal back panel trap type, which is the left two columns of data in this slide, and also by the two-and-a-quarter-inch, or 57.2-millimeter, uniform 57.2-millimeter, trap type, which are Columns 3 and 4 in this graph.

You can see the number of discarded individuals on an annual basis for this entire fishery extrapolated on the assumption that all folks use the back panel trap type, which likely now is not true, but, hypothetically, the estimated number of discarded sublegal individuals at the eleven-inch minimum size limit would be 208,000. If all folks, hypothetically, had an endorsement and switched to the 57.2-millimeter, or two-and-a-quarter-inch mesh trap type, that would drop to about 11,000 discarded individuals per year. That's about a 95 percent reduction in discards and, of course, a concurrent reduction in discard mortality.

I want to also emphasize one more thing compared to a lot of other fisheries I've dealt with. This is an extremely -- As it is right now, as we sit in this room, this is an extremely clean fishery. There is very low bycatch of both the target and other species as well. With modifications that our paper, accepted paper, in *Fisheries Research* condone, this fishery could be even cleaner and this could be literally a model fishery for other folks to follow. It is an extremely clean fishery. With modifications to the gear mesh sizes, it could become just an astronomically stellar fishery as far as published rates of discarding are concerned.

It was told to me about a decade ago, by then Chairman Curran, that the council probably wouldn't -- Hypothetically, the council probably wouldn't move on condoning or regulating gear types that weren't available on the commercial market, and so I remembered that conversation with Chairman Curran in prepping this talk, and, about a month-and-a-half ago, I contacted C.E. Shepherd in Houston, Texas. I asked about the continued availability, or potential availability, of two-and-a-quarter and two-and-a-half-inch mesh.

They informed me that, and this is simply a PDF of their price quote, but they informed me that they could retool their equipment, once again, and presumably at any time, to fabricate not only two-and-a-quarter-inch mesh, but mesh of any particular size, it would appear, and the quote they gave me for this two-and-a-quarter-inch mesh, this is an active quote, I believe, or, if the price has gone up, I'm sure it's nominal, but they quoted me a price of about \$110 a roll.

MR. COX: I would just be curious of what would that -- Say if bass trappers now changed one panel, what would that cost per trap for that piece of panel?

MR. RUDERSHAUSEN: Jack, that's a great question. I spent a solid number of hours in Sneads Ferry with Tom Burgess on the hill making this equipment, and I am trying to remember how many, at one roll for \$110, how many back panel traps that would make.

This is a wild guess, because it is a hundred-foot-long roll. Kind of off the seat of my pants, I am saying that that would supply about thirty traps, but I want to also emphasize that our data are pretty clearly showing that that would definitely be a price savings on the other -- To put the shoe on the other foot, the data that we collected here in this study are pretty clearly showing that a mixed mesh trap, regardless of the size of the back panel, is not going to optimize the selectivity for this species.

Again, I want to emphasize what optimizing selectivity means, and that is retaining legal fish, maximizing retention of legal fish, while simultaneously minimizing the retention of sublegal fish. A mixed-mesh trap is not optimizing that selectivity as well as a trap with a uniform mesh size.

MR. COX: What did you say the hundred-foot roll cost?

MR. RUDERSHAUSEN: The hundred-foot roll was quoted at \$110. It's a little over a dollar a foot, and I am ignorant to the shipping price on that, Jack. I can't remember. In conclusion, this is the final slide I have. It does appear this uniform 57.2-millimeter, or two-and-a-quarter-inch, mesh trap balances both commercial wire availability and optimizing the selectivity for the current eleven-inch minimum size limit.

This is the point I just made to Jack Cox, that mixed-mesh traps, such as the back panel trap type, appear not to optimize selectivity as well as uniform trap mesh sizes. As I told you a few slides ago, the study does not need to be repeated if fish size regulations change, because we now have predictions of fish shape, as well as predictions of sizes of initial retention across a broad range of trap mesh sizes. Again, future predictions of optimal trap mesh size should be based on black sea bass ability of the species to squeeze through trap mesh. There is multiple cooperators that helped me, and they are listed here, and I will be happy to take any further questions.

MR. HAYMANS: Thank you for the presentation. I have to say this may be the first time I've ever heard a presentation given that this is the definitive work and don't repeat it. I mean we're always about finding newer and better, right? Given that, I would have loved to have seen the escape rings used, or at least a two-and-a-half-inch escape ring, or two-and-a-quarter as well, because it's much cheaper than replacing the entire panel or the entire trap.

I would like to know -- I mean I would love to be able to see just how the fish reacts to that. I mean I heard you say that not all the fish are able to get to that back panel, or use that back panel, but if you included one or two escape rings on opposite walls, could you accomplish the same thing?

MR. RUDERSHAUSEN: I think the answer is now, again, there is a trap fishery up in the Mid-Atlantic that I'm not familiar with, and, if I'm not mistaken, they do use escape panels, and there has been some work done at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science that has investigated that, but, based on our data, I can pretty clearly tell you that the optimization of selectivity will be further reduced if, instead of replacing the entire back panel, you just replace various small sections of the back panel.

Fish are going to have, especially in a crowded trap, meaning with a lot of retained individuals, sublegal individuals that the fisher cannot retain in the first place that would have a further difficult

time in locating and egressing through the trap, and so I would strongly suggest that that would not be an effective approach to optimize selectivity.

MR. HARTIG: At the size limit, is there any sexual dimorphic concerns, I mean at the eleven-inch? The males seem to be different than the females as they age. At eleven-inches, is there any differences?

MR. RUDERSHAUSEN: Ben, that's an excellent question, and I plead ignorance on that. We didn't investigate that. We didn't investigate size selectivity by gender, and, furthermore, we didn't, in the 2008 study, we didn't investigate fish shape, or fish morphometry, by gender, and so that's definitely an avenue. If there's concerns about that, I'm going to have to recant on my call for more research and say that's an avenue of further research, if that's something that the council and the funding agencies warrant is important.

MR. BOWEN: Great presentation. As you were going through it, it's kind of a shame that we only have thirty-two endorsement holders. Will this presentation and your study be used in say the Mid-Atlantic or the North Atlantic? I mean it's a shame that you went through all this detail, and it's very detail-oriented, and we only have thirty-two endorsement holders. It's a little perplexing to me.

MR. RUDERSHAUSEN: I guess I can't speak to whether it's going to be used in other regions where black sea bass are commercially harvested with traps, but, given the -- Jack Cox can speak, I think, to this, since he's an endorsement holder, but given the importance of this species in our region and the preponderance for commercial fishers to use traps to efficiently harvest this species, I think it's -- Even though there's only thirty-two endorsement holders, I think it still has an incredible bearing on this fishery, and, again, it's -- I hope that this data is brought to bear on advising folks to formulate a model fishery after, as far as a way to reduce bycatch, because this is about as low a bycatch, as far as published bycatch rates, there is.

MR. BOWEN: Thanks, and, like I said, as you were presenting, I was almost wishful thinking there were more than thirty-two, and so thanks.

MR. HAYMANS: It seems obvious from this that we probably need to look at bumping the minimum mesh at some point, but do you see any reason why we need to retain a maximum mesh size?

MR. RUDERSHAUSEN: I guess, as I think about it, the maximum mesh size is too small now, and so there doesn't need to be a minimum or maximum, but there just needs to be one mesh size, and so that's what I would encourage the council to consider, is a single mesh size that's not the minimum for the trap, because the minimum and the maximum is the same thing for a trap, and so it's just a single mesh size per trap that would have the most -- It would optimize the selectivity for this fishery, and so I don't -- To answer your question succinctly, no, I don't see the utility of having a maximum mesh size in this fishery.

MR. COX: Paul, you and Tom did a great job doing this. It's very interesting, if you really understand the fishery and you understand how a fisherman goes out there and works his traps and to be very efficient and not have to go through fifteen or twenty fish to measure them as you go to

your next trap. Anytime that we're looking at ways to minimizing some discards, and I think is a great idea here, and so I'm very supportive of it. Thank you.

MR. HEMILRIGHT: What does a black sea bass pot cost, and if you were to go with the wiring that you used, what would it cost? What does a bass sea bass pot cost nowadays and what would one with using the larger mesh size, fully fitted and ready to throw overboard to go fishing, what does that cost?

MR. RUDERSHAUSEN: I apologize that I keep using Jack as my crutch here, but I worked with Tom Burgess extensively, and Tom and Jack know each other and so they can probably weigh in better about it, but I think it's -- When we were making this, and please don't quote me on this, but it was on the order of about forty-dollars per trap.

Now, there's a huge distinction in cost whether you make the trap yourself or you elect to pay somebody else to do it, and in Sneads Ferry, which is one of the places where there is quite a bit of trapping activity in this region, there are a couple of individuals that do make, commercially make, traps for sale and so some fishers elect to get those outsourced, and so I think it's on the order of about forty-dollars per trap.

Again, I could walk through the math, but I'm thinking it's about the same rate for this new mesh, these new mesh sizes, that we tested. It would not increase the rate dramatically, if at all, if the new mesh sizes were adopted. It wouldn't increase the cost of this gear. It appears that, roughly speaking, and, again, roughly speaking, the cost of the new mesh sizes that we tested are about the same as the costs of the inch-and-a-half and two-inch mesh sizes that have been used in this fishery for decades.

MR. HEMILRIGHT: Thank you for that, and, also, what's the pot limit a person can fish nowadays out there, with the regs?

DR. DUVAL: Thirty-five.

MR. HEMILRIGHT: So if you took -- To change out your gear, if it had to be done, it would be probably under \$1,500.

MR. COX: It's a maximum of thirty-five traps now, with an average probably of about twenty-three traps being fished over the thirty-two permit holders. I fish about eighteen. Some guys fish a few more and some a little bit less, but it would probably cost about twenty-five-dollars a trap to change out the back panel.

DR. DUVAL: Are there any other questions?

MR. BROWN: I was kind of leaning on Jimmy for the amount of the cost per trap, and he indicated it's more like around seventy-dollars, with the rope and the float and everything.

MR. RUDERSHAUSEN: Presumably the rope and the float -- Point taken, and I'm not going to argue details, and I totally respect the fact that there's those issues, but presumably the rope and float would be changed over from the old traps as well and used in the new traps. I was speaking about the mesh themselves, as opposed to what I will call the auxiliary equipment to haul.

MR. COX: Paul, just to clarify, in this study, were you recommending changing all the panels or just one panel?

MR. RUDERSHAUSEN: I would recommend -- I am choosing my words carefully, Jack, because the results of this study suggest that, again, to use that phrase "optimize selectivity", but to optimize selectivity, it's better that all panels of the trap get changed. That isn't to say, as a segue, that it wouldn't be a great idea to go ahead and have a grace period that you change a single panel, or consider changing a single panel, and then, after a certain amount of time, it's expected that the fisher may change more panels, but the study does show, to optimize selectivity, that all panels of the trap should be changed.

DR. DUVAL: We're just going to wrap this up, if that's okay. There have been a couple of anecdotal comments that a two-and-a-quarter-inch back panel works great, just from fishermen who have looked at this, keeping in mind Paul's comments about optimization of the selectivity for our current size limit.

I think getting Paul here to give this presentation has been sort of, I think, probably a couple of council meetings in the making. We've had a full agenda, and it really came from discussions that have occurred at the advisory panel level regarding the eleven-inch commercial minimum size limit versus the thirteen-inch recreational minimum size limit and discussions about discards from hook and line fisheries versus discards from the pot fishery.

If the council wanted to consider any further action in terms of looking at changing gear configurations, this would first have to go before the SSC, just for their view, even though it has been peer reviewed. Paul would need to make a presentation there. You know we could certainly see if the AP would like to get this presentation, if there's room on their agenda, as well, just so that all players are in the loop. We don't have to make any decisions here today.

We are going to be getting a presentation from the Regional Office during our Data Collection Committee meeting with regard to standardized bycatch reporting methodology, and there are some statistics in there about bycatch, as defined under the Magnuson Act, amongst our managed fisheries. That might help inform future discussion, and I just wanted to, while we had the time, get Paul here to make this presentation, and I thought it was pretty informative. Unless there are any other burning questions, I would like to move on to the next agenda item. Last word, Jack.

MR. COX: To Dewey's question to me a while ago, I need to correct it. It would cost about a hundred-dollars a trap is what I'm thinking, and not twenty-five-dollars.

MR. HEMILRIGHT: I was just thinking about the pot, because you would already have the other gear that was the buoy and stuff like that. I was just wondering and asking the question and thank you.

DR. DUVAL: Thank you so much, Paul. We really appreciate you coming down here and making that presentation. It was very informative. The next item on our agenda is SSC Report, before we get into Amendment 37, and I think that our esteemed SSC Vice Chair, Dr. Marcel Reichert, is going to give us a report.

The SSC met via webinar on Friday, just this past Friday, and what they were reviewing was two different methods of looking at how to deal with the issue of tracking ACLs in numbers of fish when a size limit increase is being contemplated or considered, which is what we have in Amendment 37.

We're looking at some pretty significant increases in size limits for hogfish, and so as you increase the size limit, the average weight of the fish is going to increase as well, and so how do you account for that? We had some discussion about this during our December council meeting with regard to average weights of fish going up, so that you could potentially blow through your ACL if you were only accounting for things in numbers of fish while not taking into consideration weight.

There has been a couple of approaches that the SSC considered and evaluated at their meeting on Friday, and the results are probably not quite as intuitive as one might imagine, and so I'm going to turn things over to Marcel.

DR. REICHERT: Thank you, Madam Chair. SSC Chair Luiz Barbieri was unable to make this meeting, and, hence, my report today. As you mentioned, the SSC met via webinar last Friday and reviewed two proposed methods to anticipate the effects of establishing recreational management specifications in number of fish and how a potential increase in minimum size limit may affect fishing level recommendations. The SSC thanked Dr. Mike Errigo and Dr. Nick Farmer for their significant efforts in developing and presenting the methods that were reviewed by the SSC on Friday.

The SSC noted that both scientific and management uncertainties are high for this stock, whether considering the assessment yield predictions or the size limit effects, especially in the case of a hermaphroditic species such as hogfish. It can be difficult to predict how size and selectivity may change the impact on reproductive potential.

One of the major concerns that we discussed, and has come to the forefront through these analyses, is the very poor sampling of weight of fish caught in this predominantly recreational fishery. The SSC also recognized that these uncertainties affect both of the methods that were presented.

After considerable discussion, the SSC considered the method proposed by the council staff, which is here called Method 2, to be the best scientific information available at this time to address the related issues of specifying the recreational ACL in numbers and addressing the proposed minimum size limit change.

Addressing the impact of the size limit change on fishery yield is appropriate and necessary, and the Method 2 we felt was the more appropriate approach to use at this time. Therefore, the SSC recommends that the ABC values detailed in the report, and I will show them in one of the last slides, are appropriate and believed adequate to prevent overfishing with the level of uncertainty for this stock, based on the yield per recruit analysis. As well, they are likely to prevent significant underfishing.

Furthermore, the SSC recommends that the hogfish stock assessment for the Florida Keys be updated once the 2018 data are available. I was a little ahead of myself, and so first I want to mention that it is important to point out that this recommendation is considered temporary and intended only to serve until the full revised projections incorporating the size limit changes are

available, and they were not available just yet. The SSC requests that these revised projections are completed and available for our review at our October 2016 meeting.

Furthermore, the SSC recommends that the hogfish stock assessment for the Florida Keys stock is to be updated once the 2018 data are available, and that's consistent with one of the recommendations that we put in our October 2014 report as to the timing of an update of the current hogfish stock assessment. We felt that that was important, considering the uncertainties in the assessment that were both pointed out by the review panel as well as the SSC.

In addition to the recommendations in that report, both by us and the review panel, we provide several recommendations to reduce the uncertainty in the next assessment, and those recommendations are detailed in the report that hopefully will be available on Friday. We are still working on incorporating some of the reviews of the other SSC members. This slide summarizes the recommended levels, based on the Method 2, and this concludes my SSC report.

DR. DUVAL: Marcel, perhaps you or staff could just give a brief review of these two different methods, just to kind of bring everyone up to speed. I think one of those methods was --

DR. REICHERT: Yes, and I think it would probably be good to either ask John Carmichael or Mike Errigo to give that overview, just to make sure that you guys get the appropriate detail. Method 1 was the method developed by Nick Farmer, and Method 2 was the method developed by council staff.

DR. DUVAL: I see John coming up here. I just think we need a little bit of -- The committee needs a little bit of context.

DR. REICHERT: Just to clarify, a lot of the details are given in the report that we will be providing to the council, but, John.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Right, and so the materials that were given to the SSC, the Method 1 was the South Atlantic Council approach, which was built on the idea of taking the original ABC recommendations. That was the Method 2, was the South Atlantic Council approach. It would take the original recommendations that we had and preserve the ABC in numbers and consider how the yield of the fishery could change as you change the selectivity and, thus, change the average weight, and the idea is that fish die as individuals and the fishing mortality rates and preventing overfishing is tied back to how many individuals are killed.

The size at which you harvest those individuals affects the overall poundage you take from the fishery. That's why you change the size limits and then you can change the amount of yield you get within say maintaining the same fishing mortality rate. That was the goal of the South Atlantic Council's approach and the yield per recruit analysis was a way of verifying that you would maintain the fishing mortality rate where you wanted to be.

The SERO approach was really very consistent with what the council has tended to do in the past and looked at how changes in the size limit would affect the yield and, therefore, in converting it to numbers, then the numbers that you get is actually at a lower level, based on the higher poundage yield, and so it would set your fishery at the higher poundage yield. I mean at the same poundage yield from the original ABC recommendation, but then the numbers -- In the converting of the

recreational fishery, the numbers of fish that you could actually harvest would be lower, and it could be quite a bit lower, in some cases.

Then, within the SERO document, you noticed there were seven or so alternatives for different ways of looking at and calculating the average weight, and, as we noted, the average weight is quite uncertain for this fishery, and that's why there were so many alternatives there.

The SSC has made a point in the past of noting that when the council takes actions which affect selectivity, and therefore affect the yield of the fish, that you are having impacts on your reference points and everything else, and so there probably will be a change in the actual value of FMSY. We don't really have the ability to do that until we get the new projections and look at the reference points and what the yield is, once you've chosen a size limit alternative, which we hope you will do and make it final in June, which then opens the door to get these projections updated and the SSC will look at them in October, so we've dealt with the immediate situation of this alternative yield that's available from different sizes.

DR. REICHERT: Thank you, John.

DR. DUVAL: I think at the crux of the matter is you're changing the selectivity when you change the size limit, and so the SSC's conclusion was that the second method, Method 2, more appropriately, if not fully and completely, was able to account for that change in selectivity, and I don't know who else -- I don't remember if any other council members were on the webinar, but this was a very robust discussion about how changes in the size limit can impact how we basically account for how we track our ACLs.

It was, quite honestly, a pretty fascinating discussion. I think the bottom line is really the best way to do this is to update those projections to get a final answer, but, in the interim, this is the most appropriate approach to ensure that we're not unfairly penalizing the harvest of fish, underfishing, I guess.

DR. REICHERT: Yes, and that was one of the key elements of the SSC discussion, until we got the full projections available.

MR. COX: John, when you do a selectivity study, do you look at commercial separate than recreational, and then the two are combined to change the ABC, or is it commercial gets to -- If they have an increase in selectivity, will that benefit the commercial?

MR. CARMICHAEL: The way they will do it when they do the projections is there will be a selectivity with each fleet, and it will keep all of that bookkeeping separate throughout, and then it will tell you what the yield is across all of those. The yield per recruit analysis condenses it down to just one, and so you can make like a weighted average of what the selectivity is across all the ages, but it will be more refined than that in the actual projections.

It will be reflecting the change by fleet of the size limit. Now, in some cases, there are some fleets that already may harvest a fish that's greater than the size limit you're choosing, in which you making the size limit action may not have any impact on the selectivity that you estimate will happen in the future, and so selectivity is really based on what are you observing. In this case, we'll have to predict what it is, based on the size limit, and then, when we do -- That's why the

SSC wanted two years before they do the next assessment, so that they can have enough time to see what the selectivity ultimately ends up being from this action.

DR. DUVAL: I would like to let Marcel follow up before we get into other questions.

DR. REICHERT: Yes, and the discussions at the SSC were focused on the recreational catches, because the commercial catches are tracked using weight, and so that's a clarification.

DR. DUVAL: I think also the commercial harvest is already above that size limit change, and so you wouldn't really be impacting the selectivity, and so I think that works in --

DR. REICHERT: Yes, exactly. There is no minimum size limit discussed for the commercial sector and only for the recreational sector.

DR. DUVAL: A follow-up, Jack?

MR. COX: To follow up, I mean, John, you and I have had a conversation about the ABC on the commercial -- The ACL change for the vermilion snapper fishery, and we've always had this discussion that if the selectivity changes, then we may get an increase, but as the current -- As it stands, we're fishing at maximum MSY now, and so I've always -- We're seeing an increase in our selectivity, but I'm also hearing that selectivity may not be -- We're using weight versus the size and is that what I'm hearing that you're saying, Marcel?

DR. DUVAL: It's the way the annual catch limits are tracked. They are tracked in weight, and for hogfish, because we have such small annual catch limits, we're looking at tracking those annual catch limits on the recreational side in numbers, and so what's the most appropriate way to make sure that we are converting those pounds into numbers? This was the method to do that, and the selectivity change is really impacting the recreational sector with this increase in the minimum size limit, because the commercial sector is already fishing at or above that minimum size limit.

I think it sounds like what you're saying for vermilion snapper is that you're seeing that the commercial sector is bringing in more and more big fish, and that would all come out in the next assessment.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Yes, that's correct, and so they would look at what is observed in the fishery and what's happened in the years that are added to that assessment when the update is done. The selectivity then would reflect that, and you could have, perhaps, a change in yield if the fishery has moved to catching a larger fish, on average.

DR. DUVAL: Are people totally and utterly confused right now? Are there other questions for Marcel? If there are no other questions, you are free, Marcel. People may circle back to you and I assume you're going to be here over the next day or so.

DR. REICHERT: I will be here until Thursday morning. As I said, we are still working on the full report, but we hope to have that available before full council.

DR. DUVAL: Thank you, Marcel. Thank you, John. Now we will jump into Amendment 37. We will first take five for a rest room break.

DR. DUVAL: We're going to go ahead and pick back up with Snapper Grouper Amendment 37, and this is Attachments 4a, 4b, and 4c in your briefing book, and I think Myra is going to take us through the summary of the public hearing comments first.

MS. BROUWER: Thank you, Michelle. You have, in your briefing book, a package that includes all the written comments that were received in addition to the questions log from if there had been anybody in attendance at our Q&A webinar and also, of course, the minutes from all the hearings. I will just walk you through my little summary that I prepared that's at the very front of that packet, with some of the salient points of the comments. I have divided it up into comments that are pertinent to the Georgia through North Carolina stock and then we get into the Florida comments.

Of course, folks in the Carolinas and Georgia are aware that the assessment that was conducted on hogfish is not applicable to that stock, and so they maintain that since there is not -- Since the stock assessment doesn't apply to the Georgia/North Carolina stock of hogfish at this time, the public feels that no management measures are necessary for that stock until there are sufficient data to conduct a new assessment.

The concern is that the MRIP survey is not adequately sampling the spearfishing portion, the dive boats, and so there's a lot of uncertainty in the data for hogfish in that region. We were told that hogfish have indeed become a very popular item in restaurants. There's a lot of demand for them. The public thought that yes, the council should consider conservative management measures for hogfish in the Carolinas, especially for the commercial sector, because there is reports of Florida vessels that are traveling to the Carolinas and fishing on that stock, and so there was actually quite a bit of concern about some effort shifts, especially if the council proceeds to put in a very restrictive commercial trip limit in Florida.

There were then some specific recommendations for the council to consider a two-month spawning closure during May and June for hogfish in the Carolinas for both sectors and to put in place a 500-pound commercial trip limit. There was also another suggestion to put in a spawning closure and decrease the trip limit to 350-pounds.

In general, there was support for the other measures, such as the preferred minimum size limit and the preferred bag limit, for that stock. There were some suggestions to keep that bag limit at five fish and increase the minimum size to sixteen-inches, but, in general, folks were in agreement that, because hogfish in that part of the world are much larger than the ones in Florida, that the seventeen-inch preferred was appropriate.

The commercial trip limit, similar to what North Carolina has currently in place, came back up, and there was a suggestion that the council should consider that, and I know that you guys had discussions about this already. Then there was a suggestion to consider a headcount trip limit for the commercial sector in the Carolinas, because there is, apparently, a lot of variation in weight among hogfish in that region.

MR. HAYMANS: At the Georgia meeting, there was a question that came up regarding the dive trips, whether or not dive operators needed a charter license or not. Did that ever go anywhere as far as generating an answer?

DR. DUVAL: I don't think so, and I think we talked about that at the last meeting, actually.

MS. BROUWER: Sorry about that. Now that you mention it, I am recalling it, and I know I jotted it down somewhere, but I will follow up on that and get back to you. Moving on to the comments that we received for Florida, there was most support for an increase in the minimum size limit to actually sixteen-inches. The preferred currently that you have is for the fifteen-inch fork length. Some folks even thought that seventeen-inches for Florida hogfish was appropriate, and there was also suggestions of a step-up increase.

When we were in the Keys, folks talked about the mini-season being a time during which there is a lot of undersized hogfish that are being harvested, and so there was a suggestion from folks down there that the council consider a closure during the mini-season to reduce discards. There was also a suggestion to close the recreational harvest of hogfish during June through August, and so a little bit longer, and consideration of a three-fish bag limit, or add it to the snapper aggregate. Currently, your preferred is a one-fish per person limit for the Florida stock.

As was mentioned earlier, commercial fishermen in the Keys stated that a twenty-five-pound commercial trip limit for them would affect them quite a bit. They thought that the council should consider a daily limit, and that would work better for them. Then there was some talk about the value and how increasing the minimum size limit may have some economic repercussions, because there is a certain size that is preferred by restaurants, and so dockside value may be affected with the change in the size limit.

There were some folks in South Florida that brought up the fact that since they own both South Atlantic and Gulf permits that they would, in fact, prefer that the boundary between the West Florida stock and the East Florida/Florida Keys stock of hogfish be set at the jurisdictional boundary between the councils.

There was also support for a bag limit of two per person per day or two per vessel per day, whichever is more restrictive, and then some folks were okay with the one per person per day. There was an interesting suggestion also of a slot limit, where only one fish over twenty-one or twenty-two-inches could be kept. That would limit the number of large males that can be removed from the population and still allow folks to keep a trophy fish. That's, in a nutshell, the comments that we received, and I will take any questions you may have.

DR. DUVAL: Are there questions for Myra about the public comments? I am not seeing any. Then we will move on. Are you going to be working from the decision document or the DEIS?

MS. BROUWER: I will walk you through the decision document, and this is Attachment 4b. The first thing is you had approved the purpose and need back in December. There was a suggestion from actually the NEPA Coordinator in the Regional Office to exclude the text that you see highlighted, which reads: Specify time period based on results of the recent stock assessment conducted with data through 2012. He was objecting to that language being there, because he maintains that the analyses are in fact being conducted with more recent data, and the concern was that that was not being very reflective in the purpose. This is the one edit that has been suggested to the purpose and need.

DR. DUVAL: Can I get a motion?

MS. MCCAWLEY: **I move that we suggest the IPT's edits to the purpose and need.**

DR. DUVAL: Do you mean approve the IPT's suggested edits?

MS. MCCAWLEY: **Yes, approve.** Thank you.

DR. DUVAL: Is there a second? It's seconded by Charlie. Any discussion? **Any objection? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

MS. BROUWER: Moving on to Action 1, it's on PDF page 4 of your document, and this is Modification to the Fishery Management Unit for Hogfish. I should say, from now forward, you can expect to have lots of edits to the language of the actions and alternatives, and this is because this particular amendment has a lot of acronyms, and so we've decided that we really need to watch our consistency with that, and this is why all of these edits are being suggested, and so I apologize for a lot of highlighted text there. We also fixed the no action alternatives based on your guidance at the December meeting that we received for mutton snapper and excluded language such as you see on your screen right now.

Currently, your preferred, and we've already touched on this, is to set the boundary between the two stocks, the one managed by the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council and the one managed by the South Atlantic Council, at a line that would be due west from a point just south of Cape Sable, Florida. This is what that line looks like.

I have also included, throughout the decision document, any recommendations from the Snapper Grouper AP. They got to see this document before the public hearings, and so they looked at it before you had made any changes in December, and so even though they're a little bit dated, still their recommendations are included, as well as relevant public hearing comments for each of the actions.

DR. DUVAL: Is there a desire on the part of the committee to approve the IPT's suggested edits?

MR. HARTIG: **I would make that motion, Madam Chairman, to approve the edits.**

DR. DUVAL: Motion by Ben and second by Zack. Is there discussion? **Any objection? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

MR. HARTIG: I did have a question, though. Do we have to consult with the Gulf on this boundary issue, or have we, or --

DR. DUVAL: We actually did that way back at the beginning. If you remember our joint meeting in Key West last year, that was where we discussed this, and the Gulf added an action to one of their amendments to move that management boundary line to the Cape Sable point. My understanding is that they are still moving forward with that.

DR. MCGOVERN: The Gulf Council has selected the same alternative at their last meeting as their preferred.

DR. DUVAL: So I'm assuming that there's no desire on the part of the committee to change this at this point. Thank you. Great.

MS. BROUWER: Moving on to Action 2, that's on PDF page 8 of your document. This is the action that would specify the MSY for the Georgia through North Carolina and the Florida Keys/East Florida stocks. Again, some edits there, as you can see, for Alternative 1. Your current preferred is Alternative 2, which would continue to have the MSY not specified, or unknown, for the Georgia through North Carolina stock, and then, for the Florida Keys/East Florida, we would set that at the value that you see there on your screen. Again, the Snapper Grouper AP had no recommendations here. There were some comments that were somewhat relevant to this action, and that's it.

DR. DUVAL: I would be looking for a motion from the committee to approve the IPT's suggested edits to Action 2.

MR. BELL: **Madam Chair, I would move to approve the IPT's suggested edits to Action 2.**

DR. DUVAL: Is there a second? Second by Doug. Any discussion? **Any objection? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

MS. BROUWER: Action 3 is on PDF page 11. This specifies the MSST for both stocks. Again, there are some edits there, to get rid of some acronym language. Your current preferred is Alternative 4, which sets the MSST at 75 percent of the SSB MSY. Again, the value for Georgia and North Carolina remains unknown. You have your natural mortality there. That was specified through the stock assessment, and then the value for the Florida Keys/East Florida stock.

DR. DUVAL: Again, another motion to approve the IPT's suggested edits.

MR. PHILLIPS: **Madam Chair, I make a motion that we approve the IPT's edits to Action 3.**

DR. DUVAL: Motion by Charlie and a second by Zack. Is there discussion? **Any objection? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

MS. BROUWER: Action 4 sets the ABC for the Georgia/North Carolina stock, as well as the ACLs and the recalculated allocations. There are some edits there to Alternative 1. Your preferred is Sub-Alternative 2b, which sets the ACL equal to the OY equal to 95 percent of the ABC. Here is a table that shows you how the ABC was arrived at. This was a recommendation from applying Level 4 of the ABC Control Rule to this stock, and then here's what your ACLs would look like.

Keep in mind that these numbers may change. I'm sorry. These numbers are not going to change. The changes are going to come when we're talking about the Florida stock. Under your preferred, your total ACL for the Georgia/North Carolina stock would be about 34,000-pounds. Then you've got your recreational ACL, both in pounds and numbers, and for this stock, we would be simply using the average weight of a recreationally-caught hogfish in this part of the world to provide that recreational ACL in numbers of fish, and then your commercial ACL would be about 23,000-pounds whole weight.

The Snapper Grouper AP supported Sub-Alternative 2a, which sets the ACL equal to the ABC. Then you have here, on the screen, a recommendation from the Snapper Grouper AP that for the Georgia/North Carolina stock that the council should consider regulating commercial and

recreational hogfish based on two separate gears, and so this, again, is due to those concerns that dive boats and spearfishing is not being sampled properly. Then, again, some of the public comments that would be pertinent to this action for you to see.

DR. DUVAL: I did have one quick question, which was the average weight of 10.6-pounds. I understand it's based on the fish in this region, but is that like the average of the last five years of MRIP weights, or how was that arrived at?

DR. LARKIN: How did it get to the 10.6-pounds for the region? There were extremely few samples for average weight in the Georgia/North Carolina portion of the stock, and so that is actually a decadal average. It was from 2010 to the present, or 2015, actually. It was 2010 to 2015, and so it's five-and-a-half years. It went through Wave 3, I think, the data, of 2015.

DR. DUVAL: Thank you. Again, I would be looking for a motion from the committee to approve the IPT's suggested edits to Action 4.

MR. BOWEN: **Madam Chair, I would move to approve the IPT's suggested edits to Action 4.**

DR. DUVAL: Motion by Zack and seconded by Chris. Any discussion? **Any objection? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

MS. BROUWER: Action 5 is on PDF page 17. This is the action that puts in place the rebuilding plan for the Florida Keys/East Florida stock. Edits, again, to Alternative 1. Here, you have a series of tables that correspond to the various scenarios for the rebuilding, and so different timeframes and different probabilities of rebuilding success, and then you have your tables with corresponding values. Again, some more editing and cleaning up the wording here for subsequent alternatives.

Your preferred remains Alternative 3, which is a rebuilding of ten years at a 72.5 percent probability of rebuilding success. One thing that was added to these tables was the OFL column, and so that was one suggestion that the IPT had, to include those in here. Here, the Snapper Grouper AP had no recommendations, and there weren't any, obviously, specific comments on any of this from the public.

DR. DUVAL: All right. Again, I'm looking for a motion from the committee to accept the IPT's suggested edits.

MS. MCCAWLEY: **I move that we accept the IPT's suggested edits for Action 5.**

DR. DUVAL: Motion by Jessica and seconded by Ben. Any discussion? **Any objection? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

MS. BECKWITH: Just an observation. For Action 4 and Action 5, when we read Alternative 1, no action, for people -- We have had a lot of people that have not been involved in this process that have had some interest in hogfish, and I think, for folks that don't understand the process well, when they see Alternative 1, no action, it makes it seem like that's actually a choice that we're able to legally make, rather than maybe rewording that to say status quo or current regulations or -- I don't know how we sort of make it clear to the public that the Alternative 1, no action,

alternatives are actually not choices that we as a council can legally choose, and I'm not sure that that's always clear to the public.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: I think we used to say status quo in there, but I believe, for NEPA purposes, because NEPA says you're supposed to consider the no action alternative, we call it no action. I guess you could put "no action/status quo". I mean we could certainly think about it though and maybe figure that out, if there's a better way to do it.

MR. PHILLIPS: Madam Chair, and I'm not sure if it's the right place to bring it up, but I was noticing that we were using our preferred as a 72.5 percent probability of rebuild, and I think, further down, we've also dropped our OY to be 95 percent, and so we're -- Then I was looking at the 50 percent chance of rebuild, which gave the fishermen a good bit more fish, like 25 percent more fish, and we might be a little more conservative than necessary, if we're going to use the 95 percent and the 72 percent probability. We might want to go back to 50 percent probability of rebuild. That's just a thought.

DR. DUVAL: It sounds like you're suggesting that you may want to select Alternative 2 as a preferred instead. Is that what you're saying?

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes, Madam Chair.

DR. DUVAL: You are certainly welcome to make a motion to deselect one preferred alternative and select another.

MR. PHILLIPS: **If I may, Madam Chair, I would like to make that motion, at least for the sake of discussion, for the Florida group.**

DR. DUVAL: Motion by Charlie to select Alternative 2 as a preferred alternative and deselect Alternative 3. Is there a second to that motion? It's seconded by Zack.

MR. BOWEN: For the sake of discussion.

DR. DUVAL: For the sake of discussion. Discuss.

MR. PHILLIPS: Just they're taking some pretty serious cuts in what they're going to catch. They're going to go up on the size limit, and we still may be able to get where we want to go without cutting their catch limits quite as much, and so I would think the 50 percent probability, and that's where we go in a lot of places, would be adequate, along with the other 95 percent.

DR. DUVAL: Often, I think the 50 percent probability is used for -- Never mind. Can what I was going to say. Does anybody else have any other thoughts on modifying our preferred alternative to go to a 50 percent likelihood of rebuilding?

MS. MCCAWLEY: I think I could support this alternative. However, I thought I recalled that the SSC was suggesting a ten-year rebuilding with a 72.5 percent probability of success, and I don't know if Marcel could speak to that. If the SSC is okay with ten years at 50 percent probability, then I could support this.

DR. LARKIN: Marcel is not in the room. I can go get him, but the 72.5 percent came from the P* analysis, which is the ABC Control Rule. That's where that came from. 50 percent is typically how the OFL is arrived at, and then the ABC is arrived at by calculating the P* value, which is how the 72.5 percent probability of rebuilding was calculated. It was a 25 or 27 point --

DR. DUVAL: The SSC recommended a 27.5 likelihood of overfishing, and so --

DR. LARKIN: 27.5 percent P*, which translates to a P rebuild of 72.5 percent. That's where that came from.

DR. CRABTREE: But then they gave us ABCs for all these different scenarios? Is that correct?

DR. LARKIN: Yes, there has always been a cloudy area with rebuilding. When it comes to giving an ABC for a stock that's not overfished, they just use the ABC Control Rule. When it comes to a stock that is overfished, they calculate the probability, the P rebuild, and they give that. Then it depends on the council's time to rebuild and what their risk --

DR. CRABTREE: But they're saying that, based on our control rule, this would be the probability of rebuilding that comes out of that?

DR. LARKIN: Yes.

DR. CRABTREE: Okay, and so I guess my preference is to stay with the current preferred and follow the SSC advice.

MS. BECKWITH: Did I hear in the previous presentation something about looking at the stock assessment again in 2018? Is that right?

DR. DUVAL: The SSC has recommended that the assessment be updated I think after 2018, because regulations won't be effective until 2017, and so you would want at least two years of new regulations being in place, and so a new size limit, which is altering the selectivity, et cetera, et cetera, before moving forward with an update to the assessment. The update would actually occur probably in 2019.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay, and so I guess my preference would be staying with our current option as well, because I don't see that the change in the ABC is that substantial between the two options for the first three years, and so let's give them a chance.

DR. DUVAL: Other discussion around the table? All right. Is everybody ready to vote? **Can I please see a show of hands of those in favor of the motion? One in favor. I'm assuming everybody else is opposed, and so the motion fails.** All right. Action 6.

MS. BROUWER: Action 6 is on PDF page 22. This is the action that would establish the ACLs and the ABC for the Florida Keys/East Florida stock. There are edits there to your language of the alternatives. Your preferred is Sub-Alternative 2b, to be consistent with the ACL being set for the Northern stock. ACL equals OY equals 95 percent of the ABC. Again, I will mention that the allocations changed, due to having to recalculate them just for that geographical region. Another

change that I think we made since December is the allocations are now expressed to two decimal places, to be consistent with how sector allocations have been defined for other species.

Here is your table that shows what the ACLs would be at that level, and keep in mind that the numbers, based on the presentation you just heard and the recommendation from the SSC, would change slightly, because the ABC would be specified in numbers of fish initially. The allocations would not change.

Here is a table just to show you commercial and recreational landings for that stock from 2000 through 2014, just so you can see what the trend has been. Here is the annual landings compared to the ACLs under consideration. Again, it's just a visual. Then this one was for recreational landings and then this figure shows you the commercial landings. The Snapper Grouper AP didn't have a preference, and there were no specific comments regarding the proposed ACLs for this.

A note is at the September 2015 meeting, the council approved a motion to specify the ACLs through 2025, but then we noticed that the tables actually go through 2027, because that is the ten-year rebuilding under your preferred, and so we just assumed that we, the IPT, made a mistake in not making that correction in the amendment, and so I just wanted to point that out, that the ACLs would be specified through 2027, but, of course, there would be a stock assessment prior to getting to that date.

DR. DUVAL: Again, we would be looking for a motion from the committee to approve the IPT's suggested edits to Action 6, initially.

MS. MCCAWLEY: **I move that we approve the IPT's suggested edits to Action 6.**

DR. DUVAL: Motion by Jessica. Is there a second? Seconded by Charlie. Discussion? **Any objection? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.** Is everyone okay with the preferred alternative for this action? I am seeing heads mostly nodding around the table. We will move on to Action 7.

MS. BROUWER: Action 7 would establish the recreational ACT for both stocks. Your preferred is to set that at 85 percent of the recreational ACL. Just to recap, it deviates from how you've set the ACT for other species, and that was because the percent standard error for the Georgia/North Carolina stock is actually quite high. Then, based on your current formula for determining the ACT, you would have had to set it at 50 percent of the recreational ACL if you had chosen to use the percent standard error, as you've done for other species. Instead of doing that, we're looking at setting that level at 85 percent of the recreational ACL for both stocks.

Then we've got a table here showing you what the ACT would be for the Georgia/North Carolina stock, based on your various ACL alternatives, your preferred being the two columns in the middle. Then this table shows you the recreational ACT in pounds and numbers of fish for the various alternatives as well, and your preferred is there in bold. The Snapper Grouper AP supported the council's preferred for this action for both stocks, and there were no public comments that were specific to setting recreational ACTs.

DR. DUVAL: Again, if we could just get a motion.

MS. MCCAWLEY: **I move that we accept the IPT's suggested edits to Action 7.**

DR. DUVAL: Motion by Jessica and seconded by Zack. Any discussion? **Any objection? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

MS. BROUWER: Here is where we get into the management measures. Action 8, which is on PDF page 32, increases the commercial and the recreational minimum size limit for both of the stocks. Currently, your preferred for the Georgia/North Carolina stock is seventeen-inches fork length. We've made some edits, as you can see, suggested for the language of the alternatives. Your current preferred for Florida is to set that minimum size at fifteen-inches fork length.

The DEIS currently has the tables that you see on your screen now, which are projected reductions in harvest. This is for the recreational sector for the Georgia/North Carolina stock, and it's by mode for each of the considered size limit alternatives.

It's a little busy, and so when we went to public hearings, we took the same information that's currently in those tables and sort of condensed it, so that we have this smaller table, which is currently not included in the DEIS document, because it wasn't developed by the IPT, but it was just easier to show the public a condensed version of those percent reductions in harvest, and so, at the seventeen-inch preferred, you are looking at a 4.6 percent reduction in harvest, based on the information that's included in those tables.

The same thing over here. This is the percent reductions in commercial landings, in pounds whole weight, for the Georgia and North Carolina, by month, under different proposed minimum size limits, and we condensed that and showed it just all together. That translates to about a 2 percent projected reduction in commercial harvest at the preferred seventeen-inch minimum size limit.

Again, the same thing for Florida. You've got the tables that are currently included in the DEIS, and then the table that we prepared for the public hearing document. At the fifteen-inch preferred, we're looking at a 61.3 percent estimated reduction in recreational harvest for the Florida Keys/East Florida stock. Again, this is for the commercial sector, translated into a smaller version. At the fifteen-inch preferred, the projected reduction in commercial harvest would be 49.4 percent.

Then we have some economic information that's been included in here, and this was done using the recreational decision tool that the Regional Office supplied for the IPT to use. That decision tool is going to be reviewed by the SSC at their upcoming meeting in May, and Nick Farmer has made some edits to the decision tool based on the SSC guidance from Friday's webinar, and so we do have an updated decision tool that the IPT can use. The numbers you see here were generated with the previous version of the decision tool.

The same thing over here. The Snapper Grouper AP recommended Sub-Alternative 2b as the preferred for the Georgia/North Carolina, and as I said, the AP had a different version of the document when they saw it back in November. It is the seventeen-inch current preferred, and then, for Florida, the AP suggested increasing the minimum size limit from twelve to fourteen-inches in year one and to sixteen-inches in year three, and so they felt that a step-up size limit increase would be appropriate. They also recommended considering a slot limit for hogfish, maybe somewhere twelve to sixteen-inches, for the Florida stock. Again, I've included some of the public comments

that I've already gone through, and so I'm not going to mention them again, but just to have them in front of you. That's all I have for that action.

DR. DUVAL: Myra, how does the SSC recommendation change these percent reductions in harvest?

MS. BROUWER: I'm sorry, but they don't change the percent reductions in harvest. The SSC recommendation changed slightly the assumptions that the recreational decision tool was based on, and so some modifications have to be made to the decision tool so that it wouldn't generate a lower ACL for each different minimum size, which is what Method 1 was doing, and so, based on what the SSC recommended, my understanding is that that was somehow revised in the version that was sent out to the IPT on Friday, but it has nothing to do with the percent reductions in harvest, and I don't know if Mike Larkin wants to speak to that.

DR. LARKIN: No, I'm good.

DR. DUVAL: So, basically, none of the tables that we just saw are impacted by the SSC's discussion on Friday?

MS. BROUWER: The only ones that I showed that would be impacted by that are the ones that show you the expected consumer surplus, and so the economic tables. The percent reductions in harvest, what I was trying to explain is the DEIS contains these larger tables that are a little bit harder for the public to understand, and so when we took this out to public hearings, we took the same information and then condensed it in these smaller tables that are currently not included in the DEIS, but were easier for us to explain to the public. Does that make sense?

DR. DUVAL: Right, and I just wanted to make sure that everybody is clear that the recommendation of the SSC for this method that they discussed on Friday, in terms of tracking the ACLs down the road, is we have the size limit increase and not creating any penalties, that it doesn't impact any of the tables in here.

MS. BROUWER: Right, and not the ones I have shown under this action.

DR. DUVAL: Okay. Cool.

MR. BELL: I just had some questions for the Georgia/North Carolina stock. The preferred alternative right now is seventeen-inches, but I noticed in the comments on the next page over here that it says that it could result in removal of individuals before the sex change can occur, because the sex change, they say 50 percent at twenty-four-inches, and so I'm wondering -- If you look at what twenty-inches does for you, there's sort of no -- For the recreational fishery, twenty-inches doesn't matter. It seems like there is no impact. The potential impact would be a little bit on the commercial side, but I'm wondering, if we considered twenty-inches, if we could get a little bit better biological bump from this with less risk, at kind of a minimal cost.

I'm just thinking up our way that they just tend to be bigger fish anyway, and I know I can't -- It says in here what the AP -- I guess the AP must have recommended seventeen, but there may have been some discussion at the AP meeting about seventeen versus twenty or something, but it's just something to think about, because what's always kind of bothered me about hogfish is this sex

change later on. I can't kind of grasp how to factor that in, but we do have a comment in here specifically about a potential negative consequence of sticking with seventeen, and I realize twenty still isn't twenty-four, but it's closer. Any thoughts on that?

MR. HARTIG: Thoughts on it, Mel, I mean if you want to keep the size of transition at a high number in the Carolinas, you need a bigger size limit. It's going to be mediated by the size of the fish in the population. It changes. You can look at what happened in the Keys.

It will change in the Carolinas as well. If the harvest starts removing those bigger animals, your size will change at transition, and so I'm kind of supportive of what you're thinking as far as trying to keep those animals as large as possible to keep the size at transition high, which means your females are going to be bigger and producing more eggs and older. A whole bunch of good biological things happen when you do that. Now I forgot what I was going to ask in my question. Okay. Here is what I remembered. Michelle, are we going to do what is suggested by the SSC and redo projections based on the size limits we pick in this amendment?

DR. DUVAL: Yes.

MR. HAYMANS: I was actually thinking sort of the exact opposite of what Mel was thinking, and that is that sometimes you wonder whether the juice is worth the squeeze. We keep cramping down on the folks, and we're only getting somewhere between a 4 and an 8 percent, if you go between 17 and 20 percent commercial to recreational, reduction, which isn't much of a reduction, but yet we're creating another enforcement problem at an arbitrary line, where I can go into the Port of Fernandina with a fifteen-inch fish, or I go into St. Mary's and I've got to now have a seventeen or a twenty-inch fish. We're talking about a 4 to 7 percent reduction, and I would almost say fifteen in the South Atlantic, and so I'm thinking different than Mel.

DR. DUVAL: So you were thinking about actually selecting a different preferred alternative for the Georgia through North Carolina stock, to match up with what's being done in Florida?

MR. HAYMANS: Somehow, we actually didn't include fifteen-inches in the list of alternatives, but I think we've got twelve and we've got sixteen, and so maybe we could -- It's not currently one we can select.

DR. DUVAL: Right.

MR. BOWEN: When this came up at our last meeting, I was an advocate for the twenty-inch minimum size limit, because it's mostly a -- It's not a hook and line fishery where release mortality is going to play a big role, and so I'm on the same page with Mel, I think, and when it was brought up the last time, the reason I think the preferred, and Ben was the one that brought it up, was his - I remember vividly his rationale.

It's kind of flip-flopped what he just said to what he said at the last meeting, because, at the last meeting, his rationale for wanting to keep it at seventeen instead of twenty was because we didn't need that great of a reduction, and so I am leaning with Mel on this. I can see a twenty-inch minimum size limit, to keep the transition of sex at twenty-four-inches, or close to it. I hated to go against you, Doug, and I hated to throw you under the bus, Ben, but you flip-flopped on me, and I was curious of why.

MR. HARTIG: That's okay. I can flip-flop based on the information I've seen since that time.

MS. BROUWER: Just to make sure -- I thought I had this table up in the decision document, but I don't, but there is a table in the public hearing document that shows the average length, in inches, of recreationally-caught hogfish in Georgia and the Carolinas, using data from 2012 and 2013. That average length is 25.8 inches, and so they're a lot bigger up there.

MS. BECKWITH: I'm trying to remember, because there were some great arguments that were made for the seventeen-inch fish by some of our constituents in North Carolina, and I'm digging through, and I don't think I will be able to find them that quickly, but I think some of the reason was there is a directed hook and line fishery that is developing in North Carolina, and so the concern was going much higher than a seventeen-inch fish would cause discards in that particular fishery that's developing.

Also, because the average fish that is being speared is larger, it didn't seem like setting it higher was going to get a whole lot of bang for your buck, especially since the speared fish aren't really being counted in those MRIP numbers anyway, and so it was more of trying to acknowledge that hook and line fishery and make sure that we weren't creating additional discards that were unnecessary for the amount of savings. My personal preference would be to retain it at seventeen-inches, personally.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Madam Chair, I move that we change the preferred alternative for the Florida Keys/East Florida stock to Sub-Alternative 3c, sixteen-inches.

DR. DUVAL: There's a motion by Jessica, and it's seconded by Ben, to change the preferred alternative for the Florida Keys/East Florida stock from 3b to 3c. Is there discussion?

MS. MCCAWLEY: Based on the public comment that we got at the workshop, I would say that sixteen was a popular size limit that people could live with, and also sixteen is the size that they're transitioning in that particular portion of the stock.

DR. DUVAL: Thank you, Jessica. Any other comments on this motion? **Is there any objection to this motion? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.** I still have Charlie on my list of folks to ask a question or a comment, and then we will need to circle back around and approve the IPT's suggested edits.

MR. BELL: Madam Chair, I move that deselect Sub-Alternative 2a for the Georgia/North Carolina stock and substitute Sub-Alternative 2e.

DR. DUVAL: There is a motion by Mel to change the preferred alternative for the Georgia/North Carolina stock from Sub-Alternative 2b to Sub-Alternative 2e. Is there a second? It's seconded by Zack. Is there discussion?

MR. PHILLIPS: I am just curious, but are we going to -- It's mostly divers, and so are we going to have divers mostly target the males, instead of just taking whatever they find, which could be a mix? I'm not so sure that we're gaining anything from here.

MS. BECKWITH: I agree with Charlie. I think the way the biology of these fish are, we all know you've got the one male and the harem of females, and so you're sort of forcing, at twenty-inches -- You may be requiring them to shoot the bigger females, or the male, which may -- I don't know.

MR. BELL: This is what I was talking about earlier. It's confusing what these fish do, but it just seemed, to me, if you move it closer -- At twenty-four-inches, if they're 50/50, if you move it to twenty, you're getting -- For the reasons we talked about earlier, you're going to hang on to some larger fish there. I mean it just seemed to get -- That was pointed out here as a potential. At seventeen-inches, it was considered a potential detriment, biologically, and so I'm trying to push it closer to the twenty-four-inches, I guess.

DR. DUVAL: What was the discard mortality that was applied? Was it 8 percent or 10 percent or something like that, to the hook and line caught fish for hogfish? I know that it was zero in Nick's calculations, but I don't remember what that discard mortality was. I knew Mike would know.

DR. LARKIN: Hook and line discard mortality is 10 percent. It was the same for each stock.

DR. DUVAL: Thank you.

MR. BOWEN: To Anna's point, and to I think it was Charlie's point, but I'm losing track here, but we've been on this amendment now for quite a while, and it seems like I remember that we were either -- We either were given a presentation or I read somewhere that when you take one of the males out that one of the females in that harem actually goes through the change and becomes the male, and so I don't think that would make Charlie's or Anna's argument valid.

MS. BECKWITH: Just to that point, Zack, I mean when you take out the male, the female doesn't transition instantaneously. If you're spearing these hogfish while they're in the middle of their spawning season, there is some lag time to where the next female can transition in and become the male. It's not instantaneous.

MR. BOWEN: I understand it doesn't happen overnight, but it does happen.

DR. DUVAL: All right. Any other discussion?

MR. BROWN: I just remember there was some conversation at the AP, too. I noticed that the vote was pretty close as far as the outcome of what they decided on, but I remember there was some discussion about the increase in hook and line effort too for hogfish up in our area, and that the concern for barotrauma and everything, you know because a lot of this targeting had been done in deeper water, and the rationale was to try to keep some sort of a size limit in place, to where they didn't have to have so many discards, and they were thinking more in the sixteen or seventeen-inch range.

DR. DUVAL: Any other comments on the motion? Are people ready to vote? The motion reads: To change the preferred for the Georgia/North Carolina stock from Sub-Alternative 2b, seventeen-inches fork length, to 2e, twenty-inches fork length. **Can I please see a show of hands of those in favor of the motion, five; those opposed, five. The motion fails for a tie.** Anything else before we leave this action?

MR. HAYMANS: As Florida has moved the southern portion to sixteen-inches, I would consider now, since sixteen is an alternative for the northern region, of going down to sixteen, so that there's one size across the South Atlantic. The percent reduction isn't that great in either case, and I'm not going to make it in the form of a motion until I see whether there is anybody who is willing to go there as well.

DR. DUVAL: Do folks have thoughts on a sixteen-inch minimum size limit that they would care to share with the rest of the committee? Again, I will remind you that we do need a motion to approve the suggested edits at some point. I am not seeing anybody jumping on that, Doug, and so probably not. Could I please get a motion from the committee to accept the IPT's suggested edits?

MR. BOWEN: **So moved.**

DR. DUVAL: Motion by Zack and seconded by Jessica. Is there any discussion? **Any objection? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

MS. BROUWER: Moving on to Action 9, this is on PDF page 41. This is the action to establish a commercial trip limit for both stocks. Your current preferred is to put that at 500-pounds whole weight for the Georgia/North Carolina stock, and recall that in December you included Sub-Alternatives 2e and 3f for no trip limits. Your preferred for the Florida stock is twenty-five-pounds whole weight per trip.

Here is some of the same figures that you've seen before, the distribution of commercially-harvested hogfish per trip by area. The dark bars are North Carolina to Georgia, and so that's a lot more spread out than in Florida. Here's your estimated landings in the first year of implementation under these ACL alternatives, and, again, this is a table that was generated using the decision tool prior to the revisions that were made.

One thing you requested from us in December was to come up with an equivalency table, so that perhaps a trip limit could be specified in numbers of fish, and so the preferred twenty-five-pound trip limit, based on the average weight of commercially-caught hogfish from the stock assessment, would equate to eight fish.

Here, again, using the previous version of the decision tool, is how long the season would last under the various alternatives and under the fifteen-inch size limit previously preferred. That would be 159 days. Here, you see the percent decrease in landings, by gear, for that twenty-five-pound preferred trip limit. For Georgia and North Carolina, here's some economic information, again using the previous version of the decision tool, at the preferred 500-pound commercial trip limit.

The Snapper Grouper AP recommended that the council consider additional sub-alternatives for 150 and 200-pound commercial trip limits for Georgia and North Carolina, and then recall that, as far as the public is concerned -- I mentioned there was a lot of concern that the twenty-five-pound proposed trip limit in Florida is going to cause an effort shift and to the detriment of the North Carolina stock, and, again, the request that the council consider some kind of a spawning season closure for that stock.

DR. DUVAL: Let's go ahead and get a motion to approve the suggested edits and then we can get into some discussion.

MS. MCCAWLEY: **I move that we approve the suggested IPT edits to Action 9.**

DR. DUVAL: Is there a second? It's seconded by Charlie. Any discussion? **Any objection? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

MS. BECKWITH: I am going to ask for just a touch of leniency, because I've got an idea for the committee to consider. I've been thinking about this 500-pound trip limit for the Georgia/North Carolina stock. I've had numerous concerns that I think I've put on the record already about a potential increase in demand and shift in effort of commercial harvest in our waters, and one of the ideas that I was discussing with my North Carolina counterparts earlier this week was we never considered a season closure of any sort for the commercials.

We did discuss it a little bit for the recreational and decided to not go there, but one idea I wanted the committee to consider was a possible season closure to spearing, May and/or June, both or one of those two months, and my reasoning behind considering that would be, one, the spear is directing on these fish that are aggregating during their spawning season, and they're, we all know, quite easy to pick off.

One of the reasons that I would not include hook and line is the hook and line fishery is more incidental, and even the directed fishery that is developing in North Carolina would be taken care of by the two bag limit and the small ACL, and it's more likely to be intercepted by the survey.

We sort of acknowledge at the table that we don't have a great handle on the dive boat catches that are coming in, and so if that would be something that the council would be willing to consider -- I recognize it would have to be a new action and that we would have to take it out to public comment between now and June, and if that is something that we would be willing to discuss, then I would make that in the form of a motion, but I am a bit uncomfortable with directing 500-pounds per trip on spawning aggregations in our waters during the month of May and June. I will allow for comments and come back.

DR. DUVAL: That, obviously, begs some questions of timing and things like that. We did have -- Actually, we moved to the Considered but Rejected Appendix regarding a recreational season for the Georgia through North Carolina stock, but there was never any specific mention of a spawning closure.

MR. BOWEN: I will come back to my point, but I would just like to go to Anna's point. You know in visioning we heard, from the commercial sector, about a year-round fishery, and so I can't see going to a, quote, unquote, season for the commercial guys on a stock where they're not even meeting their ACL, and it would be hard, in my opinion, for law enforcement, if we did implement that or go in that direction, for law enforcement to decide whether a fish was caught hook and line or speared, and so there would be some difficulties there, and so I'm not in favor of what I heard from Anna.

To what I wanted to bring up, was I was going to make a motion to deselect Sub-Alternative 2c and select Sub-Alternative 2d for the preferred. Again, it would only raise the projections of 82 percent of the ACL harvested to 85 percent of ACL harvested. That would be a motion.

DR. DUVAL: There is a motion by Zack to deselect Sub-Alternative 2c and to select -- To change the preferred alternative for the Georgia/North Carolina stock from Sub-Alternative 2c to Sub-Alternative 2d or 2e?

MR. BOWEN: **2d, 750-pound trip limit.**

DR. DUVAL: 2d. Is there a second to that motion? It's seconded by Chris. Is there discussion?

MR. COX: As I listen to our conversation about hogfish in North Carolina through Georgia, I want to tend to err on the side of caution that I don't think we know a whole lot about this stock. I mean, in North Carolina, it's a very specialized fishery.

It's a lot like our lobster fishery. I know the divers are the ones that, especially from Florida, that have come up to North Carolina and got most of the -- They helped meet a lot of our ACL, but I just -- Until we know more about the stock, I just think we need to be a little cautious on how we approach it.

I mean I think, as more and more seasons close, I think we're going to see more and more people enter this fishery. It's one of the best fish, eating fish, that we have, but just being sensitive to North Carolina, I think it's a very specialized area. I mean throughout the range, it's just a small part of the state where these fish live, and I am going to be careful going down this road.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I wanted to point out that I know we don't have data about the spawning season for the Georgia to North Carolina stock, but, in Florida, the spawning season is November to April.

DR. DUVAL: The information that we have indicates that hogfish are spawning up in the Carolinas in May and June, and I think, Zack, just to clarify, Anna's suggestion was to simply establish a spawning season closure for all spearfishing gear, commercial and recreational. That's all, clarifying that.

MR. BOWEN: Okay, and, again, I couldn't support it when it's not overfished and overfishing is not occurring and the ACL is not being met.

MS. BECKWITH: We don't know if it's overfished or if overfishing is occurring, because we have no status for this stock, and the fact that the trip limits are going to be so low in the Florida area is certainly going to increase demand. As Jack says, it's a great fish, and Florida is no longer going to be able to provide their own hogfish for their restaurants, and so we are going to get an increase, a shift in effort, to provide those fish for market down there.

I think it just seems not like a great idea to have that level of trip limit for an aggregation during their spawning season. We're about to discuss mutton, and we're taking great care to protect mutton in Florida during their spawning season, and so we've got different trip limits for

recreational and for commercial that we may put into place to protect them during their spawning season and then outside of their spawning season.

To direct on a fish that is so easy to spear at that level, and we've already had some indications that we've got a bit of localized depletion in a few of areas in North Carolina from these fish, this is just something that I would in no way be able to support.

MR. PHILLIPS: I am inclined to stay with the 500-pound trip limit. I don't see going along with allowing a hook and line season and not a spearfishing, because it's too easy to say, well, I gaffed the fish and that wasn't a spear, but it was a gaff mark. I'm afraid it would be a nightmare for law enforcement.

MR. HARTIG: Anna, I could support your motion a little better if hogfish actually aggregated to spawn. I mean it's not like muttons. They don't form big, giant aggregations on specific locations to spawn. It's more of a harem type of situation. I don't see that as a big problem with this fish.

DR. DUVAL: I would like to ask a question of staff, maybe, just in terms of logistics, really more for the committee's benefit. We have a statutory obligation to get some regulations in place, I believe by the end of this year. That's our two-years within which we have to establish a rebuilding plan, and so the suggestion of adding another action brings that up. Gregg, can you help us out with that?

MR. WAUGH: Yes, and thank you, Madam Chair. Adding an action at this time would mean that we would have to go back out and do additional public comments, and that would be challenging to get that wrapped up for the June meeting. There is quite a bit of work that needs to be still done on the document between now and June to get it ready for you all. This would add additional complexity and make it difficult to get that ready in time to meet the first briefing book.

DR. DUVAL: Thanks, Gregg. Zack, do you have one more comment? Then maybe we should vote on this motion.

MR. BOWEN: Yes, ma'am. I just want everybody at the table -- They already know it, but just keep in mind, as they make their decision on my motion, that there is zero trip limit right now, no trip limit, and so going from no trip limit to still 750 on a stock that is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring, that we know, is still tightening the reins, if you will, and so thank you for my time.

DR. DUVAL: I will just note that we don't have a status on this stock, because we don't have an assessment. I will just remind everybody that when these analyses are done in terms of the impact of setting a trip limit or a bag limit and how long the season might last and whether or not the commercial or recreational ACL is going to be caught up, that's based on information from previous years, and so it's based on information from 2015 and 2014 and the way fishermen were behaving and the way the fishery was conducted then.

When we pass this amendment and put in some new measures, that is certainly going to change behavior, and I think that's the concern that you're hearing from folks at this end of the table, is that once there is -- There is no trip limit on hogfish throughout the range right now, but there is

going to be some pretty restrictive trip limits later, and that's just the concern that's being expressed down here.

MR. BROWN: I have dived and shot these fish off the Carolinas, and they're pretty vulnerable. They're pretty easy fish to shoot. I kind of feel like Jack. I feel like there's a little bit of a necessity to err on the side of caution, just simply because there is just a few -- There is a very few individuals that are prosecuting the fish pretty hard in our area, up here in the Carolinas, and, because of that, I think I would just be a little bit more cautious, just because of the vulnerability of this stock.

DR. DUVAL: All right. I think we've had a pretty robust discussion on this motion, which is to change the preferred alternative for the Georgia/North Carolina stock from Sub-Alternative 2c, 500-pounds per trip, to Sub-Alternative 2d, 750-pounds per trip. Is everyone ready for the question? **Could I please see a show of hands of those in favor of the motion, two; those opposed. The motion fails.**

This concludes our business with Action 9, and, given that it's ten minutes after five, I am going to suggest that we go ahead and recess for the evening and pick back up with Action 10 tomorrow. We've only got a few actions left in this amendment. Thank you, everyone, for your hard work today.

The Snapper Grouper Committee of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council reconvened at the Westin Jekyll Island, Wednesday morning, March 9, 2016, and was called to order by Chairman Michelle Duval.

DR. DUVAL: Let's get started. We're going to pick back up with Amendment 37, hogfish. Yesterday, we completed our business through Action 9, and so let's go ahead and move on to Action 10. This is recreational bag limits.

MS. BROUWER: Good morning. Action 10 is on PDF page 47 of your decision document. This is the action to modify or establish the bag limits for the Georgia through North Carolina stock and the Florida Keys/East Florida stock. We have suggested some edits to the language of the alternatives.

Your current preferred for Georgia/North Carolina is to establish a bag limit of two fish per person per day. Under Preferred Alternative 3, your preferred sub-alternative is 3c for the Florida Keys/East Florida stock. It's to put in a bag limit of one fish per person per day. This figure here shows you the number of hogfish harvested per angler. It combines the MRIP and headboat datasets.

This is the distribution per vessel, again for those two same datasets. Here is where we show you the estimated percent decrease in landings from decreasing the bag limits. The top panel of the table is for the North Carolina to Georgia stock, and so there is no expected reduction in landings there. Then, for Florida, at the one fish per person preferred, we're expecting some reductions for the charter and the private modes.

Here, again, is the projected percent reduction in harvest. Similar to what I explained yesterday, we have these tables that show it by wave. They're a little bit busy. This one is for Florida, and then we have this table that summarizes all the information in the previous table. Based on that

same information, the percent reduction overall, at the one fish per person preferred for Florida, would be 44 percent. This is the economic information that was gathered through using the decision tool. This is for Georgia through North Carolina, and then the following table is for Florida.

The Snapper Grouper AP recommended that the council consider a recreational bag limit for the Georgia/North Carolina stock of two, and so they're supporting the council's preferred. For Florida, they suggested Sub-Alternative 3b, which is two fish per person per day.

Some of the public comments in Georgia and North Carolina, there was really no opposition to the preferred bag limit. There was a suggestion to establish a five fish per person per day bag limit, which is currently what's in place in Florida, and then, for Florida, there were some suggestions to consider a three fish bag limit or adding hogfish to the snapper aggregate. There was some support for two per person per day, or two per vessel per day, and some support for one hogfish per person per day.

DR. DUVAL: At this time, I just need a motion from the committee to approve the IPT's suggested edits.

MR. BOWEN: Good morning, Madam Chair. **I would make the motion that we approve the IPT's suggested edits to Action 10.**

DR. DUVAL: Is there a second to that? Seconded by Charlie. Is there discussion? **Any objection? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.** Is there any desire on the part of the committee to modify your preferred alternatives based on any of the public input? I am not seeing any hands go up, and so it looks to me like we're okay.

MS. BROUWER: The following action, Action 11, is on PDF page 54, and this is to establish a recreational fishing season for the Florida Keys/East Florida stock. You can see here some edits. Originally, we had included Georgia and North Carolina in the action, and so we need to fix that. Your current preferred is to establish a recreational fishing season for the Florida Keys/East Florida stock of July through September. Here is the graph that shows you the average landings, in the red dashed line, by wave. Some consumer surplus information, again gathered through the previous version of the decision tool.

The Snapper Grouper AP recommended that the council consider a spawning season closure for Georgia and North Carolina that would span May through June. We talked about this yesterday as well. This was one of the comments from the public, and they suggested keeping the calendar year as the fishing year for the recreational sector.

Then, under Other Business, during that same meeting, they recommended that the council start the hogfish commercial and recreational fishing year on July 1. They also recommended an additional sub-alternative under Action 11 for a season of May 1 through September 30. Again, from the public, there was a suggestion to consider a two-month spawning season, May through June, for Georgia and North Carolina for both sectors and a 500-pound commercial trip limit, or no spawning closure and decrease the trip limit to 350-pounds.

In Florida, there were suggestions to prohibit recreational harvest during August, which is the mini-season for lobster, to reduce discards, and also a suggestion to close harvest of hogfish during June through August.

DR. DUVAL: Let's go ahead and deal with the pro forma issues.

MS. MCCAWLEY: **I move that we accept the IPT's edits to Action 11.**

DR. DUVAL: Motion by Jessica and seconded by Ben. Any discussion? **Any objection? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

MS. BECKWITH: **I move we set the Georgia/North Carolina fishing year for the recreational and commercial to July 1. That would be an additional alternative under Action 11.**

DR. DUVAL: There is a motion by Anna to add an alternative to Action 11 to start the fishing year for the Georgia through North Carolina stock on July 1. Is there a second to that motion?

MR. HARTIG: Second.

DR. DUVAL: Second by Ben. Is there discussion?

MR. HAYMANS: Did we hear yesterday from Gregg that if we added alternatives that we would go back to public hearing?

DR. DUVAL: No, the fishing year was not part of -- Changes to the fishing year was not an action that was taken out for scoping.

MS. BECKWITH: The idea behind doing this is if we were to reach the ACL, then at least it would close during the known spawning time within the Georgia/North Carolina area. I guess I would need some input on how much -- This would be less controversial than a potential spawning closure, and so could this be scoped or receive public comment between now and June in the form of a webinar for just this one change in the fishing year, and would that be -- Would that really slow down the process significantly?

MS. BROUWER: The action, as it currently is, is to establish a recreational season, and so the action itself does not include changes to the fishing year, and so my recommendation would be to add an action to deal with fishing year, and that would slow things down a little bit. I am not sure, and Monica might have a better idea of what we need to do to meet NEPA requirements.

DR. DUVAL: I think the other thing I might mention that we're going to talk about later on today, is the results of the survey that we took in regards to priorities coming out of visioning. If you recall, we had a fishing seasonality/retention amendment, and so everybody took a survey online prioritizing what items might go in a fishing seasonality versus a fishing retention amendment. That might also be another place for that, where we would be considering fishing year start dates on a broader scale.

MR. COX: I am all about supporting any kind of spawning season closure. I think maybe the two months may be a little bit too much. We have our shallow-water species that will open May 1,

and so, therefore, I think if we had like a May spawning season closure for hogfish that it might be more appropriate. That's my thoughts on it.

DR. DUVAL: This is not a spawning season closure. This is just an alternative to change the start date of the fishing year, or actually this would be a new action, since we don't have an action in this amendment looking at the fishing year.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I would be supportive of adding another action, because I would also like to have a July 1 start date for the fishing year for the Florida Keys/East Florida stock.

MR. HARTIG: How much of a stretch is it to say that the season would be a year for the Carolinas? No? Okay.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: You can add this action, and you would need a range of reasonable alternatives. I don't know what you all would consider to be reasonable, and I am not sure -- It would probably be good to hear from Gregg, perhaps, on how much additional work and time it would take and would this slow the document down a little bit. I am not sure. You've had fishing year changes in other amendments, and so I am not sure what all goes into that analyses, and I see Gregg is coming to the table, but you definitely can add it in. You will need a reasonable range of alternatives, and I will turn it over to Gregg to speak to the timing of all that.

MR. WAUGH: Good morning and thank you. It will have to be balanced with what else we've got on our plate. We've also got a mutton snapper amendment that we want to try and turn around very quickly and get some analyses very quickly, and our staff -- You know we've got the red snapper review workshop next week as well, and the timing on these is tight.

Anything you add to it is going to slow things down some. I am not saying we can't do it, but if we can -- If it's okay to any of these changes to do webinar hearings, and we certainly wouldn't want to have to go through and do another round of physical public hearings.

Adding one thing probably won't be a make or break, but it's certainly going to have impacts on, for instance, depending on what we do with mutton snapper, how fast those analyses can be turned around as well, because, again, this is on a statutory deadline and we need to approve it at June, in order to give the Service sufficient time to get it implemented by the first of the year. Everything you add is going to slow things down some, and then this would have priority, for instance, over mutton and the other amendments, since it is on a statutory deadline.

MS. BECKWITH: We did take some workload off by not moving forward with anything in the Dolphin Wahoo Committee until further discussions in June, and so hopefully that will alleviate enough of the workload for the staff that adding this one additional action for a change in the fishing year will balance out.

MR. WAUGH: We certainly appreciate that, and it's not just our staff load that you need to consider. It's the Region's as well. They work with us. Mike Larkin helps us with a lot of these analyses, and they are down several people in the Region as well, and so it's not just our staff, but it's their staff as well.

MR. CARMICHAEL: I guess I just wanted, from the science and data perspective, to just urge caution in applying fishing years, because, perhaps in this case, where the catch limits are -- The landings of a fishing year starting on July 1 will occur in that calendar year, but when the landings start wrapping over the calendar year, as used to be the case with black sea bass, it can get really difficult for people to necessarily keep track of what's going on in that fishery.

You know you go to the MRIP dataset for recreational and it gives you landings on a calendar basis or on a wave basis, and so back when black sea bass wrapped over the calendar year, people would get calendar-year landings and they wouldn't match something we were producing on a fishing-year basis, and it led to a fair amount of confusion at times. You can get it by wave, but that's another step to then go and get the data by wave and get the previous year's late waves and this year's early waves.

You know I'm not saying fishing year is not a good idea, but let's just consider the implications it has just on the simple things of like tracking our ABCs and people being able to -- You know the average member of the public being able to go to things like the MRIP website and know where a fishery stands.

DR. DUVAL: Thank you, John. Is there discussion from other committee members?

MR. BELL: If we were to set the year at 1 July, and then we ended up hitting the ACL at some point -- I mean, for us, at least in our part of the world, May and June are pretty big months for the fishery, and we effectively just shut the fishery down for a couple of important months. I mean I'm kind of more interested in trying to provide some conservation measures based on some of the other stuff we've talked about, trips and sizes, but that's just a potential impact of doing it on 1 July.

DR. DUVAL: **Anna, if you don't mind, if we can modify the language of your motion to say "add an action", as opposed to "add an alternative".**

MS. BECKWITH: **Yes.** Mel, yes, I agree, and if we wanted to reconsider some of the trip limits, maybe the commercial trip limits, during those two months, May and June, and have a slightly lower trip limit during the spawning season, then that would probably satisfy my concerns as well, rather than changing the fishing year, but what I'm looking for is to have some protection for these fish when they are aggregated in their harems during May and June and they are at their most vulnerable.

If we would like to pursue another avenue than the fishing year, but my concept with the fishing year was it would allow that what I consider that very high commercial trip limit, to go until it was done. If it was done, then at least it would be done while those fish were in their spawning behavior patterns during the May/June, but if we wanted to consider a slightly lower trip limit during the May/June period, then that would also satisfy my concerns.

DR. DUVAL: Just a couple of procedural things here. Jessica stated that she would be supportive of having a change in the fishing year also apply to the East Florida/Florida Keys stock. Anna was the motion maker, and I think Ben was the seconder of this motion. Ben, would you be amendable to that change, to have it apply to the Florida Keys/East Florida stock as well?

MR. HARTIG: Sure.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: We were just looking at the timeline for the amendment, and remember this amendment contains a Draft Environmental Impact Statement, and I believe, because some of the analyses used in the amendment were going to be reviewed by the SSC at their late April/early May meeting or whatever, and so the plan is to publish the DEIS in late May, if possible.

There is a forty-five-day public comment period on that, and so I would think that you would get this amendment back in September with the comments to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. That would be the meeting, in September, in which you take final action, after you've reviewed all the NEPA comments. We would be on a really tight timeline to get the amendment then implemented in time to meet the two-year statutory deadline for getting the rebuilding plan implemented by some time, I think, in mid-February.

DR. DUVAL: So the deadline for getting the rebuilding plan in place is mid-February?

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: I think that's when you were noticed. I can get the exact date, but I think you were noticed -- It will be two years in February of 2017.

DR. DUVAL: I just want to make sure I'm understanding what you're saying. The decision tool that's going to be reviewed by the SSC at their April meeting, that review is what is delaying publication of the DEIS for public notice, which is going to take us into September for final action, or is it if we add another action to the document at this point that it -- I am just trying to understand what you're saying what the cause is for not taking final action in June versus the September meeting. Would it be adding this action or is it because of the review that the SSC has to do with the decision tool?

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: It's not because of adding this action. It's because -- Well, I don't know all the reasons as to why the timeline is that it is, but I think one of the major reasons is that the SSC is going to review the decision tool in their May meeting, and then you're going to get the SSC's input in June on that. In the meantime, the DEIS will have been published, and so that adding this action is not going to be the cause of you all taking final action in September.

DR. DUVAL: Okay, and so that's what I was trying to clarify. I mean, based on some of the comments and Anna's stated intent that -- Anna, it sounds like what you really would like to see is a spawning closure during May and/or June, and you're just trying to get around to that by adding an action to change the fishing year. My suggestion would be that, if what you really want to do is have a spawning closure, then I would -- It seems like it might make more sense to actually add an action to have a spawning closure, rather than adding an action to change the fishing year.

MS. BECKWITH: I would be happy to do that, or I would also be happy to consider a lower trip limit commercially during those two months. If we also wanted to consider a 250-pound commercial trip limit May and June, rather than the 500, then that would also be an acceptable alternative. I am just looking for some additional protection for these aggregated harems during their spawning season in North Carolina. I am happy to do it with a spawning season closure, and I will be happy to add that action, or keep it simple and reconsider a trip limit during those two months. I'm flexible, but I just need some additional protection.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I still would like the fishing year for the Florida Keys/East Coast Florida stock to be July 1. The reason that I say that is, in this Action 11, I would ultimately like to get to a place to choose two preferred sub-alternatives, and so the one that's already chosen, which is July to September, and then an additional sub-alternative of May to June, so that you would basically be running a season that would start July 1, and, if there's additional quota, it will come back around later in the year. To me, starting July 1 is more important, and so I have a different motivation for why I'm choosing, or suggesting, that we start the fishing year on July 1, and so it's not for the reason that Anna is suggesting for the other stock. I still would like to see the July 1 start date.

MR. HAYMANS: I don't know that I'm really comfortable with adding any actions to this amendment. However, when I go back and look through the trip limits, and Anna is talking about the trip limits for a couple of months, I mean we want the 500-pound to be all inclusive, but if we drop back to 250-pounds, we're only excluding about three-and-a-half percent of the total trips. If that gets protections during the spawning season in Carolina, I would be willing to go back and revisit the commercial trip limits, but let's not add any new actions, if that gets us where we need to be.

MR. COX: I mean I can support Anna's thinking in why she wants to do the two-month. I think access during those two months is crucial, but I think, also, that backing off a little bit during that spawning season wouldn't hurt things either. Doug, to your 3 percent that you're talking about, I just see more increasing the fishing pressure on these fish, and so I'm just trying to project out where things are going to probably go with it.

MR. HAYMANS: Is that the fishing pressure from the twenty-five-pound fishery in Florida coming up north? Is that the increase in pressure?

MR. COX: No, it's the commercial boats coming up and spearfishing on that stock from Florida. That's correct.

MR. HAYMANS: Right, and so if you went to 250-pounds year-round, I mean that's not a whole lot of incentive to come from Florida to fish.

MR. COX: We don't want to do that year-round, because that's not a commercial -- We can't make it on 250-pounds.

MR. HAYMANS: Again, I'm looking at maybe three-and-a-half percent of the trips, year-round, that are over 200-pounds, and so I don't see how there's a commercial fishery in that 3 or 4 percent, unless you're one of the 1 percent.

DR. DUVAL: I think there's a couple of ways we can go here. I mean clearly Jessica would like to add an action to start the fishing year on July 1, but for different reasons than Anna. I think if Anna is interested in having a different trip limit during a couple months of the year that we might be able to go back and add an alternative to Action 9 that would, for the Georgia/North Carolina portion of the stock, that would just set a 250-pound trip limit, or whatever your pleasure is, during May and June, and then some alternate trip limit during the remainder of the year. There's a couple of ways that we can address the concerns for the Georgia and North Carolina stock, but it sounds like there's a desire to add an action to change the fishing year, regardless.

MS. BECKWITH: Right, and so if we wanted to go back and set a 250-pound trip limit for the months of May and June for the Georgia/North Carolina stock, that would satisfy me, and have the 500-pounds the rest of the year. I would be okay with that.

DR. DUVAL: Let's dispense with this motion and perfect it, and so, Ben, are you okay with adding an action to change the fishing year? It would be for both the Georgia/North Carolina stock and the East Florida/Florida Keys stock.

MR. HARTIG: Yes, but I would just like to hear Jessica's explanation again, when we have a season. I'm missing something here.

MS. MCCAWLEY: What I'm saying is if you look at Action 11, the preferred alternative for that Florida Keys/East Florida stock is July to September. Using the SSC's decision tool, it appears that we could, at the very least, run it July to October and still be under the ACL, but I would also like to choose the sub-alternative of May to June, in case there is additional quota left.

It's going to come back available in the May to June of the next year, because I don't want to leave available quota on the table, but, to me, I think starting in July is more important, and so that's why I would start the fishing year in July. You're basically choosing two sub-alternatives under Action 11 and starting the fishing year on July 1, since that time period is more important for Florida.

MR. HARTIG: Yes, I'm okay with that.

MR. BELL: Since Jessica has a -- Can you have a fishing year in one sort of sub-area and -- If you just modified that and took Georgia/North Carolina out of that and made it a Florida thing? Is that doable, or can you not have a split fishing year within the region? In other words, we would deal with her concern for down south, but if we can deal, in the Georgia/North Carolina area, the way you just described it, differently, then all you have to do is modify that motion, if that can be done.

DR. DUVAL: You can probably -- It might just be easier at this point, the way we have the other actions set up, to have alternatives for each of the two stocks, and you can just simply select the no action alternative for Georgia through North Carolina, rather than get ourselves in a situation where someone then decides, down the road, that they actually want a change in the fishing year. It's easier to include it at the front-end than try to come back around at the back-end.

I mean I guess the one issue is that if there are different fishing years for the two different stocks, I don't know how much of a problem that creates in terms of tracking things. I don't know, but it's just something to think about.

MR. PHILLIPS: Madam Chair, what I heard John say was having a fishing year that didn't start on January 1 was a problem, because of the waves. If you did it in July, and if you try to do two different fishing years for two different stocks, I can see it being a nightmare. There's no way I can support it.

DR. DUVAL: If there is no other comment around the table, I would like to go ahead and take a vote. **Everybody in favor of the motion, please raise your hand, four in favor; those opposed,**

eight opposed. The motion fails. Jessica, do you also want to select another preferred alternative under this action?

MS. MCCAWLEY: We're still discussing that over here, but I do know that I would like to modify the Preferred Sub-Alternative 2c. Instead of being July to September, I would like that to be July to October, based on the decision tool.

DR. DUVAL: Monica, can we modify a preferred alternative? The preferred alternative is listed as July through September. Jessica would like to extend that to October.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: Isn't that a new sub-alternative?

MS. MCCAWLEY: It's in the same wave, and so we're talking about the same MRIP wave. That's why I was thinking that it might not be a big deal to add that additional month.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: I would, again, check maybe with Gregg and Myra to see -- Because the analyses will have to be revised to include that additional month. I am not sure about the timing and which is easier, to add a new sub-alternative or to modify that alternative. In terms of whether you can add it in now, yes, you can add it now or change it. I mean it's your prerogative to change these things at the meetings as you see fit. It does affect the timing somewhat, and that's why I think it might be helpful to talk to staff to see which would be an easier -- Which would be less time-consuming to analyze.

DR. DUVAL: Jessica, maybe just add another sub-alternative and select that one as a preferred.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. I can do that, Madam Chair. **I would like to make a motion to add another sub-alternative to Action 11, and I think it would be 2d, for a fishing year of July through October.**

DR. DUVAL: There's a motion by Jessica. Is there a second? Second by Ben. The motion would read: Add a Sub-Alternative 2d to Action 11 for a recreational season of July through October and select as the preferred.

MR. HARTIG: I think what becomes problematic here is when you see the analyses that we get, and that we can keep a longer season open. We should probably kind of try and take advantage of those things. I mean I know it's problematic, from the analysis standpoint for staff, but I mean if we're going to do the analyses and we're going to use these analyses to make better judgments in management, we should do that.

DR. DUVAL: I am not disagreeing with you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I just want to go on record again and say that by voting down, choosing a July 1 fishing year, based on the decision tool that the SSC saw last week, it appears that there is going to be quota left on the table for this Florida Keys/East Florida stock. July seems to be one of the most important months, and so what I was trying to do with that start date of the fishing year was make sure that we could use all of the available quota.

DR. DUVAL: The SSC has not reviewed that decision tool yet. That's all we're saying. Any further discussion on this motion? **Is there any objection to this motion? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.** Myra, then do we need to deselect Sub-Alternative 2c as a preferred?

MS. BROUWER: I don't believe so. I think it's pretty clear, unless Monica thinks for NEPA purposes that we need to have that, but I think if you add another alternative and select it as preferred that you automatically are deselecting your previous preferred, in my mind anyway.

DR. DUVAL: I only ask because we have been in that situation before, where we've selected a new preferred and then have had to go back and deselect something else, and so I just want to make sure we're not having to go back and redo things. Anything else on Action 11?

MR. BOWEN: I was just going to say I'm not sure I would want to support switching a preferred without having the analysis of that extra month that we just added in.

DR. DUVAL: Anything else before we leave this action? All right, and so do you guys want to go back to Action 9, which is the trip limits, the commercial trip limits? No? Okay. I mean we can either revisit it here or we can revisit it at full council, because I'm sure it's going to come up, and so you all let me know.

MR. HAYMANS: Madam Chair, I would like to revisit it, although I went to slide my computer forward and I shut it down, and so it's going to take me a minute, but I'm interested in either looking at the 250 trip limit year-round -- That was page 42, I think, of the document.

DR. DUVAL: Are you talking PDF page 42, and which document are you in, the decision document?

MR. HAYMANS: The decision document, and I believe it was page 42. I'm still rebooting. It was the bar chart. When I looked at that, everything above 200-pounds -- I mean I added that up, trying to come across the graph there, at about 4 or four-and-a-half percent of the trips, which is somewhere in the neighborhood of thirty to forty-five trips in the Northern Zone.

Jack and I had a little sidebar, and Chris, a little sidebar discussion about it, and I mean is it really -- Does that many trips negate the commercial fishery? I don't think so, and so, to Anna's point earlier, if we were to select -- Again, I don't see the alternatives in front of me, but if we were to select the 250 range, I think you still keep the fishery open and you're adding more protection during the spawning season, and you're providing some deterrent for boats from the south coming up for a smaller trip limit. I am in favor of going from 500 down to 250.

MS. BECKWITH: **I would move that we add an Alternative 4 that would establish a commercial trip limit for the Georgia/North Carolina stock of hogfish in the South Atlantic region during the months of May and June and have a sub-alternative of 250 and a sub-alternative of -- 200, 250, and 300, with the intent to be picking the 250 as the preferred.**

MR. HAYMANS: So why not year-round?

MS. BECKWITH: In deference to the commercial guys being able to potentially make that trip when they're not aggregated in their harems, and they're not quite as vulnerable to being picked

off in large groups. I mean I would support you if you -- If you think you can get a 250 year-round, I will certainly vote for that, but, as an alternative to a 250-pound year-round, then I would like to have an option in there to get a 250-pound during May and June, to cover my bases.

DR. DUVAL: Anna, your sub-alternatives, if you look at the screen, was it 200, 250, and 300? Is there a second to this motion? Second by Chris. Is there further discussion?

MR. BELL: Just so I understand, that's just during those months and then you would go back to -- Okay.

MR. CONKLIN: To the motion maker, if we're going to be cutting the commercial trip limit in half during the spawning season, would you entertain reducing the recreational bag limit by one fish as well?

MS. BECKWITH: I would.

MR. CONKLIN: If we could do that, then I could support this.

MR. HAYMANS: But we're already going from unlimited to two. I think that's a pretty significant reduction across the year as it is.

DR. DUVAL: Before we get into other actions, let's just keep the conversation focused on the motion on the screen, which is to add Alternative 4 to establish a commercial trip limit for the Georgia/North Carolina stock during May and June, and include Sub-Alternatives 4a through 4c of 200, 250, and 300 pounds.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Just so I understand, what is the trip limit during all the other months? Is it unlimited? I am confused.

DR. DUVAL: It's 500. That's the preferred.

MR. PHILLIPS: I know those divers really -- Unless they're picking a lot of other fish, 500 pounds isn't going to make a trip for them, much less 300, but maybe Jack can say what they actually need to work, and it's just getting so convoluted that I'm not sure if we're going to catch our ACL through the year or not. I'm inclined to just to leave it at 500 all year long. I don't think it's going to make that much difference, and it's easier on law enforcement to just have one trip limit all the time.

MR. BOWEN: I agree with Charlie.

MR. HARTIG: I mean I'm looking at the numbers here in Table D-19, and there's not very substantial differences between no trip limit and a 250-pound trip. It's 4,000-pounds for the entire year between 250-pounds and no trip limit. I don't know how much you gain. You're not going to gain much, period, if I'm looking at these numbers correctly.

MS. BECKWITH: You gain protection for the spawning harems while they're doing their deed, and, to Charlie and Zack's point, I don't think it's that convoluted. I think you're not giving the

commercial guys enough credit for being as smart as they are. I think they can follow along pretty easily.

DR. CRABTREE: I am just looking at the same thing as Ben. It seems to me that not many trips catch over 250, and so it's going to have a minimal impact. My concern is just the extent to which we're complicating the regulations. I hear all the time, from almost everyone, that the regulations are already too complicated, and I just don't see enough benefit from doing this to be worth adding all these complications in.

MS. BECKWITH: The projections are based on past behavior, and so we still have to consider what the shift in effort from the impact in the Florida fishery is going to be on our area, and so those projections can only tell us the story in the past.

MR. CONKLIN: Can somebody from North Carolina please bring me up to speed on what your state trip limit is on these things, since you all have taken extra measures already to keep traveling boats out of your waters?

DR. DUVAL: Our proclamation is a twelve-inch size limit, a five-fish recreational bag limit, and it is 150-pounds on the first day, with an additional 100 pounds each day thereafter, up to a total of 750-pounds for a trip of seven days. If you're out for seven days, you can't have more than 750-pounds. You've got to call in to Marine Patrol before you leave the dock, and you've got call in when you're coming back in. Is that cleared up for everybody?

MR. CONKLIN: So a 500-pound trip limit would be a decrease in what the maximum allowed is in North Carolina. That's sufficient protection, and if we're looking at doing spawning season closures and stuff like this, I mean we've got a bunch of MPAs that we created out there. We still have this plan to monitor them. I mean I could beat a dead horse all day. We're putting in a pretty significant area off of North Carolina that's going to probably be designated as an SMZ. It's probably a real critical habitat for these things.

DR. DUVAL: There's no hogfish up that far. I will just tell you that.

MR. CONKLIN: Okay, and so I -- Not to mention this fishery pretty much takes place May through September, with the traveling boats, and I really don't see why, as much oppression as the commercial fishermen have already, why we would want to pick on a -- What we're doing by doing this is picking on just a couple of guys. I mean it takes those guys and their specialized way of fishing. It's pretty valuable to them, and if we come with a problem later on, then maybe we should address it, but if it's not happening now, I don't see any point in doing this.

DR. DUVAL: Monica, I have a question. One of the other pieces of feedback that we got was potentially look at a trip limit between 250 and 500-pounds. Is it okay for us to simply add an alternative that is between the sub-alternatives that we already have, in terms of a trip limit?

MS. SMIT- BRUNELLO: Sure, yes, and remember this hasn't gone out for -- I know you've had some public hearings, but you will have more, another public hearing, so to speak, or a public comment period at the meeting at which you take action. You will have some comment here. The DEIS hasn't gone out, and so, yes, I think that's fine.

DR. DUVAL: Let's go back up to the motion, which is to add an alternative to establish a commercial trip limit for the Georgia/North Carolina stock during May and June and include Sub-Alternatives 4a through 4c of 200, 250, and 300-pounds. Is there any more discussion on this motion?

MR. HARTIG: I mean there's been some talk of effort shifts from Florida up into the Carolinas. Now, yes, there has been effort shifting from people who have fished those same stocks, and mostly from boats from northern Florida. There is not going to be people coming from the Keys and trying to catch hogfish in North Carolina. I'm sorry, but that's not going to happen. They've got plenty to do in the Keys other than shooting hogfish. They're not coming to North Carolina, and so put that out of your mind.

DR. DUVAL: I would like to see a show of hands of those in favor of this motion, two in favor; those opposed, nine opposed. The motion fails.

While we're mucking about in Action 9, is there any other desire to reconsider anything at this time? Our preferred alternative right now for the Georgia/North Carolina stock is 500-pounds. For the Florida/East Florida stock, it's twenty-five-pounds.

MR. HAYMANS: I was just going to suggest that between now and full council if there needs to be discussion about the 250 or the 300 -- 300 is not an option, but the 250, that we can take that back at full council for that one change.

DR. DUVAL: I would encourage you all to think long and hard about what you might want for this particular action between now and full council. Thanks. Let's go back to Action 12, I believe is where we were in the mix.

MS. BROUWER: Action 12 is on PDF page 68. This is the action that would establish accountability measures for each of the two stocks. We have some edits to the no action. The alternatives are written in the same manner that they were presented in Amendment 34.

Your Preferred Alternative 2 pertains to commercial landings, and you've got in-season and post-season accountability measures. Alternative 3 pertains to the recreational sector. Alternative 4 is a post-season accountability for the recreational sector, and recall that at the December meeting that you added Alternative 5. I don't believe the AP had any recommendations, and the public didn't really have anything specific to say about accountability measures.

DR. DUVAL: All right, and so a motion to approve the IPT's suggested edits?

MS. MCCAWLEY: I move that we approve the IPT's suggested edits to Action 12.

DR. DUVAL: Motion by Jessica and second by Charlie. Is there discussion? **Any objection? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

MS. MCCAWLEY: I just want to remind folks that Alternative 5 was the action that we had discussed at the last meeting that was added because of how the data works for hogfish and some of the uncertainty, and it was requiring, basically, two consecutive years of exceeding it, as opposed to the language that's in Preferred Alternative 4. Basically, it kicks in after two

consecutive years of an overage. I would be willing to switch the preferred to that, but I think that Roy mentioned that he had some concerns with this the last time that we discussed it.

DR. DUVAL: Roy, would you mind just reiterating some of your concerns with Alternative 5?

DR. CRABTREE: You're going to have to give me a few minutes on that, because I'm going to have to find it and read it.

DR. DUVAL: I think the one thing with Alternative 5 -- I mean we do have some other accountability measures for our coastal migratory pelagic species that use a three-year moving average, except in the case in which the year in which an annual catch limit is updated, in which case that three-year moving average resets. This is a little bit different than that even, in that you're not taking any action whatsoever when the ACL is exceeded, and so you don't take any action until the second year of exceeding the ACL, if I'm reading this correctly.

MS. BROUWER: Right, and so I was just going to mention that the IPT did discuss some concerns with this alternative as well, because you are allowing for overages in two consecutive years on a stock that is undergoing overfishing and is overfished, and so the IPT just felt uncomfortable with that alternative. I will leave it at that.

DR. CRABTREE: Yes, that's my concern, looking at it now. It seems, to me, it's possible that you could have quite a few overages. Every other year, you could be way over. It could prevent the stock from rebuilding and lead to widespread overfishing, and we wouldn't do anything, based on this AM, and so it does seem, to me, that it's not really adequate.

DR. DUVAL: If this alternative is not something that we're seriously considering, then it should probably be moved to the Considered but Rejected Appendix, but what's your pleasure? Our existing preferreds would allow for an in-season closure on the recreational sector, regardless of stock status, if the Fisheries Service determines that a closure is necessary, and Preferred Alternative 4 would reduce the length of the fishing season the following year if the total ACL is exceeded, simply by the amount of the recreational overage.

We have the language in there that allows the Fisheries Service some latitude to determine if that's necessary, based on the information available. If we're going to keep these preferreds, then we may want to consider moving Alternative 5 to Considered but Rejected.

MR. BOWEN: Madam Chair, I would so move to make that motion, to move Alternative 5 to the Considered but Rejected Appendix.

DR. DUVAL: There's a motion by Zack. Is there a second? Second by Charlie. Is there discussion? Hopefully, Monica, from the discussion we've had so far, it's clear the rationale for moving this to the Considered but Rejected Appendix.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: Yes.

DR. DUVAL: Any other discussion? Is there any objection to this motion? That's an objection, Jessica? Okay. The motion passes with one objection.

DR. CRABTREE: I would point out, because it strikes me that if you look at our current preferred alternative, it has language in there about reduce the length of the fishing season in the following year only if the stock is overfished and the total ACL is exceeded. If you think about our discussion yesterday about dolphin, if we had similar language about closure only if the total ACL is exceeded or something like that, it might solve a lot of our problems there.

DR. DUVAL: Are you suggesting a single ACL? Is that the suggestion?

DR. CRABTREE: No, just that I think there are lots of ways to get at some of the problems we have with yellowtail and dolphin.

MR. BOWEN: Would one of those solutions be adding the word “total” in front of the word “ACL”? Is that what you’re insinuating?

DR. CRABTREE: Maybe. I think that’s something we talked about yesterday. I am probably digressing here.

DR. DUVAL: All right, and so that finishes our work on hogfish for now. It sounds like we may revisit at least one item during full council. The next item on our agenda is Snapper Grouper Amendment 41, and this is mutton snapper. This is Attachments 5a and 5b in your briefing book. I will just give Myra a couple of minutes to get that up.

MS. BROUWER: Attachment 5a is your scoping comments package. There is a brief summary at the beginning, and all the comments that were received, as well as the meeting minutes are included in your briefing book. We held scoping hearings for mutton snapper, Amendment 41, at the same time that we were doing scoping, or public hearings rather, for hogfish, and so we conducted those hearings in January and February of this year. Also, we had the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission conducting workshops and gathering public input at the same time.

In general, the public felt that the current bag limit for mutton snapper is too high, and most folks favored a decrease in the bag limit. There were several opinions as to how much of a decrease, but everybody thought that the current bag limit is too high and that there were issues with potential overexploitation of spawning aggregations.

Most people supported a decrease in the bag limit, anywhere from five to two fish per person per day, year-round. Several folks supported five fish during the regular season and two during the spawning season, but then other folks agreed that maybe just decreasing it to three year-round would just be easier for everybody.

There was some support for per-vessel limits. We included in the scoping document sub-alternatives of ten and twelve fish per vessel during the spawning season. However, most of the folks who commented preferred per person limits rather than per vessel. There were some suggestions of a slot size in addition to the bag limit decrease. For example, allow one fish over thirty-inches within the bag limit.

There were suggestions to consider increasing the minimum size limit to eighteen-inches, twenty-inches, even twenty-four-inches. Also, considering a larger size limit for on the water versus from shore, to also give folks that are fishing from shore access to the resource. There was support for

prohibiting all fishing during the spawning months or reducing the bag limit to two per person. There were suggestions to remove the size limit altogether, and setting the bag limit at two per person per day, and allowing only one fish over twenty-five-inches. You can see that people were coming up with all kinds of solutions.

Also, a suggestion to close harvest in April and May. This would allow most fish to spawn at least once. If possible, close April through June. There were some fishermen who opposed a spawning season closure, and they stated that they dive for grouper in May, and they expect to be able to also catch muttons at that time. If muttons were to be closed during May, those fishermen would be impacted. There was some concern that if too many older mutton snappers are harvested that the fishery may eventually follow the path of red snapper.

Some people were not in favor of increasing the size limit, because of subsequent increases in regulatory discards, and they thought that considering regulations where a percentage of the catch can be undersized would be a good thing.

There was some support for commercial trip limits and similar restrictions to the recreational sector during the spawning months. However, there was general agreement that mutton snapper are just not targeted commercially in the South Atlantic. Then there were folks that thought that we shouldn't specify a spawning season, because the fishery is very dynamic and the timing of spawning may shift, especially with climate change. A suggestion to remove mutton from the ten-snapper aggregate was also thrown out, and some for-hire captains were not in favor of reducing the bag limit. Any questions?

DR. DUVAL: No questions for Myra? If not, then we'll probably start digging into the decision document, which is Attachment 5b.

MS. BROUWER: If you to PDF page 4 of your decision document, this is the purpose and need that we've drafted. You did not have this in December when you approved this for scoping, and so now would be the time to approve it as presented or modify it and then approve it.

For the record, I will just read the purpose of this amendment. It's to update the acceptable biological catch, annual catch limit, maximum sustainable yield, minimum stock size threshold, optimum yield, and revise management measures for the mutton snapper component of the snapper grouper fishery based on the results of the most recent stock assessment, utilizing data through 2013.

The need for the amendment is to base mutton snapper management measures on the best scientific information available, in order to achieve and maintain optimum yield and to prevent overfishing, while minimizing, to the extent practicable, adverse social and economic effects.

DR. DUVAL: Myra, I have a question. This purpose includes that phrase "utilizing data through 2013", which we took out of the purpose, I think, of hogfish. Maybe with that language stricken through, so that we're consistent, but I don't know if -- Do other committee members have any other comments or -- I see heads nodding around the table in agreement with that, and so I think with that modification. Myra has a draft motion up there on the screen to modify the purpose statement.

MR. HAYMANS: **I would add to that “and accept the need statement as presented”, and I would make that motion.**

DR. DUVAL: Motion by Doug. Is there a second? Second by Charlie. The motion reads: Modify the purpose statement to remove “utilizing data through 2013” and accept the need statement as presented. Any other discussion on this? **Any objection? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

MS. BROUWER: Thank you for that. Action 1 is on PDF page 5. It specifies the MSY for mutton snapper. We simply added a statement to the no action alternative to indicate that the value is currently not specified, and, here, you would need to select a preferred and accept the edits that we’ve suggested, if you so choose.

MR. HAYMANS: **Madam Chair, I would move that we accept the IPT’s suggested edits to Action 1 and to select Alternative 2 as the preferred.**

DR. DUVAL: Motion by Doug. Is there a second? Second by Charlie. Is there discussion? The motion reads: Accept suggested edits to Action 1 and select Alternative 2 as a preferred. Any other discussion? **Any objection? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

MS. BROUWER: Action 2 specifies the MSST. Again, an edit to the no action alternative to indicate the value is currently not specified for mutton snapper, and then you have a similar table. You would also here need to select a preferred.

DR. DUVAL: Mutton falls within that range of species for which we have modified the minimum stock size threshold definition previously to be 75 percent of SSB MSY instead of one minus M times SSB MSY. I’m just noting that for the committee’s benefit, and so whenever someone is ready to make a motion for the proposed edits and a preferred.

MR. HAYMANS: **Madam Chair, I would make a motion that we accept the IPT’s suggested edits and select Alternative 3 as the preferred.**

DR. DUVAL: Motion by Doug and seconded by Charlie. Any discussion? **Any objection? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

MS. BROUWER: Action 3 revises the ACLs and the OY for mutton snapper. There are no changes suggested to the no action alternative. However, we do have two alternative approaches to structure the alternatives. What you see on your screen right now is the way that it was currently structured in the document, where you have sub-alternatives for ACL equaling OY, and then various percentages of the ABC. This is how you’ve structured many of the other amendments.

Then this alternative approach was suggested by an IPT member, where each alternative is actually all-encompassing, and so you have the ACLs and the OY and the allocations and language in there that would specify the recreational ACL in numbers of fish. The IPT was not in favor of any particular approach, but I just wanted you to see both of them. The Alternative A here, or Approach A, is just simply familiar to you, because this is the way you’ve structured many of your other documents.

Here, we would look for you to give us guidance on how you would like to structure those alternatives, and here is the table that shows you the ACLs under the various alternatives for the projections from 2015 onwards. Of course, we would have to remove some of these rows here that are no longer applicable, and, again, in order to specify the recreational ACL in numbers of fish for mutton snapper, we have used the average weight of 4.13-pounds to convert the ACL from pounds to numbers.

Here are some of the landings, for you to see how that would compare. These are from 2010 through 2014. Here, we would want you to accept the proposed edits and give us guidance on how you want the alternatives structured, and then select your preferred for this action.

DR. DUVAL: I have a question, and it's similar to the one I asked yesterday. How is the average weight being used to convert the recreational allocation in pounds to numbers of fish? Where do those numbers come from?

