

**FINAL
SUMMARY REPORT
SHRIMP COMMITTEE
SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
September 18, 2025**

The Committee approved the agenda for the September 2025 meeting.

Giant Manta Ray and Smalltooth Sawfish Section 7 Reinitiation Updates

In June 2023, the SERO Sustainable Fisheries Division requested the SERO Protected Resource Division reinitiate Endangered Species Act (ESA) Section 7 consultation on southeast U.S. shrimp fisheries (Gulf and South Atlantic). Reinitiation of consultation is required by the ESA because new information indicates shrimp fishing is affecting smalltooth sawfish and giant manta rays more than predicted in the previous 2021 Shrimp Opinion. SERO staff reviewed the key summary data on smalltooth sawfish and giant manta ray assembled for the reinitiation of Section 7 consultation compiled over the past two years. SERO staff discussed present paths forward for collaboration and advancing the consultation, consistent with the October 2024 ESA/Magnuson-Stevens Act policy directive. The Council discussed the need for the creation of a workgroup, similar to what was proposed at the August 2025 Gulf Council meeting to explore ways to reduce interactions with smalltooth sawfish and giant manta rays in the South Atlantic. The Committee made the following motions:

MOTION 1: POPULATE AND CONVENE A NEW WORKING GROUP COMPRISED OF SHRIMP HARVESTER SECTOR REPRESENTATIVES, NMFS STAFF, COUNCIL STAFF, COUNCIL MEMBERS, AN SSC MEMBER, RESEARCHERS, AND OTHERS TO IDENTIFY WORKABLE SOLUTIONS THAT AIM TO REDUCE INTERACTIONS WITH SMALLTOOTH SAWFISH AND GIANT MANTA RAYS IN THE SOUTH ATLANTIC FEDERAL SHRIMP TRAWL FISHERY. THIS NEW WORKING GROUP SHOULD BE FORMED BY THE COUNCIL CHAIR; SHRIMP COMMITTEE CHAIR, REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR, AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR WITH NO MORE THAN 15 MEMBERS.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

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Timing and Tasks:

MOTION 2: DIRECT STAFF TO DO THE FOLLOWING:

- Coordinate the formation of the workgroup, schedule meetings, and facilitate workgroup discussions.
- Present workgroup discussions to the Shrimp Committee as needed.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL