



# SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201, North Charleston SC 29405

Call: (843) 571-4366 | Toll-Free: (866) SAFMC-10 | Fax: (843) 769-4520 | Connect: [www.safmc.net](http://www.safmc.net)

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Carolyn N. Belcher, Ph.D., Chair | Trish Murphey, Vice Chair  
John Carmichael, Executive Director

## AGENDA

### System Management Plan Workgroup Webinar

**Wednesday, November 15, 2023 – 9:00 A.M. – 3:00 P.M.**

#### Introduction of Workgroup Members

1. Spawning Special Management Zones (SSMZ) Review – (*Attachments 1a and 1b*)
  - a. Overview – Chip Collier
  - b. Workgroup Discussion – Stacey Harter
2. Data Collection and Findings in SSMZ – (*Attachment 2*)
  - a. Presentation – Will Heyman
  - b. Workgroup Discussion – Stacey Harter
3. Larval Dispersal Models – (*Attachment 3*)
  - a. Presentation – Roger Brothers
  - b. Workgroup Discussion – Stacey Harter
4. Evaluation Tools for the SSMZs – (*Attachments 4a and 4b*)
  - a. Council Guidance on Evaluation – Chip Collier
  - b. Review of draft Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool for SSMZs – Chip Collier
  - c. Potential Metrics included in Snapper Grouper Amendment 36 System Management Plan – Chip Collier
  - d. Workgroup Discussion – Stacey Harter
5. Next Steps
6. Election of Co-Chair
7. Public Comment

Adjourn

Staff Lead: Chip Collier ([chip.collier@safmc.net](mailto:chip.collier@safmc.net))

**Attachments:**

**Attachment 1a:** Snapper Grouper Amendment 36

**Attachment 1b:** Snapper Grouper Amendment 36 System Management Plan

**Attachment 2:** Presentation on Data and Findings in Spawning Special Management Zones  
(will be in recent materials)

**Attachment 3:** Presentation on Larval Dispersal Models (will be in recent materials)

**Attachment 4a:** SSMZ 2023 Evaluation METT4

**Attachment 4b:** Potential Metrics included in Snapper Grouper Amendment 36 System  
Management Plan with Scoring

# OVERVIEW

## System Management Plan Workgroup

The Workgroup will approve the agenda for the November 2023 meeting.

Introduction of Workgroup Members

### **1. Spawning Special Management Zones (SSMZ) Review – (Attachment 1)**

Five SSMZs were created through Snapper Grouper Amendment 36 in 2017, which included a 10-year sunset provision for three of the SSMZs. Snapper Grouper Amendment 36 included a system management plan, which is a document designed to help evaluate the protected area. Due to the upcoming sunset of three SSMZs, the Council has requested the System Management Plan Workgroup to develop an evaluation of the SSMZs. Council staff will review the contents of Amendment 36 and its System Management Plan, [managed areas webpage](#), and SSMZ Information Module (located on managed areas webpage toward the bottom).

**Workgroup Action:** Discuss and provide input, as appropriate.

### **2. Data Collection and Findings in SSMZ – (Attachment 2)**

Data on spawning condition of grouper, tilefish, and snapper have been collected in the SSMZs using a cooperative research approach funded through Pew Charitable Trusts and the Nature Conservancy. Will Heyman, Senior Marine Scientist with LGL Associates, will present the findings from the research.

**Workgroup Action:** Discuss and provide input, as appropriate.

### **3. Larval Dispersal Models – (Attachment 3)**

NOAA Fisheries received funding to evaluate the effectiveness of the SSMZs as potential sources of recruitment. Roger Brothers, Post Doctoral Research Associate with the Gulf of Maine Research Institute, will present the findings from a simulation study on larval dispersal of particles released from the SSMZs to evaluate the efficacy of the areas.

**Workgroup Action:** Discuss and provide input, as appropriate.

### **4. Evaluation Tools for the SSMZs – (Attachments 4a and 4b)**

Many tools have been developed to aid in the evaluation of protected areas; however, no tool has been developed to evaluate the areas in the South Atlantic region. The Council recommended an evaluation tool be developed for protected areas in the region. Two options to consider for evaluation include the Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT, Stolton et al. 2020) and draft SAFMC evaluation metrics for the SSMZs. Council staff will present a draft evaluation using the METT and present another potential evaluation tool targeted at evaluating the SSMZs based on the goal and objectives for the area.

**Workgroup Action:** Discuss and guidance on which approach to consider to further develop to evaluate the SSMZ.

### **5. Next Steps**

### **6. Election of Co-Chair**

### **7. Public Comment**

**Adjourn**