MS. BROUWER: Unfortunately, Mike is not here today. He's not feeling well, but my understanding is that 4.3-pounds came from the stock assessment, and so we have simply proceeded with setting the allocations in pounds, using your approved formula, and then taken the resulting recreational ACL, dividing it by the average weight, and that's how we've arrived at the recreational ACL in numbers. It's a pretty straightforward calculation.

DR. DUVAL: I only bring this up because I feel like we're being somewhat inconsistent in the method that is being used to make that conversion from pounds to numbers of fish. Yesterday, when we were looking at the pounds to numbers of fish conversion for hogfish that was being done based on MRIP data from an average over four years and these are numbers that are coming out of the stock assessment, and I'm assuming these are average weights from the projections, and then I'm going to keep on harping on snowy grouper, where the average weight being used there was actually the commercial average weight. We're going to get dinged if we keep moving inconsistently like this.

MR. COLLIER: For hogfish, the way that the average weight was calculated is we ended up going forward with using the commercial average weight, and you've got to remember this is very different than snowy grouper and mutton for hogfish. We're looking at a size limit change in that, and that was causing some of the issues.

We looked at using the commercial average weight to get average numbers of fish for the commercial sector and then looked at the ABC and subtracted the numbers from the ABC and subtracted the commercial numbers from that to get the recreational numbers, is how we derived the recreational numbers. We didn't use the average numbers for hogfish, or we didn't use average weight for the recreational hogfish.

It's described in there because that's the way it was originally done, but, with this method that the SSC approved last week, that's the preferred method from the SSC to calculate numbers of fish for the recreational sector for hogfish.

DR. DUVAL: Right, and I guess my point is just that we need to be really careful, moving forward, on how we're actually -- The method that we're using. I mean I realize the hogfish is a special instance, but the public isn't necessarily going to understand that, and so I am just asking these

questions to bring awareness to how we're making those conversions from pounds to numbers and that's all.

DR. PONWITH: Yes, and I think it's worth having discussions about that, because it seems so simple, and why aren't we managing these fisheries in numbers? Numbers are easier to manage than pounds, because pounds you have to go out and weigh those fish, right? The big challenge with numbers is that the number of fish can stay the same.

The weight of that same fish changes, and the average weight of landings in any given year can be very different from the next year, and so you have to -- This is why it's prudent to be consulting your SSC, because conversion of weights into numbers, it's really important to contemplate all of the facets of that decision of what method you use to do that and make sure that you've evaluated that carefully, because, otherwise, you run into a situation where you're using numbers as your metric, and if the weights change over time, you end up being in sync in your allocations when you look at numbers, but when you reevaluate those allocations by weight, you may have drift in the percentage of the allocation.

Looking at when you do the conversion and how you do the conversion and how frequently you revisit the conversion is really, really crucial, to make sure that you're honoring those allocation percentages as you've established them.

DR. DUVAL: Thank you, Bonnie. For this action, we would need a motion to accept the proposed edits. We've got two different ways of structuring these alternatives here. What is the committee's pleasure?

MS. MCCAWLEY: I move that we accept the IPT's suggested edits to Action 3. My preferred method would be to use the B version, the longer version, of each one of these.

DR. DUVAL: There's a motion by Jessica to accept the suggested edits to Action 3 and adopt Structure B. Is there a second to that motion? Seconded by Charlie. Is there discussion? **Any objection? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

MS. BROUWER: Now we need to select a preferred alternative. You basically have three options there, setting the ACL equal to the ABC or stepping it down by 5 percent or 10 percent.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I move that we select Alternative 2, Sub-Alternative 2a, as the preferred under Action 3.

DR. DUVAL: You just changed the structure, and so it would just be Alternative 2.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you.

DR. DUVAL: So select Alternative 2 and is there a second on that one? Anybody? Charlie. That sets ACL equal to OY equal to ABC. Any discussion? **Any objection? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

MS. BROUWER: Action 4 is on PDF page 13. This is the action to revise the ACT for mutton snapper. Here, we have suggested adding the language that you see highlighted on the screen,

where the ACT for 2020 would remain in place until modified. Here, you have the table showing the percent standard error and the same suite of sub-alternatives. Again, IPT members have suggested a range of Alternatives 2 through 5, instead of one alternative with sub-alternatives. To be consistent, I guess, since you selected that second structure in the previous action, we would then be consistent throughout the document.

Here is your table showing you, under the various ACL alternatives, what the recreational ACTs would look like determined in pounds and in numbers. Here, we would just need for you to accept the proposed edits, just adding that language to the alternatives, and select a preferred.

DR. DUVAL: I would need a motion from the committee to approve those edits. We don't need to include that structure. Since we've already selected it, you will carry it through the document.

MS. MCCAWLEY: **I move that we approve the IPT's edits to Action 4.**

DR. DUVAL: Motion by Jessica and seconded by Mel. Any discussion? **Any objection? Seeing none, that motion is approved.** Now we need to select a preferred.

MR. HAYMANS: We're going to remain silent on the restructuring?

DR. DUVAL: No, and we just said that since we accepted that restructuring in the previous action that that would then be carried throughout the document. I know it's a little bit confusing that --

MR. HAYMANS: So there would only be four and not five? I was just sitting there trying to read through it, and I'm sorry that I missed that discussion.

DR. DUVAL: Right, and so you would now have four alternatives to choose from here. Is there a desire to select a preferred alternative, or do we need a bathroom break? Before we go to break, I think Dr. Crabtree wanted to say a couple of things.

DR. CRABTREE: I know everybody has been concerned about the cobia closure, and that notice is filing at the Federal Register today, and the Atlantic group recreational cobia is going to close at 12:01 a.m. on June 20. I expect a Fishery Bulletin will go out this afternoon probably, and then the golden tilefish longline portion of the commercial fishery is set to close at 12:01 a.m. on March 15, which I think is Tuesday of next week. I wanted to give you a heads-up. That bulletin will go out later today as well.

DR. DUVAL: I think that's longer than last year for the longline portion of the ACL. It was February, almost a month earlier. I know there's been some weather down in Florida, and so that's definitely contributed to that quota lasting longer. Charlie, did you have a question?

MR. PHILLIPS: No, Madam Chair. I was just going to make a comment that the tide and a lot of things have slowed their production down.

DR. DUVAL: All right. Let's go ahead and take a break and be back here in fifteen-minutes.

DR. DUVAL: All right, everyone, and so we're currently in the decision document. We accepted the IPT's suggested edits to Action 4, which was revising the recreational annual catch target for

mutton snapper. We do need to select a preferred alternative here, and just recall that with our approved restructuring that we now have four alternatives, and so think about phrasing your motion for a preferred alternative in that regard, Alternative 1 or 2, which would be setting ACT equal to the recreational ACL times one minus the PSE. Alternative 3 would be setting the ACT at 85 percent of the recreational ACL, and Alternative 4 would be setting the ACT at 75 percent of the recreational ACL.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I move that we select what I think is the new Alternative 3, which is ACT equal to 85 percent of the recreational ACL, as the preferred under Action 4.

DR. DUVAL: There is a motion by Jessica. Is there a second? Second by Ben. Any discussion on this motion to select New Alternative 3, ACT equals 85 percent recreational ACL, as a preferred under Action 4? **Is there any objection to this motion? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

The next several actions get into the meat of the management measures, which we discussed at length last time, at our December council meeting, and the FWC has gone out and conducted public workshops in conjunction with the scoping meetings that the council conducted, and so I just want to turn things over to Jessica to review the input from those meetings, because that will certainly inform how we proceed from here.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you. I just want to give some updates. In addition to the workshops that were held in conjunction with the council, we also conducted workshops, FWC did by ourselves, at Key Largo, Naples, St. Pete, and Stuart. At this time, there doesn't seem to be a lot of consensus about where to go. We really feel like we need to see some of the analysis before we make a recommendation to our commission, and this is going to change FWC's timeline a little bit, and so let me talk about what the timeline is for FWC.

At this point, we are still planning on taking a draft rule to the April FWC Commission meeting, but we would still like to see the South Atlantic's analysis before we decide what that recommendation is going to be. Instead of FWC taking a final action at the June commission meeting, we would push the final action to the September commission meeting. That way, it would give both councils time to look at this document further. It would also allow for additional public hearings by the councils before FWC took a final action.

Remember that the goal here is to try to get consistent regulations across state waters and federal waters on both coasts of Florida, and so, because of that, that's why we've modified the timeline a little bit. As we go through this document, based on what we heard during the public workshops, we're going to be making some suggestions for removing some of the alternatives, or sub-alternatives, as we go through the document, to help streamline that a little bit, and then we also have an action that we would like to add for analysis.

DR. DUVAL: Great. Thank you, Jessica. I think that would be really helpful. When is your September commission meeting?

MS. MCCAWLEY: I believe it's the week after the council meeting, but just give me a second to look that up.

DR. DUVAL: The idea would be that we would take final action in September, is what you're suggesting, or actually we would take final action in December, like there would be another review of the document in September with final submission in December?

MS. MCCAWLEY: I think that it would be final submission, final review and the submission, at the council's December meeting. I just looked, and so the FWC September Commission Meeting is September 8 and 9 in St. Augustine, and that is the week before the South Atlantic Council meeting, and so, in theory, the FWC would be taking final action at that meeting.

DR. DUVAL: Great. That is helpful and thank you. I will be looking over to the left side of the table pretty frequently as we go through the next several actions. Myra, could you walk us through Action 5?

MS. BROUWER: Action 5 is on PDF page 15. It's to designate the spawning season during which commercial and recreational management measures should apply. Currently, the spawning season is designated as May through June. Alternative 2 reads: For regulatory purposes, designate the following as spawning months. The remainder of the year would be the regular season, and then we have sub-alternatives under that.

There was an approved motion at the December meeting to approve inclusion of Action 5, as modified, in the amendment and approve the range of alternatives for analysis. The IPT is suggesting that the action to designate the spawning season be Action 5, and so we kind of felt like it needed to be put ahead of -- Anyway, basically the number of the actions has changed since you saw this in December.

Also, I have a couple of notes here. A council member suggested using single months under the sub-alternatives above, so that the council could choose multiple preferreds. Instead of having these two-month or three-month chunks of time, we would just have sub-alternatives with single months, so that then you could choose several preferreds. That's been, as suggested, a way a structure this.

Then, again, based on the prior structuring of alternatives, some IPT members feel that we could structure this as individual Alternatives 2 through 6, as opposed to having sub-alternatives under an alternative, and so, since you've already chosen that under Action 2, I believe it was, then we would just maintain that consistency. Here, we would be looking for you to approve inclusion of this action as we've modified it, and then provide guidance on how to structure things for you to consider, and then, of course, select a preferred.

MS. MCCAWLEY: First, let me say that if the council feels more comfortable doing the single-month option, we are fine doing the single-month option. **If we want to keep it structured like it is right now, then we would suggest moving Sub-Alternatives 2c and 2e to the Considered but Rejected.** However, I'm not sure if this action is actually in there, since it looked different before, and so maybe it's not Considered but Rejected, because we haven't actually added this action. I am not sure.

DR. DUVAL: Maybe, to be safe, we can put it in Considered but Rejected. That totally clarifies where it's supposed to go. Would you all want to see these in single-month options, or are you fine with them the way they are?

MS. MCCAWLEY: I think, ultimately -- I can't predict what our commissioners are going to do, and so the single-month option might be easier, because, that way, you could select multiple preferreds, but I'm not sure what council staff thinks about the analysis if it has single-month options in there, and so I would be looking to council staff to determine which one would be easier to analyze.

DR. PONWITH: Just an additional consideration, I think, just to keep in the background, and that is if you do have latitude, as you consider how you set those months, there is statistical advantage if they actually line up with MRIP waves. Any time you start something in the middle of an MRIP wave, it makes it a little more difficult to be able to detect the effectiveness of that.

DR. DUVAL: The two sub-alternatives that you were going to suggest removing were 2c and 2e, and is that correct?

MS. MCCAWLEY: 2c and 2e, correct.

DR. DUVAL: I think Brian is going to enlighten us.

DR. CHEUVRONT: Just to make sure you understand, in terms of analysis by staff, all this is doing is designating months as spawning months or regular season months. There is really no analysis in this action, per se. I think Bonnie's comment comes in later, when you actually are doing the analysis. This is just describing -- This action simply describes the months. It doesn't have any closed or open periods here.

That analysis comes in a later action, but what you have here, I think Bonnie's point is probably a pretty good one when you start splitting MRIP waves and the effects that that's going to have on the analysis, but that doesn't happen in this action.

MS. MCCAWLEY: To me, the action is just designating which months you're going to apply the regulations that are being proposed.

DR. DUVAL: Perhaps we can dispense with removal of sub-alternatives first, and then if we want to restructure the remaining sub-alternatives to be reflective of single-month options, we can take it in that step-wise approach.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Is she typing out that motion that I made earlier or -- Okay.

DR. DUVAL: We need a second to that motion. Second by Ben. Any discussion on this motion? Do you want to elaborate on maybe why you're just moving those out?

MS. MCCAWLEY: One of those options does cut across multiple waves, like Bonnie mentioned. Also, based on the input that we heard at the workshops, the 2e option, I believe it is, the May to August timeframe, I think it's too long, based on what we heard at the workshops as well as some of the FWRI data, and so I don't think it's needed.

DR. DUVAL: Great. Thank you. Any other discussion on this? **Any objection to this motion? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.** Now do you want to -- Given the remaining sub-alternatives, we have the months of April, May, June, and July covered. Would you want to make

a motion to give direction to staff to restructure the alternatives to be single -- Each sub-alternative to be a single month?

MS. MCCAWLEY: I guess I'm a little bit concerned, since I don't believe that we would ultimately pick a single month, and so it seems like it's actually making more work for staff, because they would be analyzing each month singly, but you wouldn't have the combined effects of a two or three-month time period. I am a little concerned about just making these sub-alternatives a single month.

DR. DUVAL: I'm fine with leaving things the way they are. That's not a problem at all, but I just wanted to give you that option if you thought that your commission might want to pick and choose. Nothing else on Action 5? Action 6.

MS. BROUWER: Action 6 is on PDF page 17. Mutton snapper is currently part of the aggregate ten-snapper bag limit in the South Atlantic. In the no action alternative, it describes the species included. Alternative 2 would be to retain mutton within the snapper aggregate, but specify a bag limit during the regular season, and so this would be for the non-spawning months. We have some edits suggested here. Sub-Alternative 2a would be for four fish per person per day, 2b is five fish per person per day, and 2c is ten fish per person per day.

Alternative 3 would retain it in the snapper aggregate bag limit, but specify bag or vessel limits for mutton snapper during the spawning months, and then you have a range of sub-alternatives, ranging from two fish per person per day, two fish per vessel per day, five fish per vessel, ten fish per vessel, and twelve fish per vessel. Alternative 4 would, again, retain it in the snapper aggregate and specify bag limits year-round. Your sub-alternatives there are two, three, and five fish per person per day.

Currently, the bag limit, as I said, is in the aggregate. You also have a size limit, currently, of sixteen-inches total length. Then here are just some landings by wave for 2012 and 2013. Here is the distribution of mutton snapper landed per angler by season for MRIP and headboat, and then this is an analysis that was done when this action was included as part of the Joint South Florida Amendment, and so we do have some preliminary analysis here on bag limits. These are estimated percent reductions in landings at the various bag limits. That was generated for years 2011 through 2013 and, again, split for MRIP and headboat. Again, here, we would need motions to accept the edits that the IPT suggested and modify the range of alternatives, if you choose.

MS. MCCAWLEY: **I move that we accept the IPT's suggested edits to alternatives under Action 6.**

DR. DUVAL: Motion by Jessica. Is there a second? Second by Charlie. Any discussion? **Any objection? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.** Any desire to modify or eliminate any of these sub-alternatives?

MS. MCCAWLEY: Let me talk about what I would like to see done, and then we can figure out how to word this. Basically, under Alternative 3, I would like to see a sub-alternative that would be no retention, or a zero-fish option, during these spawning months. I would like to remove Sub-Alternatives b and c, which are the two fish per vessel per day and five fish per vessel per day, and I would like to add an alternative that would be three fish per person per day during these spawning

months. I am not sure how -- If you want me to just go through the removals and then go through the additions in two separate motions, or how you would like that worded.

DR. DUVAL: I think let's deal with the removals first. How about that?

MS. MCCAWLEY: **I move that we send Sub-Alternative 3b and 3c to the Considered but Rejected Appendix.**

DR. DUVAL: There is a motion by Jessica. Is there a second? Second by Charlie. Some rationale would be great. It's 3b and 3c, correct?

MS. MCCAWLEY: Right, and so that would be removing the two fish per vessel per day and the five fish per vessel per day. Based on everything that we heard at the workshops, especially at the Key West workshop, I just don't think that this is going to work. Also, remember that mutton is not overfished or undergoing overfishing. I just think that these are too restrictive during the spawning months. I think there are some other options that could possibly be chosen, and then, depending on how you choose the various options as you go throughout this document, I just am not sure that you would pick these two vessel limits in combination with some of the other options.

DR. DUVAL: Any other discussion or comments on this rationale or the motion? **Is there any objection to this motion? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.** Now, Jessica, how about any additions?

MS. MCCAWLEY: **I would also like to add two new sub-alternatives under Alternative 3. I don't know what you want to call it. One of them would be a zero fish, or no retention, and one would be three fish per person per day.**

DR. DUVAL: Motion by Jessica to add new sub-alternatives under Alternative 3 for no retention and three fish per person per day. Is there a second to that motion? Second by Ben. Is there discussion?

MS. MCCAWLEY: The reason that we're suggesting this is, based on what we heard at the workshops, is it seems like there might be a combination that we might want to choose for zero fish during whatever these spawning months are, and then one of the most popular options that we heard was to choose three fish or two fish during these spawning months, and so I wanted to make sure that both of those alternatives were in the document.

DR. DUVAL: Sounds good. Thank you. Any other discussion on this motion? **Is there any objection to this motion? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.** Were there any other sub-alternatives that you wanted considered under this action? Okay. Great. Are there any others that can be removed?

MS. MCCAWLEY: No, Madam Chair, I don't see any others that can be removed at this time.

DR. DUVAL: Great. Then moving on.

MS. BROUWER: Action 7 is on PDF page 20, and this action would modify the commercial trip limit in the South Atlantic. We have some edits suggested to the no action alternative, and then

Alternative 2 would establish a trip limit during the regular season, and so the non-spawning months, and your options there are from 300 to 500-pounds per trip.

Alternative 3 would specify those trip limits during the spawning months, and you have quite a range of sub-alternatives there. It's expressed not in pounds, but in fish per person per day or fish per vessel per day. Just to remind you that the guidance from the December meeting was for us to structure alternatives under Action 7 to resemble those under Action 6, and so we're trying to keep the same range and be consistent between the two.

Here is some information that, as I said, previously was gathered when these actions were included in the Joint South Florida Amendment. These are landings, by gear, for the years 2004 through 2013. These are all commercial, of course, and you've got a figure that is kind of too big for me to display on the screen, but it's showing commercial mutton snapper landings in trips by month. You've got total Florida mutton snapper landings from 2008 through 2013 in this figure for both recreational and commercial. Then the total is your blue line, and that's by year, from 2008 to 2013.

This table is a monthly distribution of landings from the commercial logbook, and so you've got the percent landings from dealer reports and those from the logbook by month, and the months highlighted there are the current spawning season. For this action, we would be looking for you to accept the suggested edits and then any modifications to the range of alternatives.

DR. DUVAL: Let's start with the easy stuff, maybe, the IPT's suggested edits.

MS. MCCAWLEY: **I move that we accept the IPT's suggested edits to the alternatives under Action 7.**

DR. DUVAL: Motion by Jessica and seconded by Charlie. Any discussion?

MR. COX: As we're talking about commercial trip limits, and I continue to see bag limits in the language, it just doesn't seem appropriate that we have bag limits in commercial. Any time we're talking commercial trip limits and then we see bag limits in it, it's a little confusing to the commercial sector.

DR. DUVAL: That's just up in Alternative 1, where it says there is no bag or trip limit for the commercial sector in the Gulf or South Atlantic from July through April. It's just people associate the terminology of bag limit with the recreational sector, and so I mean that has definitely led to some confusion, certainly in our existing regulations, where we allow retention of the recreational bag limit during a commercial closure.

I think that's a nomenclature issue that we need to work on, and so I definitely appreciate Jack's comment. Is it okay with folks to just strike that, the "bag", from that no action alternative? Okay. Any other discussion on this motion? **Is there any objection to this motion? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.** Jessica, what kind of modifications would you all like to see to these, based on your workshops?

MS. MCCAWLEY: Let's start with the removals. **Under Alternative 3, I move that we move Sub-Alternatives 3b, 3c, and 3d to the Considered but Rejected Appendix.**

DR. DUVAL: Motion by Jessica to move Sub-Alternatives 3b, and 3c, and 3d to the Considered but Rejected Appendix, and those are the five fish per person per day, two fish per vessel per day, and five fish per vessel per day alternatives. Is there a second to that motion? Second by Anna. Is there discussion?

MS. MCCAWLEY: Once again, this is based on what we heard at the workshops, and also kind of trying to match up what would happen to the commercial folks as being similar to what would happen to the recreational folks during the spawning months. That's why I'm suggesting removing these. Ben, if you have a different idea about the five fish per person per day, but we took that out of the recreational alternatives, and that's why I would suggest taking it out here, which is the 3b option.

MR. HARTIG: I think that you're going to add in some other options as well. Thank you.

DR. DUVAL: Great. Thank you for that discussion. We will go back to the text of the motion. I will just read this one more time. It's to move Sub-Alternatives 3b, 3c, and 3d under Action 7 to the Considered but Rejected Appendix. Any further discussion? **Any objection? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.** Okay. Additions?

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you. **I would move that we add an alternative for no retention, or zero fish, and another -- It's actually a sub-alternative of three fish per person per day, and so those are both sub-alternatives.**

DR. DUVAL: Motion by Jessica to add a sub-alternative for no retention and three fish per person per day to Alternative 3, correct?

MS. MCCAWLEY: Correct.

DR. DUVAL: It's seconded by Chester. Is there discussion?

MS. MCCAWLEY: One again, this is aligning this particular action for commercial similar to what we just did for the recreational action, because one of the goals that we've talked about at previous meetings, and was discussed at the public workshop, is trying to make the commercial limit the same as the recreational limit during the spawning months, and so that's what these deletions and additions of these sub-alternatives is trying to do, is make that the same.

DR. DUVAL: Great. Any other discussion on this motion, which is to add sub-alternatives for no retention and three fish per person per day, to Alternative 3? **Is there any objection to this motion? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.** That's it for Amendment 41.

MS. MCCAWLEY: **I would like to add an additional action to Amendment 41 for modifying the size limit.**

DR. DUVAL: A motion from Jessica to add an action to Amendment 41 to modify the mutton snapper minimum size limit. Is there a second to that motion? Can I get a second? Ben. Is there discussion?

MS. MCCAWLEY: This is also based on some things that we heard at the public workshops. There was a lot of discussion about the differences in the fishery, especially in Key West versus other areas of the state, or even other areas of the Keys. If this motion is approved, I would like to list out what the alternatives for changes in size limit would be.

DR. DUVAL: Any other discussion on this motion? The current minimum size limit is sixteen-inches total length. **Any objection to this motion? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.** All right, Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: **I would like to add alternatives for seventeen, eighteen, nineteen, and twenty-inches.** If I get a second, I will talk about my rationale.

DR. DUVAL: Motion by Jessica to add alternatives. It's seconded by Chris. Those would be seventeen, eighteen, nineteen, and twenty-inches. Go ahead, Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: The most popular size limits that were discussed at the workshops were the eighteen and the twenty-inch options. The reason that I have seventeen and nineteen in that list is so that we would have a range of alternatives to look at. Once again, this is an increase from sixteen-inches total length, which is the current size. This would be for recreational and commercial, if that's not already clear.

DR. DUVAL: Is there discussion from other folks around the table?

MR. PHILLIPS: Will we have a no action of a default sixteen somewhere, in the case the public just decides -- I'm just not sure if you were going to put it there or somewhere else.

DR. DUVAL: That would be Alternative 1, just no action, or status quo.

MR. COX: Just for the sake of the people that may be listening to the webinar or whatever, over the internet, Jessica is making a lot of these comments because the majority of these fish are coming from Florida. In North Carolina, on the commercial side, we don't see rarely, off of a vessel, more than about three or four muttons ever at one time, and we will very rarely see any smaller than twenty-inches.

DR. DUVAL: Thank you for that, Jack. Any other discussion on this motion? I will just read it. The motion is to add alternatives for seventeen-inches total length, eighteen-inches total length, nineteen-inches total length, and twenty-inches total length to the action, to the new action. **Any objection to this motion? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.** Is there anything else from the public workshops, Jessica, that you wanted addressed?

MS. MCCAWLEY: I can tell you that there was a lot of discussion about Western Dry Rocks, which is an area that -- It's actually inside the Sanctuary. It's in state waters. The reason we're not discussing it here is it's not in federal waters. It's not an action that the council would take, but that's something else that the FWC is considering.

There is definitely an aggregation at that site, just like there's a current spawning aggregation at Riley's Hump in the Tortugas. Riley's is already closed. FWC has already done some significant

research on the Riley's area and seen, I believe, a 400 percent increase in spawning activity at Riley's Hump.

Western Dry Rocks is another known spawning aggregation in the Keys, and so that was probably the hottest topic of discussion, I would say, at these public workshops, but the reason we're not really discussing it here is it's not an action that the council would take. It would be an action that the FWC would have to take.

I can tell you that the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, which we've heard in the past -- You know they're working on modifying their plan. I believe that Sean Morton has been here to speak to the council about that plan, and I think that the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary is going to propose that Western Dry Rocks be closed year-round, because there is other species besides just mutton snapper that are spawning in that particular location.

Once the Sanctuary would propose that, those changes would then have to be approved by the FWC, the Department of Environmental Protection, and the Governor and Cabinet. FWC could take an action that would be specific to mutton, considering some type of spawning closure, area closure, multi-month type spawning closure, or something at Western Dry Rocks outside of the council process, and so that's something that's being considered. It, of course, would not be part of the analysis that the council was doing, because it's not an action for federal waters.

DR. DUVAL: Thank you for that background and update and clarification.

