

# **SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**

## **SNAPPER GROUPER COMMITTEE**

**Town & Country Inn  
Charleston, SC**

**September 26-27, 2017**

### **SUMMARY MINUTES**

#### **Committee Members**

Dr. Michelle Duval, Chair  
Anna Beckwith  
Zack Bowen  
Mark Brown  
Dr. Roy Crabtree  
Ben Hartig  
Tony DiLernia

Jessica McCawley, Vice-chair  
Mel Bell  
Chester Brewer  
Chris Conklin  
Tim Griner  
Doug Haymans

#### **Council Staff**

Gregg Waugh  
Dr. Brian Cheuvront  
Kimberly Cole  
Mike Collins  
Dr. Mike Errigo  
Kathleen Howington  
Dr. Kari MacLauchlin  
Cameron Rhodes  
Dr. Julie Neer  
Christina Wiegand

John Carmichael  
Myra Brouwer  
Dr. Chip Collier  
Kelsey Dick  
John Hadley  
Kim Iverson  
Roger Pugliese  
Amber Von Harten  
Julia Byrd

#### **Observers/Participants**

Leann Bosarge  
Monica Smit-Brunello  
Erika Burgess  
Dr. Marcel Reichert  
Mike Travis

Dr. Jack McGovern  
Dr. Bonnie Ponwith  
Rick DeVictor  
Jeff Radonski

Other Observers and Participants attached.

The Snapper Grouper Committee of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council convened at the Town & Country Inn, Charleston, South Carolina, Tuesday afternoon, September 26, 2017, and was called to order by Chairman Michelle Duval.

DR. DUVAL: I would like to go ahead and call the Snapper Grouper Committee meeting to order. Just to review, the committee members are myself, Jessica McCawley is Vice Chair, Anna Beckwith, Mel Bell, Zack Bowen, Chester Brewer, Mark Brown, Chris Conklin, Dr. Crabtree, Tim Griner, Ben Hartig, Doug Haymans, Charlie Phillips, and then our Mid-Atlantic liaison, Tony DiLernia, and we know that Tony is en route, or unable to be with us on the webinar this afternoon.

The first order of business is Approval of the Agenda. Are there any modifications to the agenda beyond what's already been modified for this meeting? Seeing none, the agenda stands approved by consent. The next item is Approval of our June 2017 Minutes. Are there any modifications to the minutes? Seeing none, the minutes stand approved. The next item we have is our Status of Commercial Catches Versus Quotas for Species Under Annual Catch Limits, and I think Rick DeVictor is going to walk us through those.

MR. DEVICTOR: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, as I normally do, I will walk you through the commercial landings and where we're at percentage-wise and some of the closures and trip limit step-downs that we've had so far this year. The original landings are in your briefing book, and they are Tab 5, and it's Attachment A1, I believe, and those are landings through August 21.

What's on the screen up there are updated landings, and that is through September 18, and so through Monday of last week, and so I'll just walk through some of the percentages. Black sea bass is currently at 39 percent. You can see that only 36 percent was landed last year of the ACL. Blueline tilefish are at 94 percent, and that closed July 18. Moving down the list, golden tilefish longline, we closed that May 9. 99 percent of the ACL was met, and that closed down a few months earlier last year. That closed on March 15.

Moving on to gray triggerfish, again, we have a split season with gray triggerfish, both six-month seasons. 87 percent of the first ACL was met, and so just over 20,000 pounds have not been landed of gray triggerfish from the first season, and the regulations call for the un-landed fish to be rolled over into the second season ACL, but we are only at 52 percent of the second season ACL for gray triggerfish right now.

Moving down to hogfish, and I will talk about more of hogfish in my next report, but we put in regulations on August 24. Of course, that was Amendment 37, and that created two different stocks of hogfish, a Georgia to North Carolina stock and a Florida Keys/East Florida stock. The Georgia/North Carolina stock, by the new ACL, is at 60 percent. However, you can see that we are well over the Florida Keys/East Florida stock. That's 255 percent, and so, when that was implemented, Amendment 37, we closed down the fishery on August 24.

Just to let you know, there is a payback if it's overfished and the total ACL is exceeded, but, if you add up those columns right now, we are not above the total ACL, but that's just something to note there. There is a payback, again, if it's overfished, which the East Florida stock/Florida Keys stock is, and the total is exceeded.

Jacks, we are at 95 percent of that. That closed down on August 4. That's pretty close to last year, where that closed down on August 9. Mutton snapper, and, again, I'll talk more about Amendment 41 and where that is in the rulemaking process. We're at 29 percent of the current ACL, but that ACL is going to be reduced from about 557,000 to just over 100,000 through Amendment 41.

Moving on down to snowy grouper, we're at 101 percent, and that closed down on June 22, and, again, you can see that was pretty close to last year, where that closed on June 14. Moving on to the next page, just a few species of note. Greater amberjack, we're currently at 92 percent. However, if you look on our website for this week, we're actually at 97 percent, but what the Science Center is telling us is that landings have slowed, probably due to the storms out there now, and so we'll be watching that pretty closely now, but it seems like we still have a few weeks on greater amberjack.

Vermilion snapper, again that's another split season, and so, the first season, 95 percent was caught, and that, just like gray triggerfish, you roll over the un-landed catch into the second season. There is also a step-down in the trip limit, from 1,000 pounds gutted weight to 500 pounds gutted weight, and so, if you saw that, and that just went out today, a Fishery Bulletin on that, where we stepped down that trip limit. Finally, yellowtail snapper, that's an August 1 start date, and 17 percent has been landed so far. That concludes my report.

DR. DUVAL: So are there questions for Rick?

MR. PHILLIPS: Rick, when you've got a rollover, say with vermilion, when you hit the 75 percent drop-down, is the 75 percent after the rollover is included, or does the rollover go in -- It seemed like the -- I would think it would just be you would get the 75 percent out of the big number instead of the original number, but tell me how you all are doing that.

MR. DEVICTOR: Yes, and that's something we're still trying to figure out, on when you rollover, because what happens is landings come in during the season, of course, and so you don't rollover right away. You kind of wait until you get closer to the catch limit being met and then you see how much is left, and so just to tell you on that that we are currently at 81 percent with the rollover and 85 without the rollover, and so we are well over the 75. To respond to your question, we kind of wait to roll it over until some more landings come into play, but that's a tricky situation when you have that rollover.

MR. CONKLIN: Just for the public's sake, when there's an extra 5 percent or something at the first part of the season, would it be better to change the second-half ACL, to increase it by 5 percent on the website? Is it reflective of that? It's similar to Charlie's question, but I see the same 50/50 numbers, and I don't see the 5 percent, which is what the regulations say, and I think the public would like to see it, and so would I.

MR. DEVICTOR: I think that that's something that we can do, if we want to show the rollover amount and where we are on that. I think that's something we could probably -- But, again, that rollover changes as the season goes on.

DR. DUVAL: My question is about blueline tilefish, and so Rick and I had communicated about this back at the end of July or the first part of August, and so after the season had closed, and I was getting questions from the fishermen in North Carolina that we're at 94 percent, and we're still at

94.2 percent, and I know, Rick, you checked into this with the Science Center and got a report that there were -- If things run the way that they did previously, last year, that there is late landings that are received an average of fifty-nine days post-closure, and so if things go as expected, we expect around 97 percent of the ACL to be landed, if similar reporting patterns occur this season.

We're still at less than 95 percent, and there is about 5,000 pounds left on that ACL, and I know we had some discussion about this last year in December and the council's guidance, in terms of if you're below that 95 percent number and if there is at least two days' worth of projected harvest left, then we would go ahead and just reopen the fishery. Just looking at the 300-pound trip limit that we have right now, with 5,000 pounds left, that's quite a few trips that would be left on that blueline tilefish quota.

Is there -- I am just asking, on behalf of the fishermen. I mean, some of the guys in our area are probably not necessarily going to go out again and gear up for this in certain places, but they're pretty upset that there wasn't I guess maybe closer -- There was maybe a closer eye kept on this, because they see that as foregone income that's there, and I realize it's a careful balancing act of trying to balance and project the late reports against how much is left and how many days there might be and anticipating late reports, but I think when those guys hear about some dealers being late sixty days and trying to account for that, they get pretty upset, and so I'm just looking for some answers, I guess maybe that I can take back to folks, in terms of is there any intent or any consideration for allowing harvest on that remaining 5 percent.

MR. DEVICTOR: We haven't discussed this in the office to reopen blueline, but I think we can ask the Science Center to give us a new projection, and, again, you highlighted -- When you met in March, the motion was to reopen if you're 95 percent, less than 95, and then talk about a projection, and so we are currently less than 95, and we'll see if we have more than two days, and so I think that this is something that we can talk about. This is something that the RA decides on what to do, and so is there a time in the year where it's too late, you think, that we shouldn't reopen for blueline tilefish?

DR. DUVAL: I mean, I know that most of the harvest in the areas where folks are dependent on this -- When it's easiest to access is really like May through September, and so we're almost pretty much at the end of that right now, and, given the current weather -- I mean, nobody is going out fishing right now off of North Carolina, that's for sure. I don't know. I guess, if I could maybe get some feedback on that after the council meeting, in terms of what might be available, and I can communicate with the fishermen a little bit more, to see if it would be worthwhile to go ahead and reopen, I would appreciate it. Thanks. Sorry to take up so much time. Any other questions for Rick?

MS. BURGESS: Rick, I didn't quite catch what you were saying as we went through hogfish. You noted that the East Florida/Florida Keys stock was at 255 percent of the ACL, but you didn't think there would be a payback next year, and is that correct?

MR. DEVICTOR: As it stands now, looking at the numbers, there wouldn't be, because, again, the AM is you pay it back if it's overfished, which it is, and the total is exceeded, the total of the Georgia/North Carolina stock plus the East Florida/Florida Keys stock. Right now, we're not over the total, because we haven't reached the Georgia/North Carolina stock, but, again, this could

change, of course, but, as it stands right now, if the season finished and these were the current landings, there wouldn't be a payback kicked in, because we're not over the total.

MS. BURGESS: Thank you.

DR. DUVAL: I thought it's really like the total of the commercial and recreational of the Florida Keys stock and not -- Because they're two separate stocks. Okay. Great. It's late in the day for everybody, and I get it.

MR. HARTIG: Before we leave that point, I mean, basically, the overage is a result of when the amendment was actually put into place, and to actually tell the fishery next year, based on a 255 percent overage, that that's going to be deducted from your catch for next year based on when the amendment went in, is patently unfair. In this case, I hope we'll be able to something to rectify that.

DR. DUVAL: I don't disagree that the administrative process results in situations like this. The same thing happened with Amendment 32 when blueline tilefish went in as well. Any other questions? Okay. Next is the Status of Amendments Under Formal Review. Rick, is that also going to be you?

MR. DEVICTOR: Yes. There is three amendments to report on. We just talked about hogfish, and that's Amendment 37, and so the final rule published on July 25, and regulations were effective on August 24. Again, as I discussed, we closed the commercial and recreational sectors on August 24. The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Plan, Amendment 37, that went into place the same day as our hogfish.

Amendment 41, we received the amendment from the council on February 28. The Notice of Availability published on Tuesday, September 26. Comments are due on November 27, and so we are waiting to hear back on the proposed rule on that, and then we'll send out a Fishery Bulletin that will announce both the Notice of Availability and the proposed rule comment periods, the end of those comment periods.

Then, finally, the golden tilefish interim rule, as you know, you requested the interim rules in a letter dated June 27 to NMFS. At that time, you requested a reduction in the ACL for golden tilefish to the projected yield at 75 percent of FMSY, which is 323,000 pounds gutted weight. We're working on that right now. The rule package and the document, we have four alternatives in the document, including the no-action alternative. The preferred alternative is to reduce the ACL from 558,036 pounds gutted weight to the projected yield at 75 percent of FMSY, and so the current preferred alternative is to reduce it to the council's recommendation.

Like I said, we're working on this rule package. We're kind of planning to publish the proposed rule in October, and we're going to consider having a shorter comment period than normal. Perhaps we can have a fifty-day comment period, and the goal is to publish the final rule later in November or early December and have the regulations effective in the new year, and so we have a bit of a time crunch on this, because it's going to be a reduced catch limit, and they have been meeting the catch limits in March and in May, and so, with the lower catch limit, that could be met sooner in the year, and so our target is really to get this in place by January 1, around that time period. That concludes my report.

DR. DUVAL: Thank you, Rick. Any questions for Rick on status of amendments? Okay. That takes us to our next item, which is the Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 26, and so this is Attachment 3 in your briefing book, and so this is the decision document, but then what is posted online and what everybody should have received is actually a staff presentation that is titled -- It says "Tab05\_VBReg26Presentation.pdf", and so this is a staff presentation that Myra is going to walk through about sort of a more holistic way to look at this amendment and probably try to get to what our intent is, which is simplification of regulations and sort of a different way to manage the recreational fishery. We're going to turn things over to Myra. I hope everybody has this presentation that they can pull up and have on their screen, so that they can follow along.

MS. BROUWER: This presentation, if you're having a hard time finding it, is under the Late Materials on the website, and it was, like Michelle said, prepared after the briefing book was posted online, and so, ideally, as Chip mentioned yesterday, we have talked about putting these presentations together, before you get into the nitty-gritty of an amendment, to give you guys sort of an overview of what you did in the previous meeting, what the timing is, and to make sure that everybody is aware of what the objectives that we need to accomplish at the meeting are, and so that's the intent of these presentations.

This one, as Michelle said, doesn't follow the decision document, because we are introducing, for your consideration, a different approach than what you saw at the meeting in June, and so I am going to go through this slowly, and I'm going to take my time and make sure that I go through all of my notes, so I don't leave any points out that I want to mention, to make sure that you have all of this information to digest, possibly so we can get into more detail about how you want to proceed first thing tomorrow morning.

First of all, what you did in June, recall that we reviewed the actions and alternatives in Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 26, and we had some preliminary analyses for you to look at. The amendment was not approved for public hearings, pending making all these revisions that you requested in June. You gave us guidance to modify some of those actions and alternatives. There was some renumbering and reshuffling of things, and then you added a new action addressing the prohibition on powerheads in the EEZ off of South Carolina.

The timing that you saw in June is what you see on your screen right now. In June, we did everything that I just said. At this meeting, you are supposed to review and finalize the actions and alternatives and the purpose and need. That would put you reviewing analyses and selecting preferreds and approving for public hearings in December. In March, you would review that public comment and make whatever modifications and approve all actions, and then you would review and approve for formal review in June of 2018, and so that's currently the timing that you have discussed, as of the June meeting.

If we are to stick to that timing, this is what needs to happen at this meeting. We would review the purpose and need and get you to make any changes you want to and go ahead and approve it and finalize that. Review whatever recommendations the IPT has and make those modifications to the actions and alternatives and consider perhaps removing some actions and alternatives that are not necessary, and then finalize all of that, and so that would allow the IPT and staff to complete whatever analyses are needed for you to be prepared to select preferreds in December. Then review and approve the timing of the amendment.

To stay on schedule, this is what we would need from you at this meeting, based on the way the document has been developed up until now, and so here's a list of actions as of June 2017, and I'm not going to read through all of those, but you have several actions there dealing with the aggregates, making some modifications to the composition, to the bag limits under those aggregates.

You talked about potentially having a season for deepwater species, some gear restrictions, perhaps single-hook rigs as a requirement for deepwater species, modifications of the existing seasonal closure for the shallow-water groupers, modifications of recreational minimum size limits for black sea bass and gray triggerfish, and, as I mentioned, this new action addressing powerheads.

If you look at all these actions, it's kind of hard to see a vision. It's a little confusing and difficult to grasp the overall picture of what the council is proposing, and so this is where council staff is proposing a potential different approach for the committee to consider, and I should mention that this approach has not been reviewed by the IPT. This is something that council staff has come up with, and so, if the council decides to explore this approach, then the IPT would work out all the details prior to the next meeting, and so that's an important point that I want you to keep in mind, so that we don't get caught up in the details of how are we going to do this and how is this going to look. What we want you to think about is more of the larger, the concept, and then decide if that's to your liking and you want to give us guidance to proceed accordingly.

First of all, input from the public that we received during the visioning workshops that we had, people kept on mentioning that they wanted a season without in-season closures. This type of stability would allow them to properly plan. It would spread out the demand out over the season. It removes derby-style behaviors, and it meets the needs of support industries like gear sales, vessels, bait and tackle shops, and the like.

What they are really talking about is something that is very similar to game management, and so we put this little slide together to kind of get you in that frame of mind, and so it's listing from most restrictive to most liberal. You can see here, for alligators, you have a tagging-type of thing, and I know you have discussed about similar things for fisheries as well.

I should say that some of these, for example for the ducks, there is a federal permit that is required, and so you need a duck stamp and a state migratory bird permit with data collection requirement to renew the permit each year, and so these are all concepts that you have talked about and mentioned and people have expressed support for something similar to be applied to recreational fisheries in our region.

There is also certain gear restrictions for hunting those animals, which is another thing, like I said, that you have been interested in exploring. For ducks, for example, you can't have more than three shells loaded at one time, and you have to use non-toxic shots, and so these are example of gear-type restrictions that would be sort of analogous to some of the things that you have talked about for fisheries, and so, with that frame of mind, this is what we have proposed.

We are looking at five actions. The first one would modify the species composition of the recreational aggregates, with the intent of ending up with three groupings, and so one would be the deepwater species, one would be the shallow-water groupers, and then the third grouping

would be the other shallow-water species. This would be for all the species in the snapper grouper complex, and so that's another thing you need to keep in mind, and so we're talking about including black sea bass and vermilion, things that are currently excluded from the recreational aggregates in this approach.

Then, for each of those three groupings, you would then have sub-actions to consider a season, a sub-action to consider the number of fish in the aggregate, a sub-action to possibly make adjustments to size limits as needed, and a sub-action to consider any gear restrictions. Then that would put you to those four first actions, and then you would have the fifth one, which addresses the gear prohibition, which it stays with your intent of simplifying regulations, which is another thing that stakeholders were very supportive of.

As I said, this approach would build on game management concepts that were popular among stakeholders during the visioning project, mainly addressing predictability of seasons, and also reducing discards is another thing that kept coming up. It would reflect how the fishery currently operates, and that's another important thing to keep in mind. It would, as I said, simplify the regulations and reduce the number of actions in the amendment.

Here is where we get into each of the actions. As I said, you would have your main action with three groupings. That would be the end result of that action. If we take each grouping individually, Action 2 would then deal with the deepwater species aggregates, which would address the current Actions 1 and 3 in the Visioning Regulatory Amendment 26. Sub-Action 2.1 would specify the season for deepwater species, and, here, we would urge you to consider a short season, perhaps two to four months. We would possibly talk about removing the in-season closures that are in place and then work out the details of how landings would be monitored.

Changes could be done via framework, which is an avenue that you have at your disposal right now to make quick changes to management measures, and then perhaps the approach would be to adjust the bag limit initially and then season would come in sort of as a second step to make changes.

Then Sub-Action 2.2 would deal with the aggregate bag limit, which would have to be a low bag limit, and, here, what I have here in red is the total ACL of current deepwater species, and so what we did is just combine all the ACLs, and this is sort of a ballpark, because, as you know, some of them are in gutted weight and some in whole weight, but just sort of to give you an idea of the amount of total harvest that you are looking to manage for this group of species, and so we're talking about 146,000 pounds plus about 8,000 fish, and that's made up of your snowy and golden tilefish.

Also to keep in mind here is that discard mortality is very high for this group of species, and so you need to have low bag limits, and, again, we talked yesterday about encouraging retention of the first-caught fish and then stop fishing for the deepwater species. As far as the season goes, of course, it would have to be structured around the MRIP waves, and because of our limitations in getting those recreational landings estimates in time, the accountability measure, of course, of an in-season closure would be removed.

Continuing on with the same action, you would have a sub-action to remove size limits, and, for the deepwater species, you had an action in the current amendment, as it is structured now, to

remove the minimum size limits for silk snapper, queen snapper, and blackfin snapper, and so that would be addressed under this sub-action, and then gear restrictions would include alternatives for you to consider this single-hook rig for this group of fish.

Moving on to the shallow-water grouper aggregate, this would, again, address what is currently in Action 1 and then with the similar sub-actions. Here, the total ACL for this group of fish is more sizable. We're talking about over a million pounds, and so, here, you can possibly consider longer seasons, but the bag limits would still need to be low, and you have species, like red grouper and black grouper, where we are seeing some issues with recruitment, and so you need to keep all of that into consideration, and so we would look at aggregate bag limits of one to two fish for all the species combined and a season that could be set annually, and you have options for May to December. That's obviously the current fishing year for the shallow-water groupers. We could look at a May through October 31 and any others that you wish to include. Again, the other two sub-actions, if you wanted to make any changes to minimum size limits or gear restrictions, you would keep those sub-actions in there or get rid of them.

Then it's similar going on with the other shallow-water grouper species. Here, you have a much bigger amount to manage, 7.4 million pounds, plus that 16,000 fish, which is your hogfish recreational ACL, and so bag limits here could be one to five or up to ten is what we put up there for you to think about. Again, this is including your species that are not included in an aggregate.

You already have an action in the amendment that would look at reducing the black sea bass minimum size limit and one that looks to doing the same thing for gray triggerfish off of the east coast of Florida and then, if you wanted to look at any gear restrictions, there would be a sub-action for that as well. For this one, you could have a season. You could have a year-round fishery for this group of species, or you could still specify a season, and then, again, remove those in-season closures. For overfished species, there would have to be some exceptions, such as for hogfish.

Other things we wanted to point out to you that are relevant when you consider this approach is the possible level of harvest that is currently under existing regulations, and so, for the commercial sector, under the unlimited commercial permits, you have up to the existing trip limits, and then you have a trip-limited permit that allows 225 pounds of snapper grouper species.

For the recreational, we did some calculations, and, currently, if you assume an average of six people on a charter vessel, you could harvest 756 pounds per trip, and that is for an average of I believe it was 126 pounds per person, and so that means, for the current private recreational sector, a person could harvest, like I said, 126 pounds, for an average of 567 pounds per vessel, with an average of four-and-a-half people on the vessel, and so that's a lot of fish. That is just there for completion, and that would be the last action that would be included in the amendment.

Here it is again, all put together, sort of to give you an idea of what we are looking at here. This is more in line with a vision that people can wrap their head around that really addresses what we've been hearing from stakeholders, and that reflects how the fishery is actually prosecuted, and so, going back to timing for all of this, if, at this meeting, we review and finalize all the actions and alternatives and the purpose and need, if we accomplish everything and you stay with your timing that I described before, then we would be looking at approval for this amendment in June.

If you decide to go with this alternative approach, we would need to revise the timing. In December, we would bring back to you actions and alternatives fleshed out in the form that you are familiar with, and we would go, again, through all of that, with some preliminary analyses. You would finalize all of that. In March, you would review the final analyses, in order to allow you to select a preferred alternative, and then you would approve it for public hearings then.

We will have to figure out how to schedule those hearings between March and June. In June, you would review the public comments and modify the documents and approve all the actions, with the intent of coming back in September to approve the amendment for formal review, and so what all of this means is, if we switch gears and go with this alternative approach that we are proposing, we think that we could just have this ready by -- The timing would shift by one council meeting, and we would have stuff ready for you to approve in September. It would deviate a little bit from the timing of the commercial amendment, but I don't know that that is really an issue. It's not a show-stopper, but it's something to keep in mind.

To move forward from this point on, we can retain the structure that we have now, and then, if you want to do that, then, tomorrow, we could go more in detail through the decision document that is in your briefing book, and you would give us guidance accordingly, or we could think about adopting this alternative approach and direct staff to proceed with developing an amendment like that, and we would go back around, and I would need more guidance from you on how to structure each action, as far as the ranges of alternatives and that sort of thing and then review the timing.

The purpose and need, I think we would go back and look at it too, but obviously this new approach is going to continue to meet the purpose and need that's been put out there for this amendment, and, if you're interested, and I'm not going to go through all that, there is several slides at the back of the presentation that show you all the tables with the species within the aggregates, as proposed, and some tables that also show you how we arrived at the bag limit poundage by sector, if you want to go into all the details of that. I am ready to answer questions, and let's go from there.

DR. DUVAL: Okay. First of all, thank you to Myra and the rest of the staff who had a hand in putting this together. From my perspective, I like the reorganization, and I think the consolidation of multiple actions into sort of overarching actions makes a little bit more sense, but I might be in the minority.

DR. MCGOVERN: I like the alternative approach as well. The purpose and need is to simplify the regulations, and, to me, the other version, as Chip told me last night, was kind of clunky, and so I think this is easier to understand. I still think it's going to be a lot of work. There are a lot of sub-actions in there. I did have one question. The three groups, Myra, you said it includes all the species in the FMP, I guess besides ecosystem species, but I don't think -- It doesn't include tomtate, does it? I didn't see tomtate in the table.

MS. BROUWER: Right, and I guess that's because tomtate is -- I guess we need to -- It doesn't have a bag limit. It's just in the twenty-fish aggregate, but you're not limited to that twenty tomtate, and so we'll figure it out.

DR. MCGOVERN: All right, but it does include wreckfish in the deepwater group?

MS. BROUWER: Yes.

MR. BELL: I like it. I think what is attractive, to me, is it's just kind of well-organized, and part of the -- "Clunky" may be a good word, but we were just kind of pulling pieces and parts together, but this has a nice flow to it, in terms of logic and organization, and it might be easier to work through, and so I think it's an attractive approach, myself.

DR. DUVAL: I think we were sort of getting towards this at the last council meeting, when we said, well, let's simplify this and look at modifying the species compositions and the aggregates and then let's look at modifying the bag limits, and I think we would have -- We might have eventually wandered our way around to this, but I really appreciate the initiative of staff in kind of trying to prod us along to get there. Are there other questions or comments on this approach?

MS. MCCAWLEY: I would have to get direction from our commission, but my gut reaction is I don't like it. I like how it's less clunky, but I don't like the way that the bag limits -- I think they would be a lot lower than what we have right now, and so, to me, there is some tradeoffs here, and so my gut is I think that some of this is just too low. I would have to see alternatives, but my gut is that I don't like it.

MR. BREWER: A couple of things. Myra, I didn't go back and read the blueprint, and so I apologize, but would this not be a good place to put in a requirement to use circle hooks across the board for live and natural bait?

MS. BROUWER: Yes, absolutely.

MR. BREWER: Then I have another question. Why are powerheads prohibited off of South Carolina and yet allowed -- I am not talking about commercial here. We're only talking recreational. Why are they prohibited off of South Carolina, but apparently allowed in the other three states?

DR. DUVAL: I am going to go back to Mel to answer that question. There is kind of a long history there.

MR. BELL: That goes back before my time, but it basically had to do with the construct of the council at the time, and they were able to make that happen, and I brought that up, at the previous meeting I think it was, or even before that, about one of the things that we wanted to change was to basically bring South Carolina into the same standards as everybody else, but, in terms of the why part, I wasn't there, but I know there was a great deal of interest in prohibiting them amongst folks that were on the council, and so it just happened, but it's been that way for a long time. The whole powerhead restriction sort of thing started here, but it was initially focused on artificial reefs. That's all it was meant to be, and then it kind of grew, but that's something that we have talked about dealing with. I wouldn't worry about why it happened.

MR. BREWER: Okay. I was leading up to my question of could an alternative also be to outlaw powerheads in the recreational industry, period?

DR. DUVAL: Myra, did you want to add a little bit to the history?

MS. BROUWER: Sure, and I just wanted to add a little bit more. South Carolina sent a memo, or a letter, to the council, and it was back in 1991 or 1994 or something like that, and they were concerned about localized depletion of greater amberjack, in particular. There were some large quantities being removed from some of those SMZs, using powerheads, and that's when the DNR said, hey, council, can we do this, and the council did.

DR. DUVAL: Chester, we did previously, a little while ago, look at modifying the use of powerheads off of North Carolina and prohibiting their use, and we got a lot of pushback from our folks up there, and it ended up -- We just decided that it really wasn't a priority at the time for the council, and so we just kind of moved on, but it's certainly something that could be included.

MR. WAUGH: Just some more background on that. That's commonly referred to as the John Floyd Amendment. He was a council member from South Carolina, and, while he was a council member here, his half-brother was Governor Carroll Campbell, and there were some conflicts with the use of powerheads in some of the SMZs and some other areas off of South Carolina, and John made it his mission to get that gear prohibited, and a lot of people never thought it would happen, but it did.

MR. BOWEN: The question I was going to ask, or I have two of them. One, I heard Jessica say that she didn't like this new format, and I didn't hear the reasoning, because I was having a sidebar with Chip, but the question I wanted to ask is Myra is just basically going over this new format, for lack of a better term, this afternoon, and then, tomorrow, we are planning to go through this, like we did at the last meeting, to go over these specific actions and alternatives?

DR. DUVAL: I think what we're looking for here today is having some discussion on this reorganization and slightly different approach to Regulatory Amendment 26, and, if the committee would like to move forward with that approach, then we would need to fill in some blanks, in terms of sub-alternatives and things like that in there, and so this is not a -- I would not say that this alternative approach is completely fleshed out.

Jessica mentioned that she didn't like this, because she felt like some of the bag limit alternatives would be too low, and she would need to go back to the commission to get some direction on that. Just to address that, I think that what you saw in this slideshow is the hard-and-fast on what those different bag limit alternatives would be, and I think, if folks have gone through the decision document that you have in the briefing book, you see that there is two per person per day, three per person per day, two per person per day with existing restrictions on things, and so I don't think there is necessarily -- I don't think that's it, like one to two per person per day.

We would have to walk through and try to address that. This was an alternative approach to look at trying to simplify regulations, and so, if you're going to look at kind of modifying those species aggregates, which is what we talked about at the last meeting, then, in the interest of simplicity, what makes more sense, I think, in terms of anglers being able to remember regulations and things like that.

MS. BECKWITH: My initial reaction to this presentation is that this actually is closer to what my original vision for simplifying recreational regulations was, sort of a deepwater, a shallow-water grouper, and then a kind of everything else bag limit. I agree with Jessica that the devil is in the details with what that bag limit will be, but, ideally, having something that is more inclusive with

the least amount of exceptions would clearly get us towards what our original intent of simplifying regulations and making it easy for people to follow along. I would encourage consideration of this, and I did email Michelle and Gregg a couple of notes, in terms of specifics, and, when that becomes appropriate, they can share my one or two thoughts that I had to add into this, since I won't be with you guys tomorrow, but that's it.

DR. DUVAL: Thank you, Anna.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I have a couple of questions, but, first, I don't think that the goal of no in-season closures is not admirable, but I just felt like, when looking back at some of our original goals, they were things like looking at regional management strategies and the impact of depth on bycatch, and so, not that I think that there is a problem with no in-season closures as a goal, but it just didn't seem like that matched up with our original goals, when I looked back to the document.

My other question is I guess -- Once again, the devil is in the details, but, for example, if you had this combined overall category, if you say vermilion, even if everybody caught all the quota on vermilion, vermilion is going to shut down, even though it's within a category. Would it not? Or triggerfish or some other species. You would still be tracking those ACLs by species, would you not?

MR. WAUGH: The intent of this is -- Obviously it needs to be fleshed out and explored, but the intent is to get away from tracking and closing the recreational sector, to set seasons, and I know those bag limits are shockingly low. That was the purpose of including the examples from game management, where people have accepted it. There is not a lot of gators out there, and so you get to tag one, and your season is one month long.

Well, compare that to our deepwater species. There is not a lot of them out there. The total available to the recreational sector is like 176,000 pounds, plus a few more, and 100 percent release mortality. If your idea is that you don't want that sector to close and you want fishermen to know that they have two months that they can plan on and go and fish for deepwater species, then it's a very short season, two months, but you can go anytime during those two months, and it's a low bag limit.

We're not tracking it, and we're not closing it. You will be able to go anytime, and so, as you think about this tonight, look at it within that context. The deepwater is the most restrictive, because that's the one with the least yield. You come into shallow-water groupers, and you've got about a million pounds to allocate, and so you can get a longer season, but the bag limit still has to be one or two, because you're going to catch a lot of fish in that longer season.

If you don't want to track and close, the tradeoff is that you have to have set seasons that are relatively short, but the shallow-water species grouping gives you a year-round fishery, so there's something to fish for year-round, and then the accountability measure is, and we have to package this and get it approved, but the accountability measure then is that we will monitor this for a year or two and see what the catches are and then adjust the season and bag limit, again so that people have a set season, so they can plan on it and know when they can go fishing.

After you get over the shock of the bag limits -- Yes, they're a big reduction, because look at that slide. Under our current bag limits, recreational anglers can have trips that are greater than our

225-pound trip-limited commercial permit. Is that really what your objective is, or is it to have these set seasons when people can plan on fishing?

DR. DUVAL: I think I would note that, in the discussions that we had at the last meeting, and the meeting prior to that, if you think about the actions that we've taken in previous amendments, and I just use the deepwater species as an example, where we set a season for blueline tilefish that was sort of lined up with I guess the main timeframe of the recreational season, and we modified our snowy grouper management to also fit within that four-month season, or vice versa. It might have been snowy grouper first and then we followed with blueline tilefish, I think is how it went.

I think, as we've started walking down this road of simplifying regulations and trying to reduce discards, which is one of the other goals, I think that -- I thought that we were walking towards that type of approach, at least for the deepwater species, of having a season for those deepwater species and recognizing that most of those fish are subject to an existing three-fish bag limit. I would just kind of throw that out there for consideration.

MR. PHILLIPS: My first thought is, with the low bag limits, and I am just looking at shallow-water species, it would be -- I could see a lot of incentive to throw away a twelve-inch sea bass to keep a mutton snapper, if you've hit your bag limit, or a big amberjack or let a porgy go to keep a four-pound b-liner. I see a high probability or possibility of high-grading, just right off the bat.

MR. HAYMANS: First, I really like the concept the way it's been rewritten. Secondly, I think it will be moderately less burdensome for the recreational public. However, there is still a lot of fish to track within a given category, but my question is for Gregg. Though I like the concept, if we don't track landings, doesn't that fly in the face of Magnuson now, with managing under an ACL, as it's currently written?

MR. WAUGH: Yes, and that's part of what we would have to get. We would have to put this package together and get it approved to change -- There is a lot of activity looking at adjustments to MSA to give more flexibility in how you manage the recreational sector, and so this is what we're proposing, a different way to manage the recreational sector. Yes, we will have to change how we are currently tracking and closing. We still track, because that's part of the AM.

We're going to monitor it, and we'll have to talk about it and say can we look at it one year or two years, and I'm sure there is going to be a lot of push to look at it after the first year. You look at it after the first year, and, if you're way over, then you have to adjust your season or your bag limit to get down to your target yield. Those numbers then become your target harvest instead of ACLs, and you're not tracking them in-season, but you're still tracking them, and, yes, this has to get approved. We have to sell it to the Service and make sure that it meets the National Standards and so forth.

MR. HAYMANS: I thought I heard you say, or my interpretation of one of the things you said, was its contingent on MSA reauthorization or with the flexibility.

MR. WAUGH: I think so, because I don't know how we get around our ACL management now, and so we haven't thought that far ahead yet, but I would think that we would need some change to Magnuson, but, if you look across the bills, consistently there is a lot of proposals in there to provide a different way of managing on the recreational. If we were able to start developing this,

we might be able to comment, if asked, and increase the chances that there would be changes to the MSA to allow this type of approach. Always think about what the flip side is of how we're doing business now.

DR. DUVAL: One thing to throw out there is, the way some of our existing aggregates work with our different complexes -- I mean, we have this mish-mash of aggregate bag limits, and then we also have complexes, where we have a shallow-water grouper complex and a jacks complex, and where those ACLs for those complexes are merely a summation of the individual ACLs for those species, and so it doesn't matter how many pounds or how many numbers of fish of one of those individual species in those complexes is caught. Once you reach that number, it shuts down, and so I think the jacks is one, in particular. I think it's mostly almaco that is shutting down that particular complex, and so that's another thing to just kind of chew on as you think about this concept.

MR. HARTIG: There is a little bit of a disconnect between the two meetings, and we talked -- You guys have come up with a potential poundage that could be caught by a recreational fisherman or a headboat or actually I guess it's for-hire. Is that what you figured it out for, a for-hire trip? Which certainly happens on a for-hire trip. There is no doubt about that. I know some for-hire fishermen who catch that amount of fish on a trip, but we also heard at the last meeting that the recreational fishery isn't catching anywhere near the numbers of fish in the aggregate.

I can't remember exactly the conversation we had, but there was a conversation that came up about what is the recreational fishery really catching, and they're not catching near the numbers of fish that they could have caught if they used the twenty-fish aggregate, and so the for-hire is one thing, but the general recreational sector is another, I think, as far as it comes to how much fish they're actually catching on an individual trip.

DR. DUVAL: I think that's why this is -- If the council decides to move forward with this type of approach, there is a lot of alternatives that would need to be fleshed out. I think, if you look through some of those additional slides, you will see that, for the deepwater species, according to the estimates that we have, those ACLs are more than being filled by the recreational sector, and so that's why you look at grouping things slightly differently.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I am going to ask some more questions here. Would you be wanting states to go consistent with this, because I am concerned, depending on how this comes out, to try to get the FWC Commission onboard with this. I also have concerns about us starting an amendment and spending staff time on an amendment that is contingent upon Magnuson reauthorization that we've been waiting for since 2012, and so I'm a little concerned that we're going to spend some time on -- Let me pose a question.

If we change the structure now -- I mean, I don't think we can have two amendments that go side-by-side, the new structure and the old structure, but I am concerned about tying up a lot of time while Magnuson is being reauthorized. Let's say we get this amendment all the way through the process with the new structure, it goes out to public hearing, and we're a year from now. By then, we would know if Magnuson has been reauthorized, but let's say it hasn't. Then we've spent a lot of time, and maybe got the public onboard with the concept, that couldn't be put forward in the existing Magnuson structure.

I guess that just seems a little counterintuitive about what to do with staff time, and so then I wonder if we put the whole recreational amendment to the side and move forward with the commercial while we wait for Magnuson reauthorization, to try to flesh out these concepts? I am just kind of posing some ideas or questions.

DR. DUVAL: I am going to let Monica jump ahead of Zack and Chester really quick.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: I have a couple of questions for Gregg, based on these kinds of comments, and I just briefly looked at this, like everybody else, and it hasn't been through an IPT or anything like that, but you know we have some current species for which we have set recreational seasons ahead of time, that it's this amount. It doesn't mean that we don't monitor those, and it doesn't mean that we don't look at how much was harvested, and so, Gregg, let's put congressional action aside, because obviously we have no control over that. We don't know what, if anything, they would do.

Can you envision a situation in which what you are proposing here could still take place, given the current Magnuson Act requirements, because we have kind of done this, at least in terms of set seasons and that sort of stuff, for a few species. Not quite like this, but it seems like maybe there is a way to make this work, but that's just for your thinking about it, and maybe you want to answer it now. I don't know.

MR. WAUGH: Yes, I think you could set it up under this new process. The only part that you can't guarantee is that there won't be an in-season closure, and so you could set it up how we've outlined here, to approximate a season and bag limit that you think will achieve your target harvest, and that could operate now, and, yes, we would still track and close if you exceeded that, based on the projections from the landings, but this would help over what is happening now, because we're going way over on a number of our species, and so this would get us closer to what I think we're trying to do now. The one part that you couldn't guarantee people is that set season, but, shortening the season and lowering the bag limit, you increase the chances that it would last that time period.

DR. DUVAL: I think one thing -- I want to sort of come back around to Jessica's questions really quick, and so I think it seems like the question, or the concern, is in sort of the aggregation approach, and it seems like perhaps the organization of actions within this is not necessarily your concern, because I think you can reorganize these actions to be more consolidated and sort of follow along more closely.

Your concern is really about the individual species bag limits, perhaps more so for the other shallow-water species, because we do have these ten snappers and the twenty everything else and things like that, and ensuring that there is enough access to those fish for anglers, and so I think maybe there is two slightly different things here that people need to think about overnight, and one is sort of the overall reorganization of the document. Do you like this type of reorganization? Then the other prong is sort of the approach of this aggregate target of these three different groupings of species, and so I want to let Zack go and then Chester, and then I can come back to you.

MR. BOWEN: Thank you, Madam Chair, and my comment or question could wait, but, to Ben's point, and to the chart, and I don't know what page it is, but 756 pounds per trip on a charter trip, Ben, you said that you know of people doing that. I don't know -- With the regulations that are in

place currently and the amount of fish, based on what I am seeing offshore and the trends reports that we had from MARMAP at our last meeting, I don't know that 756 pounds a trip is even available, and so I like this new thing. I guess there is details, and, like Jessica said, the devil is in the details, but I like the way it's going so far, but I just don't think there is that many fish available.

MR. BREWER: First, let me say that I don't think that we're going to take a vote on this, but I do like the way this is organized, and I wanted to speak to the point that Gregg and Monica were sort of discussing. Ever since the reauthorization, the last reauthorization of Magnuson, the recreational sector has been working diligently to have the changes made so that the recreational sector is managed more on trends and averages than on hard ACLs.

That drive has been in place, because it is my opinion, and I've said this before, that it's impossible to count every fish that's caught recreationally. From everything that I am hearing, that theme is being heard in Washington, and there will be -- In my humble opinion, there will be changes in Magnuson that will allow sort of that kind of management theme, and so nobody has got a perfect crystal ball, certainly not when it comes to what Congress is going to do, but I think there's a really, really good chance that a management scheme like this will be permissible in the future, if it's not permissible now. We have always argued that there is more flexibility than what we've been told.

DR. DUVAL: Jessica and then Tim, but I am just going to remind folks that it's 5:46, and we do have a 6:00 p.m. public hearing here this evening for -- South Carolina is holding their ASMFC cobia FMP public hearing, and so we do have a hard-stop, and so I'm just --

MR. SCHMIDTKE: It's at seven.

DR. DUVAL: It's at seven? You shouldn't have told people that.

MR. SCHMIDTKE: We still need an hour to set up though.

DR. DUVAL: Meet Mike Schmidtke, ASMFC FMP Coordinator. Thanks, Mike.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Just to try to -- If you're looking at the board, and to try to articulate this a little bit more, I feel like this is a concept that we've discussed and can get onboard with for the deepwater species, and maybe for the shallow-water groupers. It's where we hit Action 4 that I really get hung up.

That's my big hang-up, in that structure of that particular action and the dependency on the reauthorization to get the kind of flexibility that I think would be needed so that this would work like clockwork and not have all these in-season closures of all these different species while this is happening, and so, if that helps, in trying to think about how this would be structured, then 2 is okay, 3 is maybe, and 4 is probably where our biggest hang-up is.

DR. DUVAL: I just want to be clear that you're talking about the actual concept of the aggregate, like ACL target, and not necessarily -- Like are you onboard with sort of the general organization? In other words, if you didn't use that sort of target ACL, but at least in terms of organization of the document, the way the actions are grouped, and maybe that's a better way of putting it, is looking at how the actions are grouped.

I mean, the feedback I feel like I've gotten from most folks around the table is the way these actions are grouped in this sort of reorganization makes sense. I think it's the sort of second prong that I was talking about, in terms of the aggregate ACL approach, that seems to be something of a hang-up.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Yes, the sub-actions, I guess is what we're calling it. That's where I'm hung up.

DR. DUVAL: Okay.

MR. GRINER: I was going to say the same thing. I think 2 and 3 make sense, but, when you start looking at the other shallow-water species, and, as Charlie said, you're not helping discards here at all, and you're really kind of putting yourself -- You're going in the wrong direction, if you ask me, and so I think, yes, maybe the devil really is in the detail, but I think, when you get through all the detail, you're going to be right back to where you were.

DR. DUVAL: I think one thing to keep in mind, and maybe this bears flipping through some of the extra slides at the end, in terms of the average bag weights per person, and so those were based on what an angler could land, on average, if they caught all of their snapper grouper bag limits that we have right now on a trip, and so that's adding up the average bag weight per person for the ten snapper, the twenty fish, the three grouper, the greater amberjack and all of that, in terms of what could be caught in maximum.

I think that's where some of those suggestions for bag limits are coming from. I don't think that's necessarily where we have to go, and this is just an approach to get us thinking. I think, like I said, there is two pieces here. There is sort of the overall organization of the document that makes it easier for an angler to get through, the way this is approached, and then there is the -- I guess maybe the more philosophical type of approach of establishing aggregate ACLs, or a different set of aggregate ACLs, versus maintaining the individual ACLs for these species, yet just looking at a different type of organization moving forward.

MR. WAUGH: You all are right that that grouping, that shallow-water species, is the one that requires some more thought, and Chip reminded me to raise the bycatch issue. It gets to the question that Monica asked. Certainly with the seasons for the deepwater species and the shallow-water grouper, you have an open season. When that season is closed, then you have no discards, and so we could argue that that's a significant savings.

Then, when you get to the shallow-water, you don't have that, because you're looking at year-round, and so I understand people's difficulty with that other shallow-water species grouping. We struggled with the same thing, and just, honestly, that's as far as we got with it, but I think bycatch -- Think about that for certainly the other two groupings.

DR. DUVAL: I think it was my hope that, as we moved down the road of developing this amendment further, that that deepwater season would be where we would end up. I mean, Ben was kind of instrumental in sort of starting that deepwater season type of grouping, given the low annual catch limits we have for those species, and we do have kind of a season for shallow-water grouper. It's May through December right now, and so we do sort of have a couple of default

seasons that it really comes down to this other shallow-water species and do you set a season? Is it simply the calendar year and looking at different approaches there?

MR. HAYMANS: The thought immediately jumped that -- What you just said regarding the reduction in bycatch, that's assuming that it's a closed area to fishing. In other words, if you shut off the harvest of deepwater species, you haven't necessarily closed that area, and so people can still -- Heaven forbid you want to catch-and-release deepwater species, but the potential is still there for catch-and-release. You almost have to shut off deepwater fishing.

DR. DUVAL: Okay. I'm going to jump in here a little bit, because I think what we've heard from the public is they don't like closed areas, any more closed areas, and we haven't walked down that road. To this date, what we've tried to do is say these species tend to be caught out in these depths, and let's set a season for them, and presumably that's going to dissuade people from fishing out that deep if you have a season for them.

MR. WAUGH: Certainly we're not envisioning any closed areas with this. I think we have to step back a little and recognize that, similar to some of our discussions yesterday with red snapper, this is a start of a co-management process with the recreational community. You the recreational community, you want a set season with no in-season closures, and so here's how we can work on that, and I think we've got to rely on recreational fishermen to participate in this in a positive way and not go out and fish for deepwater species, just like we don't -- The bulk of us don't go out and try and shoot deer outside of the open season. Now, there are some, and Mel's guys get them, and so it's the same thing here, but we've got to figure that people are going to see the benefit of this and participate in a positive way.

DR. DUVAL: Are there other questions or comments right now on this approach? I think there's a lot of good concerns that have been raised of things that would need to be considered and discussed. Like we said, this has not been through the IPT, which always has good input, but I want to see if I can kind of bring us back to -- At least what I am hearing is support for the organization that is presented here, in terms of how actions and sub-actions are organized. Action 2 and 3, it seems like there is general support for moving in that direction. It's really Action 4 where there would need to be some additional work. Again, it seems like it's really this approach of this aggregate ACL type of thing.

MR. BOWEN: Well, the gist I get, from the ones that have spoken around the table, is even Action 4 would be okay north of the Georgia/Florida line. It seems like Action 4, with the exception of Tim, who is a commercial fisherman, but it seems like Florida is the hang-up with Action 4, but it's my opinion, and it is an opinion, that Action 4 would work for all of the states, all of our jurisdiction, north of the Georgia/Florida line.

DR. DUVAL: I hesitate to speak for North Carolina anglers until they would have the opportunity to see something like that, because I suspect, as with folks in Florida, that you would see people who would object to simply a five-fish limit for that entire other shallow-water species grouping, that they would want to see at least ten or higher. There would need to be some consideration of additional bag limits.

MR. BOWEN: Yes, and, to that point, Madam Chair, I wasn't really necessarily getting that deep in the weeds. I was just saying the layout of it.

DR. DUVAL: Is everybody good to kind of think about this tonight and chew on this and come back with suggestions for how you would like to proceed tomorrow? Okay. I really appreciate the conversation around this, and I want to give a shout-out to staff for trying to think of an approach that's going to be more understandable for our angling public that would try to implement the type of vision that we think that we both have in mind for them, and so thank you, Myra, for going through that presentation, and I encourage folks to take another look at it and come back tomorrow morning with suggestions for how you would like to move forward from an organizational perspective of the document as well as some of the other conceptual things that were brought up.

We are going to recess until tomorrow morning, but we start at eight o'clock tomorrow morning again, and so I just want to remind folks of that, and then we do have a public hearing that is occurring here tonight at seven, and so thank you all very much for all of your hard work today, and go forth and be merry.

(Whereupon, the meeting recessed on September 26, 2017.)

- - -

September 27, 2017

### WEDNESDAY MORNING SESSION

- - -

The Snapper Grouper Committee of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council reconvened at the Town & Country Inn, Charleston, South Carolina, Wednesday morning, September 27, 2017, and was called to order by Chairman Michelle Duval.

DR. DUVAL: I would go ahead and reconvene the Snapper Grouper Committee if I could, please. Yesterday, when we recessed for the evening, we had had what I thought was a very productive discussion with regard to an alternate approach for how we might think about Regulatory Amendment 26, which is our recreational vision blueprint amendment, and, Myra, I was wondering if maybe you could pull up the presentation and we could go to I think it's Slide 16, which sort of shows the reorganization, I think.

I think, just to recap where we ended yesterday, my understanding is that folks really seem to like kind of this approach to reorganization and that it helped to make the document flow better and it made sense to consolidate the actions in this type of approach and that, really, it sounded like what the concerns were was with potentially looking at redoing our aggregate annual catch limits, because, right now, the way that we monitor these species, as I mentioned yesterday, is we have different complexes, and the ACL for a complex is simply the sum of the individual ACLs of those species, regardless of what the aggregate bag limit regulations are.

For our grouper aggregate bag limit, we have this three-fish grouper aggregate bag limit, and that really is kind of disconnected from how the ACLs are monitored for individual species and tracked and whether or not harvest continues to be allowed, and so there's a couple of different ways that

we could approach this. We could move forward with this type of reorganization that you see in front of you, for ease of navigation of the document and for ease of understanding for the public.

The alternatives and the sub-alternatives that you see here in front of you, this is not -- This is simply a suggestion, and so there were other alternatives that we had in the decision document with regard to things like individual bag limits for deepwater species and for shallow-water groupers that included from one to three fish, and that also included maintaining, I think, some of the existing restrictions, such as maintaining a one-fish limit for gag or black.

Reorganizing the document in this fashion doesn't preclude us from bringing those things back into this, and I think one of the things that I heard was that we were talking about trying to accommodate the regional differences in the fishery, and so we spent a lot of time talking at the last meeting about the seasonal nature of the fishery and the fact that certain species are not accessible to certain anglers at different portions of the range, which is why we were looking at some things like modifying the shallow-water grouper closure to allow for access for Florida at certain times of the year.

I think that those types of sub-alternatives could be brought in under this reorganization by including some additional options under say Action 3.1, which are the seasons, and so I think those things could be addressed. Another thing that we talked about was extending the shallow-water grouper closure by a month for red grouper, but only for the Carolinas, and so, again, I think that's something that could be accommodated within this structure. It would simply be another sub-alternative.

Then I think some of the other concerns that I heard, with regards to Action 4, which would be all of these other shallow-water grouper species, really had to do with the bag limits, and I think Ben brought this up, that the information that we saw last time, and I think, if folks have taken the time to look at some of the additional slides in this presentation that show the proportions of the annual catch limits that have been met for different species, really there are not very many species for which the annual catch limits have been met that are currently within that ten-snapper or twenty-fish aggregate, and so you're looking at things like I think greater amberjack, and you're looking at things like the porgies complex, and you're looking at things like the jacks complex.

I am just thinking of a couple of the complexes that have actually had recreational closures, in-season closures. It has happened a couple of times, I think in 2014, and it happened again in 2016, and it seems to go every other wave, and so things like a one to five-fish bag limit option for all of these other species that wouldn't be in either the shallow-water grouper the deepwater species complex might not be -- It would just be a non-starter, I think, in some areas, because anglers need the promise of potential access to those species.

If you're looking at things like a ten-fish bag limit, that would be more along the lines of what anglers would be looking for, and I think what our for-hire industry might be looking for. I am not trying to speak for everybody, but I'm just trying to echo some of the concerns that I think I've heard around the table, and so I say that as a means of trying to kick off the conversation, as to whether or not we would like to take this alternative approach and the fashion in which we would like to take it.

It sounds like, from a document organization perspective, most people would be onboard with this. It's really -- If you're looking to maintain some of the decisions that we made last time with regard to accommodating the seasonal differences in the region, then it would require adding a few extra sub-alternatives under seasons for a couple of these actions, and I think, if folks want to consider something like reorganizing how our aggregate annual catch limits are tracked, that isn't something that we necessarily would have to do in this amendment. That could be something that we could consider down the road.

I think Jessica had expressed some concerns about no in-season closure and aggregate ACLs and how this matches up with the requirements under Magnuson. I think we have expressed the fact that we have a lot of species down here in this region for which there is considerable uncertainty or imprecision in the estimates of harvest, and we've indicated that we would like to disconnect our accountability measures from that, or at least address it within our accountability measures, such that we're not being hamstrung, I think, by some of that uncertainty.

I think I will stop talking, but I just wanted to recap our discussion from yesterday and kind of lay out a couple of different paths forward and try to address what I thought were some of the concerns that I saw around the table.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Let me try to repeat a little bit of what you're saying. It sounds like what you're saying is that maybe the structure that we see on the board for 2 and 3, where we're grouping some of the existing actions that are in the document now, or actually I guess they're actions and then there are those alternatives that include regionalization and such, but grouping them under a category called deepwater species and then grouping some others under the shallow-water grouper category.

It's the other stuff, to me, that is in question, and I think that maybe that doesn't get a grouping, or it's the other stuff grouping, and I think I'm okay with that, and I guess -- So are you suggesting that how we proceed forward is to look at the actions that are in the existing document and then figure out how they fit under the groupings and do they still have the correct alternatives that we would like to see analyzed? Is that what you're suggesting?

DR. DUVAL: Yes, and I think, in terms of moving forward organizationally with this approach, just to make sure that we are including, under this new organization, particularly some of those regional things like red grouper, shallow-water grouper, things like that that we actually spend a good amount of time on.

MR. BELL: I still think this is a more attractive approach, just from organizing. It works for me better. It kind of sorts things a little better, and I think a lot of the things that Jessica brought up yesterday, obviously, were down kind of in the details, and that can all just be put in in the appropriate place, and so it just seemed to me that it was just kind of a different approach, organizationally speaking, that would be easier, personally, for me to track, but I think maybe for the public or folks to follow this, and so I just like the approach, but I think, being sensitive to specific needs and regional and sub-regional differences, we can work that in there somehow.

It seems to me that -- I think for like what you see on the screen is Action 4, other shallow-water species, and the two things that I am hearing that are really kind of the hang-up would be discussion of a season, because, for most of those species, the season is the calendar year. It starts January 1

and then things run until there is an in-season closure for most of those species, and we might not -- I think we can continue discussing this. We might not be able to get to something like a season with no in-season closure right now, given some of the concerns that I am hearing around the table about trying to impose a season and perhaps significantly more restrictive bag limits. We had talked about restricting some of the bag limits on these species, because we felt like, for gray triggerfish, that maybe twenty fish is just too much, but five might be too few, and so, okay.

MR. PHILLIPS: I think that we could probably run this rabbit and move some of our other stuff under these headings. I just think we should be careful and not assume that Magnuson is going to change and give us flexibility and we don't go there, because the political climate is a little shaky, and just stay within our bounds of what we know we can do. That keeps us on fairly safe ground.

DR. DUVAL: I think, to move forward with this, I think if we could provide a little bit of guidance to Myra that she could then take back to the IPT for this type of restructuring of these actions would be helpful. When I was looking through the decision document, in terms of I think when we were discussing bag limits for the deepwater species, we had alternatives for two and three per person per day with existing restrictions on golden tilefish and snowy grouper.

I think what was suggested in this alternative approach was one or two for the entire deepwater species complex, and so it doesn't seem like it would be too onerous to add an additional alternative or to include three fish as a potential bag limit as a sub-alternative in there when considering the bag limit action.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Can we back up a little bit? What about the purpose and need? Should we not start with modifying that some? There were IPT recommendations, and then, now, considering some of the restructuring, it seems like maybe we need to broaden that purpose and need a little bit.

MS. BROUWER: I think the purpose and need pretty much captures everything. Like I said yesterday, it does address simplifying regulations and minimizing discards and all the things that you all set out to do with the visioning amendment. We do need to talk about it and approve it, and so what I had thought we would do, if I may, Michelle, is I had prepared this sort of an outline document to help me help you get through this in a somewhat not too bumpy way.

Based on what option you choose, whether we go back to the decision document and proceed as we would have had we not come up with this approach, we would follow the procedure where we talk about the purpose and need and we approve the timing and then we go action-by-action and I get your guidance and so on.

If you choose to go with the alternative approach, again, we do need to approve the purpose and need and talk about the timing, and then I had sort of created this outline, based on the new approach, and we're going to have to be kind of going back and forth between this and the decision document, to make sure that I can capture whatever alternatives are in the current document that you wish to retain.

Then, that way, we can get further guidance from you on whether those alternatives are still what you want analyzed for December or whether you are interested in making any changes to those, and so I think maybe if we attempt to proceed that way, kind of in a more methodical way, one

action at a time, and then compare that this is what we had as of June and this is the new approach and how are we going to combine the two.

DR. DUVAL: I think we were getting there, in terms of starting with do you want the approach, and then digging down from there.

MR. BOWEN: Good morning. Madam Chair, are you looking to entertain a motion on this, or is this just going to be by consensus, or what are you looking for?

DR. DUVAL: I think it's more helpful for staff if we can have a motion, I think particularly for this, to either retain the structure of the vision blueprint regulatory amendment as it currently is or, as Myra indicated, Option 2 here is to adopt this alternative approach to organizing the vision blueprint document.

The only thing, I think, in the wording under Option 2 there, Myra, is "adopt alternative approach as presented", and I think we want to make sure that it's "Option 2, as modified by the committee", because we have discussed a lot of sort of tweaks that we would want to make to that approach, that we really like the organization, but I think maybe some of the other components of no in-season closures and things like that we're not quite ready to tackle.

MR. BOWEN: I am prepared to make that motion. **I will make the motion to adopt the alternative approach, as modified by the committee at the September 2017 meeting, and direct staff to proceed with development of the amendment accordingly.**

DR. DUVAL: There is a motion by Zack. Is there a second? It's seconded by Mel. Is there discussion?

MS. MCCAWLEY: Is there any way that we could maybe -- I don't know if what we want is going to come out as we move through the document, or do we need to write some bullet statements about what we wanted to keep and what we wanted to change? I am up for whatever, but I just wanted to be clear.

MS. BROUWER: I think that's the kind of guidance that we will get directly under each action, and so I feel okay having this general guidance first.

DR. DUVAL: I feel like there will be additional motions to clarify exactly what we want to retain and what things we want to change or pull in under each of those actions under this new structure. Any other discussion? **Is there any objection to this motion? Seeing none, the motion stands approved.**

**Obviously this is going to require some reworking, and so I think we would also need a motion to approve the timing below.**

MS. MCCAWLEY: **So moved.**

DR. DUVAL: Motion by Jessica. Is there a second? It's seconded by Charlie. Any discussion on this motion? Everybody is clear that we would come back in December and review the actions and alternatives and the purpose and need? Then, in March, we would review the analyses and

select preferreds and approve for public hearings. Then we would have public hearings between March and June, which is a little different than how we normally do things, and then, in June, we would come back and review the public comments, and so it really just pushes things out an additional meeting. **Is there any objection to this motion? Seeing none, this motion stands approved.**

MS. BROUWER: On your screen is the purpose and need as the IPT has proposed changing it, and so I will just go ahead and read it into the record. The purpose for the actions would be to increase recreational access to the snapper grouper fishery through modified aggregates and fishing seasons, minimize discards to allow for increased recreational harvest, and improve regulatory compliance, consistency, and enforcement by simplifying regulations.

The need for the actions would be to simplify and promote compatible regulations while minimizing, to the extent practicable, adverse socioeconomic effects for the recreational fishermen in the South Atlantic region. Of course, you are free to modify this as you see fit and then go ahead and approve it.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I have some issues or questions about this. In the purpose, the “minimize discards to allow for increased recreational harvest”, aren’t we trying to reduce regulatory discards? Also, in thinking about the deepwater species, just ensuring that this purpose indicates that we’re trying to reduce dead discards by the actions that we’re going to try to take on those deepwater species, and so do we think “minimize discards to allow for increased recreational harvest” really covers both of that, or should we add some modifiers to the word “discards”?

DR. DUVAL: So your concern is that it doesn’t cover what we’re trying to do with the deepwater species?

MS. MCCAWLEY: Yes, and I think that maybe “minimize regulatory discards”, and I don’t know if that covers both of those things or if we need to add another word there.

DR. DUVAL: Certainly regulatory discards are those that are out of season, over the bag limit, under or over the size limit, and so I think that’s a good addition, if the committee is amenable to that.

MS. BECKWITH: I’ve got a comment as well. (Part of Ms. Beckwith’s comment is not audible on the recording.) I am not sure that the public is going to see that as increasing recreational access. We may be concentrating recreational access. We may be doing that to reduce regulatory discards, but I am not sure that we’re in fact truly increasing recreational access.

DR. DUVAL: I think part of this, Anna, is, when I think about some of those seasonal types of things that we’ve discussed, in terms of like modifying the shallow-water grouper closure to allow for additional access there, that’s what I think of when I think of increased recreational access, but I definitely understand what you’re saying.

MR. HAYMANS: I was approaching the purpose statement slightly different, only to try to make sure that the recreational angler -- It’s sort of what Anna was saying, that the recreational angler understands what we’re trying to do, and this is a purpose statement that I have never seen before, and I’m just curious, but something to the effect to address recreational fishermen’s concerns for

simplified regulations through the creation of species groupings, set seasons, size limits -- Something of that nature that the recreational anglers know that we're reacting to the visioning and that we're trying to simplify the regulations. I don't know if I have ever seen a purpose statement that way, but at least they know that we're trying to react to their concerns.

DR. DUVAL: While you're thinking about that, I am going to go to Charlie.

MR. PHILLIPS: Thank you. I am not sure, in all cases, that we're trying to do increased recreational harvest, but maybe have our recreational harvest in ways that are -- I don't know how to wordsmith it, but they have asked for simpler regulations, but that doesn't necessarily mean increased recreational harvest, because they're going to get some more fish in some places and not in other places, and I'm not sure that exactly covers what we would be doing.

MR. GRINER: Along the same lines, I think that the average recreational guy is going to have a hard time understanding that the purpose was to allow for increased harvest if in fact his harvest goes down, and so I really think we've got to be careful there, because they're just going to have a hard time understanding that.

MR. BELL: I think I was thinking along the lines of what Doug was thinking, is that this wasn't so much about increasing access or even catch, but it was about making improvements, through simplification, and providing stability in the fishery and positive things like that that we've heard about, and I got real sensitive when Roy was talking yesterday about artificial reefs and how it makes fishing easier and catching easier and some concerns with that, and so it's really not about increasing the harvest or increasing the catches or the accessibility, but it's about making improvements to the fishery that we've heard about with the simplification and stability and things like that. That's kind of, I think, the direction Doug was going in.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I feel like we're going to totally throw out what the IPT has suggested, and I'm wondering if we can make some bullet points and then the IPT can go back and work on it, because I like what Doug is saying also, and I do see what Anna is saying. I agree that the increased recreational access is probably not the best way to start this statement, and so I wonder if we made some bullet statements about what we wanted if then the IPT could fix it up for us.

DR. DUVAL: I want to get to Chester, because he has had his hand up, but I think we can provide this feedback to Myra, and she can take that back to the IPT and let them rework it, because, if we try to wordsmith it here, we're just going to sit around for thirty minutes, and we don't really have that kind of time.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Yes, and that's why I was suggesting some bullet points, instead of trying to edit the statement that's already on the board.

DR. DUVAL: So, Chester, and then we'll make sure that we capture some of these things that have been mentioned here.

MR. BREWER: For the recreational sector, "access" is a magic word, and I think it's important that that word stay in here. Access doesn't mean, necessarily, that you're going to be able to catch more fish on a particular trip. It can also mean that the seasons in which you are allowed to harvest those fish get extended, and I think that's part of what we're looking at here.

It may well be that the deepwater thing is closed, but you can still go fishing for shallow-water, and so I think access is important, and I do also agree with Doug and Jessica that you can put some bullet points in this thing that go to maybe more in-depth of what we're really trying to do here, and I think what we're trying to do here is laudable, I really do.

DR. DUVAL: Okay. Anna, any additional bullets or thoughts you want included on this?

MS. BECKWITH: Yes, and, instead of "increased recreational access", we could just say "stabilize recreational access", which is part of the goal.

DR. DUVAL: I think we can capture that in bullets. Mel also mentioned stability in the fishery. I think Chester has made an important point about I guess how we characterize access that is trying to be provided, and so that's something that the IPT can go back and think about. I think we want to make sure that -- We want to provide access, but "increased access" might not necessarily be the most appropriate phrase or how it's phrased right now.

I think the other issue was allowing for increased recreational harvest seems like it might not actually be what we're shooting for. It's really -- I think part of the issue is that increasing harvest is really -- I mean, any increase in harvest is entirely dependent on what assessments we get back and things like that, and so that is sort of the cap on harvest, and so we need to be very careful about using that phrase. I think also the point that Jessica made about the discards, the regulatory discards -- I mean, yes, we want to minimize discards, but we want to make sure that we're addressing the regulatory discards.

MS. MCCAWLEY: What about some of Doug's points that he brought up? I don't know if those have been captured in there.

DR. DUVAL: We could ask the IPT to go back and -- I think Doug was trying to get to some phrase that indicates that the purpose is to sort of respond to angler concerns about all of these issues I think that you've captured in these bullets.

MR. BELL: One of Doug's points, I think, was simplification, and think about it. What we've heard and what we all know, instinctively, is that, if you're a fisherman, it's scary, in terms of just the complexity and the regulations and all. That turns a lot of people off, and so things that we can do to simplify, as best we can, the regulatory piece for them, which is also better for law enforcement, but also from a -- We've got stability in there, but predictability, for folks like Zack and Mark.

I mean, they've got to know that they -- Because they're working a business model into this, there has got to be predictability of their seasons and things, and so those are all things we kind of instinctively know and we've heard from the public, and so it's just a matter of working them into the statement. I get the accessibility thing. It's access, but I think it's not necessarily trying to build access or grow this a lot. It's just maintaining a level that people want to go fishing and they feel like they can run a business or they can participate and it's not an onerous thing and they're not scared to death about breaking various laws.

DR. DUVAL: I think we have the simplifying regulations in there already, and so it's really -- I think what probably hasn't been captured is the predictability. Okay. Last word, Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Ben had his hand up too, but so I don't know if we want to ask the IPT to go back to the December 2016 options paper. There were some points in there, and that's what I was bringing up yesterday. I don't know if we just want to ask them to go back and look at this. There were some things about bycatch and other things, but just to make sure they're included in that list.

MR. HARTIG: We have had the discussion about whether the increased recreational access is correct or not, and it is correct, at least from the seasonal aspect, because we are thinking about shortening the shallow-water grouper season. I don't know if you need to get that specific in the purpose and need under that, but I can see how you could reword it to "minimize discards through modified aggregates and fishing seasons" and things of that nature. I could see how you could reword it that you could leave the "recreational access" in there, pertaining to fishing seasons, and then reword it so that you minimize discards through the other actions that we're doing.

DR. DUVAL: Okay. I feel like we have had a robust discussion on this, and we're not going to bring anything additional to this conversation. I think there's plenty of direction that Myra can take back to the IPT on this one.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Is this supposed to be about the need as well, or are we just working on the purpose? I say that, because I see the word "compatible" in the need statement, and that word concerned me. I don't even know exactly what it means, but the word "compatible", I didn't like that in the need statement.

MS. BROUWER: I think the IPT was trying to address, for example, the minimum size limit change for gray triggerfish just off of east Florida, and our understanding was that the intent for that was to make regulations compatible, not just state and federal, but across Gulf and Atlantic, so that there was -- That's where we were coming from, as far as the compatibility, but, if that's not the intent, then we can certainly change it.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I agree that's one piece, but I didn't know that that's what they were referring to, and so the word "compatible" really threw me off, in trying to think about what the need was for the amendment.

DR. DUVAL: Maybe that's something that the IPT should consider. I feel like we've just been focusing on the purpose statement here and we haven't actually looked at the need, which is a little bit simpler, but perhaps we could include a bullet there about maybe either clarifying or rewording compatible regulations in the need. I think what we're trying to do is like promote angler understanding of the regulations and adherence to the regulations as well. Okay. Is there anything else? I hesitate to ask the question. **I think we would want a motion to approve the following items to include in the purpose and need statement.**

MS. MCCAWLEY: **So moved.**

DR. DUVAL: It's seconded by Zack. I don't think that I need to read all of those bullet points. **The motion is just to approve the following items to include in the purpose and need statement.** Is there any further discussion on this motion?

MR. BELL: I will just say that, any time you improve the public's ability to understand and abide by the regulations, it makes law enforcement's job a lot easier.

DR. DUVAL: Duly noted. Okay. **Is there any objection to this motion? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

MS. BROUWER: Okay, and so this is Action 1, as it was presented to you yesterday, and so this is under the modified approach, and I wanted to also make sure that you remember what you had, or still have, in the decision document for this amendment, and so let me bring that up. Recall that in June you gave us guidance to split Action 1 into three different actions, and so what we have in the decision document is a little bit confusing, because the old actions that you saw in June are very different than the new actions, because of this reshuffling and reorganizing, but we didn't want to leave that out, so that you would be able to recall the guidance that you provided to us in June.

This is what was there in June that you talked about, and you gave us the guidance to split it out into different actions, and all of that is captured in the decision document, and I am not going to go through all of that, but so then the IPT took that guidance and reworked Action 1, and so, currently, in the original version of the amendment, Action 1 would modify the species composition of the recreational aggregates.

We also included an alternative that would remove the recreational aggregate groupings that are in place in the South Atlantic region, because the IPT felt that was an appropriate alternative to analyze, and then here is where we had attempted to group things into the various deepwater species, shallow-water groupers, and other species aggregates. That is what is currently in the decision document.

As I pointed out yesterday in the decision document, those alternatives that I just showed you do not include addressing individuals, addressing species with individual bag limits, such as black sea bass, hogfish, or vermilion. It leaves all of those out, and we are only dealing with the existing aggregates and shuffling those around, whereas the modified approach does include species like vermilion and black sea bass, but, as you know, as you pointed out this morning, that would be under Action 4. There is a little bit of disconnect here, and it's going to be difficult to just take the existing alternatives that are in the decision document and move them over, but I wanted to make sure that you're clear on those differences.

Basically, I just took what was in the PowerPoint and put it in a Word document, so we could talk about it more easily, and so what we talked about yesterday for Action 1 would be to have a season, and we talked about removing the in-season closure, but it sounds like that is going to be a much more long-term sort of thing, and then the bag limits that were also in the PowerPoint.

DR. DUVAL: I think, if you scroll down a little bit, again, the committee guidance from last time was, for deepwater species, a May to August 31 season, which is currently what we have for snowy and blueline. A September 1 to December 31 season was also raised as an alternative, and I don't

think we provided any additional seasonal alternatives, in terms of the deepwater species that we were considering. Are there any others that folks would want to throw out?

I think, in terms of -- I will just make one comment on the season right now. For snowy and blueline, we have this May 1 through August 31 season, and it encompasses two MRIP waves, and, quite honestly, even though our accountability measures include an in-season closure, there is, realistically, no way to do an in-season closure for these species. I mean, we simply don't get the data in time, and so it's really a de facto no in-season closure, just the way the data streams work, and so I will just throw that out there.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I am confused already, partly because I thought that we would talk about the species that are in the aggregate first, and it looks like we're already on Action 2, which was the bag limits and size limits, and so what happened to the composition?

DR. DUVAL: I think that, and don't let me jump ahead of you, Myra, but I think that, in terms of the species composition, the existing things that you see, the existing alternatives and sub-alternatives that you see for a deepwater species aggregate that are in the decision document, would be pulled into that as sub-options.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay, and so, in other words, in the current document, it's Alternative 3, Sub-Alternative 3a, 3b, 3c, and those come in there as Action 1 under deepwater species aggregate, and is that right?

DR. DUVAL: That is my understanding, but I am looking to Myra for clarification.

MS. BROUWER: Yes, and, for the deepwater species, it is compatible, I guess, and I don't know what other word to use, but I just wanted to point out, if you go to the presentation -- We have these tables, where we show you what the total ACL is, and so, right now, the deepwater complex includes sand tilefish, which is not a deepwater species.

Unfortunately, for you to rearrange the species that are within a complex, you would need to do that through a plan amendment. It's not something that you can do through a regulatory amendment, but, as Michelle pointed out, you can modify the aggregates, but just bear in mind that you're not modifying the complexes, nor are you modifying the way the ACLs are going to continue to be tracked, and so that is staying the same way that it is now.

DR. DUVAL: Given that people had some concerns about I think that as an approach at this point, that's okay. I think we could take this step-wise, if we want to modify the complexes as how the ACLs are tracked, and we had heard from the public that sand tilefish should not be in any kind of deepwater aggregate and that it really should be included in with shallow-water species.

MS. BROUWER: Unfortunately -- So, if we go through and make these changes, sand tilefish would then be potentially in the aggregate with the shallow-water species, but it would continue to be a part of the deepwater complex, and so it would be tracked, for ACL purposes, with the deepwater species.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: I think we can have that discussion earlier in the document, once the IPT can develop that, and then I guess -- I mean, I don't want to add more issues for you to think

about, but, really, if you want to make some changes -- I think this is a really interesting approach, and I'm really curious to see how it evolves, and I will be obviously happy to help, but, if you want to make some changes, I wouldn't get so hung up on whether you can do it via the framework or a plan amendment, because, if it turns out to be a plan amendment, but it's where you want to go, then it's a plan amendment. That just means a little more comment period.

I know these have been framework amendments, but, if it turns out while you're going through this -- Really, it's a continuation of the visioning process, I think, and, if it turns out that you want to go somewhere else that's not allowed in the framework, then it just becomes a plan amendment, which means a little more comment period and all that sort of thing, and so that's just something for you to think about.

DR. DUVAL: Okay. So I think what we would be doing is pulling in, as Jessica noted, Alternative 3 and those sub-alternatives for a deepwater species aggregate.

MS. BROUWER: Those alternatives currently don't include wreckfish, but we are proposing -- This is how the deepwater species aggregate would be structured under the proposed approach, and so we would bring in wreckfish, and so we would have to modify Alternative 3 and its sub-alternatives a little bit.

DR. DUVAL: No, that absolutely makes sense.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I am okay with like what Monica said, if this ultimately becomes a plan amendment, so that we can get it right and just do this once, if there is some option in there about excluding sand tilefish.

DR. DUVAL: Okay. I think, if we want to provide that direction to the IPT, to include an alternative that does not include sand tilefish in the deepwater complex -- Okay, and so let's let Myra capture that. I think I just want to make sure that we include, and I don't know if we include in this that we're pulling in those alternatives under Action 1 and sub-alternatives, in terms of modifying those compositions.

MR. HAYMANS: Madam Chair, rather than excluding sand tilefish, wouldn't it be moving it to either the shallow-water species or shallow-water grouping, but, I mean, you don't want to exclude it.

MS. MCCAWLEY: We will exclude it from the deepwater.

MR. HAYMANS: Right. You want to move it to one of the shallow-water groupings.

DR. DUVAL: Right.

MR. HARTIG: You should probably move it to the species without bag limits, to be honest with you.

DR. DUVAL: There is a couple of different things going on here. There is where should sand tilefish be included for within an aggregate, like kind of with all the other species, not the deepwater species and not the shallow-water groupers, but the all other species, and then Myra's

question is where does it go for ACL tracking purposes? Is it just out there on its own, or is it included within a complex? Maybe we can ask for a little bit of IPT thought on that, because I don't think we're going to make that decision here.

MS. BROUWER: I think we had proposed including it with the shallow-water groupers, even though it is a tilefish, but, based on where it is caught, it seems to be mostly caught when folks are fishing for shallow-water groupers, and you all can correct me if it's that's wrong, but we were -- The attempt is to structure things the way the fishery happens.

MR. HARTIG: Well, I mean, it's caught in association, primarily, with a mixed snapper grouper complex fishery that occurs in south Florida. That animal doesn't occur much farther north than Jupiter that I know of.

DR. DUVAL: We get them once in a while.

MR. HARTIG: You do get them? Okay. Cool. I did not know that. Okay. Then wherever.

MR. BROWN: We do catch a large one up here every now and then, and it is in deep water, but we don't catch very many of them.

DR. DUVAL: So we have on the screen here -- I just want to draw people's attention to this committee guidance to modify alternatives as presented under Action 1, Alternative 3 and its sub-alternatives in the decision document to include wreckfish in the deepwater species aggregate and modify the composition of the deepwater complex to exclude sand tilefish and place in an appropriate shallow-water complex.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I now realize that Action 1 is kind of similar to the Action 1 that's in the document where you're just organizing the species. I thought that we were doing an action preceding every one of these complexes that would have the species at the beginning, and so I am less confused now. Thanks.

DR. DUVAL: So is it clear to everybody that Action 1 in this new organizational approach is the groupings, which is exactly the same as Action 1, and so we're simply moving those alternatives over? Okay. You will still have sub-alternatives to select from for what those groupings are. Okay. Do you want to do it as a motion?

MS. MCCAWLEY: **So moved.**

DR. DUVAL: **There is a motion by Jessica, and a second by Mark, to modify the alternatives as presented under Action 1, Alternative 3 and its sub-alternatives in the document to include wreckfish in the deepwater species aggregate and modify the composition of the deepwater complex to exclude sand tilefish and place it in an appropriate shallow-water complex.** Again, we will see this again in December to make any final tweaks or anything like that to those alternatives for the groupings. Okay. Can we move on to Action 2?

MS. BROUWER: Did we approve the motion?

DR. DUVAL: I'm sorry. Is there discussion on the motion? **Is there any objection to the motion? Seeing none, the motion stands approved.**

MS. BROUWER: The next bit of this action then, still dealing with the deepwater species aggregate, would be any changes or additional season alternatives that you would like us to bring back to you in December, any changes or additions to the bag limits, and -- Well, we'll start with those for now.

MR. HARTIG: I am a little bit concerned about the September through December, due to hurricane season. Three of those months fall within hurricane season, and so I'm a little bit concerned with the choice of those months. You could alternate. I mean, you could move it a month earlier. I am just looking for another alternative, so we don't get into NEPA problems.

DR. DUVAL: So April, May, June, July, that splits a couple of different MRIP waves.

MR. WAUGH: You may want to just, to make sure you have all the analyses -- The ones up there before were four-month seasons. I think it would be helpful to have a two-month season. That would give another alternative, but it would also give you a full range of seasons and bag limits to compare to your available ACL.

DR. DUVAL: Would the committee like to include an alternative for a two-month season? If so, what two months would you select?

MR. HARTIG: May and June.

DR. DUVAL: So including an alternative for May and June.

MR. BROWN: June and July.

DR. DUVAL: And an alternative for June and July.

MS. BECKWITH: The June and July, we get into the same problem of splitting the MRIP waves, and so I would rather see an option for May and June and a separate option to look at July and August.

DR. DUVAL: That's a good point. I mean, what we have up there right now, May to August and September to December, those encompass full MRIP waves, and so, Mark, would you consider July and August instead of June and July? Mark is nodding his head. Thanks, Anna.

MR. HAYMANS: Just out of curiosity, if you look at the May to August and then the September to December and then those options below that are really within May to August, there is nothing that overlaps there, and so you are either going to have an early season, kind of what you've got now, or late season, but no option for the middle, and so -- I hate adding more options, but a July through October, is that a reasonable timeframe that -- I know it's hurricane season, but it overlaps those two.

DR. DUVAL: I see what you're saying. I might stop there. Do you want all of those? Those are five different alternatives. I will just throw out there that my concern about September to

December is that it doesn't encompass any of the summer months, when people have off, when they're out fishing with their kids and things like that, and I know it was brought forward at the last meeting as a means of addressing concern about spawning. I will just throw that out there.

MR. HARTIG: I would remove the September 1 to December 31.

DR. DUVAL: **What we have up there now, and we're going to get a motion to include these, is May 1 to August 31, which is what we currently have for snowy and blueline, May to June, July to August, and then July through October, and so it encompasses a bit of summer and a bit of fall with that last one.** Is there someone willing to make a motion to include these alternatives?

MS. MCCAWLEY: **So moved.**

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

MS. BROUWER: The next one is the sub-action that would address the bag limit, and, like I said, these are the ones we had suggested in the PowerPoint. In the decision document, I believe you had -- For the deepwater species, you had here, under Alternative 3, two per person per day, two per person per day with existing restrictions on golden and snowy, three per person per day, three per person per day with existing restrictions on golden and snowy, and you had up to four per person per day.

DR. DUVAL: The four was removed, I think, or at least in my copy of the decision document, that is crossed out for the deepwater species.

MS. BROUWER: Okay.

DR. DUVAL: I think we removed that at the last council meeting.

MR. BROWN: Michelle, should we add three here, because that's what it said in the document.

DR. DUVAL: I think that's what we were just pointing out to include alternatives for, and so can we add -- Would the committee like to add an alternative for three per person per day?

MR. BROWN: That's a combination, right? That's still a combination of the deepwater species, right?

DR. DUVAL: That's for the deepwater species, including wreckfish.

MR. HARTIG: Three per person per day, I'm looking at blueline tilefish in North Carolina, and that's a lot of primarily what you're going to be catching, and that's what the bag limit is for those now, correct? Okay.

MS. MCCAWLEY: But we're purposefully excluding four? Because the alternative went two, three, and four before.

DR. DUVAL: Can you say that again? I am not understanding what you said.

MS. MCCAWLEY: The previous one in the document, it appears to have options for two per person, three per person, and four per person, and so that's what I was asking. Are we purposefully excluding four per person as an option?

DR. DUVAL: I think four per person is an awful lot for the deepwater species.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I'm just saying it's in the document now. Are we making a conscious decision to exclude it?

DR. DUVAL: It's up to the committee. I mean, that would be my recommendation. I just don't think it's realistic.

MR. HARTIG: I think that's appropriate.

MS. BROUWER: To clarify, these would be aggregate limits. Would you want to keep the existing restrictions on wreckfish, snowy, and golden, which is one per person for golden, one per vessel for snowy, and I believe it's also one per vessel for wreckfish.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Yes, I would like to keep that in the document.

DR. DUVAL: As one of the sub-alternatives?

MS. MCCAWLEY: Yes, to maintain those existing regulations for snowy and tilefish, yes.

DR. DUVAL: To maintain those existing restrictions. Are folks clear on this? We are including alternatives from one to three fish that would include sub-alternatives to maintain the existing restrictions for golden, snowy, and wreckfish. Okay. Could I please get a motion from the committee to adopt this?

MS. MCCAWLEY: **So moved.**

DR. DUVAL: It's seconded by Mark. **The motion reads: Include the following alternatives for a deepwater species aggregate bag limit, including sub-alternatives for each to maintain existing restrictions for golden tilefish, snowy grouper, and wreckfish.** Is there any discussion on this motion? **Is there any objection to this motion? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

MS. BROUWER: The next sub-action under this structure would remove the minimum size limits for queen snapper, silk snapper, and blackfin snapper, and so those would stay basically the same way they are, with just two alternatives, and then, under the gear restriction sub-action, this is where we would capture a possible requirement for a single-hook rig when fishing for deepwater species, and we would bring that into here with any other potential gear restrictions that you would like to see analyzed.

DR. DUVAL: Again, these are things that are included under Action 3 in the decision document, and I think folks would be looking at PDF page 14, and so do we want to -- I would think we

would want to maintain the removal of minimum size limits as it is and simply pull that into this document. Then, in terms of gear requirements, do folks want to maintain that? I am seeing some nods yes.

MR. BROWN: I just have a question. Right now, we have -- This is going to be pretty broad right here, and I know we've still got to refine it a lot, but, right now, we have a break at the 28<sup>th</sup> parallel for circle hooks. I am not -- It doesn't really -- I am not overjoyed either way. I mean, I could go either way on circle hooks, but what I'm saying is, if this is going to be inclusive for a broad area, is there any -- Do we need to consider that? Do we need to consider that regulation and that type of rigging, because of how we're structuring all of this?

DR. DUVAL: I think -- Go ahead, Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I like where he's going, but we're in deepwater species right now. I'm thinking yellowtail, and so, yes, I like where he's going, but I don't think we need it right here.

DR. DUVAL: Given that this is deepwater species, I think we'll tackle that question when we get to the next action, which is like the shallow-water groupers and the other shallower-water species, when talking about circle hooks. What I am hearing from the committee is that you guys want to go ahead and maintain the existing actions for removal of size limits on deepwater species and pull that into this document and also to maintain the alternative for use of single-hook rigs in there.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Would you like a motion to that effect?

MS. BROUWER: I think I'm good with the guidance.

DR. DUVAL: Myra says she thinks she's good with the guidance to retain what is in the decision document for both of those actions. Is the committee good with that? Okay. Moving on.

MS. BROUWER: The next item is the shallow-water groupers, and so, again, here we have sub-actions to establish a season, do the bag limits, and so on and so forth. For this one, I believe, in the decision document, it would be under Action 1, as far as the composition goes, and that would be Alternative 4. If you look at your presentation, we have a table. Basically, it would include the shallow-water grouper complex, which contains red hind, rock hind, coney, graysby, yellowfin grouper, and yellowmouth grouper, and then we would add scamp, gag, black grouper, and red grouper, and that would constitute your shallow-water grouper aggregate.

I think here we would just need to -- The IPT would probably need to regroup and come up with an appropriate range of alternatives, so that you end up with something that would allow you to establish that aggregate, and I would suggest that you let the IPT get our brains together and figure out how to best accomplish that.

We would dispense with that, and then we would need your guidance here for the season. This is where we could potentially bring in some of the alternatives under the existing Action 4, I believe it is in the decision document, where you wanted to have potential specific seasonal restrictions for black grouper off of Florida and for red grouper off of the Carolinas and so on and so forth.

DR. DUVAL: I think, first, we would want to include, in that document right there, committee guidance to allow the IPT to develop alternatives for the shallow-water grouper species composition to meet our necessary requirements.

While Myra is getting that up on the screen, then the next thing we will tackle is the season and the shallow-water grouper spawning closure, and so, right now, in what was presented yesterday, there were a couple of alternatives for consideration. Our existing open season is May 1 to December 31, and so obviously that would be included in there.

Another suggestion that the committee can consider maintaining in there is simply establishing a May 1 to October 31 season for all of these shallow-water grouper species, and then we have those alternatives, which are really captured under -- It's PDF page 17, and so the IPT recommendations, based on the discussions that we had previously, and those are Alternatives 2, 3, and 4, and so we were looking at maintaining the January 1 through April 30 closure north of 28 degrees for all species except -- Alternative 2 is simply excluding black grouper.

MR. BROWN: Where is 28?

DR. DUVAL: Approximately off of Palm Bay, Florida. I guess I am looking over to the Florida side of the table here, to see which of these alternatives you would like brought into this.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I would like Alternatives 2, 3, and 4.

DR. DUVAL: Are there any of those sub-alternatives that could be eliminated?

MS. MCCAWLEY: I am not ready to say that at this time. Sorry.

DR. DUVAL: Just to clarify for folks, the difference between Alternatives 2 and 3 is really Alternative 2 would modify the shallow-water grouper for everything except black grouper south of 28 degrees, and then Alternative 3 specifically addresses black grouper and when harvest would be prohibited. I just wanted to make sure that folks understand that. Then Alternative 4 is red grouper.

I think we would probably be looking for a motion from the committee to include alternatives to consider the following seasons for the shallow-water grouper aggregate, and so this includes Alternatives 2, 3, and 4 from I think it's Action 4 from the decision document. I guess the only question I have for the committee is do you want to maintain -- We have these two alternatives. May 1 to December 31 is really -- That's status quo, and so that's always going to be an alternative in there. Do you want to include an alternative that allows for a May 1 through October 31 season for anything in this complex? If yes, say yes. If no, say no. Otherwise, I'm going to start going around the table to get a little bit of input on this.

MS. MCCAWLEY: No.

DR. DUVAL: I am hearing no. Okay. That would eliminate one alternative for analysis. Thank you. Okay. So is someone willing to make this motion?

MS. MCCAWLEY: **I move that we include alternatives to consider the following seasons for the shallow-water grouper aggregate and include Alternatives 2, 3, and 4 from the decision document.**

DR. DUVAL: Is there a second to that? Second by Chester. Is there further discussion? **Is there any opposition to this motion? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

MS. BROUWER: The following sub-action would specify the aggregate bag limit for this group of species, and what we had in the PowerPoint yesterday was one per person per day or two per person per day. In the decision document, I believe you had -- This would be under Action 2.

DR. DUVAL: That is PDF page -- It starts at the bottom of PDF page 11. I think the alternatives that are in that are two, three, and four right now, with existing restrictions on gag and black. Do you want to include options for one, two, three, and four or one, two, and three, or two, three, and four? Do you want to maintain existing restrictions?

MS. MCCAWLEY: I would like to include options for two, three, and four and options for maintaining existing restrictions on gag and black.

DR. DUVAL: So eliminate one per person per day. I am seeing nods around the table. Okay.

MR. PHILLIPS: Shallow-water groupers are going to have graysby and coney and things like that in it. Do you think we're going to have any issue with high-grading if you catch that second big grouper and you've already got a graysby in the box? I am concerned about the possibility of high-grading when you've got such great big differences between the fish.

MR. HARTIG: Charlie, that's why you had three and four on there, to me, to cover those situations where you catch a graysby or a coney or a hind or whatever.

DR. DUVAL: **Okay, and so I would be looking for a motion from the committee to include the following alternatives for the aggregate bag limits for the shallow-water aggregate.**

MR. BROWN: **I would like to make that motion to include these sub-alternatives in this motion.**

DR. DUVAL: There is a motion by Mark, and it's seconded by Jessica. Is there further discussion on this? **Is there any opposition to this motion? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

This is where we get into size limits, and so, in the decision document, we have a couple of actions to modify the minimum size limit for black sea bass and gray triggerfish. I'm assuming that we would like to pull those actions into this, or pull those as alternatives into this, right?

MS. BROUWER: This action deals with the shallow-water groupers.

DR. DUVAL: Right. My bad.

MS. BROUWER: So I wasn't sure if you were interested in considering changes to minimum size limits, and so, currently, there is a minimum size limit for black and gag of twenty-four inches.

Red, scamp, yellowmouth, and yellowfin have a twenty-inch minimum size limit, and there is none specified for the rest of the species that would be in this aggregate.

DR. DUVAL: I am thinking no. I was jumping ahead to the other species. That shows you how much I am ready to move on, and so I am hearing that we don't want to consider any size limit changes for the shallow-water groupers. Okay. So then we'll get that committee guidance up there, and then I think we would jump into consideration of gear restrictions, and this is where you might get into consideration of circle hooks.

MS. BROUWER: Just for completion, I assume that you do not want to consider any type of gear restrictions for this grouping?

DR. DUVAL: I think this is what Mark was addressing, was we've had a lot of discussion about the use of circle hooks north and south of 28 degrees latitude. We had conversations about this during the South Florida Committee meetings, and I think, if the committee wishes to consider this, and these are also items that are included in Amendment 46 right now, is my recollection, and so I don't know if folks want to -- We could pull some of that into here.

We're going to see Amendment 46 in December, and we will also see this again in December. It might be my suggestion that the committee might want to wait until we have both of those documents side-by-side and then make a decision on where we would want to place those, but I don't know. Myra, do you have any input on this?

MR. BROWN: We're just making a recommendation anyway, right?

DR. DUVAL: All I'm laying out is where these types of actions exist right now, and so consideration of use of circle hooks and modification of use of circle hooks are in Amendment 46.

MR. BROWN: We get a lot of feedback from different fishermen that the circle hooks are not really improving anything with discards or anything, and then we hear a lot from different areas to where it would harm their fishery if they used them south of 28, and so I just think it would be better just to go ahead and make it uniform across the whole region and just do away with that requirement.

DR. DUVAL: Are you saying do away with the requirement to use circle hooks?

MR. BROWN: Yes, because it's kind of hard to enforce anyway, you know. I mean, it's a difficult situation with that, and also I don't see that it adds that much back to our assessment or anything. We get a very small credit for it, and so I just think that it's probably something that we should remove.

MR. HAYMANS: I just wanted to ask -- With us rolling back 26 a little bit, how does that match up with 46 as far as a proposed finish line? I mean, we're now into late 2018, I guess, on this one, right, and so where does 46 line up with that? Only in that I would like to see most of these regulations come online fairly close together.

MS. BROUWER: I think the timing of development would be similar, and so we would be looking, potentially, at public hearings in the spring. Then Amendment 46 is a plan amendment

though, and so, as far as when things would be implemented, there would be potentially a delay there, because of the extended comment periods, but it would be on a similar track.

MR. HAYMANS: This could become a plan amendment, we heard this morning, and I would rather keep all the gear stuff over in 46, at least the circle hook portion of it.

MR. BREWER: I disagree vehemently with my esteemed colleague, Captain Brown. The only pushback that I have heard with regard to the use of circle hooks has been with the commercial yellowtail folks down in the Keys. Otherwise, there is, I think, a fairly broad consensus that circle hooks do in fact decrease somewhat mortality on bycatch.

I know that I am a big believer in them, and, for the West Palm Beach Fishing Club, any tournament we have, you're required to use them, and so I would like to go with the Chairperson's suggestion that we look at this in December, when we can have both of these things side-by-side, and decide what we want to do. I think that makes plenty of sense, and I would love to see circle hooks required across the board when you're bottom fishing, just the way we require them now in most of your HMS species across the board.

MR. PHILLIPS: To Mark's point, they are pretty much unenforceable, and I am no fan of having regulations that our law enforcement can't enforce, and circle hooks probably work fine on things other than yellowtail. I don't think they work very well on vermilion, and so I am inclined, at some point, to make some changes. They work well in some places, but it's not enforceable, and so why do you give them a regulation that people get used to just following whatever they feel like they need to follow for whatever fishery they're doing? I am inclined to not use them, myself, but, not necessarily here, but wherever it's the appropriate vehicle.

DR. DUVAL: We're not going to get into an extended debate about the use or not use of circle hooks here today. I did have a couple of other folks that wanted to make comments, but I am going to go ahead and say that my recommendation is that we debate this in December, when we're going to have both of these documents in front of us, and all of that kind of gear stuff is in 46 right now. If the committee wishes to make a different decision about where to put those actions, we can do that then.

MR. BOWEN: I will leave this debate for the future, but snapper grouper fishing with circle hooks has increased discard mortality on my vessel.

MR. BELL: We can wait until December, but enforceability is an issue for me, and particularly with some species where we've got a lot of folks that target spadefish and issues with that, but we can talk about it in December.

DR. DUVAL: Okay, and so Myra is getting our guidance up on the screen here that we will discuss gear restrictions in December, once the Amendment 46 actions and alternatives have been developed. They are somewhat developed right now. I think that probably finishes the shallow-water grouper stuff, and then we get to sort of the all the other species.

I think this was where, for all the rest of these species, and I think, Myra, you indicated that the way this new structure was being proposed, this includes things like black sea bass and vermilion snapper, for which we have existing bag limits, correct?

MS. BROUWER: Correct, and so, in your PowerPoint, in the presentation, there is a table that shows you what would be included in here, and so we would be looking at including the species that are currently in the jacks complex, those in the snappers complex, the grunts complex, and the porgies complex, in addition to sand tilefish, once we move it, yellowtail snapper, mutton, spadefish, bar jack, black sea bass, gray triggerfish, greater amberjack, the two hogfish stocks, red porgy, and vermilion. Those are all your other shallow-water species.

DR. DUVAL: I think what we've heard from folks around the table is a reluctance to consider like seasons for these species right now. Right now, our season is the calendar year. I would just draw folks' attention to the 2016 landings and the proportion of the annual catch limits for some of those species for which those have been met, and so, last year, the porgies closed. Did we close greater amberjack recreationally? I think it just went over. Either Jack or Rick, did we close recreational harvest of greater amberjack? The jacks and the porgies was what I remembered. Okay.

I think, right now, my sense, from the committee's comments earlier, is that we're simply going to maintain a calendar year for all of these other species. I think the one thing that I would just note is that, for black sea bass right now, our accountability measure is the season, and so the accountability measure is the season starts April 1, and the Regional Office projects how long the season is going to last, and so the start date and the potential end date for the fishery are published in a Fishery Bulletin prior to the start of the fishing year.

For black sea bass, things are slightly different. We have an April 1 start date to the fishing year, and so I'm assuming that we would want to maintain that, because that is our accountability measure at this point. I am seeing nods around the table on that one.

MS. BROUWER: There is also a season for hogfish that was just implemented. That's from May through October for the Florida portion of hogfish, and so, just to clarify, are you then okay with moving forward with establishing these other shallow-water species aggregates to include species like black sea bass and vermilion into that aggregate? The next thing, after we make that decision, is do you want to then consider including those species in the aggregate and retaining the existing bag limits or making modifications to that?

DR. DUVAL: I think -- I'm just going to go out on a limb here and say, based on some of the other discussions that we've had, my sense is that we would want to retain the existing bag limits that we have for some of those species, like black sea bass and like vermilion snapper, and so we've got five fish on vermilion, and we've got seven fish on black sea bass, and so we could -- Similar to what we did for the shallow-water groupers, we could include alternatives for bag limits that have sub-alternatives that maintain existing bag limits for I think sea bass, vermilion, greater amberjack. It's up to the committee, but I am just trying to name off species for which I know that there are different bag limits.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I think my bottom line is I don't want to create this other category that has this conglomerate of species in it where we're trying to track this overall ACL or anything. Is that what you're asking?

DR. DUVAL: The ACLs don't change. The way things are right now, we have a snapper bag limit, and we have "an everything" else bag limit, but then we have complexes against which those ACLs are tracked. My sense, from what folks were saying yesterday, is you don't want to change the way the ACLs are tracked. Those complexes are those complexes. What we were interested in looking at, and this was the committee's guidance from June, was that you did want to consider changes to those other aggregate bag limits.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Yes.

DR. DUVAL: So this is another way of approaching that. We're not trying to mush together all of the annual catch limits.

MR. BROWN: Like you said, vermilion is like our most popular species off of Charleston, and sometimes that's all you're going to catch, and so the ten-fish limit is very important for a lot of fishermen, for-hire and the recreational, because that is your target species.

DR. DUVAL: The bag limit on vermilion is five and not ten.

MR. BROWN: Excuse me. I meant five.

DR. DUVAL: Myra is trying to get some wording up on the screen here, I think to reflect what's been said around the table, to develop alternatives to establish an other shallow-water species aggregate to include/exclude species outside the existing aggregates and include alternatives to retain existing bag limits.

MR. HARTIG: One of the problems that I see with yellowtail is, I mean, in the northern climes, it's vermilion that drives the snapper fishery. In the southern tropical area, it's yellowtail, and we have a ten-fish bag limit for yellowtail in the snapper aggregate.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Where I was kind of going here with my question is -- Let me just try to say it. We have talked about this before, and, when this went out before, the public said no way on vermilion, and we also took comment, I think when we were in North Carolina, where the public said do not put vermilion in here, and so I'm just trying to remind us of those types of things.

DR. DUVAL: I think that's why this wording says include/exclude with a question mark.

MS. BROUWER: Remember that, in June, you also -- Somebody suggested maybe just having a twenty-fish aggregate of all snapper grouper species, and so there is still some clarification that we need.

DR. DUVAL: Right, and so that was the alternative that Mark brought up at the last meeting, was a twenty-fish limit, period, that includes all the existing bag limits that we had, and so that included your five vermilion and your seven sea bass and your ten other snappers and everything like that.

MR. BROWN: I apologize for getting confused a minute ago, but that's kind of -- I was kind of going in that direction with my thought, is that, when I saw the one to five -- I was thinking, well, I know that we recommended more than that back in June, but I think that the twenty-fish was adequate, considering the way the limits are.

DR. DUVAL: This is a big decision. Do you want to establish -- Do you want to develop alternatives to establish another shallow-water species aggregate that excludes vermilion, sea bass, red porgy, greater amberjack, mutton -- Mutton has its own thing within the aggregate and hogfish. I think that's it. That's, what, seven species? There is your list of species again.

I think, in the decision document, this is actually -- I think it's Action 2, Alternative 5, and that's to look at those bag limits for the other species aggregate, and we had quite a bit of conversation, and so to specify within the twenty-fish aggregate where ten fish could be snappers and ten could be other species, maintaining those existing restrictions on mutton, and twenty fish, where no more than ten can be gray triggerfish, no more than ten could be spadefish, or one where no more than ten fish of any one species.

MR. PHILLIPS: It's scary when I am trying to think and talk at the same time, but I am thinking that we're probably going to need to at least have it in there as alternatives, because we're trying to make it simple, but, basically, we are going to have sub-bag limits inside of a big bag limit, aggregate bag limit, but I don't know how we're going to get around it and still -- I don't know how we're going to get around it.

DR. DUVAL: I think there is probably two ways forward here. We can sort of move the Alternative 5 and its sub-alternatives into this action and also include Alternative 2, which was what Mark had referenced, establish a twenty-fish per person maximum recreational bag limit that includes all other snapper grouper species, but existing bag limits would continue to apply, and so that captures all the changes that we made at the last meeting.

The big decision is does this other shallow-water species include everything except those seven species for which we have existing bag limits, or does it also include those species and we say those existing bag limits continue to apply? Those are sort of two paths forward that I see, and I don't know how the committee feels.

MS. BECKWITH: I have a question. When you're referring to the twenty, kind of including everything, we're not talking about the two fish or three grouper, shallow-water grouper, or the deepwater. Those will be sort of independent, and so, when we're talking about a twenty-fish maximum, we're really referring to potentially this other grouping?

DR. DUVAL: I think when Mark originally proposed that alternative, it did include the shallow-water grouper species.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay, and so I guess, the way I am envisioning this, is that that shallow-water grouper and the deepwater grouper, they are sort of independent, and then we have this other category, and I am okay with a twenty-fish total for this other category, and I continue to feel like the least amount of restrictions possible or sub-bag limits as possible in there would be best, but even when we consider the sub-bag limits, if you started to simplify the sub-bag limits and say, okay, well, everything is either going to be five, seven, or ten, something where it's sort of easy for the public to remember -- If the maximum is twenty and you get ten vermilion and ten whatever, but every other bag limit within it is a maximum of five, just thinking something along those lines, where somebody doesn't have to go back and reference what the rule is, but I do think that that twenty should be independent of the deepwater and the shallow-water that we're establishing

separately, and I also don't love the terminology that we're using of the other shallow-water grouper complex. We've got to come up with a different name for that.

DR. DUVAL: It's not other shallow-water grouper. It's just other shallow-water species. We have established deepwater species, and we've established shallow-water grouper, and so this is everything else. Why don't we go ahead and take about a ten-minute break? Everybody can get up and stretch their legs, and then we'll come back and make a decision on this. Thanks.

(Whereupon, a recess was taken.)

DR. DUVAL: Let's go ahead and come back around the table. That was a very generous ten-minute break that turned into two times ten. In talking with Myra about how we could try to skin this cat here, I think probably the only way to do this would be to develop alternatives that establishes sort of another shallow-water species aggregate, where one alternative includes the species outside the existing aggregate, and so the black sea bass, the vermilion, et cetera, which is the approach as it was presented yesterday, and then a different alternative that excludes all of those species, and so it excludes black sea bass, it excludes vermilion, and it excludes amberjack, red porgy, mutton, hogfish, the one for which we have established existing bag limits, and then it establishes a twenty-fish aggregate, and then we did have sub-alternatives from the decision document that we could direct the IPT to work those in.

For example, we had noted that we wanted to ensure that, if we maintain a twenty-fish aggregate, that no more than ten snappers are allowed within those twenty, and I think no more than ten would be gray triggerfish, that no more than ten could be spadefish, and that no more than ten could be any other species, and so those were like the sub-alternatives that we developed before, but this is really the only way that I see for us to get out of this little hellhole that we're spinning ourselves into of do we include these species for which we have established bag limits or do we exclude them from this. Including them, in some respects, simplifies things, but I understand that folks are not necessarily willing to walk down that road unless they can see something else.

The other issue is the alternative that Mark had brought forward at the last meeting, which was to establish just an overall twenty-fish limit that included all existing bag limits, as a simplification, and, in speaking with Mark, his original intent was that that twenty-fish limit would not include deepwater species.

I think, if you want to do that, that's actually going to have to be a separate action, because it just doesn't fit within any of the work that we have done here today. You would have to include it as a separate action, which we can do. I am just laying out how it would have to be done. Included as a separate action to establish a twenty-fish per person maximum recreational bag limit, including all snapper grouper species, deepwater, shallow-water, et cetera, with existing bag limits. There would be no changes to existing bag limits, and then you could have another alternative, for NEPA purposes, that would exclude the deepwater species from that. That is how I am seeing things, as a way to move forward.

MR. PHILLIPS: If you want to set it up that way, could you also -- If you are going to have an option to exclude the deepwater species, I guess you could also put in an option to exclude shallow-water grouper species, and then you've got your other twenty-fish other species aggregate, with the bag limits of the --

DR. DUVAL: That's what's on the screen right now, and so, the way that we talked about reorganizing this and the way that we've walked through this document today is establish a deepwater complex, establish a shallow-water grouper complex, and then deal with all the other species. What I am saying is you could deal with all the other species in one of two ways.

You could maintain the existing single species bag limits that we have for all of those seven species that we've mentioned and then establish a different twenty-fish aggregate that includes those options that we discussed at the last committee meeting, with some limitations on triggerfish, spadefish, snappers, et cetera, and then Mark's option, which would actually need to be a separate action, because it's different than anything else. What Mark had proposed was maintain all the existing bag limits and just set a twenty-fish cap on everything, and you can either set that twenty-fish cap such that it includes deepwater species with their existing limits or excludes them, and that would be a separate action.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I hate to keep harping on what you're explaining, but, the two things that you just explained, one of those is different, and so it's almost like a third one, because Mark's option is not up there, right?

DR. DUVAL: Mark's option is not up there, and what I'm saying is that, because it doesn't fit within anything that we've done, it would have to be its own separate action. It would be like a separate action with a couple of sub-alternatives.

MR. BROWN: Do you need a motion to direct staff to include that?

DR. DUVAL: I want to make sure that everybody understands and is clear on these different approaches that I am proposing to get us off the dime here.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I actually think that's Mark's action is easier to talk about and dispense with, and I am fine with adding that as an action, if he wants to make a motion, and then I think maybe we come back to this, and that might simplify this a little bit more.

DR. DUVAL: I think we would just need a motion from the committee to direct staff to develop an action to establish a twenty fish per person maximum recreational daily bag limit that would maintain all existing individual bag limits with sub-alternatives to: 1)include deepwater species; and 2)exclude deepwater species.

I want to make sure that people understand this, and so this action wouldn't change any of the individual species bag limits or aggregate bag limits that we have right now. What this action would do is establish a twenty-fish maximum daily recreational bag limit, and it would just have a couple of sub-alternatives that includes the deepwater species in that twenty-fish maximum and one that excludes them.

MS. MCCAWLEY: It's the smorgasbord bag limit.

MR. BROWN: Just a little rationale, too. We've had porgies and some other fish close early in the past couple of years, and I think that this would be a benefit, too, to where you had the other

species that were included with that twenty-fish bag limit, and that would give a little bit of a buffer to those other species that have been closing early.

DR. DUVAL: Is there someone willing to make this motion?

MR. BROWN: **I would like to make the motion to direct staff to add an action to establish a twenty fish per person maximum recreational daily bag limit that would maintain all existing individual and aggregate bag limits with sub-alternatives to include deepwater species and exclude deepwater species.**

DR. DUVAL: Is there a second to that motion? Second by Jessica. Is there discussion?

MR. PHILLIPS: So the twenty fish is going to include the grouper, the b-liners, the pinkies, everything, everything probably except deepwater? Okay. I just --

DR. DUVAL: **Is there any opposition to this motion? Seeing none, this motion stands approved.**

Now, if we can come back to the other shallow-water species, again, I was proposing sort of a two-prong approach, because I think we've heard some -- We have heard opposing public comments, I guess I would say, to both include all of the other species, black sea bass and b-liners and amberjack and red porgy, as well as exclude those species, and so I think if we can have a couple of sub-alternatives, one that includes those and one that excludes those, and then we can allow the IPT to work up sub-alternatives that would address some of those individual species that we were concerned about that you saw in the decision document under Alternative 5 that focused on only ten snappers, only ten triggers, only ten of any one species, that sort of thing.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Those options that you just listed, would they fall under both one and two or one of those? Which one of those do they come under?

DR. DUVAL: **I think we would give the IPT direction to come under both, but I want to make sure that we're not sitting here wordsmithing what those exactly look like, but we can provide that direction to them to include sub-alternatives that would address Alternative 5 from the decision document.**

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. Do you need a motion to do this?

DR. DUVAL: Yes, please.

MS. MCCAWLEY: **So moved.**

DR. DUVAL: Jessica is making the motion that is being put up on the screen, and Charlie has seconded it. Is there discussion?

MS. MCCAWLEY: I feel like we've already had a lot of discussion on this, and so this is what we were talking about prior to the break, and this is just breaking it down into two distinct paths that can be analyzed in the document and brought back to look at in December.

DR. DUVAL: Okay. Myra, are you clear? I just want to make sure that you're clear on the committee's intent.

MS. BROUWER: Yes.

DR. DUVAL: **Is there any opposition to this motion? Seeing none, that motion passes.**

I feel like we have sort of dispensed with discussion of a season on these species for now. My sense is that we didn't want to consider a season for these other fish, and then I think we have beat bag limits to death, and we have addressed that in these sub-alternatives. Really, the only remaining thing is size limits, and so we had two previous actions that we were considering to reduce both the black sea bass and the minimum size limit in gray triggerfish off the EEZ on the east coast of Florida, and I'm assuming that we would want to maintain those in here? I am hearing yes.

MS. BROUWER: Here, I need to remind you that, back in June, we explained that we were not going to be able to analyze reducing the minimum size limit for black sea bass, because of the delay in the stock assessment, and so we just cannot -- We don't have the information that is needed to conduct that analysis right now, and so, if you choose to retain this action, we would need to wait for those data to conduct the analysis before you can select a preferred, and, of course, that is tied to the SEDAR schedule for the black sea bass assessment.

DR. DUVAL: So we're not going to see black sea bass until June, I think, of next year, because it will go to the SSC in April. Do you still want to keep this action in here right now?

MS. MCCAWLEY: I am okay with removing black sea bass, but I thought that Doug was one of the ones that wanted to look at the smaller minimum size limit.

DR. MCGOVERN: I would be good with taking black sea bass out, because, if you reduce the size limit and the stock assessment comes back and tells you the stock is in worse shape, then we could have short seasons for black sea bass again, and so I think just wait until the assessment is done before dealing with any kind of changes with the minimum size limit.

MR. BOWEN: I made this motion at the last meeting and didn't even get a second, but I am going to try it again. **I make the motion that we remove that out of this document.**

DR. DUVAL: It's seconded by Jack, and so motion by Zack and seconded by Jack to remove the action to reduce the black sea bass minimum size limit. Is there discussion?

MR. PHILLIPS: The stock assessment is not here, but we still had that presentation that, if you stayed with a thirteen-inch size limit, you had so many discards that your discard mortality -- You didn't really help yourself, if I remember the presentation, other than having a lower size limit, and you kept more fish and then you were done. It was kind of a wash, if I remember, or you may even be in worse shape, having the large size limit, and I don't know that that's going to change with the new assessment.

DR. DUVAL: The presentation that we had received previously was that the majority of the discards were because the fish were below the minimum size limit and not because they were over

a bag limit or anything like that. I do have a lot of concern, because I know that -- I am pretty certain the discard mortality on black sea bass is going to go up, particularly in the summer months, based on new information.

MR. BOWEN: I also think that presentation was previous to the presentation that we have had with the CPUE in a downward spiral for sea bass. The stock, from what I can tell, is in trouble, and so I wouldn't want to take those twelve-inch fish, or twelve-and-a-half-inch fish, out of the biomass.

DR. DUVAL: I guess my point is that you're killing them anyway, and so is there any other discussion on this motion?

MR. BREWER: How about defer pending the stock assessment? I mean, this is a --

MS. BROUWER: Isn't that the same thing?

MR. BREWER: It's really the same thing. You're right. It sounds different, but it's really not. Never mind.

DR. DUVAL: I think you all could indicate, if this motion passes, that your intent would be to pick this back up once we get the stock assessment back, and so is there any further discussion? **Could I please see a show of hands of those in favor of the motion, eleven; any opposed, one opposed. The motion passes.**

I am assuming that we would like to maintain the action to reduce the minimum size limit of gray triggerfish?

MS. MCCAWLEY: Yes, please. This would match what we've done in state waters.

DR. DUVAL: All right.

MS. BROUWER: Here you have -- I just put what minimum size limits are currently in place for all the other species that would be in this aggregate, in case you wanted to revisit any of those.

DR. DUVAL: Since there are several of those that we have just battled, I don't think there is -- I don't have any desire to walk down that road, but I don't know about anybody else. I am seeing heads shake around the table no. Okay.

Now we get into gear restrictions, and I think, based on our previous conversation, my recommendation is that we wait until we have Amendment 46, which contains all the gear restriction stuff, in front of us in December, and we can have a discussion about that then. Okay.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Except the powerhead item that's --

DR. DUVAL: That's a totally separate item, yes.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay.

MS. BROUWER: This is the lone action that is out on its own, and, here, I believe it was an action that was added kind of at the end of the committee meeting, or maybe we were moving on to something else, and the IPT wanted a little bit more rationale for including it, and we're assuming that part of the rationale is to simplify regulations. We talked a little bit, yesterday, about how it was important to have things that are compatible, and so if we could just get a little bit more discussion on the record on the rationale for including this action, that would be great.

MR. BELL: It was all about basically for consistency among all the states, and we went -- Yesterday, we discussed how it came to be, which was sort of before my time, but that the original intent for the whole powerhead thing had to do with worrying about extremely heavy fishing on artificial reefs. That's what started the whole discussion, and then, of course, they are a restricted gear on SMZs, artificial reefs for us, and that was the original intent. The intent kind of spread into other areas, but we have always been inconsistent with the other states.

Given that we operate -- This was in the days before ACLs and all, and so now, given the full suite of regulations we have, there is really no reason, and then I have received repeated requests from industry folks to just make us like the other states and have a level playing field across the board on the commercial, but, given how we manage fisheries now, and given that they still are regulated on the artificial reefs, on our SMZ artificial reefs, there is just no need to be inconsistent, and so it's a simplification for consistency.

MR. HARTIG: To me, I have heard discussion that this -- On the other side of the coin, that maybe we should prohibit powerheads in the entire EEZ, and so I think this would get out of hand in this amendment. I think people would focus on this, some people particularly, if we continued to put options that I would like to put in here to consider it. **I would favor, and make a motion, to remove the prohibition on powerheads in the EEZ off of South Carolina at this time.**

MR. BELL: The reason for adding it here is we were just looking for the appropriate mechanism to put it in somewhere. It doesn't have to be married to this, but it just seemed, timing-wise, sort of an available opportunity and it made sense to add it at that point, which is why I brought it up when I brought it up.

MR. HAYMANS: That was to my point. I would like to see it in 46 rather than here. I mean, we've got a nice, clean document and then this, and I would rather see it in 46.

MR. BELL: I have no problem with that. If we're dealing with gear restrictions in 46, if that's a more appropriate mechanism and it keeps this cleaner, that's just fine, but just as long as we address it is all I'm saying.

DR. DUVAL: Myra, would you -- I guess we would just need a motion to move this action to Amendment 46, if that's the will of the committee.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I feel like Ben already made the motion. It just didn't say amendment 46. It just said to remove this action from this amendment.

DR. DUVAL: The action is already in the document. We put it in there at the last meeting. This action is already in Regulatory Amendment 26.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I believe that Ben's motion was to remove it. A point of order. That's what I'm saying. He made a motion to remove it from this document.

DR. DUVAL: It wasn't clear to me that that was a motion. I apologize.

MR. CONKLIN: I thought Ben's motion was to remove it off of South Carolina at this time and not out of the document.

DR. DUVAL: Ben, how about you speak to what your motion is, instead of letting everybody else speak for you?

MR. HARTIG: **My motion was to remove this action from the Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 26. That's what it was, and I have no problem with adding the verbiage of "and revisit in the appropriate amendment, what 46? I have no problem with that, and I would add that to the motion.**

DR. DUVAL: Is there a second to this motion? It's seconded by Charlie. **The motion is remove the action on powerheads from Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 26 and move to Amendment 46.** Is there discussion?

MR. BOWEN: I am not necessarily against the motion, but it's of my opinion that I'm not sure that Amendment 46 is where it needs to go. I mean, that, to me -- Of course, I have yet to see an Amendment 46 document, but, from the conversation around the table that we've had for the last two meetings, it seems like that was more going to be about best fishing practices and ways to lower discard mortality, and so, again, I'm not necessarily against the motion, but I just don't think Amendment 46 is where it needs to go.

MR. BELL: I am not that married to where it goes, but, related to discard mortality, powerheads -- I mean, you see the fish, and you shoot the fish. If it's not the fish you want to shoot, you don't shoot it, but you don't have to worry about discards. I mean, talk about improving discard mortality. It actually helps, in terms of worrying about things like discard mortality.

MR. BOWEN: But to your point, Mel, just because you shoot it, it don't mean that you kill it immediately.

DR. DUVAL: No, you just mortally wound it and let it die later, right? Okay. I say that we just vote this motion up or down, and, if when we see Amendment 46 in December, if we decide there is a different vehicle that it needs to go to -- It's really this is an equity issue that Mel is trying to address. This is not a prohibition that's off any of the other states right now. South Carolina's fishermen have come forward, at several public comments, public hearings, and asked why they have been singled out for this, and so I think it behooves us to address it. **Could I please see a show of hands of those in favor of the motion, nine in favor; those opposed, two opposed. The motion passes.**

That completes our work on Regulatory Amendment 26 for now, and so we'll see this again in December.

MR. BREWER: I am not terribly opposed, quite frankly, to the motion that just passed, but the reason I voted against it is, when this thing goes to Amendment 46, I would like to see an alternative or consideration of outlawing recreational use of powerheads. It's just a philosophical thing, probably, with me, but I just do not consider that to be recreational gear, any more than a gillnet or a longline. It's a commercial gear. I mean, you can sit down there and you can pop a bunch of fish with powerheads, and I just -- To me, it just leads towards commercial-type harvest, and, philosophically, I am opposed to it.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Madam Chair, technically, there were three opposed to that last vote.

DR. DUVAL: I saw Chester with his hand up, and Anna said that she was opposed to it.

MS. MCCAWLEY: And Zack.

DR. DUVAL: Okay. You must have raised your hand late. **Let the record stand corrected that there were three opposed.** Just please raise your hand higher when we're taking these votes and do it immediately. Thank you. Okay. So we're done with Regulatory Amendment 26. The next item on our agenda is Regulatory Amendment 27. Are you going to start with the presentation?

MS. BROUWER: Yes, and so, similar to what we are doing for other amendments, to orient you and make sure we're all on the same page, we put together these very short presentations, sort of an overview of what we're going to be talking about, and so this does track the material that is in your decision document.

To remind you what you did in June, again you reviewed actions and alternatives for this amendment and some preliminary analyses. The amendment was not approved for public hearings, and you gave us guidance to modify some of the actions and alternatives, and, again, we added a new action addressing the prohibition on commercial use of powerheads in the EEZ off of South Carolina.

The timing that you saw in June is up on the screen right now. At this meeting, you are supposed to review and finalize the actions and alternatives and the purpose and need. In December, you will have analyses to look through and select your preferreds and approve for public hearings. We would conduct those public hearings, like we normally do, at the end of January or early February of 2018. In March, you would review those public comments and make whatever changes are needed to the document and approve all the actions. Then, in June, you would review and approve it for formal review.

This is where we are on this amendment, and, to get that accomplished, what we need to do at this meeting, like I just said, is revise the purpose and need, modify it as you wish and approve it, review what the IPT is recommending, in terms of edits and organizing the document, consider removing actions and alternatives, as needed, and finalize the actions and the alternatives that you want to see for the IPT to get busy finalizing the analyses that you will see in December and approve and review the timing of the amendment development.

Here is the list of actions that are currently in there. There is ten of them. There is Actions 1 through 5 that deal with commercial split seasons, and some of them include modifications to trip limits or establishment of new trip limits. That is Actions 1 through 6, actually. Action 7 deals

with the shallow-water grouper closure, making modifications to that, and Action 8 removes the minimum size limit for the same deepwater species that we have talked about for the recreational sector. We have an action, of course, to reduce the minimum size limit of gray triggerfish off the east coast of Florida, and, again, the action on powerheads for the commercial sector.

For Action 1, what you saw in June was to establish a commercial split season for blueline. What we're proposing, and we will go through in the decision document, is to establish a commercial split season and also potentially modify the trip limit for blueline. We added an alternative to modify the trip limit during certain months.

Recall that you had requested commercial landings by month and by state for the last ten years, and so we do have some figures for you on the landings and the percentage of those landings by state for the years where there were no closures, and then we're going to need some guidance on -  
- There was some confusion on some trip limits and the percentages that we had discussed for how to split up the ACL between the two seasons, and so we'll be asking for your guidance on that.

In June, Action 2 was actually Action 3, and so there was some shuffling around of actions to make it flow a little bit better, and so we are proposing renumbering this action as Action 2, and that is to establish a split season for snowy grouper. Here, the minutes reflect that you were talking about blueline tilefish and snowy grouper kind of back and forth, and so the IPT just needs a little bit more clarification on alternatives that would be appropriate for the snowy grouper and those that would remain for blueline, and so we'll be going through these actions. Again, we're going to be looking at the landings by month and by state for the last ten years, and we also have a figure showing you the number of vessels that are reporting snowy grouper landings by state and by year for the last ten years, to help you refine your alternatives here.

For Action 3, back in June, this was numbered Action 4, and so we're moving it up, and this is to establish a split season and to modify the trip limit for greater amberjack. You had given us guidance that you wanted to see some trip limit alternatives in there. We did request commercial landings by month and state for the last ten years, but the Science Center -- The data were not delivered in time to have that information for you at this meeting, and so that is still pending, unfortunately. We will be reviewing the sub-alternatives, and some of those do have a step-down option, and we just need to talk about clarifying whether the split season would be a part of the alternative for those trip limit revisions or not and whether you intend to keep the harvest restriction in April for this species.

For Action 4, this was formerly Action 2. This one establishes the split season and modifies the commercial trip limit for red porgy. We do have some landings to show you for this one as well, by state and by month, and, again, we'll need some clarification on the alternatives. You had given us guidance to look at some trip limit modifications in the season, and, again, those are analyses that were not completed in time, and so I apologize for that. We'll have those to you in December.

Action 5 is the same that you saw in June. This one looks at modifying the commercial trip limit for vermilion in the second season, and we added an alternative for a 750-pound trip limit for both seasons without a step-down, and so we have analyses for you for that. Action 6 deals with a trip limit for the other jacks complex, and, here, we just revised whole weight and made it gutted weight for all of the alternatives.

Action 7 deals with the shallow-water grouper closure. Here, we made the same modifications that you had requested for the recreational amendment, and so we removed the alternative to consider that rolling closure by area, and we modified the alternative to consider different closures south of 28 degrees for black grouper and the alternative to consider different closures off the Carolinas for red grouper. Again, here, we have already talked about the rationale of the 28 degree boundary for black grouper. This one has minor edits and no other changes here.

It's the same thing for Action 9. In fact, you have already selected a preferred alternative for this one, and then the new Action 10 is the removing the commercial prohibition on the use of powerheads in the EEZ off of South Carolina. Once we get through it all, we'll go back and revise the timing, and so I've already gone over this, and so, with that, I guess we can dig into the decision document, and that is Attachment 4a.

Again, the format of the decision documents has changed since June. We're trying to be more consistent in how we bring this information to you, so it's easier to follow, and so I've already gone over most of these introductory sections. The objectives, as I said, is to consider the changes to the purpose and need, make changes to actions and alternatives, and approve the timing.

In June, the purpose and need is displayed on your screen, and we do have some edits to consider, and so the IPT recommends, for the purpose of this amendment, that it be to increase commercial access to the snapper grouper fishery, minimize discards, and simplify regulations. The need is to achieve optimum yield for the commercial component of the snapper grouper fishery and improve regulatory compliance and consistency to aid in enforcement. Here, we would like your guidance on how to proceed, whether to accept it or modify it.

DR. DUVAL: We had quite a bit of discussion on this for the Regulatory Amendment 26. Is there thoughts or input on the purpose and need here?

MR. PHILLIPS: I guess, when you say increase commercial access, you mean lengthening the seasons, because I don't know that it's necessarily increasing access if they're catching their TACs.

DR. DUVAL: I think we're referring to the geographic access, because not everyone throughout the geographic range has the same access.

MR. HARTIG: **I am fine with the purpose and need in this one, and I would make a motion that we approve the suggested edits.**

DR. DUVAL: There is a motion from Ben to approve the suggested edits, and it's seconded by Jessica. Is there any discussion?

MR. BELL: Just a quick question, since we still have Action 10 on the tail-end of this one, which is a gear-based action, and we don't say anything about gear in the purpose. Does that mess things up in here? That's the only gear thing we're talking about, I guess.

DR. DUVAL: It might fall under simplify regulations, since you wouldn't have an outstanding regulation off of one state and not the others. Any other discussion? **Is there any opposition to this motion? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

MS. BROUWER: Here, in Action 1, we get started with a little bit of discussion, again, to recap what you did in June and what you requested, and so there is a figure that shows the distribution of landings by state from 2004 through 2013, and then the following figure presents the percentage of blueline tilefish landings by state from 2002 through 2016.

I should also mention that Attachment 3b is the document that contains all the details of the analyses that have been conducted by the Regional Office, and so, if you have any questions on methodology and those details, those are in a separate attachment, and so here is your Figure 1 showing the average monthly blueline tilefish commercial landings by state, and so you see the distribution there is the highest average landings are in the summer months. North Carolina is the biggest player there. Here is a figure showing you the percentage of the annual commercial landings by state for the same time period.

MR. HARTIG: Myra, I appreciate this information. I mean, it really brings to light some of the discussions we've had before now, in Florida, that it's primarily a bycatch fishery. Obviously, in the Carolinas, it's a much more important fishery, especially North Carolina.

MS. BROUWER: Then you have a table that uses two different methods to project the season closures, when the season reaches the ACL, under the various alternatives, and so Alternatives 2a, 2b, and 2c apply to a commercial split season that would make January through June have 60 percent of the ACL and July through December have 40 percent of the ACL.

Alternative 2a looks at a 100-pound trip limit from January through June and then increasing that to 300 in the second season, and so, if you see, under the different approaches, you would have a closure sometime in the first of July, from the 7<sup>th</sup> through the 13<sup>th</sup> of July. I'm sorry. That was Alternative 1. You would have no closure under that trip limit option of 100 and 300 and 60/40 split under both different methodologies.

If you go to the Alternative 2b, which is the opposite, where you have a 300-pound trip limit early in the season and then drop down to 100, you're looking at the ACL being caught by May, sometime between the 10<sup>th</sup> and the 23<sup>rd</sup> of May. For the second season, it would be in August.

Then, for Alternative 2c, we don't have any trip limit alternatives there, and so that's why you don't see any projected closures. Alternative 3 is the same thing. We still have just X's for the percent split, and so we would need guidance there if you want to retain that, and then Alternative 4 and its sub-alternatives are the ones that were suggested for inclusion, and these were not discussed by the committee in June. These were suggested by council members as potential alternatives that you might want to consider at this meeting, but we went ahead and included them in the analysis, so that you would have those numbers there to help you decide if you want to include them in the amendment or not.

Alternative 4a looks at no commercial split season, and so it basically only has a 100-pound trip limit from January through April and a 300-pound trip limit from May through December without a commercial split season, and so, under that scenario, you are looking at the fishery closing sometime at the end of July.

If you go to Sub-Alternative 4b, that one looks at a 150-pound trip limit from January through April, and then it bumps up to 300 pounds from May through December. Under that scenario,

again, you're looking at a potential closure at the end of July. Then, finally, 4c looks at 100 pounds from January through April and 400 pounds from May through December, and it happens a little bit earlier in the season, and so we're looking at somewhere between the 20<sup>th</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup> of July under the different scenarios.

Just to put some perspective there, in 2016, blueline closed on June 1, and then it reopened on July 13, and then it closed again at the end of August. In 2014, it closed at the end of June. In 2013, there was no closure. That was a weird year, and, in 2012, it closed at the beginning of September.

Moving on, under that table, you have the alternatives as you saw them in June. We have included, for your reference, what the Snapper Grouper AP recommended when they discussed this back in the spring. Then, under IPT recommendations, is how we are suggesting that you consider editing this action, and so including in the title "modifying the commercial trip limit", and we have made just some minor changes there to Alternative 1.

There was some confusion, as I said. We need to talk about whether a 60/40 split is appropriate for blueline. Maybe you intended for it to be the opposite. Sub-Alternative 2b doesn't seem to make much sense, to have a high trip limit early in the season, based on the distribution of landings, and so you might want to get rid of that one. Guidance on whether you want to keep Alternative 3 and look at a different split for the ACL, and then this is the alternative that I mentioned as being included for your consideration. It was not part of the amendment in June, and so we would need your approval to include it. Now I will stop talking, and it's your turn.

DR. DUVAL: Thanks, Myra, and just a shout-out to the IPT for all the information and for getting all of those landings by state and by month. I think that really helps to illustrate how the fishery has operated, and I do think there was probably some confusion, in terms of the split.

I have gone back and reviewed the minutes pretty extensively on this, and we were talking about blueline and snowy at the same time, interchangeably, and I think it was made mention that, in terms of snowy, folks would have rather seen like a 60 percent sort of split on quota, in terms of a split season for snowy, like January through April, when the shallow-water grouper closure is out there, and then maybe 40 percent for the remainder of the year, as an option for splitting that out, given the importance that that fish serves for some in the market.

Clearly the distribution of landings is such that the bulk of the fishery is in the latter half of the year, and so I think my recommendation would be to like switch those two, the splits, and have it be 40 percent in January through April and 60 percent in the latter half of the year. I think one of the other reasons is that -- This is based on feedback that I've gotten, and I think public comment that we have received, that when folks, at least in the southern part of North Carolina, or below Cape Lookout and other parts of the range, are going out and they're trying to catch their 200 pounds of snowy grouper, they are pulling in maybe up to a hundred pounds of blueline tilefish at the same time.

Some folks, because there is a 300-pound trip limit on blueline, will then try to go and catch an additional 200 pounds of blueline, and then they're discarding hundreds of pounds of snowy, and so, really, having I think -- Chris and I had talked about alternatives, which I think are reflected in Alternative 4, if you could split this another way, looking at just establishing a different trip limit

during a certain period of the year as an alternative, instead of simply splitting the quota. That's why you see this Alternative 4 and those different sub-alternatives there.

I think, upon looking at this and the analysis and the feedback that I've gotten from fishermen for whom this is an important species, north of North Carolina, from looking at our landings, I think I might want to add another sub-alternative under Alternative 4 to consider 100 pounds January through June and then 300 pounds July through December and also look at a split like that, but I will stop talking and let the committee talk as well.

DR. MCGOVERN: I guess a question. I know blueline tilefish has been assessed, and I think the SSC is supposed to look at the results of that assessment in October, I believe, but I'm not sure, and I don't know how that will change the ABC and all that, and there might be a desire to change the trip limits and all of that as a result of that assessment down the road, too.

DR. DUVAL: Blueline, the review workshop has occurred, and so the SSC is reviewing that in October, and so we should get that in December, actually. I think, if we wanted to make some tweaks based on that, we could do it. It's an unusual assessment. Both Anna and I have participated in that assessment, and we'll have to see how the SSC responds, but, the way things were split up, according to the data, is a little bit different than many of our other assessments.

I think we would be -- A few questions that Myra has posed, looking at, under Alternative 2, that 60/40 split and looking at perhaps changing that to a 40/60 split, in which case Sub-Alternative 2b does not really make much sense, but you could consider another sub-alternative for perhaps a different Season 1 and Season 2 trip limit, if you wanted to look at 150 pounds for Season 1 and 300 pounds for Season 2.

Should we maintain Alternative 3, or is there perhaps a different split that folks would want to look at, where you might want to consider something, an allocation, that is January through April, May through December, that sort of lines up with the shallow-water grouper closure? Then, for Alternative 4, I had mentioned another sub-alternative that I would like to see included of 100 pounds January through June and 300 pounds July through December. Mr. DiLernia, our Mid-Atlantic Council liaison, welcome.

MR. DILERNIA: Thank you very much. It's a pleasure to be here. I hope everyone got through the storm all right. I know we in Tampa, our second home in Tampa, we dodged a bullet, and I hope everybody else was able to be as fortunate as we were. My question is, when you're looking at the difference in the trip limits, is there a time of year when the price varies? I would look to some of the commercial representatives or the wholesalers here, because that might be a factor also with trying to maximize the return to the commercial fishermen. Is there a significant swing or variation in the price for blueline tilefish during the course of the year? I don't know the answer, but I put that out as a question or something to be considered.

DR. DUVAL: I know that we've had some discussion about how the price changes for snowy, but I haven't heard similar feedback on blueline tilefish. This is really more about providing access for fishermen in the northern part of the range where that access is important.

MR. CONKLIN: It stays pretty consistent on the blueline, but, the snowy, there is a significant price difference.

MR. HARTIG: Same here.

DR. DUVAL: What is the committee's pleasure? I have thrown out a few options for folks.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I agreed with everything that you said. I am fine with adding all of those alternatives and clarifying, inside Alternative 3, those particular months and percentages, and so I am good with adding all of those. I don't know if you need a motion to do that.

DR. DUVAL: Let's let Myra get some of this additional stuff on the screen.

MR. HARTIG: I am fine with that as well.

DR. DUVAL: Chris, are you okay with that? Okay. This would be, I think, under Alternative 2, switching the 40 percent and the 60 percent. Then I think, Myra, you mentioned that Sub-Alternative 2b probably doesn't make a lot of sense.

MS. BROUWER: Right, and so what I have on the screen, what I'm understanding, is to change Alternative 2 ACL percentages to 40/60 split and remove Sub-Alternative 2b and modify, or fill in, rather, Sub-Alternative 2c with a Season 1 trip limit of 150 pounds gutted weight and a Season 2 trip limit of 300 pounds gutted weight.

DR. DUVAL: Okay. That would be a draft motion that we would be looking for.

MS. MCCAWLEY: **So moved.**

DR. DUVAL: Is there a second? It's seconded by Chris. **The motion reads: Change Alternative 2 ACL percentages to 40 percent/60 percent and remove Sub-Alternative 2b and modify Sub-Alternative 2c as you see there on the screen. Is there any discussion on this? Is there any objection to this motion? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

I think the next issue was addressing Alternative 3, and so this was an option where you could fill in a different quota split and different periods to which you might want to assign a quota split. The only thing that came to mind for me was that you might want to consider a 40/60 split that applied January through April and May through December, as that sort of lines up with the shallow-water grouper closure, which is what the AP suggested.

If you look at Alternative 3, it requires filling in both a percentage split for split seasons as well as the months across which those seasons would apply, and one suggestion was to have a 40/60 split, where 40 percent of the ACL would be applied to January through April and 60 percent to May through December, which is different than Alternative 2, which applies that split January through June and July through December.

MR. CONKLIN: I would look to maybe move this on out, and the Sub-Alternatives 4a and 4b and the new Sub-Alternative 4c I think could get us where we were going, and we could just get rid of this Alternative 3 altogether.

DR. DUVAL: Chris is suggesting that we could probably get rid of Alternative 3, and I think my suggestion for Alternative 4 was to include an additional sub-alternative that would have 100 pounds January through June and 300 pounds July through December, if folks are okay with that.

MR. GRINER: I think the most important time for us is January through April.

DR. DUVAL: There are options and alternatives to allow harvest during that time. It's not that you're shutting it down, but it's just looking at different trip limits for different time periods under Alternative 4.

MR. HARTIG: To that point, if you look at the distribution by month, you see, earlier in the year, although it is important, there just aren't that many blueline tilefish caught until May, the beginning of May, and so, even though it is an important part, that 40 percent should cover you for that time period.

MR. GRINER: Yes, and I was looking at the wrong graph.

MR. HARTIG: At least that's how I'm interpreting it.

MR. PHILLIPS: If we're going to move our trip limits around, back to Chris's point, do we need Alternative 3? Can we clean the document up some, if we're going to put enough options in to cover what we need to do for the fishermen?

DR. DUVAL: Right, and so that's why I was saying the suggestion would be to add another sub-alternative to what is currently Alternative 4 that would just apply that 100-pound trip limit over a longer timeframe, to stretch out the season, and then get rid of Alternative 3.

MR. CONKLIN: **I would like to make a motion to remove Alternative 3 from the document in Action 1.**

DR. DUVAL: Motion by Chris and seconded by Jessica to remove Alternative 3 from the document, to the Considered but Rejected. Is there discussion?

MR. HARTIG: As long as we have the options to line snowy up with this, I'm fine. As long as we can line them both up the same seasons, I am good with that.

DR. DUVAL: I think that's the intent, and, if we need to revisit this, or hopefully not, when we move into snowy in the next action, we can do that. Any other discussion on this motion? **Is there any opposition to this motion? Seeing none, this motion stands approved.**

**Then we would just need a motion to add a sub-alternative to Alternative 4 to consider a 100-pound limit from January through June and 300 pounds July through December.**

MS. MCCAWLEY: **So moved.**

DR. DUVAL: Motion by Jessica and second by Chris. Is there discussion? **Is there any opposition to this motion? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

MR. CONKLIN: So, in December, we will see Table 1 filled in? Okay. Great.

DR. DUVAL: So moving on to Action 2.

MS. BROUWER: Action 2 deals with the commercial split season for snowy grouper. Again, we have a figure showing you the average monthly commercial landings by state from 2002 through 2005 and then again 2007 through 2011. Those years were excluded due to closures, and so this is the distribution for each of the states, and then we have the percentages, the percent of annual landings, by state.

Then, in addition, we have here, as I mentioned, the number of vessels reporting landings of snowy by state and by year, and Georgia and South Carolina had to be combined, for confidentiality reasons. Then this table here is, again, the projected closures under the various alternatives, and so, again, Alternative 2 has a 60/40 split of the ACL, and you're looking at a closure sometime between the end of June and early February, based on the two different methodologies for the first season, and, then the second season, you're looking at a closure between the end of July and the end of September.

Alternative 3 is grayed out, because, again, we have still not specified any percentages there. Then, to remind you, last year, snowy closed on June 14. In 2015, it closed at the end of September. In 2014, it closed at the end of July.

Here is the action and alternatives as you saw them in June, and so, for Alternative 2, what we did was just assumed the same split that we had for blueline. The Snapper Grouper AP had some recommendations. They had recommendations for a trip limit step-down and to coincide with the opening of the shallow-water grouper in May.

Here are the IPT recommendations for how to clean this up. It's just editorial things. Here is that 60/40 split that we now probably need to tweak, and then, Alternative 3, that remains to be filled in. Again, consider what you just did for blueline and give us guidance to make modifications, as appropriate, for snowy.

DR. DUVAL: Myra, I had a question, because the tables showing the potential closure dates don't show which is like the last three and which is the SARIMA model. Do you know which is which?

MS. BROUWER: I am sorry. Yes, and it looks like I just forgot to copy the top row there, and so the last three is going to be on your left, and the SARIMA model is going to be on your right. I believe that's how it is for all of them.

DR. DUVAL: Okay. For this one, as Ben was saying, making sure things line up, under Alternative 2 here, you have the same split, in terms of season, January through June and July through December and Alternative 2 for both Action 1 under blueline and Action 2 under snowy. The splits are different, and so it's 40/60 for blueline and 60/40 for snowy, and then, for Alternative 3, I don't know if the committee would like to maintain that 60/40 split, but consider 60 percent January through April and 40 percent May through December. I mean, that's just another alternative to throw out there.

MR. CONKLIN: Given that the market value of the snowy is exceptionally higher during the shallow-water grouper closure, and Mexico also has a two-month closure during ours, and so there is really no grouper around, and there is a real significant price difference, and I would like to see more than 60 percent stacked on the first part of this season and maybe like a 70/30. I think we talked about that, but I know people might not like it, because you're taking a seven-dollar fish and turning it into a four or five-dollar fish, and it doesn't make sense when you can catch all the fish at seven-dollars.

DR. DUVAL: I guess when I'm just looking at the -- There is obviously a spread there between potential closures under a 60/40 split January through June and July through December. I mean, it ranges from a potential closure on June 21, based on the last three years, and February 18, based on the SARIMA model, which is -- That incorporates all years of harvest, is my understanding.

MS. BROUWER: I don't know. I would have to refer to the attachment. I am not sure.

DR. DUVAL: One thing, I guess, that I will note is that I know folks -- I think, in terms of the regional access off of North Carolina, it's a little bit more -- It's more difficult, and those landings have dropped off significantly, just because the quota has been sucked up prior to those folks getting access, and so being able to put together a trip for blueline and snowy is certainly important.

I guess there's a couple of different ways you could go. You could look at 70 percent January to June and 30 percent July through December, which may have been what you were suggesting, Chris, and another option might be 60 percent January through April and 40 percent May through December, but I would like a little input from other folks on the committee here.

MR. HARTIG: Well, I mean, I'm looking at each state's participation, and, North Carolina, although they had some -- The wave before, they're up to the 2002 landings, for at least percent, in 2016, and so it's pretty equal across the board. My concern is the increase of boats participating in Florida. If you look at that, there is a pretty substantial rising increase in the number of vessels, and so, if that -- It can't continue much longer, I wouldn't expect, because the last two years are pretty similar, and so you're probably close to where you are, but that's a substantial increase from 2011.

I would like to preserve some of that for the northern states. I am happy with the 60/40, and so at least they get another 10 percent. I understand Chris's point very well, but, if Florida continues to -- Well, I don't know that they're going to continue, but they have already increased substantially, and so that's just something to look at.

DR. DUVAL: Just to your point about the North Carolina landings, Ben, that's all south of Cape Hatteras. That is a significant, almost doubling, of harvest, and it's all south of Cape Hatteras, and it's gone in opposite directions.

MR. PHILLIPS: I would be a little bit concerned if we were down to 30 percent for the second half of the year and then we end up discarding snowy trying to catch blueline.

DR. DUVAL: So what's your pleasure?

MR. CONKLIN: I am looking at Figure 5, and I see Florida obviously catches more, because of the number of participants down there, but South Carolina and North Carolina -- North Carolina is catching the lion's share of the fish, equal amounts at least, and then they step it up in April and May, and it seems pretty fair as it is, to me, the way it is, but people have choices. I have talked to North Carolina fishermen too that say that they're fishing fifteen to eighteen miles around Cape Hatteras in January and February and that they're catching the same fish that the guys from up that way could go and get, but they have other choices.

DR. DUVAL: I think it's a little bit different, because those are folks who are leaving out of Beaufort Inlet, and so they can go -- They're going up that way, and I am talking about folks that are north of the shoals up there, and so it's a little bit different environment.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I am in agreement with Ben. I think the 60/40 in Alternative 2 is fine, but, also, if Chris wants to add a 70/30, I think that I'm okay with that too, to be analyzed.

DR. DUVAL: Chris, would you want 70/30 January through June, I guess 70 percent January through June and 30 percent July through December? Is that what you were thinking?

MR. CONKLIN: I wanted to line up like Action 1, the alternative, which was January through April and then May 1 through December 31.

DR. DUVAL: Action 1 has, under Alternative 2, is January 1 through June 30 and July 1 through December 31. We got rid of Alternative 3, and then Alternative 4 has sub-alternatives that run from January through April and May through December and then another sub-alternative that we added that is January through June and July through December.

MR. CONKLIN: You're right, and so the months I would like to see would be January 1 through June 30 and then July 1 through December 31, to line up with the blueline action, Alternative 2 in Action 1.

DR. DUVAL: Myra is just getting this inserted here. You said 70/30, right?

MR. CONKLIN: Yes, and so my reasoning behind that -- Are we going to make this a motion?

DR. DUVAL: Yes. Chris, I think if you're prepared to make that motion.

**MR. CONKLIN: I would like to make the motion to specify two commercial fishing seasons for snowy grouper. Allocate the snowy grouper commercial ACL into two quotas, 70 percent for the period January 1 through June 30 and 30 percent to the period July 1 through December 31. Any remaining quota from Season 1 would transfer to Season 2. Any remaining quota from Season 2 would not be carried forward. If I can get a second, I will explain my rationale.**

DR. DUVAL: It was jointly seconded by Jessica and Ben.

MR. CONKLIN: This lines up with -- I guess when fishermen are targeting blueline in like North Carolina, they can have a bycatch of snowy, and this still allows for the bulk of the fish to be caught when the price is significantly higher and when we can catch -- When other fishermen are

targeting snowy, they have a bycatch of the blueline, and so it's sort of a reciprocal, but it's a kind of makes-sense move to me.

DR. DUVAL: Just to be clear, the trip limit stays the same. There is no modification to that 200-pound trip limit. Any other discussion on this motion?

MR. GRINER: Myra, so this will go back into that table?

MS. BROUWER: Yes, and so we would bring back analysis for you in December, including this one.

DR. DUVAL: Any other discussion? **Is there any opposition to this motion? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

MS. BROUWER: Moving on to Action 3, this one would establish a split season and modify the trip limit for greater amberjack. As I mentioned earlier, the data to show you the distribution of landings is still pending, and so apologies for that. You had requested adding an alternative to reduce the trip limit to 1,000 pounds and implement a step-down somewhere between 750 and 500 pounds, when 75 percent of the commercial ACL is met or is projected to be met, and you also mentioned including options for a timeframe after which the step-down would not apply, and that was unclear, and so we request that you clarify a little bit for the IPT how you envision that being included.

In June, this is what you saw, and we had, again, just spaces there for you to fill in the percentages, if you wish to consider a split season, and the alternatives we had for you was looking at March through August and September through the end of February, because the fishing year for amberjack is different. It's not the calendar year, and the same sort of things as far as transferring uncaught ACL from Season 1 to Season 2 and, again, clarification of whether you still intend for commercial harvest to be restricted in April, which is currently the case.

The Snapper Grouper AP supported exploring the use of a split season to lengthen the harvest, and they suggested trip limit reductions or step-downs to achieve your objectives, and so here is what the IPT is recommending, and so just to change the title of the action to capture modifying the trip limit. Then we had the sub-alternatives here. The Season 1 trip limit would be 1,200 pounds. The Season 2 trip limit would be 1,000 pounds, and then a step-down to 750. Sub-Alternative 2b has the same thing, with the step-down to 500 pounds, and we included another sub-alternative for any other combination that you wish to consider. A question from the IPT is does the committee also want to consider modifications to the trip limit without splitting the season?

DR. DUVAL: I think that's a similar approach as what we took with blueline, just considering a different trip limit for a different portion of the year.

MR. CONKLIN: We didn't ask for any analysis, similar to blueline and snowy, in June, did we?

MS. BROUWER: Yes, you did, and we made that request for the data, but it just wasn't delivered in time.

DR. DUVAL: So we would see that in December.

MR. GRINER: Can we look at an alternative, when you're doing that table, that would give us a 1,000-pound trip limit with a step-down to 500?

DR. DUVAL: Tim, are you saying -- It sounds like it would be to add -- I guess maybe if we can look at -- I just want to clarify what you're asking for, and so you're asking for an alternative that would just be a 1,000-pound trip limit for the entire fishing year, with a step-down to --

MR. GRINER: It would be similar to 2b, except for the first season would be 1,000 pounds, and so both seasons would be 1,000 pounds, with a 500 step-down.

DR. DUVAL: That would kind of be like filling in Sub-Alternative 2c. You would be looking at 1,000 pounds for each of the two seasons with a step-down.

MR. GRINER: With a step-down.

DR. DUVAL: To 500 pounds?

MR. GRINER: To 500.

DR. DUVAL: Just to be clear, Tim, would that be -- So the way these sub-alternatives are structured now, both Sub-Alternatives 2a and 2b only include a trip limit step-down for Season 2, and so would you want what you're filling in for Sub-Alternative 2c to be a step-down only for Season 2, or would you want it for both?

MR. GRINER: I would like to see the analysis for both of them.

DR. DUVAL: For including a step-down for both Season 1 and Season 2?

MR. GRINER: Yes.

DR. DUVAL: **This would be consider Sub-Alternative 2c to include a 1,000-pound trip limit in both seasons with a step-down to 500 pounds when 75 percent of the ACL has been met in each season, I think, right?** Tim, are you willing to make that motion?

MR. GRINER: Yes, but it's going to carry over to the second season, correct?

DR. DUVAL: So yes. I think, if there's anything left over from Season 1, the way this action is set up is that it would carry to Season 2.

MR. GRINER: Yes.

DR. DUVAL: Okay, and so motion by Tim. Is there a second to this motion? **Seconded by Chris.** Is there discussion? Just making sure that people understand what we have right now is simply a 1,200-pound commercial trip limit. It starts on May 1, and April is a closed month, and then it runs through the rest of the year. Alternative 2 would split the season March 1 through August 31 and September 1 through the end of February, carryover of any leftovers from Season 1 to Season 2, and then three sub-alternatives for trip limits.

MR. CONKLIN: So we need to plug some numbers into the percentages here too? If we need to talk about that then, I wanted to add another sub-alternative, after we did that.

DR. DUVAL: Let's make sure we get this motion voted on, and then I will come back to you for those percentages and another sub-alternative. I want to make sure that everybody is clear on the sub-alternative that is being added. **It would be 1,000-pound trip limit for each of the two seasons, and you would have a step-down to 500 pounds when 75 percent of that sub-ACL is met in each season.** Okay. Is there any other discussion on this motion? **Is there any opposition to this motion? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

Chris, you wanted to discuss allocation of the quota into two periods?

MR. CONKLIN: I would look over to Ben and see what kind of numbers you were thinking about, because we haven't discussed it.

MR. HARTIG: I mean, I am waiting on the analysis. I can't make any decisions until I see the analysis, and that's critical on amberjack, because we catch a lot of fish in that first season, and that's --

MS. BROUWER: To be clear, we're not going to be able to actually analyze, in terms of giving you a projected season closure, unless we have a percentage. What you're talking about is you want to see the distribution of landings.

MR. HARTIG: Yes.

MS. BROUWER: Okay, and that we can bring back to you, but, without having those percentages, understand that we're not going to be able to make any projections.

MR. CONKLIN: It will hold us up a whole other meeting, right?

MR. PHILLIPS: Going back to the step-downs, do we want to put something in there that if the Science Center projects that the season TAC won't be caught if you put the step-down in that we do not go to the step-down or -- What is the best way to run that rabbit, because we don't want to, obviously, get to December and hit 75 percent and then have a step-down knowing that we're going to leave fish on the table, and so can we get a projection from the Science Center, or do we just want to try to pick some dates, say November 1 or December 1 or whatever, but I think it would be better if the Science Center could give us a projection on if we're still going to land the fish before the end of the season.

DR. DUVAL: I think what you're asking for is something that would say, if 75 percent of the sub-quota or the ACL has not been caught prior to December 1 or a certain date, kind of like what we've done with mackerel, then that step-down would not go into place. Then the other way you're suggesting is that simply -- Well, I think that would probably be the best way to do it, because the Science Center is projecting when a certain proportion of the harvest is going to be met anyway, and so I think, if it's written similar to how mackerel is written, that if a certain proportion is not caught prior to a certain date, then the trip limit remains the same. I think I would

give the IPT the latitude to develop what that language should be. Chris, you had mentioned that you wanted to add another sub-alternative under Alternative 2?

MR. CONKLIN: Yes, ma'am, just for 1,000 pounds with no step-down in each season, but maybe what Charlie has done alleviated my heartburn about the first one. That's why I have Charlie at the table, is to take care of that kind of stuff for me, and so thank you, but I do want to fill in some percentages, so we can get some numbers, and I would make a motion for a 50/50 split in Alternative 2.

DR. DUVAL: Are there any other percentages that you might want to throw into that motion, maybe a 60/40?

MR. CONKLIN: Would we need a whole new alternative with different percentages or would --

DR. DUVAL: Yes, it would be another whole -- You would repeat Alternative 2, and it would just become Alternative 3, but with different proportional splits.

MR. CONKLIN: So we could do 60/40 and 40/60, add that into the same motion, and would that be enough for NEPA?

MR. HARTIG: I would just add that I don't think that you're going to need 40/60, based on the history of the fishery. I think we could preclude that analysis, based on what is caught there, and we could save Myra a little bit of work.

MR. CONKLIN: To your question, no, I don't want to add any more alternatives.

DR. DUVAL: I think, to address what Ben is thinking, if you make this draft motion, it would allocate the commercial ACL 50/50 for each season under Alternative 2, and it might be simplest to just vote on that and dispense with it and then decide if you wanted to add another alternative that simply splits the ACLs 60/40 as Alternative 3, but that's up to you guys. I am not trying to put words in anybody's mouth, but I am just trying to do something for analysis, and it sounds like Ben might like something like that. Okay. Chris, would you like to make a motion?

MR. CONKLIN: **I will make the motion to allocate the commercial ACL 50 percent to each season under Alternative 2.**

DR. DUVAL: Is there a second to that? It's seconded by Ben. Any other discussion on this? **Is there any objection to that motion? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

**Now, Ben, would you want to see a 60/40 split, but maintaining those same -- Basically just copy Alternative 2, but make it a new alternative with the 60/40 split?**

MR. HARTIG: Yes, ma'am. **I would make that motion.**

DR. DUVAL: Okay, and so a motion by Ben and a second by Jessica to add an Alternative 3 to consider a 60/40 split of the commercial ACL between seasons with the same sub-alternatives as under Alternative 2.

MR. HARTIG: Thank you.

DR. DUVAL: **The motion reads: Add Alternative 3 to consider a 60/40 split of the commercial ACL between seasons with the same sub-alternatives as under Alternative 2.** Is there discussion on this? Again, this accounts for the fact that Florida has traditionally harvested a significant amount of the annual catch limit during that early part of the season, and so at least we would be able to see both the distribution of landings in December as well as some analysis that would allow us to move forward. **Is there any opposition to this motion? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

It seems like we may have covered the range of everything with these two alternatives and their sub-alternatives, and so we have kind of filled in Alternative 3 for Myra. Okay.

MS. BROUWER: Action 4 considers a commercial split season and modification of the trip limit for red porgy. This is one of the actions that got moved around. In June, you asked us to include an alternative that would split the ACL 50/50 during the two seasons of January through April and May through December, again with that same rollover of the uncaught ACL, and a range of alternatives, up to sixty fish in Season 1 and 160 fish in Season 2.

Again, unfortunately, the analyses for these different trip limits are underway, but couldn't be completed in time for the briefing book, but here we do have the distribution of landings for red porgy for you by state and month, and this is from 2005 through 2012 and 2014 through 2016.

Then you also have here that percentage of annual landings by state, showing those trends for the last ten years, and so, in June, this is how you saw this action with the alternatives, and so Alternative 2 maintains the annual January through April seasonal harvest limit for red porgy, and then you have sub-alternatives that allocate the directed ACL quota into the two groups, 50 percent January through June and 50 percent July through December.

Then we had a Sub-Alternative 2b that allowed you to select a different percentage and perhaps a different split, temporal split. Alternative 3 removes that seasonal harvest limit from January through April for red porgy and has similar sub-alternatives as under Alternative 2, and so the same 50/50 split and then one that you can have there to fill in.

Here are your Snapper Grouper AP recommendations for this action. They had some concerns about moving forward with management changes ahead of the stock assessment. They said consider a trip limit modification to address discards and still consider a trip limit, but consider a bycatch allowance, and then this is where they had suggested different retention limits, trip limits, for red porgy during the months of the spawning closure.

Here is how the IPT has recommended that we change this action, that we renumber it Action 4 and change the title. I think we're recommending here that we get rid of Alternative 3 and then -- I am sorry. I don't know why that's numbered Alternative 3, but the new Alternative 3 that we're recommending that be substituted would specify that that split season with the 50/50 split on the ACL and then the sub-alternatives specifying different trip limits of thirty, forty, fifty, or sixty fish, and that would be for the period January 1 through April 30, which is currently when the harvest is limited, due to the spawning season.

MR. HARTIG: The unknown in here is what are going to be the landings for the closed season. It's been closed since what year? It's been a while, but, really, I think the discussion at the last meeting was we're not going to a full harvest in that part of the season anyway, at least from the discussion that I remember, and the discussion was to have some alternative of -- What the IPT has put together is something less than what the allowance was, and so they've got sixty, forty, thirty. I think that covers the range of what we were thinking about, and I see some heads nodding over there.

I don't catch enough of them to make the decision at that time of the year, because I don't fish vermilion at that time of the year, and so you guys would have to give me an appropriate bycatch analysis, or give an appropriate bycatch analysis, so we'll know how many fish to allocate to that particular part of the season.

MR. PHILLIPS: Could somebody refresh my memory on what discard mortality for these pinkies are, because I don't remember.

DR. DUVAL: I don't know, but we can certainly circle back to that. We could ask staff to look that up and then get some input and come back after lunch and provide that input.

MR. HARTIG: To that point though, I mean, I catch these animals in about 260 to 270 feet, both red porgy and vermilion together. I can vent a vermilion and put him in my well, and they will survive. They will go back and forth, even going home and coming back out again. I have never had a red porgy that survived being vented in my bait well. Now, that doesn't mean that, sending them back to the bottom, they won't survive, but they are less hearty than vermilions, clearly.

MR. CONKLIN: I had a question for Myra. The new Alternative 3, the suggested, that would step the harvest back up to 120 fish at Season 2? Is that right?

MS. BROUWER: Yes, I believe that was the intent of what the AP had suggested.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I have a question also. Do we really want 50 percent in each period, that first period of the year? Shouldn't that be a lower percentage? I am thinking it should be a lower percentage.

DR. DUVAL: Yes, and I think --

MS. MCCAWLEY: I mean like 30, 30/70 maybe, and not 50/50.

DR. DUVAL: I am just going back and looking at Alternative 2 and the sub-alternatives. Under Alternative 2, there is no -- It maintains the seasonal harvest limit January 1 through April 30, but it just would allow you to sell those three fish, right?

MS. MCCAWLEY: It's just splitting the season. It's not changing the --

DR. DUVAL: Yes, it's not changing the harvest limitation, and so it seems like you don't even need a 50/50 split under Alternative 2, because of such a low harvest limit. I am just throwing that out there for consideration, but I agree that you would probably want something lower in Alternative 3 than 50/50.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I would get rid of Alternative 2.

DR. DUVAL: What are thoughts around the table? There is a suggestion to remove Alternative 2, which is just -- It doesn't modify that harvest limitation. It just keeps it at three fish. All it does is split the quota 50/50, which seems a little bit odd. I think the intent here, in bringing this forward, was to try to reduce discards of red porgy during that timeframe, or at least reduce dead discards, and so it seems like Alternative 3 is really the one that you would want to look at, just recommend modifying that 50/50 split to be something different.

MR. HARTIG: I concur. I would get rid of Alternative 2.

DR. DUVAL: We would need a motion. I would be looking for a motion to remove Alternative 2.

MR. HARTIG: Sorry, Madam Chairman. **I move that we remove Alternative 2 under Action 4.**

DR. DUVAL: There's a motion by Ben, and seconded by Charlie, to move under Alternative 2 under Action 4 to the Considered but Rejected Appendix. I mean, it seems like, for Alternative 3 -- Excuse me. Any discussion on this motion? **Is there any opposition to this motion? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

It seems like, Alternative 3, we would need to adjust that a bit, in terms of how you would want to see the quota split out. If you wanted to, if there was a need to have an additional alternative, you could look at Alternative 3 with a 30/70 split and Alternative 4 with a 40/60 split. I mean, I just don't know.

MR. PHILLIPS: Just to lower the number of sub-alternatives, it wouldn't mean much, but I might go to thirty fish, forty-five fish, and sixty fish, so there weren't quite so many sub-alternatives to do, especially if you're going to do different quota splits.

MR. CONKLIN: Do we need a motion to remove the old Alternative 3 or we already did?

DR. DUVAL: No, we would just modify it.

MR. CONKLIN: It doesn't matter to me. I just want to see some harvest and quit throwing them away.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I think sixty is too big of a trip limit, a bycatch trip limit, but that's just me.

MR. HARTIG: But remember, in Season 1, anything that's not caught automatically goes into Season 2, and so, even though we're going to fight over these percentages, we're going to move anything that's not caught in the first season over there, and so, realistically, it's not making that much of a difference.

MR. CONKLIN: I will say that we are discarding those sixty fish, and so --

MR. HARTIG: How many?

MR. CONKLIN: Sometimes as many as sixty, I would say. I mean, we catch them right beside the vermilion and the triggerfish. I guess it depends on how many times you need to drop down, but they bite too. Just because we can't bring them in, it doesn't mean they're not there.

DR. MCGOVERN: Rick and I found the discard mortality for red porgy from the SEDAR update in 2012, and they have it as 35 percent commercial and 8 percent recreational. Ben, also had a question about when the spawning season closure was put into place for red porgy, and that was back in 2000, through Amendment 12.

DR. DUVAL: Jack, what were those discard mortalities again?

DR. MCGOVERN: 35 percent commercial and 8 percent recreational.

DR. DUVAL: Okay. I know people are getting a little bit of low blood sugar here, but let's settle on maybe a proportion split, in terms of the commercial ACL under this alternative. Jessica has suggested I think 30 percent/70 percent. Any other thoughts?

MR. HARTIG: I mean, since we don't know what's going to happen, since those months have been closed for quite a period of time, it may be appropriate at 40 percent. I am not sure, but, like I say, it's not going to really matter, because you will be able to shift those fish into the second season, and so at least enough to cover what's caught, what we think possibly -- We don't know what's going to be caught, and so it's probably not going to be closed, based on this fishery hasn't closed -- I don't believe we have had a closure of red porgy that I recall, except way back, when they closed the fishery. I don't think we've had a closure that I remember, Chris, for red porgy in the management timeframe.

DR. DUVAL: There was a closure. I think Attachment 4b, which is all the analyses that were done to date, includes a table, and it's Table 8, that has red porgy recent landings and quota closures, and, according to that, there was a closure in 2013, but it wasn't until December. Are folks okay with the modifications to this alternative?

MR. CONKLIN: I was looking, initially, to go 50/50 and sixty fish, but, with this range of sub-alternatives offered up from the IPT, knowing how things go, we would never select the most liberal amount, or maybe we would, but, for the sake of sending it out to the public, I would do thirty, sixty, and 120 and 50/50.

DR. DUVAL: Are you suggesting -- It seems like that would be a separate alternative, I guess, if I might recommend it. If you want to split it 50/50 and then have sub-alternatives for the harvest in that January through April timeframe of -- What was it, sixty and 120?

MR. CONKLIN: Thirty, sixty, and 120.

DR. DUVAL: Thirty, sixty, and 120. What I would like to do, since we've spent so much time on Alternative 3, is just get a motion to modify Alternative 3 as you see up there on the screen, and I think we can come back to you for another alternative. Anybody?

MR. HARTIG: **Move the modification of Alternative 3 as on the screen.**

DR. DUVAL: Is there a second to that? Jessica seconded it. I think we've had a good amount of discussion here. Is there any other discussion? **Is there any opposition to this motion? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

MR. CONKLIN: **I would like to make a motion to add a Sub-Alternative 3a to Alternative 3 of 120 fish.**

DR. DUVAL: Motion by Chris. Is there a second? Seconded by Tim to add a sub-alternative to Alternative 3 of 120 fish. Can you provide a rationale for that?

MR. CONKLIN: I did before I made the motion. Do you want it now? Did I get a second? Okay. The rationale is because, if we're splitting it 50 percent and 50 percent, then why wouldn't we have the opportunity to catch the same trip limit we have been catching? We just wanted to open up harvest, and my intent was not as a bycatch. My intent was to open it up for the benefit of the greater good and harvest the OY, and, if we didn't catch it the first part of the season, then it would carry forward and we would be able to catch them the second season, if it never ended, and keep everything the same.

DR. DUVAL: So what we just did was we approved a motion to modify Alternative 3 for a 30/70 split and not 50/50, and so that's why I was thinking, if you wanted to do what you had said previously, you might want to consider adding a new alternative that splits things 50/50 and then includes thirty, sixty, and 120, if that's what you would like to do. We have already had a second to that motion. Is modifying that okay with the seconder?

MR. GRINER: Yes.

DR. DUVAL: Okay.

MR. HARTIG: It's not that it's too hard, but it's just I'm looking at what the AP -- They came up with some great recommendations, and they gave some rationale of why they thought that it should be lower during that time of the year. Since it has been closed, it's been a spawning season closure, and they thought that they could at least cover some of their discards during that time without going to the total allowable harvest that we have later in the season, and so I think they gave great recommendations on that, and that's why I was kind of sticking to what they went with.

MR. CONKLIN: Wasn't there data provided that they spawn year-round and that there is not a need for a spawning season closure, that they spawn almost every month out of the year? Is that correct?

DR. DUVAL: No, I don't think it's that they -- They don't spawn year-round, but they don't aggregate to spawn, is my understanding. I mean, they are overfished and under a rebuilding plan. Okay. Chris, if you wouldn't mind reading the draft motion.

MR. CONKLIN: I would like to make a motion to add an alternative to split the commercial ACL 50 percent and 50 percent and add a sub-alternative of 120 fish for January through April.

DR. DUVAL: I think it was sub-alternatives of thirty, sixty, and 120. **There is a motion on the floor to add an alternative to split the commercial ACL 50/50, I think it would be January through April and June through the remainder of the year, and add sub-alternatives of thirty, sixty, and 120 fish for January through April.** Is there any further discussion on this? **Is there any opposition to this motion, three opposed; those in favor of the motion, please raise your hand, eight in favor. The motion carries.**

I think that takes us through red porgy, and so we still have -- The next action looks at modifying the commercial trip limit for vermilion, implementing a commercial limit for the other jacks, modifying the seasonal prohibition on shallow-water groupers, removing size limits, and just looking at -- It's 12:05, and so I'm inclined to recess for lunch and come back and tackle the rest of this after lunch.

I will say that we're probably going to have to look at modifying the agenda a little bit. We still have John Hadley is going to give us an update on the socioeconomic characterization, and we have some red grouper projections to just review. Then we have a couple other items before public comment begins at 4:30, and so we'll see how things go through.

There's been a suggestion by Ben that we might want to consider, and this might be a surprise to staff, but we might want to consider a separate webinar, like maybe three hours, to really dig into the ABC control rule. I would like for John to at least review this for the committee today, but we can sort of take that as we go and see how far we get with things, but I just wanted to give folks a heads-up, and so go ahead and get some lunch and come back here at 1:30, please. Thank you.

(Whereupon, a recess was taken.)

DR. DUVAL: We had finished up with Action 4, which was greater amberjack, and the next action is similar, a commercial trip limit action for vermilion snapper, but it focused on the second season, and so Myra is going to walk us through this.

MS. BROUWER: Yes, and so we're back on Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 27, Action 5, and so this one modifies, as Michelle said, the commercial trip limit for vermilion in the second season. The table that you see in front of you, Table 3, uses the two different methodologies to project the season closure, and so, under Alternative 2, that is the one that would put in place a 750-pound trip limit in Season 2, and so that one projects the ACL for that season to be harvested September 1 to August 30, and so both methodologies project the same thing.

I'm sorry. That is when the step-down would be implemented, and so the trip limit would be reduced on September 1 or August 30, and then, for Alternatives 3 and 4, those ones didn't have a step-down. Those are the options that you removed the step-down, and so then you move down to where the projections are, where it says, "fishery closed", and those would be -- For Alternative 3, it has the 500-pound trip limit in Season 2, and so then the ACL would be reached by the middle of October, October 10 or October 11.

For Alternative 4, that one is the one that we have 750-pound in both seasons without a step-down, and so then you're looking at a fishery closure sometime in mid-September. Both methodologies are very close in that projected date when the ACL would be reached.

This is how the alternatives looked in June, and then, based on your guidance, this is how the IPT recommends that it be restructured. We had some recommendations for how to word it a little bit differently, and so Alternative 2 would retain the management measures in the first season, which is January through June. For the second season, which is July through December, the change in the commercial trip limit would be to 750 pounds gutted weight, and it would retain the trip limit step-down to 500 pounds when 75 percent of the second season quota is met or projected to be met. It essentially retains what was in there before, but it just words it a little bit more clearly.

Alternative 3 would also retain the management measures in the first season. For the second season, you're looking at a commercial trip limit change to 500 pounds gutted weight and remove the step-down. Then Alternative 4 is the one that you asked us to include, and that would change the commercial trip limit for both the seasons to 750 pounds gutted weight and remove the step-down. I think that just clarifies the intent, and, like I said, your projected dates under the various alternatives are in this table.

DR. DUVAL: Myra, I just had a question. Alternative 4 just removes the step-down for Season 2? It doesn't remove it for Season 1?

MS. BROUWER: Well, that's what it appears to do, based on the language. Was that not the intent?

DR. DUVAL: I just want to be sure that's what folks wanted.

MR. HARTIG: I think so. I think the AP talked about retaining that higher trip limit in the first season as well, and then, in the second season, a deviation, I believe.

DR. DUVAL: Alternative 4 is just -- It has the 750-pound trip limit for both seasons, but it just removes the step-down only for Season 2. That's all.

MR. HARTIG: Right. I was just talking about Alternative 2. Okay.

MS. BROUWER: Then you have, just for comparison, from 2014 through 2016, Season 1 step-downs have occurred in early to mid-March. Season 2 step-downs have been from August to early September, and, prior to that, 2014 through 2016, there was a -- There was a closure. The step-down was early to mid-March, and then there was a closure in late March to mid-April, and so, after the step-down, it just was open for a couple more weeks and then it shuts down. Then the closure mid to late September, and, then, as you know, last year, we had a closure in October, and then there was a reopening for two days in December, and so that's just to put things into perspective.

DR. DUVAL: I think we would be -- If these alternatives mean the intent of the changes that we made at the last meeting, **we would just be looking for a motion to accept the IPT's suggested edits** or if there is anything that anybody else wants to add.

MR. BOWEN: **So moved.**

DR. DUVAL: **There is a motion by Zack to accept the IPT's suggested edits to the alternatives.** It's seconded by Ben. Is there any additional discussion on this? I am not seeing

any, but I know that these are important alternatives, which is why I am waiting. I guess just a big-picture review. Alternative 2 and 3 keeps everything the same the first season, and so you have that trip limit with the 500-pound step-down when 75 percent of the ACL is met, and it really just modifies the second season trip limit. Alternative 4 just changes the limit, lowers it slightly for both seasons, and removes the step-down as a consideration. Okay. **Is there any opposition to this motion? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

MS. BROUWER: Action 6 implements a commercial trip limit for the other jacks complex. Here, there was just a very slight revision to making it gutted weight instead of whole weight. Then the Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel reiterated their concern about almaco jack. The AP had previously recommended removing almaco from the complex and implementing a trip limit on that species.

Here, I would -- Again, you are welcome to make whatever changes you want, realizing that, if you want to remove a species from a complex, that that bumps this up to a plan amendment if we do that. Here, we had presented analysis to you in June that showed the majority of the landings are attributed to almaco, and so, if you implement the whole complex versus a trip limit just to almaco, the results are very similar.

MR. HARTIG: Can you include that analysis the next time we see this?

MS. BROUWER: Yes, absolutely.

DR. DUVAL: I think, again, I think we would be looking for -- If these alternatives meet everyone's satisfaction, we would just be looking for **a motion to accept the IPT's suggested edits to the alternatives.**

MR. GRINER: **So moved.**

DR. DUVAL: Motion by Tim. Is there a second? It's seconded by Charlie. **The motion is to accept the IPT's suggested edits to the alternatives under Action 6.** Is there any discussion? **Is there any objection to this motion? Seeing none, this motion stands approved.**

MS. BROUWER: I meant to mention, if I may, that I had for you the statistics here. We have had overages for this group since 2012. There has been early closures in June, sometime between June and August, since that time. Under all the trip limit alternatives, the projected closures, as I mentioned, from the analysis you saw in June, puts it sometime between June and August under both analysis scenarios, and so, again, this will come back to you in December for you to consider.

MR. GRINER: Is that table in here?

DR. DUVAL: If you go to Attachment 4b, which says "VBReg27AppendixJCommercialAnalyses", it's actually Table 12 on PDF page 28. That shows the past six years, I think it is, the annual catch limits, the landings, what proportion of the ACL was caught, and what the closure date is.

MS. BROUWER: Here, I have projected Table 14 from that attachment, which is the analysis that you saw in June for the jacks complex and the different alternatives. Of course, these were in whole weight, and this is what I was referring to, and I will make it a little bit bigger.

DR. DUVAL: Again, Alternative 2 is establishing a range of 500, 400, 300 pounds gutted weight trip limit for the complex as a whole, and Alternative 3 just establishes those same 500, 400, 300-pound trip limits for almaco jack only.

MR. HARTIG: Essentially, none of those trip limits gets us to much more than a half-year season. Would it be worth it to consider having the numbers 500, 400, and 300 and a step-down in each one of those seasons?

DR. DUVAL: So adding a step-down to each of those trip limit alternatives of dropping it to 50 percent of whatever the trip limit is once some proportion or some percentage of the --

MR. HARTIG: I would say 75 percent.

DR. DUVAL: 75 percent? How do folks feel about that?

MR. GRINER: I would like to see that.

MR. PHILLIPS: That would stretch out the season, but when you've got particular fishermen, like divers, that target the jacks, and they're not going to be targeting things like b-liners or pinkies or other things, it might put an undue hardship on those guys, and so just to keep that in mind.

MR. HARTIG: I don't know how many almaco they actually need to make a trip. I mean, they probably do, but I just don't know. I know, in the past, it was probably greater amberjacks and not so much almaco, but I'm sure, if those almaco present themselves, they will harvest them as well. The reason I say that is because almaco -- Anybody who fishes vermilion knows that you get a bycatch throughout the season of some level of almaco. It's not like when you target them, but you do get a bycatch, on a daily basis, of almaco, and it would be nice to cover some of those for a longer period of time. The other thing is the price of those animals is getting higher, and so that could be significant on a trip, even though it's only 250 to 150 pounds, but it would be worth it.

DR. DUVAL: I am just trying to think of how this is going to work in the sub-alternatives. That's basically six sub-alternatives, right?

MS. BROUWER: Well, I guess my understanding was that we would modify the existing sub-alternatives, and so Sub-Alternative 2a would be a 500-pound trip limit until 75 percent of the ACL is met, upon which the trip limit would step down to 250 pounds, and then we would do those modifications for each of the sub-alternatives. That is what I understood.

DR. DUVAL: Okay, and so I just want to make sure everybody understands that we wouldn't have these alternatives and sub-alternatives that have a straight trip limit until the ACL is met, but they would be modified to include a step-down.

MR. HARTIG: Given the fact that almaco drives this fishery, is there any reason to leave Alternative 3 in here?

DR. DUVAL: I don't think so, but I'm only one person.

MR. HARTIG: Well, I didn't either, and that's why I mentioned it. **I would make a motion to remove Alternative 3 and move it to Considered but Rejected.**

DR. DUVAL: There is a motion by Ben to move Alternative 3 to the Considered but Rejected. Is there a second to that motion? Chester seconds the motion. I think Ben is right, because almaco drives this fishery, and so it really doesn't matter. The analyses turned out pretty much the same, and so, regardless of whether you set a commercial trip limit for the complex as a whole, you can still go out and catch 500 pounds of jacks or 400 pounds of jacks or 300 pounds of jacks or whatever. The entire complex is going to close when the ACL is met under only almaco.

MR. HARTIG: One other thing. If you go ahead and make this a commercial trip for almaco only and you leave the other species that is abundant, like banded rudderfish, which we catch, it would not have a trip limit, and we would be able to keep a thousand pounds or whatever we can catch, which, if you go fishing at a specific time of year, you could catch more than a thousand pounds without any problem, and so, to me, keeping it for the complex reduces rudderfish and reduces almaco, and everybody is on an even playing field.

DR. DUVAL: I am seeing heads nodding around the table with that rationale.

MR. PHILLIPS: Ben, kind of following that thought process, down the road, do you think we should pull banded rudderfish out, and then we just do a separate ACL for that and we go through our ORCS method and figure out what the ACL should be and just have a -- If we need a separate fishery on that, then have it.

MR. HARTIG: My thought on the jacks complex is to have some kind of a citizen science project down the line where fishermen get lengths, not otoliths, but lengths. Manage it from lengths, both almaco and rudderfish, and we have some kind of way to monitor the fishery, and it's going to take time, but I think that's a logical way to do it.

Otherwise, there isn't enough samples for almaco or rudderfish, and I think this is going to -- The carrot and the stick is, if we can get enough fishermen participating in the data reports, we can get a good idea of what happens throughout the range and, as we develop this, we should be able to get a higher catch limit over time. That's what I have thought about when I have thought about the jacks and about how to move forward with this, and that's just the idea that I've had.

DR. DUVAL: So Ben has mentioned this for a while. Okay. Is there any other discussion on this motion? **Is there any opposition to this motion? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

**We would still need someone to make a motion, as Ben mentioned earlier, which is each sub-alternative of Alternative 2 would include a trip limit step-down to 50 percent of the trip limit when 75 percent of the ACL has been met.** Ben, would you like to make that?

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

DR. DUVAL: It's seconded by Chris. Is there discussion on this motion? I think Ben has provided the rationale for that. **Is there any opposition to this motion? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

MR. BOWEN: I don't know if this is the proper place to marry these two, but I have had some interest from our constituents about -- It's kind of, and I don't know if this will go along with Ben's idea of this jacks complex separation, but introducing a minimum size limit on the almaco for the commercial sector, because the guys are bringing them in small, and they're not worth a whole lot of money anyway, and so I don't know if this is the right place to do it or talk about it.

DR. DUVAL: Did the AP mention something like that? I thought that maybe they spoke about a size limit at some point, but maybe not.

MR. BOWEN: I am not sure if it's the AP, but definitely some constituents, commercial permit holders, have sent it to me.

MR. PHILLIPS: To Zack's point, I have talked to Jack about it, and I know those one to five are really hard to sell, and so it would help the fishery and the fishermen if we had a size limit so the fish were five pounds or bigger, or six pounds or bigger, anything like that, and it would stretch out the season and make what they do catch worth more money.

DR. DUVAL: I think that would be adding an action to establish a minimum size limit for -- Was it just almaco specifically?

MR. BOWEN: Well, I'm not a commercial fisherman. Maybe we can get some input from maybe Chris or Ben or Charlie about the banded rudderfish, if they want to include a size limit on those, but the one thing that was brought to my attention was just almaco.

MR. CONKLIN: (Mr. Conklin's comment is not audible on the recording.)

DR. DUVAL: Can you throw out some sizes?

MR. BOWEN: Twenty-inches is probably a five-pound fish, a twenty-inch fork, roughly.

DR. DUVAL: Okay. We're working towards a draft motion here to add an action to implement a minimum size limit for almaco jack. Include an option for, and this would be fork length, and so like twenty inches was one suggestion that was thrown out.

MR. CONKLIN: I would say eighteen to twenty-four inches fork length.

DR. DUVAL: So that's a range that the IPT could develop for eighteen to twenty-four inches.

MR. HARTIG: I would just -- Chris, if you have some of those in the marketplace, after this meeting, get with Myra and give her a length of what poundage the smaller animals are, and I will try and do the same.

MR. CONKLIN: They are closed, and so we don't have any in the marketplace.

MR. HARTIG: The ones I release, I will try and measure one.

MR. BOWEN: Just for consideration, and I know the commercial guys fish differently, and I know we're talking about strictly commercial, but, on my boat, my guys, we have different marks for twenty-inches for scamp and twenty-four for jacks, and so maybe include definitely those two, because we already have that as a size limit with other species.

MR. PHILLIPS: The IPT might be able to flesh that out and find those numbers.

DR. DUVAL: Okay, and so is someone willing to make this draft motion?

MR. BOWEN: **So moved. Make a motion to add an action to implement a minimum size limit for almaco jacks which would include a range of twenty to twenty-six inches, and I know I changed that a little bit, fork length.**

DR. DUVAL: There is a motion by Zack. Is there a second? It's seconded by Charlie. Is there further discussion? **Is there any opposition to this motion? Seeing none, that motion is approved.**

MS. BROUWER: Action 7 modifies the prohibition on the shallow-water groupers. In June, you requested the same modifications to this action as you did for the Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 26, and so we removed Alternative 2 and its sub-alternatives, which included options for a seasonal prohibition by area. We retained Alternative 4, which pertains to black grouper, and specified that it would be applicable to the area south of 28 degrees, and we modified Alternative 5.

In June, this is what you saw, and so Alternative 2 is the one we took away, and that was this area of seasonal closure. Then we modified Alternative 3 and 4, and we included some seasons for red grouper off the Carolinas. Just to remind you, the Snapper Grouper AP had approved a motion to pursue no action on this, and so this is what the IPT recommends changing.

Alternative 2 now would maintain the seasonal prohibition on the commercial harvest of shallow-water groupers yearly from January 1 through April 30 north of 28 degrees North latitude, and it would prohibit commercial harvest and possession of shallow-water grouper species, and they're listed in there, excluding black grouper south of 28 degrees North latitude, and then the sub-alternatives are what would be applicable to just south of 28 degrees. We have Sub-Alternative 2a of January through March, February through March is 2b, 2c is February through April, and February through May.

Alternative 3 is specific to gag. You had said that you wanted some alternatives that would put a trip limit for gag during April, and so that alternative maintains the prohibition on commercial harvest of shallow-water groupers annually from January 1 through April 30. Then commercial harvest of gag is prohibited January through April of each year, but then would be a trip limit during April, and that would be anywhere from 100 to 300 pounds gutted weight.

Alternative 4 also maintains the seasonal prohibition north of 28 degrees, and it would prohibit commercial harvest and possession of black grouper south of 28 degrees. Alternative 2 and

Alternative 4 are different, because Alternative 2 excludes black grouper. Alternative 4 includes black grouper, and that's the difference there. It's a little confusing, but so this one applies just to black grouper off of Florida, under the four sub-alternatives you see there. Then Alternative 5 is the one that maintains the prohibition for everybody, except for red grouper off of North Carolina and South Carolina, and then the sub-alternatives pertain just to that species, and we have sub-alternatives for January through May, February through May, and March through June.

The IPT spent a good bit of time talking about this action. It's a little complicated. We had some folks that suggested structuring the trip limit alternatives for gag during April as a separate alternative. This is already captured in what we're proposing here. Initially, you had wanted it to be a sub-alternative to Alternative 2, and so we took it out and put it in its own alternative. We need clarification of whether the gag trip limit would be in gutted weight or whole weight. I'm assuming it would gutted weight, and then, again, I think you have already provided the rationale for that 28 degree North latitude boundary.

MR. GRINER: Shouldn't that read "commercial harvest"?

DR. DUVAL: What are you referring to? Yes, Alternative 5 should say "commercial" and not "recreational", yes.

MS. BROUWER: Sorry. Cut-and-paste mistake.

DR. DUVAL: Myra, one question I had -- One suggestion would be to sort of flip-flop the order of Alternative 3 and Alternative 4, so that they're right next to each other, and then, Alternative 3, I am confused, because I know we had a discussion about establishing some trip limit, modest trip limit, for gag during the month of April that would allow for harvest off of Florida, but the wording of this alternative says commercial harvest of gag is prohibited from January 1 through April 30 of each year and specify a trip limit for gag during April, and so maybe it's change that through March. Should this be specific to south of 28 degrees? I mean, it seems like this was strictly for Florida, as opposed to the entire region, or that was my recollection. I see Ben nodding, but I'm looking for some other confirmation.

MR. PHILLIPS: I was just going to ask Myra, because I am seeing the AP recommended no action, and it was unanimous, and can you refresh my memory or do you remember why they came out with that recommendation?

MS. BROUWER: My recollection is -- We showed the AP basically the same analyses that we had for you in June, which was mainly just descriptive, landings distribution and that kind of thing, and my recollection is that they felt that the existing closure was working, and they did not want to make any changes right now to management of red grouper, pending the results of the stock assessment. There were some concerns there, and stakeholders, from what I remember from when we took this out to scoping, is that the public there also had a lot of support for no changes there. They felt that this is something they're used to, and they have learned to work around it, and the benefit of having this closure during the spawning season was a good one.

DR. DUVAL: However, there was comment from North Carolina about red grouper being roed-up in May, and so I would just throw that out there. Alternative 5 was specifically to address red grouper. The AP's recommendation was specific to the shallow-water grouper closure in general.

So it looks like -- Myra is trying to make corrections to what is currently Alternative 3, which is that trip limit, so that's clear that it applies to south of degrees North latitude, to try to match up these different alternatives.

MR. HARTIG: At all the south Florida workshops and then going to all the visioning workshops in Florida, this is -- I am not sure if we can look it up, but it was almost the number-one thing that came up, was to address the black and gag grouper, and reducing the season by at least one month was a common refrain throughout the entire process of both species and things we did.

DR. DUVAL: Yes, it was. **I think Myra has got a draft motion here to modify Alternative 3.** Is there someone willing to make that motion?

MR. CONKLIN: **So moved.**

DR. DUVAL: **Motion by Chris and second by Jessica to modify Alternative 3 as follows. Is there any other discussion on this motion? Is there any opposition to this motion? Seeing none, the motion stands approved.**

Mine was just guidance to staff to just maybe change the order, so that what is currently Alternative 2 and Alternative 4 are next to each other, so that people can see how this follows a logical progression.

MR. HARTIG: It would be nice to add a map of Florida showing where 28 degrees is.

MR. GRINER: Can we go back to Alternative 3 again? I have gotten myself confused here. Is Alternative 3 really just changing the closure dates for everybody?

DR. DUVAL: No, it's only south of 28 degrees latitude, and so it's only addressing south Florida.

MR. GRINER: So it says prohibit commercial harvest and possession of shallow-water grouper species, excluding black grouper, south of 28, and so you're just giving them black grouper?

DR. DUVAL: Because Alternative 4 brings up black grouper and when harvest for black grouper would be prohibited, and so January 1 through April 30 doesn't change north of 28 degrees latitude. South of 28 degrees latitude, for all the rest of the shallow-water grouper species except black grouper, you see those Sub-Alternatives 2a through 2d that span two, three, or four months. Then, if you go down to Alternative 4, again it still maintains the seasonal prohibition January 1 through April 30 north of 28 degrees North latitude, but then you have different alternatives for prohibiting commercial harvest and possession of black grouper in that area, and so it's just slightly offset for black grouper versus the rest of the shallow-water groupers south of 28 degrees.

MR. GRINER: Okay. I've got you now.

DR. DUVAL: I think we'll be able to have a map in there, like Ben said, and that will definitely help. Are we good on this action?

MS. BROUWER: The next action removes the minimum size limit for certain deepwater species, and you only have two alternatives, to retain that or to remove it for queen snapper, silk snapper,

and blackfin snapper, and so there has been no changes to this since the June meeting, and so we just had some minor editorial suggestions for you to consider.

DR. DUVAL: So all we would be looking for here is just a motion to accept the IPT's suggested edits.

MR. CONKLIN: **I will make the motion to accept the IPT's suggested edits in Action 8.**

DR. DUVAL: There's a motion by Chris and a second by Jessica. Is there any discussion? **Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

MS. BROUWER: Action 9 addresses gray triggerfish, and so, in June, you selected Alternative 2 as a preferred, and here are the alternatives as you saw them in June, and so Alternative 2 decreases the commercial minimum size limit, in federal waters off the east coast of Florida. We had just recommended some wording changes to that, and so that's it for this action.

DR. DUVAL: I think the second sentence says, "Recreational minimum size limit for gray triggerfish".

MR. HARTIG: **I would make the motion to accept the IPT's suggested edits to the action and alternatives.**

DR. DUVAL: Motion by Ben and seconded by Jessica. Any other discussion on this? **Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion is approved.**

The last action is powerheads, again. I mean, do folks want to move this to Amendment 46 or another appropriate amendment as well? I am seeing heads nodding around the table.

--

MR. HARTIG: Except Mel's.

DR. DUVAL: Except Mel's.

MR. BELL: (Mr. Bell's comment is not audible on the recording.)

MR. PHILLIPS: Mel has been bringing this up for a while now, and maybe one way to approach this is to leave it in and let it go to public hearing. If it starts being a distraction from what we're doing, we pull it out in December and go on. That's just a thought.

DR. DUVAL: The timing for this right now is to see everything again in December and approve it for public hearings that would occur in January, and so it seems like you would either want to leave it in or take it out and make a decision. I guess I'm saying that I don't know how much input you're going to get before December.

MR. HARTIG: **I would make a motion to remove Action 10 and put it in the Considered but Rejected Alternatives.**

DR. DUVAL: There is a motion by Ben and seconded by Zack to remove this action from the amendment and put it in the Considered but Rejected alternatives. That's not exactly the same

motion that was made under the recreational amendment, **which was to remove it and place it in 46.**

MR. HARTIG: Sorry. **I will add that to my motion, Madam Chairman.** Sorry about that.

DR. DUVAL: I just want to draw attention to the fact that the motion is different, and so that's Ben's motion. Zack has withdrawn his second if that's the motion, I think. Is that correct, Zack?

MR. BOWEN: I withdraw my second if it's the motion to go into Amendment 46.

DR. DUVAL: Okay. Doug seconds it. Is there discussion on the motion?

MR. HAYMANS: I just think that, if we're going to change powerheads for South Carolina, it needs to be done at one time, commercial and recreational, so that there's not some dissention amongst the two sectors about fairness. Let's do it at one time.

DR. DUVAL: Okay. **I think we've had plenty of discussion about this, and so the motion reads: Remove Action 10 from the Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment and move to Amendment 46.**

MR. BELL: Instead of dealing with both sectors in two amendments, we'll deal with both sectors in one amendment, and that may be less confusing to folks, but just as long as we deal with it.

DR. DUVAL: Okay. Any other discussion?

MR. HARTIG: Just one thing, Mel. I would broaden the discussion to the opposite of what we're asking and require a prohibition of powerheads in the entire South Atlantic. I mean, if you want to remove it, I would also add another option to bring the rest of the South Atlantic in line. I mean, in Florida, they've been prohibited for years in the state.

MR. HAYMANS: I don't believe that Georgia would be in favor of that in the EEZ off of Georgia. If you want to add it as an option, fine, but I would prefer to just deal with South Carolina.

DR. DUVAL: Why don't we deal with it when we talk about Amendment 46 in December? Any other discussion on the motion? **Is there any opposition to this motion? I am not seeing any opposition, and the motion passes.**

I think the last thing we might need to do is just approve --

MS. MCCAWLEY: Just to remind me, and so now the recreational amendment, because of the reorganization and all, is on a different time track than this one, but my question is would you do the public workshop part at the same time? Could they still occur at the same time, or are they now at different times? It looks like public comment before March, maybe, and then the recreational was after that, and I'm just a little confused.

DR. DUVAL: I think that we would probably get some clarification from staff in December, because, yes, that would have been the intent, is that this amendment we would approve for public

hearings that occur during the usual January/February timeframe and that we would receive public comment back in March. The recreational amendment, yes, is on a different timeline than that.

MR. HAYMANS: Is there a reason why we can't delay one or the other to keep them running on track together?

DR. DUVAL: I don't think there's a reason we couldn't.

MR. HAYMANS: That would be my preference, is that the two continue to be developed together.

MR. CONKLIN: The first sentence under Background, on page 1, says the "Vision Blueprint Recreational Regulatory Amendment 27", and we probably need to change that to "Commercial".

DR. DUVAL: Good catch. I guess I just want to, before we get a motion to approve the timing, I just want to get a sense from the committee. Does everybody want to maintain the same timing for both of these amendments? I am seeing nodding around the table. Okay.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I move the -- Is it the timing and tasks motion? I don't know what it is.

DR. DUVAL: I think it would just be a motion to approve the timing for Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 27 to be the same as Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 26, something along those lines. We will let Myra figure it out.

MS. MCCAWLEY: **Approve the same timing for Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 27 as that for Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 26 with final approval in September of 2018.**

DR. DUVAL: Motion by Jessica, and seconded by Mel. Is there further discussion on this motion? **Is there any opposition to this motion? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

I think that takes us all the way through Regulatory Amendment 27, and so thank you very much, Myra, and thank you, everybody. That was a lot of tough stuff to get through, and so now let's go to some tougher stuff. The next item on our agenda is an Update on the Socioeconomic Characterization/Portfolio Analysis of the Commercial Snapper Grouper Fishery, and John Hadley is going to come up and give us an update on that, and that's Attachment 5 in your briefing materials. Sorry. It's Kari and John. I didn't mean to leave Kari out of the mix here.

DR. MACLAUHLIN: This is Attachment 5 under the Snapper Grouper Committee folder. We have an outline for the socioeconomic profile of the commercial snapper grouper fishery, and I am going to do work on this under contract, and I will be bringing it back to you in March, because it is pretty in-depth, when we really got into what needs to be done, and there needs to be somebody who is not trying to do all the stuff the council staff does, and so it will be me.

We did run through this with the Snapper Grouper AP and also with the Socioeconomic Panel, and we got some input from them, and so the first thing is our description of the fishing communities, and so we're going to pull all of the available information and kind of put these together. We had split them up kind of by state, and we then we got Florida a little bit, and we got some input from the AP and the SEP. The AP had some different areas that they thought they would split it up, and

so we'll probably work like that. The SEP talked a little bit about that, but, if there's any input from you guys on looking at it -- We will have some of the communities, but we will probably make them kind of by sub-region within the states.

DR. DUVAL: What do you mean by sub-region?

DR. MACLAUHLIN: For example, the AP had put in that they thought that we should select the Palm Beach Inlet as the boundary and then also having the Outer Banks separate from the rest of North Carolina.

DR. DUVAL: I agree with that, but I just wanted to make sure that it wasn't like different regions than the input that the AP had provided, and so that's all. Thanks.

MR. HARTIG: If I look at this and I give you a letter of how I think it should be divided up -- The Keys are totally separate. They are their own entity. Monroe County south is different. I mean, economically, those guys spend a lot of money down there on lobsters and stone crab, and, the other part of the state, not so much. I would separate out the Keys.

Then, if you look at Florida and the shelf there between Monroe County and I would say St. Lucie Inlet, that's a whole other area that you have to deal with, as far as the number of people concerned, the number of people that are interacting there, and that's another area we could look at. Frankly, commercial fishing is going away in that area in Florida, where you have lots and lots and lots of people. Then you could probably do the rest of Florida from St. Lucie.

DR. DUVAL: I guess one other thing I would mention about North Carolina is that, when you think of the Outer Banks, I am really thinking about like Ocracoke north, and so, when I see Topsail, North Carolina, south to Georgia would be another region, it's kind of missing a gap in between, I think. I just want to be clear about what we mean when we're talking about Outer Banks, because it's definitely different from Cape Lookout south, and even Brunswick County is a little bit different. There is a lot of overlap with South Carolina.

MR. PHILLIPS: When they say Topsail, North Carolina, south to Georgia, did they mean through Georgia or just to Georgia?

MR. HADLEY: That was one of the AP recommendations, and I believe it was through Georgia, if I remember correctly.

DR. DUVAL: I think what we mean is that's a big region, and so we may want to consider dividing that up a little bit. I mean, certainly off of Georgia and sort of southern South Carolina is a lot bigger and wider, and so you're going to have probably some different portfolios, just because of that geography.

DR. MACLAUHLIN: Moving on, the next section of this will be the descriptive statistics of the permit holders, and so we're going to get the permit data and talk about some of the basic information about the distribution throughout the states and in the communities and what kind of business structure, you know how many are corporations and how many are individuals, the demographics, as much as we can get that kind of information about the permit holders, and then

also the portfolios and what other fishing permits are they holding. I know that, Michelle, you had suggested incorporating the state-level permits for permit portfolios.

DR. DUVAL: I think there are folks that fish in -- Their portfolio includes state-water fisheries and federal-water fisheries, and part of my concern, in terms of looking at the portfolios, is looking at how they change, just based on regulations, and so Amendment 13C is a pretty big -- Further down in this document, it notes that there were some that were just based on landings from 2014 to 2016, and I don't think that's a long enough time period. I think, based on what we asked for in the vision blueprints, you might be able to see changes in time in sort of the meta-data of what event occurs that causes these changes in portfolios and harvest, and that's going to be really important to look at over a longer timeframe.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I agree that length of time was my concern as well, and so I would like for -  
- In addition to this document looking at a broader time series, in the particular thing relative to permits, I would like to include the length of time that people hold the particular permits, and so you were talking about adding state permits as well?

DR. DUVAL: I don't think that you necessarily need to get into the details of difference in permits. I mean, regardless, you're going to have to have some state permit in order to -- I just want to make sure that those people that have federal permits that have used them -- Because of regulatory reasons, of species distribution reasons, those that have been spending more of their time on state-managed fisheries, and that's all.

DR. MACLAUHLIN: When we talked to the AP, when we got into kind of talking about the permits and the permit portfolios, and we were talking about the leases and how that actually worked when fishing on somebody else's permit that's not in your name and getting a description of that, as much as we can, and maybe being able to talk about the level that that's happening at and who is not purchasing a permit or two permits to enter the fishery and why. Is it capital, that they don't have enough capital, or that's what they want to do, that they want to have kind of flexible -- Do they not want to commit and do they just want to try it for a year or something like that? So we'll get into those what we're going to call leased permits, but, technically, it's not the permit that is leased.

The AP also recommended looking at how the permits are transferred between the vessels, and there are some regulations about certain permits being on a vessel, and they have to maybe move those permits around to participate.

We will try to get into the demographics. There are -- I think SERO is going to get some of that with their permit application, and so we may be able to pull a little bit about the permit holders. However, when it's in a corporation's name, that's the age and everything that you get. It's the actual corporation, and so, as far as the people, that might be a different -- We might just have to sample individuals and get an idea about their ages.

Then the AP had recommended -- They were talking about can you find a -- It's just all the obstacles of how much does it cost and are the permits easy to find, if you want to purchase the two permits or a corporation? That's just a little bit about what goes into entering the fishery, and then our SEP did have a little input about using the home state of the permit holder and looking at that in addition to the homeport of the vessel that's associated with the permit.

Then the next one, we're getting a little more into looking at the permits, in addition to the leased. With the AP, we did get into a discussion a little bit about latent permits, and some of them were concerned about how we were going to define that, which is not what actually we were trying to do, and so it was a little more could we look at and give you guys an idea of how many permits there are that have no or very low landings over a certain number of years or something.

I think what the AP was more concerned about was that you guys -- When we look at however we want to call these, like low-level-landings permits, why people are holding onto them and not fishing them, but not selling them. For example, they may be participating in another fishery, and I think that's what the AP was more concerned about than defining "latent" or something like that. It was just talking about why people are not taking advantage of the fact that they could make some money by selling it if they're not going to fish it.

Then we were going to look at permit costs and availability around the region, because that does vary a little bit, and maybe talk to some of the people that are active brokers for these. We will look at the permitted vessels and the distribution around the region, the hotspots, and then get some information about the vessel characteristics.

Then we got into a little more of a discussion with the AP about the traditional bandit boats, and so it was really interesting, and the AP had some good input, talking about the length of a trip and really what kind of defines this, other than the gear that's on there, and then kind of the differences between the traditional boat, bandit boat, as they define them, and these day-boats, and so we'll be able to kind of talk about those, and those seemed to kind of vary throughout the region, and so it was really interesting, the AP input about those.

They did bring up a little more about working waterfronts and other non-fishery-related issues that are affecting them, which is where can they -- The cost of the property and living on the coast, in addition to having a place to store their boat and offload. Then, of course, looking at the changes over time, since the two-for-one, and then getting into those limited permits, the 225, about what's going on with those as well, how many of those are left and who are those permit holders and how has that changed.

MR. HAYMANS: I had a question. On the AP's input, there were bullets on leased permits, and is that permit holders pre-two-for-one that they're talking about? It says some fishermen who are no longer fishing have two permits and lease them both, undermining the two-for-one program.

DR. DUVAL: People own -- They have two permits, and one of them may be a boat that they own and then someone else is basically leasing a vessel from someone else for that other permit. Then there are permit brokers as well.

MR. HAYMANS: I understand that. I was just trying to get at why the commenter felt like it undermined the two-for-one. The two-for-one, if someone gets into the business and buys two, it gets combined into a singular permit. If a guy already has two permits, he is free to do what he wants with those two. I don't know, but I just didn't understand why it undermined the program, in that person's opinion.

MR. PHILLIPS: I am not sure, Doug, but I am thinking the person may have somehow had two single permits and was just leasing a boat back as a single permit instead of selling the two and it turned into one. I am not sure, but I am thinking that might have been the case.

DR. MACLAUHLIN: I don't know exactly who raised that point, but I think, in general, what the AP is concerned with the two-for-one is that what it was supposed to do over time is reduce the number of permits, but, in addition to people who are owning them and just leasing them out and corporations that can sell the whole package, it basically has plateaued, and, as the proportion of corporate permits that are in there -- It's not ever going to continue to -- What it's doing is it's not achieving its goals really to continuously reduce the number of permits over time. It's just kind of just penalizing individuals who are trying to enter the fishery not as a corporation. That's the AP's input.

MR. BOWEN: To that point, Kari, has this council considers moving toward a moratorium on the for-hire permits, I would be curious, but I think what we'll see, and of course time will tell, but I think we will see a continuation of the reduction of commercial permits, because, if you are a for-hire permit holder in the snapper grouper fishery, you cannot lease -- You will not be able to lease a commercial permit if the limited entry or moratorium on the for-hire permit goes in place.

DR. DUVAL: I am confused about that statement, but I am really afraid of going down a rabbit-hole right now. I think, because we're supposed to get information back on limited entry in December and have a discussion there, maybe you can educate us more on that.

MR. BOWEN: Yes, ma'am, or we can have a sidebar after the meeting. I know from experience, is the reason I can say it.

DR. DUVAL: Okay.

MR. GRINER: I am a little confused on, number one, how you're going to gather the data on a leased permit and what you really mean by it being leased. Are you talking about a person or an entity or a corporation that is leasing their permit to another individual or a corporation or are you talking about a corporation who is leasing a vessel and assigning that permit to a leased vessel that is within that corporation?

What you really have is each permit doesn't necessarily mean that that same entity owns the vessel, and so I don't know what it really tells you if you have a corporation owning the permit and then they have another corporation that they have their vessel under and they lease it back to themselves, and so, really, it's going to look like this permit is being leased, but it's the same entity overall that owns the vessel and the permit. However, in order to do the paperwork at the federal level, you have to lease the vessel back to the other corporation, and so I'm not sure, number one, how you're going to decipher -- If we're trying to find out who is owning a permit and not using it, this might not really tell you that.

DR. MACLAUHLIN: I anticipate that spaghetti that is going to happen with the logbook data and the permit data and a vessel that is associated with it, and we'll go -- I mean, these are the questions that you guys should talk about, like how is this working? Is it rare, or is that a common thing that everybody does? I may end up calling some people and saying, what is this and having them explain how they're moving that around, and so we'll -- I don't know. I know there are some

that are going to be complicated, because of the way they move it around in the corporation, and so we'll see.

DR. DUVAL: I think that's a point, is to understand the structure of how the permits are working and whether they are individually owned or whether they're owned by a corporation or leased, et cetera. Charlie and then Mark, and then we're going to move on to let Kari finish this, because we have a very busy agenda.

MR. PHILLIPS: One way to try to tease that out, Kari, is just the owner of the boat and the owner of the permits or corporation, and I lease stuff to myself, too. My name is on both of them, then, bam, you know how it works, and so that may be how you do it.

MR. BROWN: When the permits came out, I've got a permit in my name, and, in time, I built another boat, and it was incorporated. The boat was built as a corporation, and so I had to lease the permit back to the corporation, and I have to do that every so often.

MR. CONKLIN: I was just going to say there is a database of addresses and stuff, and you could always call or mail all the permit holders, like a survey.

DR. DUVAL: Yes, that's what they're using, is the SERO permits database, to do this. Okay. Let's move on.

DR. MACLAUHLIN: Then the next section we have is the profile of the landings, and so some of this will be a little bit of this seasonality and the distribution of landings. We're going to try to put together some typical catch combinations, their catch portfolios, kind of how we did with the black sea bass endorsement holders, where we looked at their basic yearly plan that they work with, and landings by gear and some of that basic information. Then John Hadley will be working on the economic part of the analysis, and so this will be like the heavy analysis that's going to incorporate a lot of the logbook information and the catch combinations that are coming in.

DR. DUVAL: This was a part where I -- Where it says, "the above topics will be examined based on 2014 to 2016", and that is not long enough.

DR. MACLAUHLIN: The SEP did have some information about using longer time periods to look at the changes over time, and so we'll figure all of that out.

DR. DUVAL: I think their input was like you may want to look at it for five years, and I just don't think five years is long enough either to be able to capture the changes in the fishery.

MR. HADLEY: Do you have an idea of kind of a guideline? Are we looking at fifteen or twenty or longer?

DR. DUVAL: I would say at least fifteen to twenty, because we had some really significant changes in the early 2000s, and those will have impacts on sort of geographic distribution of permits and people's portfolios.

MR. HARTIG: I see regional seasonality, but what about year-to-year differences, where people take advantage of certain species one year and not the next and how that changes through time?

DR. MACLAUHLIN: Hopefully, with the analysis, we will be able to talk about kind of the broad ways that it works, and it's not going to fit everybody exactly, but it will give you guys a better idea of each region and this size of operation and this is usually how they function, but, in a bad year, they will switch or something.

MR. HAYMANS: Kari, I'm sure it's obviously, but it's just that I don't see it here. Backing up to the description of the permit holder, will that include a description of how long the individual has held a permit or what type of permit? Did I miss that?

MS. MCCAWLEY: That's what I was asking.

MR. HAYMANS: I am sorry. Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Also, and maybe somebody said this, but are we going to look at the reliance of a dealer on imported seafood? Is that something that you can look at as well as part of this portfolio?

DR. MACLAUHLIN: We will incorporate what we can with pulling the dealers in, as far as how they function with the commercial sector, but I don't know if there is enough data of the effect of the influence of the imports. Maybe we can do some more qualitative data collection with that, which is just going to fish houses and talking to them.

MS. MCCAWLEY: One more thing. Is this also going to capture that there might be fishermen that maybe have a homeport in one state, but, during a certain part of the year, they are landing fish in another state? This will capture all of that, right?

DR. MACLAUHLIN: Hopefully, and especially if there is a big enough group where you can kind of see that, where you can see the typology of a fishing operation, for example like the king mackerel guys that go, somebody like that that maybe moves around in kind of a pattern every year.

MR. HAYMANS: I apologize for reiterating a question, but this is snapper grouper, and Georgia doesn't have any snapper grouper communities. We might have a snapper grouper neighborhood, but no communities.

DR. DUVAL: It's called a bluff. It's a snapper grouper bluff.

MR. HAYMANS: But I do have what I consider to be a true shrimping community, fishing community that is based on shrimping. Although I know you're doing snapper grouper, are there inquiries into changes in fishing communities that might be more than just snapper grouper that you all can look into? It's a good opportunity, when you're out doing the work, right?

DR. MACLAUHLIN: If I'm available after this meeting.

DR. DUVAL: Nice.

MR. BELL: Something I know in South Carolina, whether it's Sea Grant or Clemson, but there may be equivalent things going on in the states, where they have looked at the communities and how things are changing and what the issues are, but I don't know that that's kind of our thing. That's probably a state-by-state thing.

DR. DUVAL: That stuff has been done in North Carolina, as John knows, because he has done it, when he used to work for DMF, but we have these socioeconomic profiles that are for different parts of North Carolina, and so it's not necessarily a snapper grouper community or a speckled trout community or a southern flounder community. It's just North Carolina fishing communities, really based on different areas. Okay.

Anything else for these guys? I think that was some really good input, where obviously we're excited and interested in this, and we're very excited that Kari is going to keep on working on it, and so thank you.

The next item on our agenda is red grouper, and this is Attachment 6a and 6b in your briefing book, and so, if you recall, in June, we had a presentation from Science Center staff briefing us on the results of the red grouper standard assessment, and the stock is overfished and is undergoing overfishing. What appears to have happened is that recruitment has just been at extremely low levels, and so it has not -- It has failed to rebuild within the rebuilding time period, and it will not under projections.

We talked about how to address this at our last meeting, and so we requested some additional projections from the Science Center with management starting in 2018. The ones that were provided previously had management starting in either 2017 or 2019, and we requested projections based on both a low-recruitment scenario as well as an expected or average term recruitment scenarios.

Then the other thing that I would note is that we just received a letter today, I believe, from the Regional Office informing us that red grouper is overfished and undergoing overfishing and recommending that we need to start what sounds like a new plan amendment, in order to establish a new rebuilding plan, and so John and Myra are here to kind of walk us through what our options are and how we might address this.

MR. CARMICHAEL: We requested the updated projections, and they will be reviewed by the SSC in October, and what we wanted to do here was -- We requested them in June, and we asked for them for this meeting so that you have a chance to consider them and then add any specific questions for the SSC. Now would be a good time to relay them to us and we could take them to the SSC and discuss them.

Part of this is because of the kind of challenge that has arisen, as is alluded to in the letter, where you have this long-term expectation of the productivity of the stock related on what you expect from recruitment long term, but then you have the short term, more recent, where we happen to be in a period of low recruitment, and so, when you apply that low recruitment to the stock, and you assume that goes on, then you're not going to rebuild to that level of stock that you projected if you get high recruitment or if you get the long-term expected. I shouldn't even say, but as you get that long-term expected recruitment.

It's just this separation between long-term average condition and what you may be experiencing at the time, and so we know that you can have times of really high recruitment and you're doing a lot better than you thought you would, and, we can have, as in red grouper, periods of low recruitment.

There was some question as to how we might proceed with that with regard to the reference points, and it seems like the recommendations from the Regional Administrator are pretty good, that we set short-term ABC based on the current, which is a low-recruitment expectation, and then continue to review our rebuilding plan based on what we think really is the overall stock productivity.

I think, at some point, if we continue with low recruitment, we may have to revisit that, perhaps with the next assessment, if we say, you know, we're still getting low recruitment, and maybe the period in the past wasn't really expected, but, for some reason, that was particular high. After you get more years, then those periods of higher landings and higher productivity have less influence, but we see that in the next assessment. I think if anybody has any particular questions that you would like to provide to the SSC, we'll take those down, and, as Michelle said, we will need to do a plan amendment, but we have a couple of years. Monica, I think you said two. We have two years to address the revising of the rebuilding plan.

DR. DUVAL: I think one thing I don't know -- That letter was sent to me, and I think John and Gregg and a couple others were copied, but, if we could get that sent around to council members, that would be great, so everybody can see that, but I think just the part that I would read for folks is that NOAA Fisheries recommends that the council revise the rebuilding plan for South Atlantic red grouper based on the results of SEDAR 53. Two recruitment scenarios were presented in the assessment, long-term and expected recruitment and low recruitment. Due to the effects of possible episodic recruitment, the council could prepare using the expected long-term recruitment scenario when revising the rebuilding plan and timeframe. Additionally, the council could take a conservative approach, by adopting annual catch limits based on the low-recruitment scenario, to increase the likelihood of stock rebuilding.

I think, from my perspective, I would want the SSC's input on taking that approach, that is setting catch level recommendations based on the low-recruitment scenario, but revising the rebuilding plan based on the expected long-term rebuilding scenario.

MR. BELL: Just so I'm clear, so it would be two years, or up to two years, before we actually have something, regulatory-wise, to kind of crank down? Is that what we're saying?

DR. DUVAL: I am going to defer to our attorney to remind us of the deadlines under the Act.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: You will have two years to develop and then implement the measures to end overfishing and rebuild.

MR. BELL: Maybe I am just a real worrywart about red grouper, but, just looking at the numbers, it's just really a long time, to me, and I remember that last year we were at 13 percent I think of the ACL, and now we're at 6 percent, and, particularly in our piece of the world up here, two years just seems kind of scary.

DR. DUVAL: We had a conversation last time where we talked about -- We have this expedited framework, where we can actually just change the ACL quickly, and that might be a possibility. We can ask Monica if we could use that to modify the ACL, based on the low-recruitment projections, and then work on another amendment for the rebuilding plan in the meantime.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: Certainly. I think that is definitely an approach you have. You've also got interim rules to reduce overfishing, but remember those have a shelf life of basically six months, with another six months, and so I think Michelle's suggestion of a little bit more permanent longer-term fix is a great one, about using an abbreviated framework process.

MR. HAYMANS: Why would you use anything other than 26 and 27 to adjust the measures? I mean, they're in here.

DR. DUVAL: 26 and 27?

MR. HAYMANS: Amendment 26 and 27, red grouper is there. We have an opportunity. I mean, I know you've got adjust their ACL, but, as far as their measures, you could adjust the seasonality and size and retention limit all in 26 and 27.

DR. DUVAL: But we can't address the rebuilding plan in those documents.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Another question. Could we start this procedure today, before this goes to the SSC? Is that allowed?

DR. DUVAL: The SSC did not provide -- They didn't provide any yield streams, because red grouper was under a rebuilding plan, and they suggested that, based on the results of the assessment, we might need to revise our rebuilding plan. I think the way the expedited framework works is that we could, as you see in the overview, hold a public hearing during the December 2017 council meeting, and that would allow for the SSC to look at these projections that we have received, and we can get their input on the approach as outlined here for using the low-recruitment projections to set ABCs and then use the expected projection for the rebuilding plan, and we could undertake that in December of 2017 to set ACLs for red grouper, and so that would be an expedited means of doing it.

MR. WAUGH: I am not sure that we can change the rebuilding timeframe through that abbreviated framework. I would have to look at that, but the idea behind the abbreviated framework is you could tell us at this meeting that you want us to bring a document to you at the December meeting to reduce the ACL, and we would do the analyses. The SSC, we would incorporate their review, and you would be taking final action on that at the December meeting. Then that would be implemented during the 2018 fishing year, and so you can respond very quickly in reducing the ACL.

DR. DUVAL: Then we could work on a rebuilding plan.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: Gregg, you're right. The abbreviated framework says you can use it to adjust ABC and ACL and ACT.

MR. DILERNIA: Monica might want to speak to this point, but don't you have to identify in your agenda that this would be the first framework meeting? Don't you have to publish it in the agenda ahead of time? I am not sure, but I think that's what we do in the Mid.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: I don't think our framework is exactly like the framework from the Mid-Atlantic, but are you saying that we should have identified this as the first framework meeting, or what exactly are you asking?

MR. DILERNIA: We usually have to have two framework meetings, and it would have to be announced. The first framework meeting has to be announced. They both have to be announced, but I think that this one has to be announced, and we plan on it being a framework meeting.

DR. DUVAL: The way our abbreviated framework is written up is that the council will first hold a public hearing during the council meeting during which they will review the stock assessment and the SSC's recommendations, which we did that in June, which is when we reviewed the assessment and the SSC's recommendations. In addition, the public will be advised prior to the meeting that the council is considering potential changes to the ABC, ACL, and/or ACT, and the council will provide the public the opportunity to comment on essential changes prior to and during the council meeting, and so that's what we would be doing in December.

MR. CARMICHAEL: I think that's good, and I think the council asking the SSC to look at the plan provided by the Regional Administrator and saying we expect to follow that is kind of like what Jessica said. I think that's -- We are kind of getting started. We may not have an amendment identified and a workplan, but I think we're telling them it's going to come, and we know it's got to be done within this window of two years from now.

DR. DUVAL: In the meantime, we would be taking action to reduce the ACL. What is up here on the screen is red grouper guidance is for the SSC to review the projections in October and that it would be our intent to use the expedited framework procedure to adjust the ACLs based on the low-recruitment scenario while developing an amendment to implement the new rebuilding plan, and I think we would just add "based on SSC input in regards to the expected" -- Maybe we can just leave it at just "SSC input" and leave it at that.

Is everybody clear on where we are? We're going to see a document in December that would allow us to at least adjust the ACL, and we're going to get the SSC's input on taking this approach that is suggested in the letter from the Regional Office, which Mike has sent around to everybody. We have two years to get regulations in place, implemented. Is there any objection to this approach? I am not seeing any. Okay. I think that concludes red grouper for us.

We do have a couple of things. The next item on the agenda is the ABC Control Rule Modifications Amendment, and this is Attachment 7. This is something that we were not able to get to at our last meeting, and I think, given the complexities of this document, something that Ben had mentioned, that I brought up earlier today, was the possibility of having a webinar meeting to address the ABC control rule modifications more fully, because this is kind of a complicated document, and it involves both scientific uncertainty as well as the council's risk policy or management uncertainty.

The SSC has started looking at revisions to the ABC control rule, and so they have seen, I think, a similar document as to what you have in the briefing materials thus far, and they have provided some input, but they are also going to be addressing this at their upcoming meeting in October, and they need some input from us specifically on the council's risk policy, and so I guess, first of all, what I have asked John to do is to give us a quick walkthrough to get the input that we need on the feeling on the council's risk policy, and then also I would like some input on how folks feel about having a webinar after the SSC meeting to come back to a discussion of the ABC control rule, probably like maybe a three-hour webinar or something like that that would take just a morning or an afternoon. Silence means yes. Okay. Great. Glad you guys are so agreeable.

MR. CARMICHAEL: This is starting to feel like a white grunt assessment, moving this ABC control rule down the road. I will be quick, for Michelle. You have Document A7. It's very similar to the version that you had in June. It has been discussed by the SSC. It's a little more oriented like an FMP, in some ways, and we reorganized the alternatives, to make them flow together better than what was provided in June, but it starts out with just the background.

You know we developed this in 2008, and it's been added to and amended and added on, so that it's got some inconsistencies across it, which the SSC has been talking about. Going back to 2014, they started looking at how the rule was performing and how were these different pieces maybe creating issues, and so they started thinking that they needed to make some changes, and that has kind of been ongoing at various SSC meetings for a number of years now. This is very much a work in progress.

Lately, with the changes in the Magnuson Act that have brought some additional flexibility, it has perhaps moved from the counter onto the back burner of the stove, and it's simmering a little bit back there now, as we continue to work on it.

There is really three main areas that we're talking about when we're talking about this ABC control rule revision. One is to give the council control over the risk tolerance. The current rule combines assessment uncertainty and risk tolerance considerations into one overall table that is adjusted in that setting of  $P^*$ , and it's a combination of both, and I think both the council and the SSC agree that the council should be setting the risk tolerance, and, unless someone says they disagree with that, that's something we can tell the SSC that you definitely agreed to, that the council should set the risk tolerance.

The other big section is dealing with those inconsistencies that I mentioned. There is some problems with the words that are used differently in different parts of it, because we have the rule and some addenda that have been added on. In some cases, it's very prescriptive to particularly the data-poor methods that were in existence back in 2008 and when this was first developed, such as, for example, what's called DC-AC or DB-SRA. They were kind of the cutting edge of data-limited techniques, and our rule adopted those specifically, and they mentioned those specifically as being used in some of the tiers.

Well, not surprisingly, with all the data-limited stocks in the nation, there is a lot more ways of dealing with data-limited stocks than were existent at that time, and so we would like to remove some of that specificity and not focus in on those particular items and give us a more general rule to deal with data-limited approaches that exist now and that might be developed in the future.

Then the final part is just a number of really straightforward provisions that deal with the Magnuson Act allowances for flexibility, like multiyear specifications and carrying over of unused quota from year to year, which you can do, but it just needs to be addressed in your control rule, so that you don't end up with having a potential catch limit, because of a carryover, that could potentially exceed the ABC, and a lot of the other councils have dealt with it. The Gulf has done some amendments dealing with this, and I think the process for dealing with those will be pretty straightforward.

The part that is a little more complex is changing the general approach of the control rule to give you the authority to set the risk tolerance and figure out how we deal with the assessment uncertainty within that risk tolerance and how we would go from that to the uncertainty to the actual ABC level, and I just want to focus in on a couple of those alternatives and actions that deal with that, because I think, if we can get some feedback on some of these, it will really help the SSC's discussion.

That's where Action 1 is really where we're going to get into changing the overall structure of the control rule, and the proposal is to go with categories, based on data-rich, data-moderate, and data-poor. We tried to think of a better word than things like "data-poor" and "data-moderate", and we haven't yet, but maybe we will in time.

The next one is Action 2, and it's very straightforward, which is giving the council the authority to determine the risk tolerance and the acceptable probability of overfishing. That's really is saying you either don't do it or you do, and you let the council set the  $P^*$ , and so we know the council and the SSC both -- Then it gets a little more interesting in 3, and this is where it actually gets into what are your criteria for determining the risk tolerance.

The Alternative 2 that's been laid out is just using the control rule provisions, and so, in the Tier 1, which are the assessed stocks, there is something called dimensions, which are the criteria evaluated, and Dimensions 3 and 4 address stock status and probability and susceptibility. Those are the risk factors, and so you could just pull those two out and let you score kind of like the SSC has done, but the SSC has not been satisfied with that approach, because it is kind of limiting, and we have learned that our stocks just don't line up as nicely as we would have liked and it doesn't give us very good resolution, and so the SSC is not in support of that. They would really like to consider something more comprehensive and different.

That led us to look at some of the other councils, and one is the Mid-Atlantic approach, where they have a -- Let's go straight to the figure. If you look here at this figure, this is the type of approach the Mid-Atlantic uses, where, up to a certain biomass level, you have say a  $P^*$  or a tolerance level of 0.4. Then, as biomass declines, your tolerance of overfishing declines, down to some level where you decide that you have basically no tolerance for overfishing or no ABC, and actually therefore it would be zero.

One of the concerns, at least for us, is that we have the kind of precision and confidence in our assessments that would allow us to make those small, incremental changes in our  $P^*$  and your risk tolerance, because of slight changes in the stock biomass, and we may not, and the other question is do we have the type of assessment frequency that makes an approach like this really work well, and I think those are kind of some of concerns that we should consider, the council should consider, when we have this longer call.

The other part is that, conceptually, do you really believe that your risk tolerance is related to the biomass of the population? Obviously, if you're overfishing, then there's a chance that you're going to be overfished and you're going to have to go into rebuilding, and so, as your biomass gets low, then the effects of overfishing could be more damaging, because you may push your stock into overfished, but, again, do we think we have the kind of resolution in information and timeliness in our assessments that really lets us take advantage of that?

If not, then you may be more comfortable with something like this table here, which shows the same type of approach, where you tie your risk tolerance to biomass levels, but it's really more categorical. We have categories of levels to say, well, if we're above BMSY and we consider this stock low risk, then maybe we're willing to go to 0.5 chance of overfishing. If it's high risk, maybe we're only willing to go to 0.4 as a chance of overfishing.

Then, if our biomass is between MSY and MSST, then we have a slightly lower tolerance for overfishing, and one thing this does is it doesn't go down below the MSST level, which for us is good, because, once we go below MSST, we're rebuilding, and we have said that the ABC comes based on a rebuilding strategy, and so, for us, I think having a varying risk tolerance as you get below MSST, or a biomass of 0.5, doesn't really make a lot of sense, and so it might be something like this is a more appropriate approach for us to look at.

I guess I will just pause there, because the other one is Alternative 5, and that would just be where you pick a level for any stock, based on your judgment, and then Alternative 6 is a little different. It sets it at 75 percent of FMSY, and so you would say that we want to manage these stock at 75 percent of FMSY, and uncertainty would come into play when you have determined the yield at that level, but you wouldn't set it at these specific overfishing levels. There was a recent paper on this, which is cited there, and it showed that this is very robust to preventing overfishing across a lot of stocks. However, it could give up some yield in some stocks that are at higher biomass that you might otherwise have said 0.5 or 0.4.

I know that's a lot to take in. If you haven't looked at this document a lot in the past, it might all seem pretty new, but, if anyone has any guidance or questions for the SSC, in terms of these couple approaches for setting risk tolerance, I think that would help us, to get some feedback from you.

DR. DUVAL: I will just jump out there, because I have looked at this a few times, but I do like the Alternative 4 example with the risk of overfishing for biomass categories. I guess maybe the SSC consider total biomass versus spawning stock biomass. Alternative 5 would provide the maximum flexibility, by specifying a risk tolerance for each stock directly, but I just don't think we have the information or the expertise to do that, and so my recommendation would be that we not consider that.

Alternative 6 certainly is robust, according to the literature. Maybe not as flexible as we might need for some of our species. I am not sure that it should be thrown out entirely, but it might not be quite as flexible as we need, and then the only other thing -- I noted, just when the SSC was reviewing this, in terms of Alternative 3, the Mid-Atlantic approach, that they had some concerns about the ability to really be effective with this type of approach, just based on the information that we have. I would be more inclined to go with something like Alternative 4.

I think the only other thing was I agreed with the suggestion that the existing PSA analysis should be updated if it was going to be used in any way in the ABC control rule. I mean, there have been multiple times where the SSC itself has indicated that the PSA analysis from MRAG Americas was no longer functioning or no longer applicable to the stuff that we had under consideration.

MR. DILERNIA: I agree with you. I am not so sure that the Mid-Atlantic approach would work as well as your other alternative here in this region, and we call that the hockey-stick approach there, for a number of reasons, just the number of species that you have versus the number of species that we have, and the frequency of the assessments that we go through versus the frequency of your assessments. We have had a little difficulty with this also, but, while that may suit us in the Mid-Atlantic, as I begin to learn more and more about your fisheries here in the South Atlantic, I am not so sure that that might be the way that you want to go.

DR. DUVAL: I appreciate that, Tony, and Dr. Boreman also sits on our SSC as well, and he had indicated some similar comments also.

MR. BREWER: I agree with Alternative 4.

DR. DUVAL: Okay. Thank you, Chester. Are there any other thoughts or input on this as we move forward?

DR. PONWITH: I like the idea of separating the risk from the scientific uncertainty and dealing with them separately. I think it becomes important, if you do deal with them separately, to make sure there is some degree of independence between what you consider in one versus what you consider in the other, so you don't have sort of confounding signals, I think, when you put them both together.

I like the idea of looking at the uncertainty by the assessment, and it's because, in a way, we almost have things backwards, and that is, if you do the assessment and it has a quantitative measure of uncertainty associated with it, you are very concrete about that uncertainty, but, in some cases, we have these assessed stocks that are based on third-highest year or something like that, and then it doesn't have that quantitative measure, and we have a tendency to get qualitative about that, and you could have a situation where the uncertainty penalty for a stock that's unassessed is less onerous than one is assessed, and that creates almost an incentive to not know more about the stock than we do right now.

To me, if things were logical, even the most uncertain quantitative stock assessment is bringing more knowledge to the true state of that stock than some of these data-limited approaches, and so there would be this incentive to go from the qualitative approach to understanding the stock status and setting that ABC and having wider buffers in that situation and using a more qualitative, less analytical approach.

When we get down to the scientific uncertainty, I am eager to see that kind of treatment, and then, again, I think the question on when you look at risk is are the metrics you're using to evaluate risk different than the metrics you're using to look at scientific uncertainty, so that you actually do get two different independent things to consider, as opposed to sort of the same thing and have double-jeopardy on that same thing?

DR. DUVAL: I think making sure that you're using the same metric is important, in terms of bringing those pieces. Any other thoughts on input to the SSC for our risk tolerance?

MR. HARTIG: (Mr. Hartig's comment is not audible on the recording.)

DR. DUVAL: Okay, and so I think --

MR. HARTIG: It went much better than I thought it would.

DR. DUVAL: I think that maybe having the -- Keeping open the possibility of having a webinar after the SSC's October meeting would be a good thing, because I think we could spend two to three hours on this once we have the whole control rule, and we don't have time to do that during a normal meeting.

MR. PHILLIPS: I would like some further and more in-depth explanation of the alternatives, say if we picked 4 or something, and could we use that for guidelines and guidance in this? If there is something totally different about the stock or there is some uncertainty somewhere, that we have a fallback on Alternative 5, or would we be locked into Alternative 4 or some other alternative? I would like to flesh this out some more, personally.

MR. CARMICHAEL: I think that would be achievable, yes, and I especially think if you want to leave that maybe there may be situations where you want to do like an Alternative 5 and pick a -- If, for some reason, maybe you want to use an Alternative 6, then, yes, I think we could probably work in a way to have that flexibility.

Then, I think, talking about time, I think if we get into trying to really give a good explanation of the next action, which is dealing with the assessment uncertainty, it will take some time to walk you through that and get you really a full understanding of what that means, Michelle, and I don't think that's probably a good use of our time here.

The next ones we get into really deal with the flexibility within the Act, and I am assuming that the council supports the options of implementing the flexibility that you are allowed, such as the multiyear specifications and the phase-in of ABC changes, and somewhere in here was the carryover. That has been talked about in other amendments, and so we'll go with the SSC saying the council wants to do all of those things.

DR. DUVAL: Is everyone okay with that? We have certainly wrapped ourselves around the axle in talking about how to take advantage of the additional flexibility in the new National Standard 1 Guidelines on carryover and multiyear ABCs and all that stuff.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Then the last bit is dealing with accountability measures. When we talk about those, I think that's something to consider. Are there accountability measure changes that maybe should go in here, that maybe perhaps aren't covered in other amendments? That's depending on how you want to deal with accountability measures in particularly the recreational visioning amendment, but we do know we have some sense of accountability measure changes we want to make in the recreational fishery, and so we'll have to think about where they fit within our ongoing products.

DR. DUVAL: No, I think that's right, because, when we've discussed this before, in trying to utilize these tools for dolphin and for yellowtail, it was clear that we would have to modify our accountability measure to take advantage of that.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: John, I think maybe I missed something. When you say the last two, which I assume are Action 8 and 9, but maybe that's not what you mean, we're dealing with modifications to the accountability measures?

MR. CARMICHAEL: I said that's something we need to consider, is do we have something in here to do that.

MR. HARTIG: We would have to update the PSA, and is that true?

MR. CARMICHAEL: If that survives the cut as a piece of information to be used, then, yes, the SSC would like to update it, because it is getting pretty long in the tooth.

DR. DUVAL: I think the suggestion was made to use the NMFS PSA analysis, and so we may want to consider that. Okay. Anything else, in terms of risk tolerance and options for the SSC to discuss? It's my understanding that we're still onboard for a webinar that would be a few hours long, say a morning or an afternoon, to discuss this again after the SSC takes another crack at it. Okay. Great. Thank you.

The next item on our agenda, and I am going to call Dr. Cheuvront up here, is the Wreckfish ITQ Review, and recall in June of 2017 that we instructed staff to begin a review of the wreckfish ITQ program, and, again, this is a statutorily-mandated thing. We have to do this review, and this is based on new guidelines that the agency issued earlier this year, and so a meeting of the wreckfish ITQ holders was convened in August, and I just wanted to welcome Paul Reiss, who is one of our long-time wreckfish ITQ fishermen here. We very much appreciate Paul being here, and thank you for your patience, Paul, while we've worked through some other items, and so it's much appreciated, and so we're going to turn things over to Brian to walk us through this.

DR. CHEUVRONT: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just wanted to let you all know that, in your briefing book, there are four files that pertain to the wreckfish ITQ review, all under the tab for snapper grouper, and they are Attachments 8a, 8b, 8c, and 8d. Just to give you a quick rundown of what we're going to do, I'm going to give you a background of what has happened since the last time we talked about this in June, and then we've had a couple of issues, because of the storm, and things have gotten rearranged a little bit, and Mike Travis is going to give the presentation and not Jessica Stephen.

Then they all sort of -- The steps fit together, and, when you see the presentation, then I will talk about how the wreckfish ITQ shareholders discussed the items that are in this presentation, and then that leads right into the outline for how we're going to be doing this report. A couple of things that I wanted to point out is that, in June, when we talked about this, we thought that this was going to be an initial review of the ITQ, but, since then, it has been determined that the report that was done by Kate Quigley back in 2009 constituted an initial review of this ITQ program.

There was a little bit of confusion, because there were no guidelines at that time on how the review was to be done, and so it has been determined that that initial review that was done by Kate in

2009 does constitute an initial review, and so this now counts as a subsequent review, and we've gotten over that initial hurdle.

As Chairman Duval said, we had a meeting of the ITQ shareholders in early August in Daytona Beach, and a couple of the council members were also there. All but two of the shareholders were able to attend, and, unfortunately, the two that were not able to attend are based out of the Keys, and they also participate in the spiny lobster fishery, and we had such a narrow window of when we could plan this meeting that it fell during the time when those guys were out setting traps, and so they were not able to attend that meeting.

I was able to get to them prior to the shareholder meeting a list of the topics that we were going to be discussing, and both of them wrote in their comments related to those topics, and so I was able to read those into the record, and they were able to be part of the discussion, even though they were not able to physically be there.

I reassured everybody that there is going to be at least one more meeting of the shareholders, probably next spring, around the time when we normally have our AP meetings and SSC meeting, maybe after the council has basically had two looks at the report, in December and in March, and so what we're thinking is going to happen is that they will have a pretty good idea of where this report is headed, and they will be able to have their comments on the report as it exists then, and their comments will become actually a part of the report, and so we'll have the shareholders' comments, we'll have the SSC's comments, and we'll let the Snapper Grouper AP look at it in the spring, and so we'll have lots of comments.

One of the things that I want you all to remember is this is a report. This is not a plan amendment, and so what's going to happen is that this report might make some recommendations about how folks want to modify this program, if at all, and, at that point, if the council chooses to, they could start some kind of plan amendment to modify the program, and so this is a little bit different than a lot of the things that you work on, but we'll lead you through it.

Mostly, at this point, it's going to be informational, at this meeting and in the next couple of meetings. Clearly your input is going to be desired on this, but don't be thinking that you're going to be planning on changes to the ITQ program at this point or recommend actions and things. We have got Mike Travis here, and let me see if I can get him on here.

DR. TRAVIS: Thank you. Some of you folks, I will apologize if you have already heard this presentation or otherwise been briefed on the guidance, but my understanding is that not everyone has, and so that's why we're going to go through this presentation today. I think, as was stated earlier, this guidance was just finalized in April of this year, and so it's still very new, and, before I get into the slides, I want to give you a little bit of background on what triggered the creation of this guidance.

Back in 2012 and 2013, it was when various regions and councils first started on working on reviews, outside of the one that Brian mentioned before that was recently determined that it actually constituted a review. Those were the review of the Gulf red snapper IFQ program, the Alaska crab rationalization program, and the Alaska Amendment 80 non-pollock cooperatives program.

As soon as staff started touching base with each other and we did a comparison of those first three complete reviews, basically we determined that all of them had good stuff in them, but they all had holes, and staff also were concerned about whether we were meeting the requirements of Magnuson and meeting other policy objectives, and so the request went to Headquarters to start developing guidance. I guess what I'm saying is the staff who worked on those reviews did the best job that they could, but they needed some help.

The goals and objectives of the guidance, let's talk about those. We have three primary goals of the guidance, and those are to, number one, ensure the reviews meet the statutory requirements. Number two is that there is a reasonable amount of consistency in our reviews across the different programs and the different regions and councils, and number three is that they are carried out in a transparent, efficient, and effective manner.

In terms of objectives, again we have three primary objectives for the guidance, and that is to clarify and specify the process that should be followed in conducting these reviews, the elements that a review should contain, and then the components of these programs that should be addressed or looked at when completing the review.

I also wanted to indicate that we didn't just kind of pull this out of our heads. Much of the guidance is based on information that is explicitly noted in Magnuson-Stevens, NOAA's Catch Share Policy, and NMFS's guidance with regard to developing LAPPs that was put together by Mark Holliday and Lee Anderson back in 2007, and so we borrowed a lot from those documents.

We put together a team at Headquarters to start drafting the guidance. I happened to be the lead of that team, and the primary author, and so I guess, if you have questions, I am probably the best person to ask, and maybe also the most to blame for what is in there. We started off internally, working with a group of what we could call technical program experts.

We have a National Catch Share Working Group that has representation from all of the regions and all of the centers, and so we started out with the small group at Headquarters, and we branched out to the Catch Share Working Group. Then, after we had come up with our first draft that we felt comfortable with, then we sent it out for comment and review to the regional offices and the science centers, and then we also sent it out to other NMFS offices, such as the Office of Science & Technology, for their review.

Then we revised it, based on all the feedback we got, and then we sent it out to you folks to review and to provide comments and suggested edits. Then we revised again, based on the feedback that we received from all the councils. The revised draft was then provided to the Council Coordinating Committee for review, and, in fact, we sent two revised drafts to the CCC for review. We received feedback from the CCC, as a result of those two reviews, and then we made one last set of revisions, based on the CCC's comments. Then the CCC reviewed in May of 2016 and gave us the thumbs-up and said, please proceed and you're good to go.

Initial review, when you start the initial review depends on when the program first began. If the program was established after January 12 of 2007, which is the date that the reauthorized MSA went into place, then your initial review needs to start five years after the program has been in place, and so that does not apply to wreckfish, because obviously wreckfish went in before January 12 of 2007.

For programs that were established before January 12 of 2007, then you need to start that initial review no later than the end of 2017, and, as Brian said, we've already done one review, that initial review, and that was done back in 2009, and so that gets into subsequent review, and so Magnuson is very clear that it says subsequent reviews have to be initiated at least even seven years after the first review, and so, technically speaking, in this case, we did the initial wreckfish review in 2009, and we're now at 2017, and so, yes, we may be a little bit behind, but, since the guidance wasn't finalized until this year, I don't think anyone sees that as a major concern.

The guidance also suggests that these reviews not be completed more frequently than every three years, because, when you first establish a program or you make modifications to a program, such as we did when the council and NMFS implemented Amendment 20A some years back, it takes time for new data to be collected and see how the participants in the program have responded to the new or revised management system. Anything less frequent than three years, we didn't think that that would be a sufficient enough time to capture the changes and the effects and conduct the analysis.

In a review process, obviously we want to use the best scientific information available, and that's National Standard 2, even though, as Brian said, this is not an amendment document. The council determines the composition of the review team. Ideally, you would like to have most of the members of the team be folks who worked on developing the program or the revisions to the program, because they obviously have a history of working with that particular program or fishery. The council will be the lead or the co-lead with NMFS. That is sort of worked out on a region-by-region basis, depending on the relationship between each particular council and region.

The review outline is the sort of first step. You want to have an outline as early as possible, to ensure that all the necessary data are being collected to actually conduct the review, and then the next step would be to convert that outline into a review plan before you actually do the review. We also think it's very important to solicit public input on the review, and, I think, as Brian stated, we have already started that process, with the recent meeting of the wreckfish shareholders, and they have already provided a lot of information for us to use. A good example of that is when the Gulf Council set up a new advisory panel to review the work of the team that was reviewing the red snapper IFQ program.

NMFS concurrence, once the team has produced a draft of the review plan, then NMFS concurs that the plan meets the requirements of Magnuson, and that basically occurs when the council reviews it in a council meeting and Roy, or whoever is there in his place, in our region will say yes, and Monica will hopefully say yes, that this is good to go. Then the same thing will happen again at the completion of the review. Once the review is completed, the council will look at it, and will again concur that everything is good with regard to complying with Magnuson and its guidance, and then that would be the end of the process.

The general approach and scope, the primary objective of these reviews is to assess our progress in meeting the goals and objectives of the program, primarily, but also the FMP and certain objectives and goals specified in Magnuson with respect to limited access privilege programs. The review itself should describe and analyze the effects that have taken place since the baseline time period, and so, if it was a completely new program, your baseline would be the time period leading up to the time that the program was implemented. That's if you have data during that time period.

If not, then you can look at the data from the time the program was implemented until the end of the period that you're looking at, or you look at the effects that have taken place since the last review, and that's what we intend to do in this review, is look at the effects that have transpired since 20A was implemented.

To I would say ease the burden and workload on the folks who are conducting these reviews, there was guidance suggesting that you incorporate by reference to existing documents. We don't want these to turn into encyclopedias, and I won't specify which particular review this is, but there was one review that was done that was incredibly, hundreds and hundreds of pages long, and so that would be the basis of that recommendation, is to incorporate by reference to existing documents, and then also to summarize relevant findings from research that has already been conducted or what can be found in existing amendment documents.

There is also a recommendation to use standardized indicators. NMFS has put together a set of standardized economic and social indicators for catch share programs, and so we want to make as much use of that information as possible, because they have been developed and apply to all of our programs, and then we have some on the biological and ecological side as well, and the guidance also suggests that you use as holistic of an approach as possible, and this is particularly important when you have a catch share program that has significant interactions or interdependencies with either another catch share program or another fishery.

For example, in the Gulf, we noticed, when we were working on the review of the red snapper program, that there were significant interdependencies, interactions, with the grouper-tilefish program, for example as evidenced by the fact that half of the people and boats that were involved in one program were also involved in the other, and so, if you start making changes to the one program, it's probably going to have effects on the other program, and you should take account for those effects in the analysis.

The document structure itself, I would think that this looks fairly familiar to most folks. You would start off with the purpose and need for the review, which is basically lay out what are the legal, what are the guidance requirements for conducting these reviews, and then you would present the goals and objectives of the program, relevant goals and objectives from the FMP and from Magnuson-Stevens.

Then you would go to history of management with respect to the program, and then you would get into the description of the biological, ecological, social, and administrative environment and effects, similar to what we do in our amendment documents. You would evaluate those effects, to see if they are consistent with the goals and objectives that the council wanted to achieve, as well as any unexpected effects, and that is another critical aspect of the analysis, is to determine if there have been any unexpected effects or undesirable effects that have occurred. Those tend to get the most attention in the reviews that have been conducted to date.

Then, of course, you want to identify any issues that seem to be creating a problem with respect to the program actually achieving the desired goals and objectives, and I think Brian mentioned that before, and then that would then lead to recommendations from the team to the council, if there are issues that the council may want to address,

In terms of the program components, the guidance says that we should be analyzing and evaluating a certain set of components of the programs that exist, and all components do not exist in all programs, and so some of these will look unfamiliar to you, and that may be because that particular component doesn't exist for wreckfish, and that's not a problem, but those are the ones that we mentioned.

There is goals and objectives and allocation, and allocation means allocations within the program as well as sector allocations. There is eligibility requirements, transferability, catch and sustainability, and that is going to get into are you harvesting your ACL or quota. Accumulation limits or caps, and so, in the case of wreckfish, we do have a share cap. We do not have an allocation cap, as there is in the grouper-tilefish program in the Gulf, and we don't have landings limits, as exist in a lot of the west coast programs.

Cost recovery, which, again, we have that in the Gulf programs and in the other programs, but we do not have that right now for wreckfish. Data collection, monitoring, and enforcement, and duration simply means -- Magnuson says the privilege may exist for ten years, unless the council decides to change that, and so that's a consideration if the council wants to revoke or modify the program. New entrants, provisions for new entrants, people to get into the fishery, and we actually heard a lot about that at the meeting with the shareholders, and then auctions and royalties. Again, that is something that does not exist in the wreckfish program, but it's something to look at and for the council to potentially consider if it so chooses.

One point I did want to make is, in some of the reviews that have been conducted to date, they chose not to look at one or more of these components in a particular review, because that particular component was already the subject of council action under an existing amendment, and so they wanted to keep that separate, and so, in those kinds of cases, you don't have to get into another detailed review, because you're already looking at the issue in an amendment, and so it's sufficient to just reference what the council is already doing, and that will cover it. I think that is it from my end, and are there any questions?

DR. DUVAL: Are there any questions about the process? I don't see any questions. Thank you so much for calling in. We really appreciate it.

DR. TRAVIS: Well, thanks a bunch.

DR. CHEUVRONT: What I am going to do is I am going to leave the last slide of Mike's presentation up right now, because this is sort of the outline that we used as we did the discussion with the shareholders in August. A couple of the things that I wanted to reiterate is that Attachment 8b is the report that I wrote to summarize the findings of the meeting that we had with the shareholders, and Attachment 8c is the transcript of the meeting, if you want to get into the nitty-gritty of everything that they talked about. What I thought I would do is summarize some of the key points that came out of the meeting and a couple of suggestions that the fishermen had.

We had a pretty comprehensive discussion of the entire program, and, as Mike said, all of us sitting around the table learned a lot of things about how this fishery works, and I think it was really, really enlightening, and it was really good for this council to request this meeting of the shareholders so early in the process, because apparently that has not always been done in all ITQ programs in all areas, and so we got a lot of input right from the very beginning.

I will just tell you some of the things that the shareholders said. Now, these things are the kinds of things that could be potential actions that the council could take up after the review is done, but, for example, most of the shareholders wanted to get rid of the paper coupons and go electronic. Apparently now they've got a paper system, where they have to report either -- I think it's 100-pound or 500-pound increments, and, as one of the fishermen said, if you're out of 500-pound coupons and you've got a 2,000-pound trip, you're filling out twenty coupons by hand at a time, and the system also works on rounding. It rounds up or it rounds down, depending on the number of pounds that you had, and going electronic would allow them to keep accurate records of exactly how many pounds they have left available to them in allocation.

One of the big topics that came up was this whole discussion of the ACL, and some of you weren't here during the time that we went through all of that, but, prior to the Comprehensive ACL Amendment that we did as a result of the revised Magnuson Act, the quota for wreckfish was two-million pounds, and what happened was that the SSC didn't have a stock assessment or anything to go on to help them figure out what the ACL should be set to, and so they put it at basically landings, which was a tenth of that amount, and so, originally, the SSC set ABC at around 200,000 pounds.

There was a couple of subsequent things that happened, and some of the fishermen actually paid to have an assessment done out of their own pockets, and that was presented to the SSC. The SSC looked at it, and they took the lowest limit in the range of potential values, and they then named that as the ABC, and that ABC modified slightly over time, so that now the ABC, which is equal to the ACL, is about 393,000 pounds. It's only about 20 percent of what it was prior to the Comprehensive ACL Amendment, and this is becoming a bit of a problem for the fishermen, because they are catching their ACL now. Before, they had more wiggle room, and that colored a lot of their discussions about how they wanted things to go in this review and any potential modifications that this council would like to make to the program.

They were very clear, and one thing I want to say is this is a great group of guys to work with. Everybody was very respectful of each other, and they presented all of their ideas. There were disagreements, but it just went really, really well, but the bottom line that I think that they had said is that they're not against things like new entrants or changing eligibility to be in the program or how shares are distributed.

They thought that, over time, if they can get a way to raise that ACL up to where they think it really ought to be closer to, that they have no problems with the council considering these kinds of modifications to the program, but, right now, their feeling is there is, frankly, just not enough fish allocated to the fishery for the guys who are out there fishing now, even though they think that the fishery can withstand the pressure, and, since there hasn't been any other stock assessment done, they are kind of in a catch-22 situation. We can't really modify that ACL at this point.

Among the things that they wanted was to get, whether it's the SSC or the Science Center, but somebody to comment on the data deficiencies that exist in the fishery and what additional data would be needed to be able to do an assessment or modify the ACL, and, frankly, they're really pretty unhappy with where wreckfish falls on that list of priorities for assessments. I haven't seen the revised list of recommendations, but I think it was down on the bottom, or pretty darned close to it, for recommended assessments to be done.

This is a fishery that has been hurt by circumstances and not probably by stock status. It probably could be modified, and so they would like some answers from the SSC and the Science Center on what can be done and what needs to be done to help get a reconsideration of this ACL.

Besides the things I have already mentioned, they didn't want any changes to transferability or accumulation caps right now. I believe it's 49 percent is the maximum accumulation that one shareholder can have. They don't support the idea of cost recovery, and I believe, if I'm not mistaken, it's that if the cost to do the cost recovery is more than would be recovered, then it's kind of a moot point, and in this fishery, being so small, as it is, that might be an effect here, but one of the things is that, when the cost recovery estimates were originally done, they really were estimates. For example, one of the things that was in the original estimate was that the cost of law enforcement was about \$20,000 a year, and that was a guess. These guys say, really? I mean, there are so few of them participating in the fishery that there is no way that this is the actual cost.

If we decide to go down that road at some point, they would like to have more accurate estimates, if at all possible, and one of the other big beefs that they had is remember when this ITQ program went into effect that there were a lot of people participating in the fishery. We're now down to a handful.

We have fewer than ten participants in this fishery, but one of the requirements that went in was that there had to be specific designated offloading sites, and offloading was only allowed during the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and if we could -- If, at some point the council would like to modify that, it will help these fishermen to operate more efficiently, and so that would probably be a recommendation that will come from the fishermen, for the council to consider later on, because that's actually in the CFR, these things about designated offloading sites and the hours at which they are able to offload.

The other big thing is that, when this ITQ was established, there was no duration on the time for the awarded shares. A new program, I believe, unless the council really wants to do something differently, is shares are awarded for ten years, and that doesn't necessarily apply to this ITQ. As Mike said in his presentation, it has been what was put in place, and clearly the guys who are participating in the fishery, they have been working on this, and part of their business plan is that they assume that this is going to be part of their portfolio, and they would be pretty unhappy if their shares were taken away from them.

Now, there is a document in your briefing document, Attachment 8d, which is an outline. I am not going to walk you through that. You can see it, and it basically follows this slide which I have set up here, and so it outlines the kinds of things that we think are going to be in the review document. We're going to be getting started on it. We had a little bit of a problem, because of the delay of a few weeks.

We were supposed to have an IPT call this past Monday, but, of course, that had to be delayed, because we moved the council meeting, and we were going to try to get the SEP to comment on issues related to this review, probably the day before the SSC meeting, but we were going to discuss it at the IPT call, and so that all has gotten into a mess, but I wanted to let you know that we do plan to run this review plan by the SEP, because these are largely social and economic issues that are involved here.

Also, with the SSC, the goal was not to have them review the outline and things like that of this review document that we're putting together, but we were hoping that we would going to be able to bring to the SSC some of the ideas of the kinds of analyses that we were going to do, because we would sure like for the SSC to weigh-in now and not have to wait until next spring, when the document is almost completed, and find out if the SSC has any problems with the document and the review of the data and things that are going into the document, and so we want to get a little forewarning going with that.

That is what I plan to do with the SSC in October, and, just to let you know, in December, following the discussion that we had in June, we're probably going to get you a rough and initial, pretty incomplete, version of the review. There is some text already that's in the document, but we're going to be expanding on that and putting more information in there. I can't tell you exactly how many we think we're going to have done, because we've got to get through the SSC comments, and the IPT needs to meet after you guys have had a chance to discuss it, but we will be bringing a document back to you again in December with some more information.

I think that's it. If you want to comment or ask any questions or need some clarification on the plan of how we're doing things, but mostly this is kind of informational right now. We're keeping you in the loop as this whole thing is being developed, but you are certainly welcome to comment on it at any time, and we'll just keep you apprised of how it's developing.

DR. DUVAL: Thanks for that, Brian. Thanks to both you and Mike, and I read the minutes of that meeting, and I know Zack, Ben, Charlie, and Chris were all in attendance at the meeting, and so it sounded like it was a really good discussion amongst everyone there. I really appreciated that you were able to get input from the two stakeholders who were not able to be there, and so they really took a lot of time to fill out the responses to the topics that were discussed, and I think it's clear that the ACL is a thorn, as well as some of the other things.

MR. HAYMANS: Brian, I am assuming in the review, Section 5, allocation, transferability, and caps, we'll look at some of the lease agreements between -- Well, first of all, with seven participants, I understand there is confidentiality, but, within that, will we be able to sort of get some information about how often shares are transferred or leased and the value of those transfers versus the value of the fish that were sold? I am really interested in that aspect of an IFQ or a limited entry program, the transferability and leasing of shares. Also, I see it was reduced from -- It has dropped from forty-nine participants at the start to seven, and some explanation of why or where those forty-two shareholders went.

DR. CHEUVRONT: There's a couple of questions you asked in there. The first easy one is what happened to the other participants, and, if you recall, a lot of them got kicked out of the fishery as latent, because they weren't using their shares. Their shares got redistributed amongst those who were actually participating in the fishery when the ACL was reduced.

Now, some of them probably just sold their shares. There probably will be a discussion of that in the history of the fishery that has occurred since 2009, and I assume that's going to happen. As far as talking about the transfers, the frequency and the value and the pounds and all that, Monica, can you help out with that? I am not sure about that.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: I think that we should make a list of those kind of things and then we can look at it. The Magnuson Act has a number of things that are required to be confidential. However, there is an exception for such information as is required to be submitted to the Secretary for any determination under any limited access program, and so there is a little flexibility here. However, we have to be mindful that we're not violating anyone's legal rights to keep their information confidential, and so we'll look into that, definitely.

MR. BREWER: Sort of along the same lines as what Doug was asking, do you have to be a shareholder to lease the shares, or can anybody lease those shares from a shareholder?

DR. CHEUVRONT: You do need to be a shareholder.

MR. PHILLIPS: I want to go back to the ACL and the assessments. I mean, those guys had to pay for their last assessment, and we need another assessment, and, if we're going to take these questions to the SSC, and we've already talked about these, about where and what it will take to do an update or something, and maybe the SSC can look at that last assessment and tell us what might be needed, so we can get some more fish, because I think we're leaving a lot of fish on the table that are a resource, a public resource, that should be able to go to the markets, and so I think we should find out what we need to get to where we want to go, and I can't imagine that we're not going to figure this out, because they've already paid for an assessment, and I can't imagine us asking any stakeholder group, fishery stakeholder group, to have to pay to do their own assessments. It's just hard to take.

DR. DUVAL: If you recall, we discussed this in the SEDAR Committee, and we've already committed to going to the Science Center to see what it would take to update the wreckfish assessment. I just wanted to make sure that that was clear.

MR. BOWEN: Brian, during your presentation or your summary or whatever we want to call it, you said the guys were meeting their ACL or they were not, because I was under the impression that they weren't, but I may have been wrong.

DR. CHEUVRONT: I don't know if they are hitting it exactly, but, because this is an ITQ program, they're not going over, and so, if they're under, they're not under by a whole lot. They are basically -- There are problems with some of the guys not having access to enough fish to catch, and so we've got a couple of folks who are not actively fishing their shares, who are holding onto them, but they are leasing all of those shares to guys who are fishing.

Now, I know that, of the two guys who are not fishing their shares right now, one of them is getting ready. He's repairing a vessel, or at least that's what he had told me, to begin to participate in the fishery to fish his own shares, and these two guys are geographically separated, and so they're not going to be fishing in the same area. Folks who are fishing in one area, if they could get more pounds of fish available to them, they would be able to fish them, and there does not appear to be problems, that anybody is aware of at this point, in stock abundance or whatever. It's basically a science problem that we've got to figure out how we're going to help these guys out, so they can fish closer to what the true ABC/ACL really ought to be.

DR. DUVAL: It looks like some of that is also due to the rounding, the system of rounding, also, in terms of the coupons and everything.

DR. CHEUVRONT: That could be a part of it, but it kind of depends. I was educated at this meeting on exactly how that rounding went. Sometimes it rounds up, and sometimes it rounds down, and it depends on the actual number of pounds, and so you're always within about no more than about fifty pounds or so off on a given trip, but, again, this is an ITQ program, and so the way it's set up is that you're not going to exceed that ACL. You might get close to it, but you're never going to exceed it.

MR. CONKLIN: (Mr. Conklin's comment is not audible on the recording.)

DR. DUVAL: It sounded like also -- I guess what I am going to call some of the metadata to go along with why did landings decrease, and there was some folks who passed away, and it sounded like there were some market changes also, where people were participating in other, more lucrative fisheries, and so I think all the information is valuable, like the fishery performance reports that we saw at the last meeting.

MR. CONKLIN: I think there was one participant that said that he didn't catch like 20,000 pounds the last season, because of issues, and so I know that, this past year, they didn't hit their ACL, or at least it was 20,000 pounds off.

DR. DUVAL: Are there other questions or comments for Brian on the status of the report? This will -- I know you guys were delayed on the IPT meeting for this one, but your plan is to still bring this before the SSC in October, and the SEP as well?

DR. CHEUVRONT: Yes, Madam Chair. The plan is that -- The SSC meeting dates didn't change at all as a result of the storm that pushed this meeting back, and so we kind of lost two weeks of that time in between when we thought we were going to be having the council meeting and when the SSC was going to meet.

What we have tentatively, and this will be discussed more fully when the IPT meets, is we were talking about doing a webinar meeting of the SEP at some point. We'll see if we can make this happen prior to the December meeting, but the IPT hasn't talked yet, and we haven't really figured out exactly what we're going to present to the SEP. We want to have that nailed down before we actually plan that meeting, to make sure we have something that's going to fill their time, but the plan is that, in December, you will get a report back from the SSC on their discussions on this review, what the IPT has been able to do to progress on this, and so you will be seeing a document that is more filled out than what was in the briefing book today.

What I can't tell you is, because of these timing changes, I can't tell you how far along we're going to get on this. Right now, I don't see any substantial change in overall timeframe that we had discussed at the June meeting. Tentatively, we're showing this being finished by the September meeting of 2018, and you have blessed that timing, and it will be submitted. Then, at that point, once the report is accepted, we will then bring it back to you and ask the council if they wish to modify the program in any way, and presumably the review document would be the guiding document that would help the council decide what, if anything, they need to do to modify the program.

MS. BOSARGE: We're going through some of these same reviews, and so I was just listening to the differences in your system, and the only thing that we're looking at possibly making some changes to is the leasing in some of our IFQs, but I just wanted to make sure -- You said, in this, and you call it an ITQ, this ITQ program, if a shareholder has some allocation that they want to lease to somebody else, they can only lease it to other shareholders? In other words, they can't lease it to a fisherman that holds the permit with the endorsement, but has ownership in the fishery?

DR. CHEUVRONT: That's correct. They have to lease it to other shareholders, and so that right there limits who can lease shares.

MR. CONKLIN: One more thing. The landings stream on this fish for the ACL has gone from 411,000 a couple of years ago, and it says, by 2020, they would be down to 370,000, and it would remain constant until we can get something else, and so the guys are taking more of a hit there, and the minimum amount that the shareholders can own is one-tenth of 1 percent, to be able to lease shares.

DR. DUVAL: Just additional impact, yes. Okay. Thank you, Brian, for the update and for the comments around the table. We will see this again. Thank you, Paul, for being here. I'm glad you were able to be here and for your participation in the meeting. You guys are extremely helpful. What I would say to folks is I have been asked to mention that we do have a public comment session that is scheduled to begin in fifteen minutes, and so, if you want to provide comments or anything, please see Cameron over here, and she can help you sign up on our electronic comment form. I just want to make sure that we do that.

The next item on our agenda, and I am not sure we will finish this discussion, but I would like to at least start it, and we might end up having to finish it at Full Council, is a Discussion of Atlantic Coast-Wide Planning to Address Climate Change. You have a couple of attachments in the briefing book, Attachment 9a and 9b.

Attachment 9a is actually sort of a discussion document of landings of snapper grouper species, in particular in the Mid-Atlantic region northward that is outside of our jurisdiction, and this was prompted a little bit by conversations that I had with Chairman Mike Louisi of the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council as well as Chris Moore and Gregg Waugh.

When we were at the Council Coordination Committee meeting in the spring, we discussed the fact that there are snapper grouper species whose ranges are expanding and that are being caught more frequently in the Mid-Atlantic and New England areas, and, if you recall a few years ago, in 2014, the Mid-Atlantic Council hosted a climate change and governance workshop. Several of us were able to attend that, and certainly I think the Mid-Atlantic and the Gulf of Maine people are seeing greater shifts in species.

They are seeing increasing warming of water temperatures, and Gregg and Mike and Chris and I talked, and we wanted to try to find some way that we could move forward in a fashion that was amenable if we want to try to address these shifts in species distribution, and so, long-term, what we thought is that the Mid-Atlantic Council could hold discussions with their Regional Coordinating Council, and this is kind of their planning body for stock assessments in their region, but it includes the Chairs and I think Vice Chairs and Executive Directors of the Mid-Atlantic and

New England Councils, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, and then the SSC Chairs of each of the two councils, in conjunction with the Northeast Fisheries Science Center.

This was a suggestion from Chris about sort of forming an Atlantic coast-wide group similar to that that would include our council, and it would include the Southeast Regional Office and the Southeast Fisheries Science Center, to try to take a more holistic approach to tackling some of these issues. Certainly SEDAR 50, which was blueline tilefish, included participation from the Northeast and Southeast Fisheries Science Center and the South Atlantic and Mid-Atlantic Councils, and that's kind of an ad hoc approach to that, but this would be a deliberate, longer-term effort.

Then, in the short term, we would look at gathering some information about the level of catch of snapper grouper species north of North Carolina, and so this is what Myra has sort of prepared to present to us. This is what is contained in Attachment 9a, and so we spoke to Chairman Luisi and Executive Director Moore on a path forward that we thought might work, and that would be to reach out to the Mid-Atlantic Council, via a letter, and ask if they might be willing to reach out to their member states to consider establishing regulations -- If the member states would be willing to establish regulations within their state waters, similar to what I think Virginia and Maryland have done with some of the snapper and grouper species, just to try to put a cap on things.

That's a little bit long-winded, but, like I said, we will definitely not get all the way through the discussion, and I'm aware of that, but I just want to turn things over to Myra to try to at least kick it off, and, if we need to finish this at Full Council, we will go ahead and do that.

MS. BROUWER: Thanks, Michelle, for that background. What I have prepared here for you is basically just a snapshot of landings of snapper grouper species in the Mid-Atlantic and New England regions, and, in particular, those that are now under federal management. Attachment 9a basically goes through and provides some background to sort of frame the discussion, beginning with landings of any snapper grouper species in the Mid-Atlantic and New England regions and, of course, those are dominated by black sea bass and scup.

You do see some landings, both commercial and recreational, of some other species, like spadefish and triggerfish, and so I've broken it down with several figures here, to sort of give you an idea of the magnitude of those landings, but, like I said, this is for species that are under federal management right now, and so I think, in the interest of time, I was going to get started, perhaps, going over, starting on page 4, to show you the landings of unmanaged snapper grouper species in the Mid-Atlantic and New England regions. Also, I should tell you that the data that we used for this summary document came from ACCSP and recreational data are only MRIP data.

DR. DUVAL: Just to jump in before Myra goes into that, just to remind everybody that black sea bass and scup are managed by the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, and that management boundary is Cape Hatteras north. Then golden tilefish and blueline tilefish are managed from the Virginia/North Carolina border north.

MS. BROUWER: Yes. If you turn to Figure 6, this shows you the commercial landings of unmanaged snapper grouper species in the Mid-Atlantic region on this top panel and the recreational landings in the bottom panel. The commercial landings of snapper grouper species that currently lack federal management in the region, from 2010 through 2016, totaled around

541,000 pounds during that period, and the highest were in New Jersey. The majority of those landings were attributed to blueline tilefish, whereas Atlantic spadefish comprised 18 percent. There were some other species that figured into the landings. 5 percent was red porgy, and sand tilefish was in the landings as well, and so that was for commercial.

The majority of the recreational landings were comprised of Atlantic spadefish, 35 percent, and gray triggerfish was pretty high up there, at 32 percent. Golden tilefish was 21 percent, and blueline tilefish was 8 percent. The remaining 4 percent was made up of things like rudderfish, bar jack, gag, amberjack, and ocean triggerfish.

In New England, landings are obviously a lot lower, and so here you have the commercial landings in the upper panel and the recreational landings in the lower panel by state. In New England, the total landings during that period of 2010 through 2016 were only 87,000 pounds, with Rhode Island dominating the landings commercially.

In terms of species composition, triggerfish comprises 79 percent, while blueline tilefish accounted for 16 percent of those landings, and the remaining was comprised of amberjack, snowy, groupers in general, banded rudderfish, red porgy, red snapper, spadefish, tilefish, and wreckfish. On the recreational side, the landings totaled about 25,000 pounds, and gray triggerfish was the main species in those landings.

Then what I did was break it down a little bit more for species that may require some type of adjustment in the Mid-Atlantic and New England regions, and starting with Atlantic spadefish. That one is part of the Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Unit for our council, but it is not included in any federal fishery management plans in either the Mid-Atlantic or the New England regions.

Commercial landings of Atlantic spadefish during that time period that we looked at totaled 96,000 pounds, mainly in Virginia and Maryland. I should also point out that there is a table at the very end of this document where I summarized all the state regulations for snapper grouper species, and there are, like Michelle said, some regulations in state waters for several of these species.

Recreational landings, on the other hand, of Atlantic spadefish were much higher. They total about 529,000 pounds, and they were mainly in Virginia, 99 percent, and so, as I said, there are some state regulations in Virginia waters. They have a four fish per person per day limit, and the commercial sector is limited to six per person per day taken on hook-and-line. Then I just let them know that we are talking about some doing some regulations for Atlantic spadefish in our region.

Blueline, this is one that, pending approval of Amendment 6, I believe, to the management plan in the Mid-Atlantic, it will be under federal management. Currently, it is not. That amendment has not been approved.

DR. DUVAL: The proposed rule for that has published.

MR. DILERNIA: I believe the final rule was published.

DR. DUVAL: The final rule? Okay.

MR. DILERNIA: The recreational measures are in place now. The final rule has been published.

DR. DUVAL: Okay. Thanks.

MS. BROUWER: Recall that blueline tilefish spurred a lot of discussion about extending management, and there was an emergency rule that put in some regulations for the recreational sector, and then the states put some regulations in their waters. Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware implemented incidental commercial trip limits of 300 pounds and a seven-fish recreational possession limit. There has been some progress to manage this species in both state and federal waters in that region.

There is also a pilot survey, pilot program, that is in place that the Mid-Atlantic is conducting, or I'm not quite sure exactly how the funding for that works, but there has been some funding for some pilot work to be done there for blueline and golden tilefish in that region. As you heard Michelle say, the councils are jointly participating in SEDAR 50.

Moving on to gray triggerfish, commercial landings in the Mid-Atlantic and New England regions from 2010 through 2016 totaled 112,000 pounds, mainly in Virginia and Rhode Island. On the recreational side, we saw 505,000 pounds, with 53 percent of the landings reported in New Jersey and 16 in New York. In the South Atlantic, you know what the regulations are. I am not going to go through all of that, but this is another species that is sort of in flux that you may want to consider requesting that management be put into place.

Red porgy, I put them in here, but they were only present in very small amounts, but it might be a species to watch. They were present in commercial landings during the time period. There was a total of 27,000 pounds reported commercially. New York reported small levels of landings every year, and Virginia and Maryland had landings in 2016 and 2010. The highest number were in Virginia in 2016.

Then there was a handful of snowy grouper, other groupers, snappers, and wreckfish. Again, the landings were minimal, but we are noticing these species in landings in those regions, and, as I mentioned, there is a table at the end of the document here that shows you what the current regulations are in state waters for all the states from the North Carolina/Virginia border.

Things to point out are, for example, there is -- Some of these regulations just haven't been updated in a long time, and I apologize for scrolling so fast, but, for example, the groupers include things like goliath grouper, Nassau grouper, speckled hind, tiger grouper, which is not even in our management unit anymore, warsaw, wreckfish, and it was last updated in 2013. The bag limits for groupers are just specified for a whole lot of species, including things that are prohibited in our area. Are there any questions?

DR. DUVAL: We have time for just a couple of quick questions.

MR. DILERNIA: Do you all do sheephead, because we are seeing and more sheephead.

MR. HARTIG: It's under state management.

MR. DILERNIA: You only state manage sheepshead? Okay. We're seeing more and more cobia. Sheepshead and cobia, we're seeing more of.

DR. DUVAL: You just said a dirty word, Tony.

MR. DILERNIA: There is no sense hiding it. You might as well just put it here there and deal with it.

MR. BELL: Just a thought, but certainly range shifts are due to warming temperatures or whatever, but sometimes in a fishery increased landings will be that folks just kind of discovered the fishery and there is growth in the fishery, and I know, with spadefish, for instance, if you go back to the late 1980s, we didn't have much, but then we started developing the fishery, and artificial reef programs were tied to that, and they developed, and so the fishery grew, but the fishery there -- I mean, there is a component of that as well.

DR. DUVAL: Yes, and it's hard to see those things in a range discussion versus fish being there and people just sort of discovering them.

MR. BOWEN: Do the other jurisdictions in the commercial -- Do they have the same commercial reporting requirements as we do, such as trip tickets and things of that nature?

DR. DUVAL: They do, and actually the VTR, the vessel reporting requirements in the Mid-Atlantic and New England regions, is their equivalent of a logbook. It's actually more stringent requirements, let's say. Every time you switch gears on a trip, you have to fill out a new VTR, and Tony could probably elaborate on that.

MR. DILERNIA: For the for-hire fleet, you're supposed to fill out the VTR before you hit the dock.

MR. BOWEN: I like that.

MR. DILERNIA: I think it's a great idea. Some of the captains don't, but that's the way to go.

DR. DUVAL: So that was a quick review, and I think the other attachment that I will just draw your attention to is Attachment 9b, and this is a letter from myself and Mike Louisi to Dr. Ponwith and Dr. Karp about our plea for acknowledgement and inclusion of a long-term deepwater species survey. This has kind of been spurred by the discussions about blueline tilefish, as well as golden tilefish, and having the difficulty of developing an index of abundance for these deepwater species, and so you can see, and there was also a response from Dr. Karp last year in regards to that. Bonnie, you looked like you wanted to just say a little something about that.

DR. PONWITH: Thanks, and I appreciate the letter and we certainly agree with everything that's in there. This is important work, and we have a lot of species and a lot of habitat types that are un-surveyed or under-surveyed, and I think another challenge that we have, in light of the very issue of climate change, is that a lot of the surveys that exist are broken. We are surveying the area in our management jurisdictions and neglecting the fact that those boundaries are artificial when it comes to the system.

I think that what we've learned from the projects that we've worked on in the past, trying to grapple to get enough information to answer some of these present questions, and those experiences have been valuable for us to think about what those long-term solutions are. I talked with Bill about this, and I have been communicating with Dr. Hare up there at the staff level, and we've been engaged, and we are excited to hear about the Mid-Atlantic's project that they are working on right now that's underway.

I think it hit the water in July, but I think that what it's going to take is for these two councils, or even better yet maybe all three, to be able to sit down and suss out the problem and think about what some of the options are for long-term solutions, because I will tell you that we learned a lot from those shorter-term projects, but that is just not a sustainable way to do business, and I think that thinking about it, as opposed to a one-time data collection to answer a very specific question, to think about what are some ways that we could do long-term sampling across the geography for these deepwater species and what are the tradeoffs, and that's the big thing, is what are the tradeoffs, in terms of the idiosyncrasies, biological and selectivity idiosyncrasies, of the species that we're interested in, and what are the tradeoffs for the surveys that are existing now versus creating something that is new, financially and time-wise, bandwidth-wise, for getting something stood up.

We are certainly interested in the data, and because we're interested in the data, we're eager to cooperate across the councils and try and make this happen. It's going to be a really heavy lift, financially, because those are expensive projects to run, but the data are really valuable as well.

DR. DUVAL: I appreciate that, Bonnie. Tony, I know you had your hand up, but briefly, because we're already over our time to get into public comment.

MR. DILERNIA: You're really on a subject that is one of my key interest points. Where to start? I want to be brief, but where to start? The deepwater fisheries that we're seeing in the Mid-Atlantic -- Well, let's put it this way. The recreational fleet has shifted from inshore to offshore. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, when I was in college, we would tilefish, both recreationally and eventually commercially, and we were the only ones out in the Hudson Canyon. There didn't used to be anybody there. If you go to the Hudson Canyon now, it's a parking lot on the weekend. That recreational effort has shifted there.

With that shift in the recreational effort, the effort on those deepwater species has increased. It's important to get regulations in place before the stocks get overfished, so that people are fishing under the rules, because, once you decide something is overfished and you have to put regulations in place, it's a lot more difficult. Everybody screams and yells. Let's just look at what happened with blueline tilefish. That's a perfect example.

I have been a very strong advocate for management of the deepwater complex, and I've also been a very strong advocate of looking at, since I've been visiting with you all down here and seeing your species and watching them just slowly creep up into the Mid-Atlantic, I have been a very large advocate for this approach that you are engaging in now, and so I very strongly support it. You should go there, and you should work on it.

Eventually, you may want to have joint committees on different species, but it's happening. Climate change is happening, and I see it in the Mid-Atlantic. I see critters all the time that -- Not

so much anymore, because I fish inshore, but, even when I fished offshore a couple of years ago, I would say, what is this? Only to realize that it was one of your guys coming up to visit, and it's happening more and more. Yes, this is very important work, and I strongly support it. Thank you for the time.

DR. DUVAL: Thank you, Tony. I just want folks to chew on this, and I think we can pick this back up at Full Council when we go through the committee report and make a decision on how best to move forward, if folks appreciate this, and so we're going to take a quick few minutes and turn around into public comment.

(Whereupon, the meeting adjourned on September 27, 2017.)

Certified By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Transcribed By:  
Amanda Thomas  
October 13, 2017

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL  
**2017 COMMITTEES (continued)**

**✓ SNAPPER GROUPER**

✓ Michelle Duval, Chair  
✓ Jessica McCawley, Vice Chair  
✓ Anna Beckwith — *Via webinar*  
✓ Mel Bell  
✓ Zack Bowen  
✓ Chester Brewer  
✓ Mark Brown  
✓ Chris Conklin  
Roy Crabtree  
✓ Tim Griner  
✓ Ben Hartig  
✓ Doug Haymans  
✓ Charlie Phillips ✓  
Mid-Atlantic Liaison, Tony DiLernia/Dewey  
Hemilright  
Staff contact: Myra Brouwer

**SOPPs**

Chris Conklin, Chair  
Doug Haymans, Vice-Chair  
Anna Beckwith  
Chester Brewer  
Roy Crabtree  
Michelle Duval  
LCDR Jeremy Montes  
Staff contact: Gregg Waugh

**SPINY LOBSTER**

Jessica McCawley, Chair  
Ben Hartig, Vice-Chair  
Chester Brewer  
Chris Conklin  
Roy Crabtree  
LCDR Jeremy Montes  
Staff contact: Kari MacLauchlin

[Go to Top](#)

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL  
**2017 COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP**

**COUNCIL CHAIR**

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

**VICE-CHAIR**

Charlie Phillips  
Phillips Seafood/Sapelo Sea Farms  
1418 Sapelo Avenue, N.E.  
Townsend, GA 31331  
912/832-4423 (ph); 912/832-6228 (f)  
[Ga\\_capt@yahoo.com](mailto:Ga_capt@yahoo.com)

---

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

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

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

Zack Bowen  
P.O. Box 30825  
Savannah, GA 31410  
912/398-3733 (ph)  
[zackbowensafmc@gmail.com](mailto:zackbowensafmc@gmail.com)

W. Chester Brewer  
250 Australian Ave. South  
Suite 1400  
West Palm Beach, FL 33408  
561/655-4777 (ph)  
[wcbasfmc@gmail.com](mailto:wcbasfmc@gmail.com)

Mark Brown  
3642 Pandora Drive  
Mt. Pleasant, SC 29466  
843/881-9735 (ph); 843/881-4446 (f)  
[capt.markbrown101@gmail.com](mailto:capt.markbrown101@gmail.com)

Chris Conklin  
P.O. Box 972  
Murrells Inlet, SC 29576  
843/543-3833  
[conklinsafmc@gmail.com](mailto:conklinsafmc@gmail.com)

Dr. Roy Crabtree  
Regional Administrator  
NOAA Fisheries, Southeast Region  
263 13th Avenue South  
St. Petersburg, FL 33701  
727/824-5301 (ph); 727/824-5320 (f)  
[roy.crabtree@noaa.gov](mailto:roy.crabtree@noaa.gov)

Tim Griner  
4446 Woodlark Lane  
Charlotte, NC 28211  
980/722-0918 (ph)  
[timgrinersafmc@gmail.com](mailto:timgrinersafmc@gmail.com)

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

*(Continued)*

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL  
**2017 COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP (continued)**

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

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

Jessica McCawley  
Florida Fish and Wildlife  
Conservation Commission  
2590 Executive Center Circle E.,  
Suite 201  
Tallahassee, FL 32301  
850/487-0554 (ph); 850/487-4847(f)  
[jessica.mccawley@myfwc.com](mailto:jessica.mccawley@myfwc.com)

LCDR Jeremy Montes  
U.S. Coast Guard  
Seventh Coast Guard District  
Enforcement Branch (DRE)  
305/415-6788(ph); 305/710-4569(c)  
[Jeremy.J.Montes@uscg.mil](mailto:Jeremy.J.Montes@uscg.mil)

Deirdre Warner-Kramer  
Office of Marine Conservation  
OES/OMC  
2201 C Street, N.W.  
Department of State, Room 5806  
Washington, DC 20520  
202/647-3228 (ph); 202/736-7350 (f)  
[Warner-KramerDM@state.gov](mailto:Warner-KramerDM@state.gov)

[Go to Top](#)

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL  
**COUNCIL STAFF**

**Executive Director**

✓ Gregg T. Waugh  
[gregg.waugh@safmc.net](mailto:gregg.waugh@safmc.net)

**Deputy Director – Science & Statistics**

✓ John Carmichael  
[john.carmichael@safmc.net](mailto:john.carmichael@safmc.net)

**Deputy Director - Management**

✓ Dr. Brian Cheuvront  
[brian.cheuvront@safmc.net](mailto:brian.cheuvront@safmc.net)

**Fishery Scientist**

✓ Myra Brouwer  
[myra.brouwer@safmc.net](mailto:myra.brouwer@safmc.net)

**Admin. Secretary /Travel Coordinator**

Cindy Chaya  
[cindy.chaya@safmc.net](mailto:cindy.chaya@safmc.net)

**Purchasing & Grants**

✓ Kimberly Cole  
[kimberly.cole@safmc.net](mailto:kimberly.cole@safmc.net)

**Fishery Scientist**

✓ Dr. Chip Collier  
[chip.collier@safmc.net](mailto:chip.collier@safmc.net)

**Administrative Officer**

✓ Mike Collins  
[mike.collins@safmc.net](mailto:mike.collins@safmc.net)

**Outreach Specialist**

✓ Kelsey Dick  
[Kelsey.dick@safmc.net](mailto:Kelsey.dick@safmc.net)

**Fishery Biologist**

✓ Dr. Mike Errigo  
[mike.errigo@safmc.net](mailto:mike.errigo@safmc.net)

**Fishery Economist**

✓ John Hadley  
[John.hadley@safmc.net](mailto:John.hadley@safmc.net)

**Outreach Specialist**

✓ Kathleen Howington  
[Kathleen.howington@safmc.net](mailto:Kathleen.howington@safmc.net)

**Public Information Officer**

✓ Kim Iverson  
[kim.iverson@safmc.net](mailto:kim.iverson@safmc.net)

**Fisheries Social Scientist**

✓ Dr. Kari MacLauchlin  
[kari.maclauchlin@safmc.net](mailto:kari.maclauchlin@safmc.net)

**Senior Fishery Biologist**

✓ Roger Pugliese  
[roger.pugliese@safmc.net](mailto:roger.pugliese@safmc.net)

**Outreach Specialist**

✓ Cameron Rhodes  
[Cameron.rhodes@safmc.net](mailto:Cameron.rhodes@safmc.net)

**Financial Secretary**

Suzanna Thomas  
[suzanna.thomas@safmc.net](mailto:suzanna.thomas@safmc.net)

**Fishery Citizen Science Program Manager**

✓ Amber Von Harten  
[amber.vonharten@safmc.net](mailto:amber.vonharten@safmc.net)

**SEDAR Coordinators**

✓ Dr. Julie Neer - [julie.neer@safmc.net](mailto:julie.neer@safmc.net)  
✓ Julia Byrd - [julia.byrd@safmc.net](mailto:julia.byrd@safmc.net)

Christina Wiegand

[Go to Top](#)

Leann Bosarge  
Dr. Jack McGovern  
Monica Smit-Brunello  
Dr. Bonnie Ponwith  
Erika Burgess  
Rick DeVitor  
Dr. Marcel Reichert  
Jeff Radomski  
Mike Travis

DAY 2 SEPT 26, 2017 (AM)

| Last Name        | First Name | Email Address                 |
|------------------|------------|-------------------------------|
| Bailey           | Adam       | adam.bailey@noaa.gov          |
| Ballenger        | Joseph     | ballengerj@dnr.sc.gov         |
| Bowen            | Zack       | fishzack@comcast.net          |
| Bubley           | Wally      | bubleyw@dnr.sc.gov            |
| Clarke           | Lora       | lclarke@pewtrusts.org         |
| Conklin          | Chris      | conklincc@gmail.com           |
| Dale             | David      | david.dale@noaa.gov           |
| DeVictor         | Rick       | rick.devictor@noaa.gov        |
| Erwin            | Gwen       | gwen.erwin@myfwc.com          |
| Foss             | Kristin    | kristin.foss@myfwc.com        |
| Foster           | Dean       | dfoster@pewtrusts.org         |
| Geer             | Pat        | pat.geer@dnr.ga.gov           |
| Godwin           | Joelle     | joelle.godwin@noaa.gov        |
| Gore             | Karla      | karla.gore@noaa.gov           |
| Hartig           | Ben        | mackattackben@att.net         |
| Helies           | Frank      | frank.helies@noaa.gov         |
| Johnson          | Eric       | eric.johnson@unf.edu          |
| Knowlton         | Kathy      | kathy.knowlton@dnr.ga.gov     |
| Laks             | Ira        | captainira@att.net            |
| Markwith         | Anne       | anne.markwith@ncdenr.gov      |
| Mehta            | Nikhil     | nikhil.mehta@noaa.gov         |
| Raine            | Karen      | karen.raine@noaa.gov          |
| Records          | David      | david.records@noaa.gov        |
| Seward           | McLean     | mclean.seward@ncdenr.gov      |
| Shipman          | Susan      | susanshipman@att.net          |
| Sramek           | Mark       | mark.sramek@noaa.gov          |
| Stephen          | Jessica    | jessica.stephen@noaa.gov      |
| Takade-Heumacher | Helen      | htakade@edf.org               |
| Williams         | Erik       | erik.williams@noaa.gov        |
| beckwith         | anna       | anna@downeastguideservice.com |
| brennan          | ken        | kenneth.brennan@noaa.gov      |
| brewer           | chester    | wcbsafmc@gmail.com            |
| brouwer          | myra       | myra.brouwer@safmc.net        |
| dilernia         | tony       | tony@rocketcharters.com       |
| sandorf          | scott      | scott.sandorf@noaa.gov        |

DAY 2 SEPT 26, 2017 (PM)

| Last Name        | First Name | Email Address                 |
|------------------|------------|-------------------------------|
| Bowen            | Zack       | fishzack@comcast.net          |
| Bubley           | Wally      | bubleyw@dnr.sc.gov            |
| Clarke           | Lora       | lclarke@pewtrusts.org         |
| Conklin          | Chris      | conklincc@gmail.com           |
| Cunningham       | Leda       | lcunningham@pewtrusts.org     |
| Foster           | Dean       | dfoster@pewtrusts.org         |
| Hudson           | Rusty      | DSF2009@aol.com               |
| Knowlton         | Kathy      | kathy.knowlton@dnr.ga.gov     |
| Lamberte         | Tony       | tony.lamberte@noaa.gov        |
| Markwith         | Anne       | anne.markwith@ncdenr.gov      |
| Raine            | Karen      | karen.raine@noaa.gov          |
| Rudnay           | Kayla      | RudnayK@dnr.sc.gov            |
| Smart            | Tracey     | smartt@dnr.sc.gov             |
| Takade-Heumacher | Helen      | htakade@edf.org               |
| beckwith         | anna       | anna@downeastguideservice.com |
| brewer           | chester    | wcbsafmc@gmail.com            |
| vara             | mary       | mary.vara@noaa.gov            |

Tuesday 9/26/17 Public Sign-in

| Name         | Last                 | Email (if you selected New Contact in the dropdown above) | How do you participate in fisheries in the South Atlantic? (Check all that apply) | How do you participate in fisheries in the South Atlantic? (Check all that apply) | How do you participate in fisheries in the South Atlantic? (Check all that apply) | If Other, please provide more information: |
|--------------|----------------------|---|---|---|---|--|
| Graham Rusty | Gaines Hudson        |   | Private   | Charter/H   | Seafood   | Fisheries Consultant                       |
| Dean Leda    | Foster Cunningham    |   | Recreational  | eadboat/F   | Dealer/Wholesaler   |  |
| David Ernest | Bush Muhammad        |   | Private   |   |   | NCFA                                       |
| Amy Amy      | Dukes Dukes          |   | Recreational  |   |   | SCDNR                                      |
| Leda Stacey  | Cunningham Weinstock | weinstocksa@g.cofc.edu                                    | Private   |   |   | SCDNR                                      |
| Kellie       | Ralston              |   | Private   |   |   | Graduate student                           |
| Lora         | Clarke               |   | Recreational  |   |   |  |

DAY 3 SEPT 27, 2017

| Last Name        | First Name | Email Address                 |
|------------------|------------|-------------------------------|
| Bailey           | Adam       | adam.bailey@noaa.gov          |
| Ballenger        | Joseph     | ballengerj@dnr.sc.gov         |
| Beckwith         | Anna       | anna@downeastguideservice.com |
| Bianchi          | Alan       | Alan.Bianchi@ncdenr.gov       |
| Bowen            | Zack       | fishzack@comcast.net          |
| Brame            | Richen     | dbrame55@gmail.com            |
| Brown            | Mark       | capt.markbrown@comcast.net    |
| Cheshire         | Rob        | rob.cheshire@noaa.gov         |
| Clarke           | Lora       | lclarke@pewtrusts.org         |
| Conklin          | Chris      | conklincc@gmail.com           |
| Crosson          | Scott      | scott.crosson@noaa.gov        |
| Cunningham       | Leda       | lcunningham@pewtrusts.org     |
| DeVictor         | Rick       | rick.devictor@noaa.gov        |
| Erwin            | Gwen       | gwen.erwin@myfwc.com          |
| Foss             | Kristin    | kristin.foss@myfwc.com        |
| Foster           | Dean       | dfoster@pewtrusts.org         |
| Freeman          | Mike       | mike@twojerks.com             |
| Godwin           | Joelle     | joelle.godwin@noaa.gov        |
| Gore             | Karla      | karla.gore@noaa.gov           |
| Hudson           | Rusty      | DSF2009@aol.com               |
| Iverson          | Kim        | kim.iverson@safmc.net         |
| Johnson          | Denise     | denise.johnson@noaa.gov       |
| Johnson          | Eric       | eric.johnson@unf.edu          |
| Knowlton         | Kathy      | kathy.knowlton@dnr.ga.gov     |
| LAVINE           | BRITNI     | britni.lavine@noaa.gov        |
| Laks             | IRA        | captainira@att.net            |
| Lamberte         | Tony       | tony.lamberte@noaa.gov        |
| Levy             | Mara       | mara.levy@noaa.gov            |
| Markwith         | Anne       | anne.markwith@ncdenr.gov      |
| Mehta            | Nikhil     | nikhil.mehta@noaa.gov         |
| Neer             | Julie      | julie.neer@safmc.net          |
| Player           | David      | playerd@dnr.sc.gov            |
| Pulver           | Jeff       | Jeff.Pulver@noaa.gov          |
| Raine            | Karen      | karen.raine@noaa.gov          |
| Ralston          | Kellie     | kralston@asafishing.org       |
| Seward           | McLean     | mclean.seward@ncdenr.gov      |
| Shipman          | Susan      | susanshipman@att.net          |
| Surrency         | Ron        | captronacc@gmail.com          |
| Takade-Heumacher | Helen      | htakade@edf.org               |
| Tong             | Amanda     | amanda.tong@ncdenr.gov        |
| Travis           | Michael    | mike.travis@noaa.gov          |

|          |         |                          |
|----------|---------|--------------------------|
| Waters   | James   | jwaters8@gmail.com       |
| Williams | Erik    | erik.williams@noaa.gov   |
| brennan  | ken     | kenneth.brennan@noaa.gov |
| brewer   | chester | wcbsafmc@gmail.com       |
| sandorf  | scott   | scott.sandorf@noaa.gov   |
| vara     | mary    | mary.vara@noaa.gov       |

Wednesday 9/26/17 Public Sign-In

| Name   | Last       | How do you participate in fisheries in the South Atlantic? (Check all that apply) | How do you participate in fisheries in the South Atlantic? (Check all that apply) | How do you participate in fisheries in the South Atlantic? (Check all that apply) | If Other, please provide more information: |
|--------|------------|---|---|---|--|
|        |            | Private   | Charter/H   | Commercial  | Fisheries Consultant                       |
| Rusty  | Hudson     | Recreational  | Recreational  | Commercial  |  |
| Dean   | Foster     |   |   |   |  |
| Leda   | Cunningham |   |   |   |  |
| Amy    | Dukes      |   |   |   | SCDNR                                      |
| Lora   | Clarke     |   |   |   |  |
| David  | Bush       |   |   |   | NCEA                                       |
| Ernest | Muhammad   |   |   |   | SCDNR                                      |
| Walter | Bubley     |   |   |   | SCDNR                                      |