MR. CONKLIN: I just had a question. Isn't that a pretty big recreational scuba diving site? Are you all still going to allow tons of scuba divers to go out there and interact with the fish?

MS. MCCAWLEY: It is a popular recreational site, and so, to me, anything is on the table at this point to be considered, whether it would be just a hook and line closure or whether it would just be a couple of months of closure during the spawning season. The Sanctuary is also looking at all manner of different types of options, whether the closure that they would propose would be just for hook or line or whether it would be hook and line and spearing or everybody out or is it just for bottom fishing. To me, all of those different things are on the table for that particular area.

DR. DUVAL: I will just note that in I think it's Attachment 8b is the FWC mutton snapper presentation that was given at the workshops, and so there is some mention, I think, of Western Dry Rocks in there, as well as the additional information regarding all the changes that we've just discussed here this morning.

MS. BOSARGE: Just a quick question, since you mentioned that. We did have a presentation from the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, I think at our Key West meeting last June, which was the joint meeting. What kind of a timeline are they on for that plan, and do they anticipate coming -- We asked them to keep us informed and even possibly let us have a stakeholder that sits on that committee but is not voting, simply because a lot of that area down there that they were considering were key shrimp grounds in that area. What's their timeline look like, and do they anticipate coming back to both councils and giving us some more updates?

MS. MCCAWLEY: Good question. I'm not sure if I am the best person to answer this, but I can certainly get the answer before full council from Sean Morton. I think their timeline has slowed

down a little bit. I do anticipate Sean Morton, who is the Superintendent, coming back and giving more presentations to the council.

They still haven't even released the draft of what the proposal would be, and I would have to look back, but I do believe that it was maybe a five-year process and maybe we're two years into the process, but I think it was slowed down because they formed some working groups to look at some of the recommendations, for exactly the reason that you're talking about.

The working groups were members that were not just members of the Sanctuary Advisory Council. They added a bunch of different types of fishermen and different types of user groups on these working groups, to look at various recommendations. Then those recommendations from the working group would go back to what they call the SAC, the Sanctuary Advisory Council. I think they're still working through that process, but I can try to get an update from Sean Morton and give that at full council, if you would like.

MS. BOSARGE: Yes, that would be great, and while you're talking to him, maybe you could ask if they were able to pick up a stakeholder from the shrimp fishery as well.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I will look into it.

DR. DUVAL: I apologize. The last comment I made about the FWC presentation, that was actually from our December briefing book, I believe.

MS. MCCAWLEY: We can send around a PDF version of the FWC presentation, and it has a graphic in there that shows where Western Dry Rocks is. The area where we've noted the spawning aggregation is not actually sitting on top of Western Dry Rocks proper. It's a little bit south and west of that area, but you'll see it in the presentation, and then we could discuss this further at full council, if people would like.

DR. DUVAL: Thank you.

MS. BROUWER: I just wanted to bring to your attention that, now that we have a new action in Amendment 41 for an increase in the size limit, that we're going to run into some more issues similar to what we just dealt with with hogfish, where you have a size limit increase that could impact the recreational ACL if you still want to specify that in numbers. I'm assuming the guidance would be for us to proceed, as you indicated yesterday for hogfish, in using the methodology that council staff proposed and that was recommended by the SSC, to then apply that methodology to get revised ACLs for you. You will see a little bit different numbers, perhaps, at the upcoming meeting.

DR. DUVAL: Thank you for that reminder, Myra. It's much appreciated. There are still some things that I would like for us to get through before lunch. We still have over an hour left before breaking for lunch, and so, if there's nothing else on Amendment 41, I would like to move into the Oculina Experimental Closed Area Evaluation Report, which is Attachment 6 in your briefing book, and I think Chip is going to take us through this. I think this was something that we were supposed to cover in December and we just didn't quite have time, if memory serves me correctly, which is always an assumption.

MR. COLLIER: You guys have reviewed this in the past, and what we're trying to get today is actually when you want it reviewed in the future. We're not going to actually go through this document too much. You definitely have seen it; I think on two different occasions in different committees. What we would like to do is get your comments on when to go forward with the next review of this one, and I am going to pull up a document that was sent this morning to you guys.

The name of this document is "Potential Timing and Scope of South Atlantic System Management Plans". We've been working on -- Even though we haven't called the Oculina plan a system management plan, it has a very similar form as the other two system management plans that we're going to be reviewing right after this one.

I put together potential timing of the three different system management plans that we've been working on. With the one from Amendment 36, the SMZs, that actually has some timing that's listed in the amendment, and so if you guys change that later, we might have to come back to this and readjust it, but, for now, what I'm looking at is around 2019 is when we would go back to the Oculina Experimental Closed Area and review it.

That review would include going over the science and also considering regulations, configuration, and also size of the Oculina Experimental Closed Area. If you guys are good with that, then that would be the next review, and what we would request is you guys just kind of give us the approval that that management plan is done for the Oculina.

DR. DUVAL: I'm so ready to give that approval. How does everybody else feel? 2019 for the Oculina Experimental Closed Area, we're good on that. Would you like a motion from the committee to that effect?

MR. COLLIER: Yes.

DR. DUVAL: **Okay, and so if I could get a motion from the committee approving the next Oculina Evaluation Team Review for 2019, that would be great.**

MR. HARTIG: **I would make that motion, Madam Chairman.**

DR. DUVAL: Motion by Ben, and then if we also include in that motion, Ben, just approval of the review team document that's Attachment 6 in the folder, that would be great.

MR. HARTIG: **All right.**

DR. DUVAL: Motion by Ben that the next review of the Oculina Experimental Closed Area is in 2019, with the scope including science, size, configuration, and regulations, and approval of the report that we have in front of us. Is there a second to that motion? Second by Jack. Is there any discussion? **Any objection? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

MR. COLLIER: I am going to go over the next system management plan, which is the deepwater MPAs.

DR. DUVAL: That's Attachment 7 in your briefing book.

MR. COLLIER: There were some slight modifications, due to some edits, but, overall, they were just editorial changes. There were no real big changes in any of the recommendations through this. Yesterday, we got some comments from the Law Enforcement AP, and they had some suggested editorial changes as well and some value changes in there, but nothing too substantial.

With this, we have an executive summary included in there that was a major revision, but, for the most part, the intent and all the goals and species included in this is all the same. You guys have had this in a couple of different meetings, and what we're looking for is an approval of this one as well. Then the next review for the deepwater MPAs, if you go back to the other document I have, would occur in 2021, five-years from now.

DR. DUVAL: It's really scary to think that 2021 is only five-years away. Again, I think we would probably be looking for a motion from the committee to approve the system management plan for the Amendment 14 marine protected areas and the approval of the next review being in 2021.

MR. COLLIER: For this one, we would be requesting some editorial changes to it, or just some slight changes, with approval going through you, if that would be okay.

DR. DUVAL: Similar to what we do for amendments? Yes. Okay. Can I get a motion from the committee to that effect, maybe something along the lines of approve the system management plan for the Amendment 14 MPAs and the schedule for the upcoming review in 2021, and perhaps give the Chair license to approve any additional editorial changes?

MR. COX: **I move that we approve the system management plan in Amendment 14 for the deepwater MPAs and the timing for the review in 2021, with editorial changes approved by the Chair.**

DR. DUVAL: Motion by Jack. Is there a second? Second by Charlie. Is there discussion?

MR. HARTIG: Have we had a review of our MPAs before? I know we get reports from people who go in there, at least in some of our MPAs. I mean some of them we've never had any of those ROV surveys, and so have we ever had this before?

MR. COLLIER: This is a new document for the deepwater MPAs, and we kind of, when we were developing -- In the development of the special management zones, I think it came up that it would be nice to have this for both of them, and so we developed it at the same time for both areas. They are very similar in goals and research that's going to be occurring.

If you look at the end of this document, there is some data that is included. It gives a little hint on what information has been collected in the deepwater MPAs, and it does provide species-level data, as well as length and some maturity information.

DR. DUVAL: I think this is a good thing. I mean this is sort of our accountability measure for the existing deepwater marine protected areas. Are there any other questions for Chip? Any other discussion on this motion? The motion is to approve the system management plan for Amendment 14 deepwater MPAs and timing for the review in 2021, with editorial changes approved by the Chair. **Is there any objection to this motion? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: I guess I just have a question, Chip. In some of the action items in the system management plan, it tasks certain things that are supposed to be done. Some of those things that are supposed to be done are by entities that aren't the council. It talks about patrol spawning SMZs and a variety of things, initiate a remote monitoring program for spawning SMZs and those sorts of things.

Obviously the council can't make those entities do things, and so I'm not quite sure how you have envisioned, and maybe it's just a discussion for the record, but these are things that the council would like, goals the council would like, to see achieved, right? Maybe you could just speak a little bit about that.

MR. COLLIER: I mean there is objectives and goals within the system management plan and the tasks are ways to achieve those objectives. What we mention right around the beginning of the tasks is there is no commitment or funds currently available, and we're not committing anyone to do this work, but this is what we would like to do to have a successful marine protected area off of there, and it provides the research, the enforcement, and outreach, which is going to be a very key component of these marine protected areas.

DR. DUVAL: Any other questions or discussion for Chip? Okay. We're good on the system management plan for the deepwater MPAs, and now the system management plan --

MR. COLLIER: I think we're going to go into Amendment 36, because that system management plan is part of the amendment.

DR. DUVAL: Gregg is going to walk us through Amendment 36. Attachment 8a is the document, and I believe Gregg is going to use the summary to walk us through that. The codified text is Attachment 8b, and then the system management plan is 8c, and it's highly reflective of the document that we just saw.

MR. WAUGH: Thank you, and, first, I would just like to express some thanks. Rick DeVictor hosted a GIS summit between Roger and Amanda and Nick, to sort out all of these final coordinates. What you're going to see are some minor corrections to some of the size of these areas and some of the coordinates. Since they're in the actions, we'll need your approval for those. I wanted to thank Will Heyman too for the work he did and the participating fishermen and some of the Pew funding that went into that.

This document has been reviewed quite extensively. Rick had that go through some of the internal review, and Jack and Monica have looked at it. Roger, our staff, and the IPT have all looked at this, and so what you have before you is a pretty final document.

What I want to do is we've received some comments that you've been provided. I just wanted to summarize those, and then we'll move to the Amendment 36 document. There is no decision document. We will use the summary section of the amendment document, and that highlights, in track changes, the changes. That's Attachment 8a.

In terms of the comments, Chris McCaffity from North Carolina requested that we table Amendment 36, or merge it with the system management plan. He suggested that artificial reef SMZs should be created in existing MPAs. He pointed out that you could simply manage snowy

and blueline so that the closures in those occur in July and August, when speckled hind and warsaw grouper are spawning, and that would do the job. He also pointed out that stakeholders have not had a chance to comment on the North Carolina area, and that's just a mistake on his part. I went back and looked, and that area was included in the second round of public hearings.

Pew submitted a letter recommending approval of Snapper Grouper Amendment 36 for secretarial review. They continue to support the council's plans to protect spawning deepwater snapper grouper species. Protecting special places where fish spawn is critical to the protection of long-lived, slow-to-mature species. They wanted detailed plans for research, monitoring, outreach, and enforcement, and concluded that will be critical to measuring success.

We had an individual off of Georgia, Keith Sykes, that noted that there are no areas off of Georgia, but he still supports the process and the establishment, and urged you to vote yes on Amendment 36 and establish a plan to monitor effectiveness. He pointed out that if the by the sunset there is no spawning documented, then move on to other ideas and approaches. If they do work, he wanted us to come back and to reconsider the St. Simons zone area in the future. As I said, you've been provided all those comments. Are there any questions on those?

DR. DUVAL: I think we also got a letter from the West Palm Beach Fishing Club in support of the process and the Warsaw Hole proposed spawning SMZ off of Florida.

MR. WAUGH: That's correct, and I'm sorry. That was one of the first comments we had, and that was included in the materials that you do have before you.

DR. DUVAL: Any other questions for Gregg on some of these last comments that have been received?

MR. COX: I just want to say that ever since I first got on the council that I was getting calls from commercial fishermen out of the Southport area saying to please do something to protect some of this reduction in red grouper that we've seen, and so I was getting a lot of calls on that. It wasn't official, but I did want to make that known.

DR. DUVAL: Moving on.

MR. WAUGH: Okay, and so we also added into the Amendment 36 document the area coordinates for 51 and 53, and you've been provided the references that document the work in those areas, and what I would like to do now is just move right through Amendment 36 and see if there are any changes.

MS. BURGESS: I'm a bit lost, because I'm so used to having a decision document. I want to make sure I'm in the right place before we start. So we're in the full amendment, the file titled "Snapper Grouper Amendment 36", is that correct, and which PDF page are we going to start on?

DR. DUVAL: I would imagine we would be starting on PDF page 20, which is the beginning of the summary.

MR. WAUGH: Right, and I just wanted to see if there was any interest in changing any of the wording to the purpose and need.

DR. DUVAL: The purpose and need is actually on PDF page 21.

MR. WAUGH: Hearing none, then we will move on to Action 1, which is to modify the special management zone procedure, and there are no changes to this. You have a preferred. That's Preferred Alternative 2. The next action is Action 2, to modify the framework procedure to allow modifications and/or additional spawning SMZ zones. You have a preferred, and it's Alternative 2, to modify the framework.

DR. DUVAL: That's PDF page 24.

MR. WAUGH: Hearing none, then moving on to Action 3, which establishes the new spawning special management zones off of North Carolina. We have minor changes to the sizes of these areas. The Malchase Wreck, it's 2.42-square-miles and not 2.47. Sub-Alternative 3a is 5.14 and Sub-Alternative 3b is 3.11-square-miles. Alternative 4 is 3.2-square-miles and Alternative 5 is 5.1-square-miles. Again, this changes the wording of the actions and the alternatives, and we would look for a motion to make those changes.

DR. DUVAL: This is on PDF page 25 of the full amendment document, and we would just be looking for a motion from the committee to approve the corrections to the size of those sub-alternatives.

MR. COX: I move that we approve the corrections to the size of Sub-Alternatives 2a, 3a, and 3b, Alternative 4, and Preferred Alternative 5.

DR. DUVAL: Is there a second to that motion? Second by Jessica. Any discussion? **Any objection? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

MR. WAUGH: The next item is Action 4, which is SMZs off of South Carolina. Preferred Alternative 2, Sub-Alternative 2a, the correct size of that is 12.57-square-miles. 2b is 4.62-square-miles. 2c is 1.75-square-miles. Sub-Alternative 2e is 7.9-square-miles. Preferred Sub-Alternative 2f is 3.03-square-miles. There are no changes to Preferred Alternatives 3 and 4, and so we would look for a motion to approve those corrections.

DR. DUVAL: Again, this is PDF page 34, and so we would be looking for a motion from the committee to approve those corrections.

MR. BELL: I move we approve the corrections to the size of Sub-Alternatives 2a, 2b, 2c, 2e, and 2f in the document.

DR. DUVAL: Motion by Mel and second by Mark. Any discussion? **Any objection? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

MR. WAUGH: Next is Action 5, which would allow you to establish new spawning special management zones off of Georgia. Your preferred is no action. Sub-Alternative 2a, the correct size is 14.32-square-miles. 2b is 8.89-square-miles. 2c is 3.80-square-miles. Again, we would be looking for a motion to approve those corrections.

DR. DUVAL: If I could get a motion from the committee. We're on PDF page 41.

MR. HAYMANS: **Madam Chair, I would move that we accept the corrections to Sub-Alternatives 2a, 2b, and 2c.**

DR. DUVAL: Motion by Doug and a second by Charlie. Is there any discussion? **Any objection to that motion? Seeing none, that motion is approved.**

MR. WAUGH: Next is Action 6, which are SMZs off of Florida. The corrections to the Sub-Alternative 2a is 1.8-square-miles. 2b is 0.9-square-miles, and Preferred Alternative 2c is 3.6-square miles. Alternative 3, Sub-Alternative 3a is 6.53-square miles, 3b is 13.3-square-miles, and 3c is 6.68-square miles. Again, we're looking for a motion to approve those corrections.

DR. DUVAL: Looking for a motion from the committee.

MS. MCCAWLEY: **I move that we approve the corrections to the size of Sub-Alternatives 2a, 2b, 2c, 3a, 3b, and 3c.**

DR. DUVAL: Motion by Jessica. There's a second by Ben. Any discussion? **Any objection? Seeing none, that motion is approved.**

MR. WAUGH: Next is Action 7, and there were no changes to that action. Your preferred is Alternative 2, to move the area. Action 8 is establishing transit and anchoring provisions. Your preferred is Alternative 2 and 3, Preferred Sub-Alternative 3b. There were no corrections to those. Action 9 is establishing a sunset provision. Your preferred sub-alternative is 2b, to apply the sunset provision to all spawning SMZs except the Area 51 and 53. There are no changes to that alternative. We have a list of target species that are going to be used to measure whether or not spawning is occurring in those areas, and that's listed in Table S-19.

DR. DUVAL: Gregg, I just noted that graysby is misspelled in that table, and, further in the document, Table 2.9.1.1, which is the same summary as Table S-19, actually does not have graysby in it, at least when I looked at this version, and so it's just something to double-check.

MR. WAUGH: We'll make sure those corrections get made. Then the next item that takes care of all the actions in Amendment 36, the codified text is Attachment 8c, and I've been through that and double-checked all the coordinates. They're all correct. At the time that codified text was prepared, we didn't have the area coordinates for 51 and 53, and those will be added. They're shown in the Amendment 36 document on page S-19. I didn't know if you all had any questions on the codified text or not.

DR. DUVAL: I think the only question I had was just the comment about the gear stowage requirements and that this codified text makes those requirements the same for the Amendment 14 MPAs and the spawning SMZs and the slight modification to the existing gear stowage. It looked, to me, like all the items that were in the box under Action 8, which is on PDF page 58 of the full amendment document, which describes what fishing gear appropriately stowed means. I just wanted to make sure there wasn't anything we had to do. I'm kind of looking in Monica's direction a little bit.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: I like it when you look in this direction, but what exactly are you -- Maybe you could restate what you --

DR. DUVAL: If you're looking on page 1 of the codified text, one of the comment boxes was just that this would make the requirements for gear stowage the same for the MPAs and the spawning SMZs, which seems like a good thing to me, but the following sentences state that it would modify slightly the existing gear stowage requirements for the MPAs, and just noting that the council may want to weigh in on that, because the gear stowage requirements would be mushed together for the MPAs and the SMZs.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: I guess I'll have to talk with some of the folks who draft the codified regulations, because you all don't have the MPA action in front of you, right? You've done the MPAs in Amendment 14, and so I think to change those would be something new that you have not addressed before and not alerted the public to and those sorts of things, and so we may need some revision. That's a good pick-up by you. We might need some revision in the codified text, and so great job, Michelle.

DR. DUVAL: Mind like a steel trap. It's open, so that everything just falls right out of it, and that's the problem. I guess if you don't mind checking back in with them and making sure that what we have in front of us is what we should have in front of us and that it's all the way it should be.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: Right. I will do that.

DR. DUVAL: Are there any other questions besides my own on the codified text? I am not seeing any.

MR. WAUGH: Then the next item is Appendix N. It has the spawning SMZ system management plan, and I think Chip went over the timeframe when he was covering the Amendment 14 MPAs, but we can handle any additional questions now. This timing, 2018, would be year-three for doing the review, and this timing tracks the timing in your preferred alternative for the ten-year sunset, but we'll handle any questions, as well as any questions you have on Appendix N. It's very similar to what you went through for the Amendment 14 MPAs.

MR. COLLIER: For this one, there's actually three different reviews that are set up. The first review occurs in year-three; the second review would occur in year-five, which is 2020; and then the third review, which would be two-years prior to the sunset, would occur in 2023.

DR. DUVAL: Are there any questions for Chip on this? You can see, up on the screen, the previous document that we were looking at. You see the dates for the five-year and the eight-year spawning special management zone reviews. You would be looking for a motion from the committee to approve the system management plan?

MR. WAUGH: It's a part of Amendment 36. If we look now, we've got a draft motion here for you to approve the Amendment 36 for formal review, and that includes that appendix, and so it doesn't need to be approved separately.

DR. DUVAL: Great. We have a draft motion on the screen. Is anyone willing to make a draft motion to approve this for secretarial review?

MR. PHILLIPS: I would be happy to do it, Madam Chair. **I make the motion that we approve Snapper Grouper Amendment 36 for secretarial review and deem the codified text as necessary and appropriate and give staff editorial license to make any necessary editorial changes to the document codified text and give the Council Chair authority to approve the revised revisions and re-deem the codified text.**

DR. DUVAL: Motion by Charlie and a second by Jessica. Is there any discussion on this motion? **Any objection to this motion? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

It's 11:26. I would actually, if folks don't mind, like to keep working through. I think we might gain -- I'm hoping that we can gain a little bit of time this afternoon, because I have a feeling -- We're scheduled to start the Mackerel Committee meeting tomorrow morning, from 8:30 to 10:00, and I have a feeling that it might take a little bit longer, and so if we could at least keep moving forward before lunch. That might give our Committee Chair Hartig time to get through at least some of the pro forma stuff with mackerel, so that we're not cheating Data Collection as well.

With everyone's concurrence, we will go ahead and move into an Overview of Items to be Included in Snapper Grouper Amendment 43. This is the amendment that would respond to SEDAR 41. I think Chip is going to take us through that. You have Attachments 9a, 9b, and 9c.

MR. COLLIER: Given that red snapper is a high-interest species, what we want to do, and the assessment is going to be completed prior to your next meeting, is we just wanted to give you some background information prior to the next meeting, so when fishermen are calling you and you're getting advice on how to potentially manage this species in the future, you're going to have some background information. That's all this is to be considered, is background information for red snapper.

In the document included is the landings, and so Table 1 has the ABC. It has discards and landings, in thousands of individuals, and you also have total removals. You can see that for 2012 to 2016, and you also have the ABC.

In 2012, you can see the total removals, the ABC, was 86,000 fish. The total removals estimated were 103,000. That one is going to be a little different. It is showing that we were above the ABC in that year, but there was a recalculation. There is a different method that's used now to estimate landings of red snapper, and that's why that's different than what was originally estimated back in 2013.

If you look at 2013, 96,000 was the ABC, and the total removal was 74,000. That enabled the fishing year in 2014. In 2014, the total removals were 186,000, which was substantially greater than the ABC of 106,000 fish, and that's why the 2015 season was not opened, and we're going to be getting total removals at the June meeting from NMFS on what occurred in 2015.

DR. DUVAL: Just to make sure folks understand, the total removals, the ABC, is coming from the previous stock assessment.

MR. COLLIER: That's the previous stock assessment, and you're going to be getting the new stock assessment in June. Looking at the landings up here, we have them plotted in gray and black. Gray is the recreational landings and the black is the commercial landings. I have it plotted out in

pounds, numbers of fish, and then also numbers of discards. You can see that, prior to the 2010 closure, there were substantially high -- There was very high landings in 2008 and 2009, and it decreased after that and it's been held at pretty low levels since then.

Going on from landings, we're going to go into seasonality of harvest, and some of this is going to be confounded by when the actual season was allowed to be opened in the last few years. For the recreational, I actually did it throughout the entire time series, because discards are very important in the recreational fishery, and you can see when the discards are occurring -- Even if the season is not opening, you can still have discards for the red snapper, and so that's plotted up here as well.

For the most part, the highest discards and catch occurs from April through the September/October waves. It's not real consistent on when the peak discards occur, but it's generally during the warmer months. Are there any questions on that one?

MR. HARTIG: Not so much exactly to that, but how do the headboat discards compare to the private boat discards in these years? I mean we have a better idea of what's going on in the headboats, basically.

MR. COLLIER: I haven't looked at the seasonality of just the fisheries by sector, but I can provide that information to you, and I will have that ready for you guys in June. That's what some additional information -- This is kind of asking you guys what more do you want to see? Do you want that seasonality for each sector?

MR. HARTIG: Yes.

MR. BOWEN: I don't see -- I read this a couple of weeks ago, when we got our briefing book, and I didn't notice it then, but I don't see 2011 on here, as far as the discards go. I'm also noticing the drastic drop, well, decent drop, in discards in 2012, 2013, and 2014. Maybe 2009, 2010, 2012, and 2014. Am I reading that properly, and where is 2011?

MR. COLLIER: 2011 wasn't put on here just for symmetry, more or less. It didn't really have any pattern.

MR. BOWEN: You just wanted to make it look good.

MR. COLLIER: I am always about looking pretty.

MR. BOWEN: I hear you, but, on a serious note, doesn't it appear that the discards reduce during those years, and do we have an idea of why that may have been, since we were still really fishing and we just weren't necessarily targeting snapper, since 2010?

MR. COLLIER: I don't have a clear answer for that, but some information could be that there was a good recruitment class that occurred around 2007 and 2008. You can see that in the document, and then, within talking in SEDAR right now, they're actually talking about a good year class that's coming through in the more recent time period, and so you're seeing that in 2014, and that could be the increased discards there as well.

It could be that you're just not seeing the discards, even though fishermen are going out, but it could be the fact that more fishermen, when there is little seasons out there, they are more likely to go out there and try to target some of the red snapper.

DR. DUVAL: Any other questions for Chip on these graphs before we let him move along? All right.

MR. COLLIER: Going into the commercial seasonality, I do just have the previous season up there, because I did not have discards for the commercial fishery, but the commercial fishery has minimal discards compared to the recreational fishery. Where the recreational fishery is hundred-thousands of fish, the commercial fishery is going to be thousands of fish. With the commercial discards, there is really no pattern in this one either. It pretty much occurs -- It can occur throughout the year.

The length of the harvested fish, I have plotted up here for the recreational fishery. That's going to be Figure 4. This is weighted length frequency distribution from MRIP as well as headboats. At the bottom, it's actually in centimeters. Just to give you reference for that, there is a black dot, and that's the twenty-inch size limit that was in place prior to the 2010 closure. That was a previous management measure that was out there.

You can see the length frequency distribution has shifted from mainly right around twenty-inch fish from 2006 to 2009, and it has shifted outwards to about a twenty-four-inch fish is some of those larger fish that you're seeing. Are there any questions on this?

Figure 5 is the commercial length frequency distribution. That's going to be weighted by the landings, and you can see, once again, there's a little distribution. A lot of the fish were around the twenty-inch size limit from 2007 to 2009, and you can see it has shifted to a slightly larger size from 2012 to 2014. That 2012 to 2014, there was no size limit for either the recreational or the commercial fishery.

Going on into the catches, starting off with the recreational catch, this first one is the number of fish caught per angler. It's not the number of fish landed, and so you can see we have some of the plots going all the way up to greater than four fish caught per angler, and they were actually having some pretty good success catching fish. It's most common to catch less than 0.5 fish, or half the people on the boat were catching one red snapper is another way to think of it.

Going on from there to actually numbers of fish that were retained, and we have that plotted for 2010 to 2014, and, for the most part, you can see during the closed season, 2010/2011, that most people were abiding by the closure. There were a few people that weren't. In 2012 to 2014, there's a few people that were retaining over the legal bag limit, but, for the most part, most people are abiding by the regulations.

MR. HAYMANS: Those catches were in Florida state waters, right, most of those catches beyond the one? Don't I remember that? Wasn't there a significant spike that first and second year of fish caught in state waters?

DR. DUVAL: You're talking about --

MR. HAYMANS: 2011 and 2012. I just thought I remembered that that's where those came from and it wasn't that they were necessarily federally-caught species.

MR. COLLIER: I will check on that.

DR. DUVAL: Florida is open in state waters, right? Yes.

MR. COLLIER: Figure 8 is the commercial pounds per trip, and I have broken that up from one to twenty-four-pounds, twenty-five to forty-nine-pounds, fifty to ninety-nine-pounds, and then it goes by hundred-pounds, once you get greater than that.

You can see, from 2006 to 2009, the most common catch was one to twenty-four-pounds. However, when you look in the more recent time period, from 2012 to 2014, the more common catches were occurring at the fifty to ninety-nine-pound range. It appears that, in some of the commercial fisheries, that either they're targeting the fish or they're having really good success on all trips catching their limit.

MR. HAYMANS: Wasn't that a seventy-five-pound limit during those years?

DR. DUVAL: It was a fifty-pound limit the first year, and then we bumped it up to seventy-five.

MR. PHILLIPS: It was pretty easy for those guys to go get that three or four fish, or whatever it was, and then go about doing whatever they wanted to do.

MR. COLLIER: The next plot, Figure 9, is actually total pounds of fish that were landed by catch distribution, and this is another way -- As opposed to just looking at the percent of trips, this would be looking at how many pounds are caught in that size category. Sometimes there's a little bit of a different distribution.

If you remember back from the previous plot, the one to twenty-four-pound had the most -- It was most frequent on the catches, but if you look at the total pounds that were caught, it was most common in that greater than 500, and so, even though it was very infrequent in the number in the percent of trips, it did make up a substantial portion of the catch.

That was the last figure I had for you guys as far as the synopsis of information. So far, we want to look at the catches, the recreational catches, where those were occurring in 2011 and 2012, and then you also wanted to get the distribution, the monthly distribution, by mode in the recreational fishery.

MR. COX: I just wanted to say that these charts that we've looked at, these tables, were very consistent with what we saw at the dock, and so whoever gathered this information, they look very well representative to what was coming in.

DR. DUVAL: Are there any other questions or comments for Chip? This is just background information for us as we think about our upcoming June council meeting, where we'll receive the results of SEDAR 41. We have given some direction to staff on the range of possible management alternatives that we wanted to see considered at the December council meeting, and so this is just to help further inform those measures.

Then there is one more PDF document that was sent on Friday. It's called "Red Snapper Approaches to Management in 2016 and Beyond". I think if folks can pull that up, that was -- Everyone should have gotten an email from Mike Collins that had a suite of files attached to it on Friday, and this was one of those files. There is no attachment number, but it's simply entitled "Red Snapper Management Approaches".

MR. COLLIER: With these potential management measures, we wanted to give you a full range of ideas, from pretty simple solutions to extremely complex solutions, or management measures. These are just some ideas to throw out there, once again, while you're getting phone calls.

You can be considering different things, and you can talk to fishermen about what they think is the best way to manage this fishery going forward. It's all going to be dependent on what the stock assessment says. That's why we're just giving these ranges of ideas, and you guys can be forming these as we come into the next meeting, when we have an ABC value given by the SSC.

DR. DUVAL: We are going to walk through all of these approaches. Chip is just waiting for the document to show up. I'm sure folks have some questions about these different approaches and how they might work.

MR. COLLIER: Starting off with the simple approaches, Alternative 1, when we're developing these amendments, Alternative 1 is always the no action alternative. That would be continue to use the fishing mortality and the ABCs from SEDAR 24. The next one is Alternative 2, which would be a no harvest, a discards only.

The third one would be area closures, and so this would apply to all snapper grouper fishing. The next alternative would be seasonal closures, and, once again, this too would apply to all snapper grouper fishing. Once again, with red snapper, one of the primary sources of mortality has been the discards, and that potentially could be something that needs to be addressed as you're developing some of the management measures.

Alternative 5 would be depth closures. Discard mortality is pretty significant on red snapper, and if you're able to close some of the deeper waters, you might be able to reduce some of the discard mortality for that species, and so that could be a consideration to reduce some of the impact of the discards.

Some more complex management approaches would be apply both seasonal and area closures for the snapper grouper fishery, including maybe rolling areas, where you would open and close at different times, and so this would be getting -- By combining multiple approaches into one management alternative is where you're getting into those more complex approaches.

Alternative 7, this kind of comes from what was developed during the visioning, where you guys had stated you wanted to consider some state-by-state management, and so this is looking at a state ACL. You could divide your ACL among states, and they would have what's, I guess, considered in other areas as conservation equivalencies. They would manage or provide management recommendations for the area off their state, and it would still be under federal management, but you would be looking at different management techniques by state.

MR. HAYMANS: I don't know if now is the time to add one to that particular item, state-by-state, or do you want to go through the whole thing first?

DR. DUVAL: Can we just run through the whole thing first and then kind of come back and discuss each one? That would be awesome. Thanks.

MR. COLLIER: Within these more complex ones, you could engage the recreational fishermen and try to get fishermen to report with GPS, so we can get very good spatial information on red snapper on where the harvest is occurring, potentially where some of the interactions are occurring, and maybe try to get some of those areas avoided, to reduce some of those discard numbers.

Similar to the recreational fishery, we would be looking at the commercial fishery to have something similar, to reduce some of the discards and potential impacts. It could be a feedback loop. If the commercial guys are seeing them, we could tell the recreational guys not to go there as well, and so it's just trying to provide some of this spatial information, maybe an alert network, to try to avoid these areas where red snapper are very abundant.

Then, combining some of these potential management measures, looking at time/area closures, potential depth closures, potential state sector closures. It just can get really complex. An example that's provided here is California, and they have a very similar rockfish fishery to our snapper grouper fishery, where it occurs in very deep water. They've had discard mortality issues for that fishery for years, and they also had what they call over there a choke species, where certain species were actually close to being on the Endangered Species List.

They would close down areas and prevent people from fishing in certain areas, and that actually led to series of MPAs and different things like that. When you're thinking about how California did it, they actually have different regions, and those are provided here. They have a region where we're looking at the Monterey District. Some of the fisheries are partially opened, and so it could be opened to the boat fleet, but not to the shore-based fleet, and some of these species are able to be caught from the shore, and so they're managing by fleet within that.

In addition to that, you could have something that was closed within that area. The example here was Pacific halibut, and so you couldn't harvest -- The recreational fishery would be closed for a certain time period, and then you could have another species, a similar species, the California halibut, that would be open, and so it's pretty complex out there. Then, looking at how they manage California halibut through the coast -- In one area, it's going to be open, and then if you go to the next area, the northern region, it's going to be open for certain sectors and then it's going to be closed at a different time period and different bag and size limits. These change depending on which region you're looking at.

You can get extremely complex for certain management measures, or for certain species, if you want to. It does take a lot more effort to communicate this with the public how we're going to be managing and how you guys want to manage it, but, if we have to go down that route, you guys can go down that route and think of different things to do.

DR. DUVAL: That's quite a range of items for us to consider. Are there questions?

MR. PHILLIPS: Chip, just I'm curious. The number of fishermen for say those halibut versus the number of fishermen we've got for red snapper, is it about the same or do you have an idea or what?

MR. COLLIER: I don't have the exact numbers. I know a lot of the recreational effort occurs in the Southeast, and we just have a lot more access points than what they have in California.

DR. DUVAL: Doug, I know you had a question about possibly adding something else to consideration under one of these approaches?

MR. HAYMANS: Yes, under Alternative 7, when we were starting to discuss state-by-state, I would like to have an alternative in there to include Georgia with Florida, rather than the Carolinas. Right now, b has got us with the Carolinas.

MR. COLLIER: Yes, and I can potentially -- These aren't really alternatives right now. These are just ideas for you guys to consider, but when we develop the alternatives, I will make sure that's something that we consider.

MR. COX: Doug, can I ask for some rationale on that?

MR. HAYMANS: Florida has 97 percent of the catch in red snapper, and the Carolinas has less than 2 percent, and so if I'm going to get restricted to a state-by-state allocation, I would rather go with 97 than the 2.

DR. DUVAL: Chip, I just wanted to make sure I understood some of these approaches. Like looking at area closures under Approach 3, so the idea is there that all snapper grouper fishing by all sectors would be prohibited in a particular area? I'm looking at Alternative 3.

MR. COLLIER: Yes, and so that would be additional closed areas.

DR. DUVAL: This is similar to what the council considered previously with the gigantic closed area, and in I think it was Amendment 17A, that was eventually removed? Okay. Then, similarly, with the seasonal closures, it would simply apply to all snapper grouper fishing, both commercial and recreational, and just it would simply be a closed season for snapper grouper fishing, in order to allow for some potential harvest of red snapper while reducing discard mortality.

MR. BELL: Just since this is about ideas and things right now, under the complex management, or California style, you know I think in their rockfish fishery out there that they have maybe requirements for descending devices and things, and I know that hasn't been -- It's not proven. At some point in the future, it may be useful, if you were going to go down a more complex management approach. I didn't see it mentioned, and I know we don't have the data or anything right now to implement that.

DR. DUVAL: Mel, if you want to talk about complicated regulations, I think both John Carmichael and Erika Burgess could talk about this, but I'm just thinking about some of the striped bass recreational regulations, especially like in the bay. It is by mode and it's hook and line and it's charter mode. They have a trophy season and slot limits and minimum size limits. I mean we

do have examples of complicated management like that over here on the east coast, and I think people have gotten so used to it, particularly with striped bass. It's just the way that we do things.

The fishery in the bay is quite different than the fishery in the ocean. The selectivities are different. It's a male-dominated fishery. We just went through a pretty arduous process at the Atlantic States Commission, at the end of 2014, to implement new management based on an assessment update that we had received previously that indicated that we needed to restrict harvest, and so I mean complicated, I guess, is one way of looking at it. Maybe tailored and specific is another way of looking at it.

MR. BELL: I just said that because that's how he entitled it, complex or whatever, but I mean, since we've identified discard mortality as an issue, that's one way of perhaps addressing that issue. In other things, we have requirements for certain gear, like circle hooks and things, and so it just makes sense to include it in the consideration.

MR. HAYMANS: I am in favor of looking at some of these time/area closures. I'm good with that, but just to note that I can get my state regulations down to a four-by-six sticker, the bulk of them, and I've got anglers who think we're too complicated. I pull out the some of the western coast -- We're not unique. I mean there's some more anglers in southern South Carolina and northeast Florida who think the same way, and so this is a whole new world we're going to enter into with a lot of our anglers with the more complex options.

DR. DUVAL: I think it's a tradeoff, right? I mean do you want to potentially be able to have harvest opportunities without disadvantaging fishing for everything else in the complex? It's all about tradeoffs.

MR. HAYMANS: And communication with the anglers. I mean we've really got to do a good job of explaining why we're stepping into this sort of management.

MR. BOWEN: I don't know of any other animals, and I've said this until I'm blue in the face, but I don't know of any other animals that we harvest/hunt/kill that we do it year-round. I don't see how we can continue to fish for snapper grouper species recreationally year-round. I think we need to really focus and concentrate on a season. I understand the geographical range of the South Atlantic is huge and those seasons would probably have to differ in the south a lot more than they would in the north, but a year-round fishery just doesn't make sense anymore, and when is enough going to be enough?

That's the road I'm leaning down, and it's the road I've been trying to gain traction on for several years, and I would like to see us move in a seasonal direction. When the snapper grouper species are not in season, then we have not only zero F, but we also have zero discards. Then while the seasons are in, quote, unquote, then the limits could be a little more viable for people to go and catch a nice mess of fish, seven or eight months out of the year, and four or five months out of the year, we let them sit. We let them spawn and we let them breed and we let them live. That's just my train of thought. Thank you.

MR. COX: A little bit like Zack is saying, but on the other side of that piece of management, the areas -- I can tell you the commercial guys just don't go in these areas where we know these fish are, because of the time that it costs to go in there and the bait that we burn up catching snappers.

We've already gotten pretty good at staying away from a lot of these area closures, but yes, I would support exactly what Zack is saying.

DR. DUVAL: It's kind of a move-on sort of approach, like what they've done in the Northeast with trying to avoid bycatch of river herring in the Atlantic herring fishery. There is a whole program that's been set up through the Massachusetts School of Marine Science and Technology. A follow-up, Zack, and then we're going to bring this to a close.

MR. BOWEN: Thank you, Madam Chair. Jack, I agree with you, but, for the most part, the recreational angler -- Let's face it. This is what's driving this, is recreational discards. For the most part, the recreational weekend guys fish when the ocean is nice. They can't avoid them, Jack. They're not the level of fishermen that the commercial guys are.

You can't, for the recreational perspective, you can't tell the guys that, okay, you can go fishing, but just avoid where the snapper are. They don't know how to do that, and, in some instances, it's impossible to do that in the heart of where they're the most at, and so, in order to get away from that, you just have to say -- You have to have a season, because the recreational guys can't avoid them. They don't know what they're going to catch when they drop down and catch it.

MR. COX: I agree with you, Zack. I'm just saying the commercial guys, now that they know how to avoid them, shouldn't be penalized based on what the discards for the recreational sector are.

DR. DUVAL: Chip, what would you like from the committee? I mean you've gotten a little bit of feedback about expansion of this, and I just want to make sure that we're giving you the feedback that you want and if there are any motions that you need. Clearly this has people thinking about trying to tailor things as much as possible.

MR. COLLIER: I would encourage you not to give me any motions on this, because we do not have an accepted stock assessment from SEDAR 41. I don't want to give any perception that we're trying to make management until we get the results of that stock assessment. This is more or less for you guys to start the discussion on management of red snapper and give us some ideas, and to give some background and maybe some management techniques that could be utilized for this fishery.

DR. DUVAL: I definitely appreciate you and other folks who contributed to this document putting this together. I think we'll have a lot to chew on between now and June. It's 12:04. We're going to recess for lunch and come back at 1:30, where we will tackle the Results of Ranking of Actions for Fisheries Seasonality/Retention Amendment. Then, after that, we will move into our Mackerel Committee, I believe, and so have a good lunch.

DR. DUVAL: We'll get started. We're going to reconvene Snapper Grouper. The last item that we actually have on our agenda was the Results of Ranking Actions for Fisheries Seasonality/Retention Regulatory Amendment. If you recall, at our December council meeting, we had a good bit of discussion about moving forward with priority items from visioning.

We had some example approaches that staff had put together for us, based on the outcome of our October visioning workshop. We had a little Survey Monkey exercise that we did during the last

council meeting, the results of which were included in the Executive Finance Report from the December council meeting. What came out on top, in terms of the type of amendment that we would move forward with, as a result of visioning, was a fisheries seasonality/retention amendment.

Then our further discussion was what are the items that would go into this amendment. If you recall, we had a couple of sort of outstanding regulatory amendments, both Regulatory Amendment 23 and Regulatory Amendment 24, which I think you can find in the Executive Finance tab.

If you look at the council priorities, this shows all the different staff amendment slots and it shows things that were in the background notes, things that were in Snapper Grouper Regulatory Amendment 23, which was the trip limit for jacks and the golden tilefish hook and line fishing year. Then, in Regulatory Amendment 24, we had considered a spawning season closure for shallow-water groupers, red grouper size limit, restructuring the jacks complex, an almaco trip limit, split red porgy seasons, and removal of deepwater size limits, which is a huge smorgasbord of items.

What I had encouraged folks to think about was, since the survey that we took at the last council meeting came forward with fishing seasonality and retention as a priority, what are some of those outstanding items from Regulatory Amendments 23 and 24 that might fit within an amendment focused on that topic? We decided that we would, in between December and this council meeting, we would have another Survey Monkey survey, the results of which would be displayed here, for council members to rank which items might go, or identify items from those two regulatory amendments that would fit within a fishing seasonality/retention amendment, as well as any other ideas you might have.

That's something of a long-winded background, but I just wanted to orient folks to the fact that this is part of moving forward with our vision blueprint, and so I'm going to turn things over to Amber now, but I think this is Attachments 10a and 10b in your briefing book, under the Snapper Grouper Tab.

MS. VONHARTEN: 10a is the actual results and 10b is the actual survey, and so we have a copy of the survey, for anybody that wants to see it, available. I have to say it was very strange to not be here Monday morning doing visioning. Anyway, this is the results, ordered from highest priority to lowest priority. Again, like Michelle said, these are some of the more specific action items that you all identified as short-term action items that could be addressed through visioning.

The highest priority was addressing aggregate recreational bag limits for the retention portion, commercial trip limits, and then the third one was aggregate commercial trip limits. Those kind of rose to the top for items that would address retention. Those address the objectives in the vision blueprint talking about access to the fishery, as well as reducing discards. Then, for seasonality, the top priority was adjustments to the shallow-water grouper closure, pretty clearly. Then the other ones kind of fell out after that.

How does this relate to, as Michelle said, Regulatory Amendment 23? Myra pulled together some of these proposed actions that had been in those amendments, and then also looked at had there been any analysis done so far on any of those actions, and so that's what this little table is here.

For the hook and line golden tilefish fishing year change, it looks like we did an evaluation of season length, based on alternatives, in a paper from August of last year.

The same thing for commercial trip limits for the jacks complex. There is some trip limit analysis for the complex, with and without greater amberjack, and then, of course, black sea bass bag limits was moved to Regulatory Amendment 25.

For Amendment 24, there's been no analyses done on the revision of the composition of the jacks complex, the removal of size limits for deepwater species, or modifications of size limit for red grouper, and then some preliminary analysis has been done for the modification of the spawning season closure for shallow-water grouper and the commercial split season for red porgy. Then those last two things were moved to different amendments.

Then, just real quickly, there were a few new things that people put as part of the survey that we asked you guys to comment on, were there additional items besides these proposed actions that were in these amendments or short-term objectives from the vision blueprint. For retention, there were some comments about looking at the aggregates and considering the availability of species by region when thinking about how to craft those aggregates. Also, reconsider the existing twenty fish and ten snapper aggregate bag limits, maybe adjusting some of those. The comment was that's a lot of fish, and maybe those could be adjusted down some.

As far as size limits as it relates to retention, the suggestion was made to have no size limit for deepwater species, figure out what deepwater species you all wanted to include, and also looking at size limits for almaco jacks, a twenty-inch minimum for red snapper, and then some kind of sub-regional management by size, or size limits by sub-region.

Then for bag and trip limits, the same thing, some kind of sub-regional management for bag and trip limits, and also a suggestion for a six-month red snapper limit, and then also addressing commercial limits for species that currently do not have trip limits. Then also considering the pros and cons of removing size limits with changes to bag and trip limits at the same time.

Then for seasonality, and I think we've heard this today from Zack, the idea of a recreational season and establishing a season for recreational fishing, a deepwater season, and making sure that it included golden tilefish, a seasonal closure for all recreational fishing, and then consider commercial start dates and fishing years together, especially for deepwater species, possibly.

DR. DUVAL: Presumably everyone has had a chance to read through this attachment and see what the feedback was. Are there thoughts on I guess a couple of things, how you all would like to proceed, with a single regulatory amendment or two separate amendments, one focused on seasonality and one focused on retention?

Amber has provided the background in terms of what analyses have or haven't been done for these various things that we've been talking about, and so I just want to open up the floor for some discussion. Maybe let's focus on -- I guess the first question would be what type of amendment would you want to pursue? Would you still want to maintain seasonality and retention issues in one amendment, or would you want to potentially break them out?

MR. COX: Would you want to maybe have a commercial amendment and then kind of group it all together and then maybe a recreational amendment, to kind of keep it clean?

DR. DUVAL: That's certainly one approach. I mean we could do one commercial amendment. Are you suggesting a commercial amendment that's just seasonality or seasonality and retention? We've got two groups of issues here.

MR. COX: I would say combine them, if you could.

DR. DUVAL: Okay. Other thoughts?

MR. BOWEN: Taking the workload of our staff into account, and I know they're busy and they do a tremendous amount of work already, but me trying to forward-think a little bit, in terms of seasonality and how that amendment would possibly come about and the alternatives, and, like I said earlier, the big geographical difference that we have in this region, to me, and, again, I hate to put any more work on the staff than they're already -- They're just bogged down now, but, to me, it would seem like it would be better to do two separate amendments when we're talking seasonality versus retention.

Again, being the big geographical differences in the South Atlantic with the seasons and when Florida would like to fish versus when North Carolina would like to fish, and then the limits, the bag limits and sizes, of everything that would have to go in with that, or divvying up the pieces of the pie, for lack of a better term, but, anyway, I think two amendments would be the way I would like to see it go, but, again, I am open ears for other members of the council, and I would love to hear some other discussion.

DR. DUVAL: Other folks?

MS. BECKWITH: At the moment, I'm leaning towards Jack's idea of having one amendment be recreational and one commercial, but within each amendment deal with the seasonality and retention issues. I think we might get more feedback. I think our constituents are pretty used to seeing commercial stuff come out, but there's not been a lot of concentrated recreational measures that we've put out to the public, and so, keeping them all in one, we may find that we get more productive feedback from the recreational community.

MR. HAYMANS: I look at either way, this amendment or these amendments, are going to be bears, multiple species and multiple actions. I am thinking about how do you bite little bites? To me, if we had the framework developed, such that, and that was through an amendment, that we could take species or groups of species over time, over the next several years, and dropping those into that framework.

How do we look at their bag limit retention and their size limit and the seasons? I don't know how we're going to do either one of these in a single or two amendments, with the amount of species we're talking about. I know that didn't say much except to ramble all over the place, but I'm just trying to find a way to bite this thing.

DR. DUVAL: Doug, maybe just let me ask you a couple of hopefully clarifying questions. When you say "drop into a framework", what are you talking about?

MR. HAYMANS: We maybe use an example species of how would we develop the retention plan and the seasonality for an example species, building a model for that, and then we use that, moving forward, for either individuals or groups of species, rather than trying to do them all at one time, and maybe framework was the wrong word, but I just envision us -- Right now, we take, whatever the order of the actions is, but we do them all down a list for each species. I mean the decision document is 500-pages long, and I don't know what the right approach is, but --

DR. DUVAL: This is why we had the survey, was to prioritize some of these things. You can see how the priorities fell out.

MR. HAYMANS: Sure, and so look at the first one, aggregate recreational bag limits, deepwater species, others, question mark. Others is how many other species? You know the same thing with the commercial trip limits for jacks, others, question mark. Then we start piling all these other -- That's our tendency, is to pile on once we get rolling.

DR. DUVAL: I think you could start from the existing aggregate bag limits that we have. You know we have a grouper aggregate bag limit that is pretty sticky, in my opinion. We have an aggregate snapper bag limit, and then we have a twenty-fish aggregate for everything else that doesn't have a size or a bag limit, and then we have these little exceptions for black sea bass and we've got an exception for vermilion. Tilefish are all within the aggregate grouper bag limit, and so yes, I mean we have this disparate set of bag limits.

We say we have these aggregates, but do those need some reexamination? I mean do we really need everything else in a twenty-fish aggregate bag limit? Would we want to maybe shrink the size of that everything-else-twenty-fish aggregate bag limit? Would we want to say, okay, we're going to maintain individual bag limits for maybe these couple of species, and instead maybe we have just a three-grouper aggregate and everything else is within a ten-fish aggregate?

I am just trying to think of ways, suggestions, that I've gotten from constituents and things that we heard about throughout the visioning process of trying to both simplify the regulations -- I mean I think the grouper aggregate bag limit is a prime example of it's -- It's three per person per day, with the exception of one golden tile per vessel and one snowy per vessel. It's one blueline vessel right now, and so it's kind of all over the place.

I sort of feel like maybe we need to rethink how that is structured. Maybe we have an aggregate deepwater species bag limit, so it's just three of those deepwater species, whether it's the tilefishes, snowy grouper, silk snapper. Maybe it's three of any of those in the aggregate, so that you're minimizing discards and things like that. I mean I would not see, at all, having all of these items under retention in a single amendment, because I agree with you that's way too much to bite off, and that's why you have to prioritize.

MR. HAYMANS: I fully am looking at the prioritization. I guess I was just looking at those first one or two items as being large items, but I defer to your judgment, and I think that you've got a plan forward with this, or it sounds like you may.

DR. DUVAL: I have opinions, but that does not mean that I have a plan. This is a committee, and so I'm interested in hearing everyone's thoughts. We've heard a couple of approaches of having two different amendments, one focused on recreational seasonality and retention and one focused

on commercial seasonality and retention, the approach of having two separate amendments, one just focused on retention issues and one just focused on seasonality.

I think the reason that you see the others and the question mark after some of these is if -- If we're going to tackle aggregate recreational bag limits, let's look at all of our existing aggregate bag limits. Do they need to be adjusted, either in numbers or species? Similarly, with commercial trip limits, you know we've been talking about having a trip limit put on the jacks complex in order to try to slow that fishery down for a while.

Are there other of our species complexes that might benefit from having an aggregate trip limit like that? That's all those other question marks were meant to be, is let's consider some of these issues in total. We could just do maybe a recreational amendment that is only focused on aggregate recreational bag limits, and that would just be one thing. That might be enough for discussion.

MR. BELL: As you were talking, I was just trying to formulate this. I think if you kind of review the use of aggregate bag limits or aggregate trip limits or something as a tool, aggregating things, maybe it would make sense to kind of deal with that in a separate amendment, and then, like you said, seasonality is kind of a whole other matter, but I mean it just seemed logical, for a brief second in my mind, to kind of approach it that way and kind of lump it into use of that concept, or that tool, and have an amendment that kind of dealt with recreational and commercial aggregation sort of stuff. It may seem logical.

DR. DUVAL: You're suggesting maybe one retention amendment that would just look at aggregate recreational bag limits and aggregate commercial trip limits, sort of a topical area type of thing? I think, again, one of the things that we heard was trying to simplify some regulations, while at the same time balancing some of the regional differences in the fishery, and that's a little bit of a tough nut to crack, but looking at aggregate limits -- Reexamining the existing aggregate limits we have might be one way to do that.

MR. CONKLIN: Did our bandit boat amendment that we decided we were going to do, did that go away with this survey, or is that still up? I was looking in the Executive Finance part there, and I didn't see anything about it.

DR. DUVAL: That was part of the first survey that we did at the last council meeting, and I think that ranked low, last or second-to-last.

MR. CONKLIN: Do we keep doing these surveys to keep changing our priorities, because I thought that was a big priority coming out of our workshop, and now we're looking at stuff like this, when I thought that was a big priority. I was trying to figure out if we need to have another survey.

DR. DUVAL: The survey in December was focused on the types of amendments that we could do. That was one example of an amendment, and you all participated in that survey and that's how it ranked. That doesn't mean it's not a priority in the vision blueprint, but we can't do everything at once.

MR. HAYMANS: I think I would lean now towards Jack's suggestion of separate recreational and commercial, and the reason being coming back to the simplification ideas. If we have a

separate amendment that's just dealing with aggregate bag limits, and then we come back a year later, or two years later, and now we've got a size limit change, that's not helping the recreational angler out at all, but if we did a recreational amendment that tackles issues with deepwater species aggregate and size limits, which happens to be two issues there, although they are ranked differently -- One of the problems with prioritization is you have to rank them one, two, three, or four. I think I would like to go with the idea of a recreational and commercial amendment separate.

DR. DUVAL: How do other folks feel about that?

MR. BOWEN: Again, I'm okay with it, as I said earlier. I do feel like we need to look at the immediate problems of our fishery and where they are derived from, and the two that are hot topics right now, and probably will continue to be until we do something about it, is the expanded numbers that we're getting from the recreational sector and recreational discards of red snapper.

I mean cobia and red snapper are both recreational problems that are facing us now, and so I'm okay with doing two amendments, one recreational and one commercial. It sounds like we should prioritize those, and the problems right now we're seeing are from the recreational side.

MR. CONKLIN: I am with Jack and Doug on this. I think we should do two separate sector amendments or whatever and do it like that, but definitely group the seasonality and the retention into each one.

DR. DUVAL: Okay, and so maintain a combination of seasonality and retention issues in each one. How do other folks feel about this? I've heard kind of from the right side of the table.

MR. PHILLIPS: I am a little bit curious about the logistics of it. If we split these up into two amendments versus what we normally do is put them all into one, is it going to change the workload or the number of amendments we're going to get through in the case of a year and that kind of stuff?

DR. DUVAL: Brian is coming up to the table, and we'll talk about workload and timing in Executive Finance. I think, really, it's how many things you put into an amendment that bog it down. We had Regulatory Amendment 14 that was a classic example. I think that started out with like two items, and then it ballooned to six or seven. That's why it took so long. It was a lot of work for staff and for the Regional Office.

DR. CHEUVRONT: This will come up again in Executive Finance when we talk about priorities and things, but if you're talking about doing two amendments, when we were originally looking at doing one, it would be really helpful if you would prioritize the order in which you want those amendments done, because when you see that spreadsheet, you're going to see it's still pretty full.

If you all have a preference, that would be a good thing to do, whichever way you go. You're talking about some folks are lumping and some are splitting, but we're finding there's multiple ways to lump and split, and so I think what needs to happen -- The take-away message would be for you all to decide how you want to lump and/or split, and then give us the priorities for how you want them to be done, but I think that all can be worked out. It's just that you're not going to get it all immediately at the same time, probably, because it is a staffing issue.

Whatever way you guys decide to go about it, that's great. We will deal with it, but it also would help us if you could tell us, if you decide to go a route with multiple amendments, that you tell us the order in which you would like to see those amendments be done.

DR. DUVAL: Thank you, Brian.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I was looking at the document, and the seasonality for shallow-water groupers appears to be one of our highest priorities, and I guess I'm concerned, if we split that into recreational and commercial and one of those amendments gets ahead of the other one, then I just think that we're going to be further apart in trying to adjust the shallow-water grouper closures. That's one of my concerns.

DR. DUVAL: Great concern. Maybe the advice there might be, if it's the will of the committee to do a recreational amendment and a commercial amendment, maybe just focus on retention, so that, as one of the top items that we heard about from visioning, we could do an amendment that I think would probably just be focused on adjusting the shallow-water grouper closure, because that seems, to me, like that would be a good chunk of work. That would be my advice.

MR. HAYMANS: I realize that we're trying to be proactive and get after some of the actions that came out of visioning, and I'm all for it, but is there a reason why we need to be on a fast track with one amendment or the other or some of the actions versus the other? I realize it's a prioritized list, but if we start taking these items each meeting, until we put together a full list of all these actions that go into place at one time, is that a reasonable approach, rather than trying to do a commercial amendment and get it into place? I like the split, but maybe we need to tackle them one at a time and then put them all into place at once, rather than like Jessica suggesting, that we might mess up the shallow-water grouper complex.

DR. DUVAL: You're lumping in a different way, again, and so taking --

MR. HAYMANS: It might take longer than a year, or four quarters, to do the amendment. I'm saying maybe we should take longer than trying to push it through in a year.

DR. DUVAL: I don't see -- I mean I think the intent of this exercise is for planning purposes. It's not to rush something through or push something through. I mean something like adjusting the shallow-water grouper closure is going to take a long time, and I would imagine that it would take more than a year, just because of the regional differences. I think that would be something entirely on its own. It's definitely not meant to rush, but just to plan proactively.

Let me just throw out a few options. We could say our priority is to focus on a seasonality amendment, just looking at adjusting the shallow-water grouper closure. That would impact both the commercial and recreational sectors, or, if there's still a desire to split things along commercial and recreational sectors, you could look at a couple of retention actions in a recreational amendment and, similarly, in a commercial amendment, but you would then need to figure out which one of those you wanted to do.

Another option, with regard to retention, could be to have one retention amendment, where you tackle the top two priorities, which would be the aggregate recreational bag limits and commercial

trip limits, and just have those two actions in there. Those are just several approaches, off the top of my head, for folks to consider.

MR. BOWEN: It sounds good, but, with all due respect, I don't think that's addressing the most problematic issues that we're dealing with right now. I mean, yes, all the fishermen and everybody would like to see a smaller closure for shallow-water grouper, the recreational guys and the commercial guys, but I mean we've been dealing with that now for a while, and everybody seems to have adjusted with it. We're not exceeding ACLs, that I can think of, in the shallow-water grouper complex. I just feel like that's not addressing the most problems that we have.

DR. DUVAL: What do you think is the biggest problem we have, Zack? I mean this is our response to -- This is what came from our stakeholders and this is what came out of the visioning process.

MR. BOWEN: Yes, I agree, and I think the biggest problems we have are recreational numbers, no accountability in the recreational sector, recreational discards in red snapper, and a twelve-month season on taking and harvesting and killing and discarding fish from the recreational side. That's what I think our biggest problem is in the South Atlantic right now, and I think we need to address it.

DR. DUVAL: I will just point out that some of these types of actions were exactly the suggestions that we got from stakeholders to address some of those things, to address discards. In other words, looking at aggregate recreational bag limits and adjusting them accordingly and looking at seasonality, in terms of when fisheries are open, so that we can reduce discards. Under the science component, we do have priorities in there for improvements in data collection and accountability, and through things like Citizen Science and other techniques.

I don't want you to think that those have fallen by the wayside. Again, this is based on the work that we did in October and moving forward from there, and so I guess I'm a little surprised to hear you say that, because it sounds to me like you're saying that you just want to throw the results of everything that we did out the window.

MR. BOWEN: That's not at all what I'm saying, but we got this stakeholder input before they, or us, or we, realized that cobia were going to close midseason. They, and us, got this information before we realized that the -- I understand the process is still ongoing, but the recreational discards of red snapper is just, after dealing with this, as Mark mentioned yesterday, after being a part of this SEDAR 41 -- I understand we're not completed with it, but the way it looks like right now, from what I can tell, and I'm no scientist, but it looks like it's going to be a disaster.

When the public, when the stakeholders, hears that, I think they're going to change the way they feel about what's going on and what are the problems that are facing us right now. I mean lumping snappers together so they can keep eight or ten of this or three or four of that and getting another month of grouper opening, instead of four-months, have it three-months, that's going to fall by the wayside, I feel. I might be wrong, but I mean I'm already catching flak over this cobia deal now, as well as you have, as we've spoke, and probably a lot of other people at the table. That's the problems that need to be addressed right now. Thank you.

DR. DUVAL: Cobia comes under the Mackerel Committee and not the Snapper Grouper Committee, and we just, before lunch, discussed a range of approaches for the council to be thinking about in an amendment that would respond to the SEDAR 41 assessment. I feel like we've got some vehicles out there to address red snapper.

MR. BOWEN: I was just using cobia for an example.

MR. COX: It kind of sounds like we need to figure out what's the best approach as far as timing and the workload on staff if we did combine the recreational and commercial together and dealt with those different seasonality or retention, and if we could get through something together, rather than put the commercial before the recreational amendment, because somebody is going to get put before the other one, and is that what we're trying to figure here?

DR. DUVAL: Yes, it's about prioritizing. If you split things into having a commercial amendment and a recreational amendment, if we -- When we move into Executive Finance, you will see the staff slots for amendments. There is still just one slot for an amendment dealing with fisheries seasonality and/or retention.

If we were to decide we wanted to work on two amendments, we would need to prioritize which one to work on first, and so that's why I was just throwing out options, like do you guys think you would rather focus on an amendment dealing with seasonality, and look at adjusting the shallow-water spawning season closure, or would you rather, in order to not disadvantage one sector over the other, would you rather look at a retention amendment that would examine aggregate recreational bag limits and commercial trip limits in one document? Again, I realize we're dealing with both sectors in the same document, but you might not be disadvantaging one over the other. Those are just suggestions for how to move forward.

MR. BELL: Again, I kind of go back to the tool or what it is you're using, whether it's retention or aggregation. I think it's okay to deal with both sectors in the same amendment. There are distinct things that will come up related to one versus the other, but you're just going to be talking to both of them kind of separately, but within the context of one amendment.

I'm just trying to minimize having four different amendments, or three amendments, when you can do it two, maybe, but I think, again, I'm just kind of going back to the application of a new strategy, or application of a tool, and then realizing that the commercial sector may see things one way and the recreational may see it another way, in terms of what works for them, but I think we're used to dealing with everybody at the same time. There will be specific questions and things you might deal with for the two different groups, but I think, to economize staff time and amendment slots, I think I would tend to deal with that with one amendment, maybe, and just, again, focus on it being about use of that particular strategy or tool.

DR. DUVAL: Amber is just jotting down some stuff on the screen that's reflective of our conversation.

MR. PHILLIPS: I kind of agree with Mel, and especially if we end up with some of these ideas that we talked about earlier, like some common pool that we split, or common ACLs. It may make more sense to keep it all in one amendment, so we understand it as a whole, instead of trying to split it out.

DR. DUVAL: So three options. The first one I had mentioned was the seasonality amendment, looking at the shallow-water grouper closure, which would apply to all sectors. Another option is you do have two different amendments, one focused on each sector, recognizing that they're not going to move forward, necessarily, at the same time, where you could consider aggregate bag limits for the recreational sector, size limits, maybe include a seasonality item, such as the start date of a fishing year or something like that.

Likewise, for the commercial sector, looking at aggregate trip limits or other groups of species that might need trip limits, start dates for the fishing year, where you're including both seasonality and retention issues in the same amendment, but splitting it out by sector. Then the third option is you just do one amendment focused on one action for each sector and what's the most important.

Maybe this is something to keep in mind as we go into Executive Finance and look at what those priorities are, and then folks can figure out how they would like to move forward. We're going to be having an amendment to deal with red snapper regardless.

MR. BOWEN: In Option 1, where it's got the seasonality amendment/shallow-water grouper, would that be all that that --

DR. DUVAL: That's the seasonality amendment. That would be it, looking at the shallow-water grouper closure. That's the action.

MR. BOWEN: Would it not be the proper place to put a recreational fishing season in there with that Option 1, or no? Meaning like a hunting season, like duck or deer or something. Could it go under Option 1, or no?

DR. DUVAL: I think a seasonality amendment that's focused on the shallow-water grouper closure is probably going to be all-encompassing, especially when you start considering the options that we heard from the public in looking at rolling shallow-water grouper season closures. I just think that that's going to be a lot to bite off. I mean adding in a recreational season into that, it seems to me that would be more appropriate for Option 2, where you had a recreational amendment that was focused on aggregate bag limits and maybe start dates of the fishing year, a fishing season, if that's what you wanted to focus on.

MR. BOWEN: Okay. Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: With the options that are listed up there on the board, is it possible to choose Options 1 and 3 and they just go on different time schedules, based on discussions that come out of Executive Finance? Is that a possibility too?

DR. DUVAL: I don't see why you couldn't have that as a possibility, and just schedule things out, down the road. I'm just trying to, to be blunt, prod everybody along by trying to provide some options for how we could move forward.

MS. MCCAWLEY: So then should we continue this discussion in Executive Finance, when we're trying to figure out not just what we're doing, but when we're doing it? I looked at the Excel spreadsheet, and it looked like those items were planned all the way through 2018, and so it looks like we would have to do that anyway. That's just a suggestion.

DR. DUVAL: Yes, I mean that was my next part of the plan, but I want to make sure that everybody is comfortable with what type of approach we take. I mean it doesn't really do any good to prioritize something, in terms of Executive Finance, unless you know what it is you're prioritizing. Is everybody tired of this discussion? Okay.

We really have difficulty adjusting to proactive management. I mean that's what this is. This is about proactive management and trying to plan forward, as opposed to reactive management and responding to all the latest issues. Is there any other business to come before the Snapper Grouper Committee?

MR. BOWEN: Madam Chair, I wouldn't say we have trouble dealing with proactive measures. I would say that we're all passionate and have different opinions about what the proactive measurements need to be.

DR. DUVAL: That's fair enough. I would just remind folks that the vision blueprint and that whole process was about getting input from our stakeholders with regard to their ideas for managing the fishery.

MR. BOWEN: As much as I care about the stakeholders, Madam Chair, we have really never managed to their wants. We have always managed to what we feel is the best for the fishery.

DR. DUVAL: Any other business to come before the Snapper Grouper Committee? If not, let's just take a few minutes, and what I think we're going to do is I would like to move into Executive Finance.

(Whereupon, the meeting was adjourned on March 9, 2016.)

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brian.cheuvront@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



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

Date: Wednesday, March 9, 2016

Committee: Snapper Grouper

PLEASE SIGN IN -

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Name:	Mailing Address/E-mail: <i>(If your information is currently on file, please check the box.)</i>	How do you participate in South Atlantic fisheries? <i>(Check all that apply)</i>	
Bob Crimon	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> NGO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/> Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Charter/ For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____ <i>Describe</i>
Bice Kew	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> NGO <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/> Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Charter/ For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____ <i>Describe</i>
Jim Morley	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> NGO <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/> Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Charter/ For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____ <i>Describe</i>
Jim Aftach	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> NGO <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/> Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Charter/ For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____ <i>Describe</i>
Jimmy Hull	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NGO <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/> Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Charter/ For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____ <i>Describe</i>
Deaw Foster	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> NGO <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/> Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Charter/ For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____ <i>Describe</i>

**South Atlantic Fishery Management Council
4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201
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Name:	Mailing Address/E-mail: <i>(If your information is currently on file, please check the box.)</i>	How do you participate in South Atlantic fisheries? <i>(Check all that apply)</i>	
Lora Clarke	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	NGO <input type="checkbox"/>
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/>	Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>
		Charter/ For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____ <i>Describe</i>
Jim Estes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	NGO <input type="checkbox"/>
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/>	Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>
		Charter/ For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____ <i>Describe</i>
Krista Shipley	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	NGO <input type="checkbox"/>
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/>	Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>
		Charter/ For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____ <i>Describe</i>
Dick Brame	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	NGO <input type="checkbox"/>
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/>	Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>
		Charter/ For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____ <i>Describe</i>
George Sedberry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	NGO <input type="checkbox"/>
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/>	Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>
		Charter/ For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____ <i>Describe</i>
FRANK HELMS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	NGO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/>	Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>
		Charter/ For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____ <i>Describe</i>

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Name:	Mailing Address/E-mail: <i>(If your information is currently on file, please check the box.)</i>	How do you participate in South Atlantic fisheries? <i>(Check all that apply)</i>	
Gary Zorn	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	NGO <input type="checkbox"/>
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/>	Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>
		Charter/ For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____ <i>Describe</i>
Sean Yechley Gray's Reef Intern	<input type="checkbox"/> On File 4 N. Cromwell Rd Sav, GA 31410 sp4echley@yahoo.com	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	NGO <input type="checkbox"/>
		Recreational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>
		Charter/ For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <i>intern</i> <i>Describe</i>
Holly Binns	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	NGO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/>	Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>
		Charter/ For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____ <i>Describe</i>
Dave Sarda	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	NGO <input type="checkbox"/>
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/>	Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>
		Charter/ For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____ <i>Describe</i>
Lida Dummie	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	NGO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/>	Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>
		Charter/ For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____ <i>Describe</i>
Jim Moley	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	NGO <input type="checkbox"/>
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/>	Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>
		Charter/ For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____ <i>Describe</i>

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Name:	Mailing Address/E-mail: <i>(If your information is currently on file, please check the box.)</i>	How do you participate in South Atlantic fisheries? <i>(Check all that apply)</i>	
Justin Grubich	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> NGO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/>	Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>
		Charter/For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____ <i>Describe</i>
Jim	<input type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> NGO <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/>	Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>
		Charter/For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____ <i>Describe</i>
Bob	<input type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> NGO <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/>	Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>
		Charter/For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____ <i>Describe</i>
	<input type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> NGO <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/>	Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>
		Charter/For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____ <i>Describe</i>
	<input type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> NGO <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/>	Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>
		Charter/For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____ <i>Describe</i>
	<input type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> NGO <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/>	Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>
		Charter/For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____ <i>Describe</i>

**South Atlantic Fishery Management Council
4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201
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**South Atlantic Fishery Management Council –
March 2016 Council Meeting
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Date: Tuesday, March 8, 2016

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Name:	Mailing Address/E-mail: <i>(If your information is currently on file, please check the box.)</i>	How do you participate in South Atlantic fisheries? <i>(Check all that apply)</i>	
Bob Crimian	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	NGO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/>	Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>
		Charter/ For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other Describe
Jim Atoch	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	NGO <input type="checkbox"/>
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/>	Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>
		Charter/ For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other Describe
Bruce Kew	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	NGO <input type="checkbox"/>
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/>	Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>
		Charter/ For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other Describe
Jim Morley	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	NGO <input type="checkbox"/>
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/>	Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>
		Charter/ For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other Acad Describe
Justin Gumbich	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	NGO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/>	Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>
		Charter/ For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other Describe
Dick BRAME	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	NGO <input type="checkbox"/>
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/>	Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>
		Charter/ For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other Describe

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Lora Clarke	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	NGO <input type="checkbox"/>
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/>	Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>
		Charter/For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____ <i>Describe</i>
Holly Binns	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	NGO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/>	Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>
		Charter/For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____ <i>Describe</i>
Krista Shipley	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	NGO <input type="checkbox"/>
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/>	Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>
		Charter/For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____ <i>Describe</i>
Deaw Foster	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	NGO <input type="checkbox"/>
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/>	Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>
		Charter/For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____ <i>Describe</i>
Leda Dunmire	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	NGO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/>	Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>
		Charter/For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____ <i>Describe</i>
Jim Freeman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NGO <input type="checkbox"/>
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/>	Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>
		Charter/For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____ <i>Describe</i>

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Name:	Mailing Address/E-mail: <i>(If your information is currently on file, please check the box.)</i>	How do you participate in South Atlantic fisheries? <i>(Check all that apply)</i>	
Jimmy Hull	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NGO <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/> Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Charter/For-hire <input type="checkbox"/> Other <u>SFA</u> <i>Describe</i>	
FRANK HELLES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> NGO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/> Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Charter/For-hire <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ <i>Describe</i>	
Susan Shipman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> NGO <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/> Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Charter/For-hire <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ <i>Describe</i>	
Gary Zurn	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> NGO <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/> Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Charter/For-hire <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ <i>Describe</i>	
	<input type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> NGO <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/> Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Charter/For-hire <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ <i>Describe</i>	
	<input type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> NGO <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/> Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Charter/For-hire <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ <i>Describe</i>	

**South Atlantic Fishery Management Council
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Tue 8 MAR 16

Last Name	First Name	Email Address
Alvarado	Nicolas	Nicolas.Alvarado@noaa.gov
Amick	Steve	steveamicks@aol.com
Amick	Steve	steveamicks@sol.com
Austin	Anthony	redress@ec.rr.com
Bademan	Martha	martha.bademan@myfwc.com
Bailey	Adam	adam.bailey@noaa.gov
Barbieri	Luis	luiz.barbieri@myfwc.com
Bianchi	Alan	Alan.Bianchi@ncdenr.gov
Bonura	Vincent	SailRaiser25C@aol.com
Brennan	Ken	kenneth.brennan@noaa.gov
Bresnen	Anthony	anthony.bresnen@myfwc.com
Byrd	Julia	julia.byrd@safmc.net
Clarke	Lora	lclarke@pewtrusts.org
DeVictor	Rick	rick.devictor@noaa.gov
Erwin	Gwen	gwen.erwin@myfwc.com
FARMER	NICK	nick.farmer@noaa.gov
Grunwald	Robin	robin.grunwald@myfwc.com
Hesselman	Don	don.hesselman@ncdenr.gov
Hood	Peter	peter.hood@noaa.gov
Hudson	Russell	DSF2009@aol.com
L	I	captaindrifter@bellsouth.net
Lambert	Debra	deb.lambert@noaa.gov
Lee	Jennifer	Jennifer.Lee@noaa.gov
MacLauchlin	Bill	billmac@charter.net
Mahood	Bob	rmahood@mindspring.com
Markwith	Anne	anne.markwith@ncdenr.gov
McHan	Chris	cmchan@gmri.org
Mehta	Nikhil	nikhil.mehta@noaa.gov
Neer	Julie	julie.neer@safmc.net
Owsley	Dan	owsleydj@gmail.com
RITCHIE	Donna	dolphinchasers@aol.com
Records	David	david.records@noaa.gov

Sedberry	George	george.sedberry@noaa.gov
Shepard	Nathan	ballinimpression@yahoo.com
Stafford	Pete	spstafford@gmail.com
Takade-		
Heumacher	Helen	htakade@edf.org
Von Harten	Bo	capt_bo@hotmail.com
Wyanski	David	wyanskid@dnr.sc.gov
holiman	stephen	stephen.holiman@noaa.gov
sandorf	scott	scott.sandorf@noaa.gov
smart	tracey	smartt@dnr.sc.gov

WED 9 MAR 16

Last Name	First Name	Email Address
Alvarado	Nicolas	Nicolas.Alvarado@noaa.gov
Amick	Scott	Amick331@gmail.com
Amick	Steve	steveamicks@sol.com
Anderson	Joshua	joshuamarlinanderson1@hotmail.com
Austin	Anthony	redress@ec.rr.com
Avery	Mike	mike@averys.net
Bademan	Martha	martha.bademan@myfwc.com
Bailey	Adam	adam.bailey@noaa.gov
Ballenger	Joey	ballengerj@dnr.sc.gov
Bonura	Vincent	SailRaiser25C@aol.com
Brennan	Ken	kenneth.brennan@noaa.gov
Bresnen	Anthony	anthony.bresnen@myfwc.com
Byrd	Julia	julia.byrd@safmc.net
Clarke	Lora	lclarke@pewtrusts.org
DeVictor	Rick	rick.devictor@noaa.gov
Errigo	Mike	mike.errigo@safmc.net
Erwin	Gwen	gwen.erwin@myfwc.com
FARMER	NICK	nick.farmer@noaa.gov
Franco	Dawn	dawn.franco@dnr.ga.gov
Fritts	Philip	kason03@hotmail.com
Gerhart	Susan	susan.gerhart@noaa.gov
Grunwald	Robin	robin.grunwald@myfwc.com
Hadley	John	john.hadley@ncdenr.gov
Harter	Stacey	stacey.harter@noaa.gov
Hesselman	Don	don.hesselman@ncdenr.gov
Hudson	Russell	DSF2009@aol.com
Iverson	Kim	kim.iverson@safmc.net
Jepson	Michael	michael.jepson@noaa.gov
L	I	captaindrifter@bellsouth.net
Lancaster	Daniel	daniellancaster@aol.com
MacLauchlin	Bill	billmac@charter.net
MacLauchlin	Kari	kari.maclauchlin@samfc.net

Mahood	Bob	rmahood@mindspring.com
Malinowski	Rich	rich.malinowski@noaa.gov
Markwith	Anne	anne.markwith@ncdenr.gov
McHan	Chris	cmchan@gmri.org
Mehta	Nikhil	nikhil.mehta@noaa.gov
Neer	Julie	julie.neer@safmc.net
Ottavt	Raymond	rjottavi@hotmail.com
Raine	Karen	karen.raine@noaa.gov
Records	David	david.records@noaa.gov
Sedberry	George	george.sedberry@noaa.gov
Serchuk	Fred	fred.serchuk@gmail.com
Shipman	Susan	susanshipman@att.net
Stafford	Pete	spstafford@gmail.com
Takade-Heumacher	Helen	htakade@edf.org
Von Harten	Bo	capt_bo@hotmail.com
Wyanski	David	wyanskid@dnr.sc.gov
holiman	stephen	stephen.holiman@noaa.gov
hull	james	hullsseafood@aol.com
mershon	wayne	kenyonseafood@sc.rr.com
pugliese	roger	roger.pugliese@safmc.net
rindone	ryan	ryan.rindone@gulfcouncil.org
sandorf	scott	scott.sandorf@noaa.gov
smart	tracey	smartt@dnr.sc.gov