

SPINY LOBSTER COMMITTEE
STUART, FL
June 9, 2009

The committee received a status report from Mark Robson on the State of Florida's activity on the trap certificate program, the commercial dive endorsement, and work on addressing concerns about stag and elk horn corals. Tony Iarocci reported that fishermen are working on trap designs that do not move around and they have formed a working group to address stag and elk horn coral issues.

Staff briefed the committee on coordination work with the Gulf Council: Gulf Council Staff will take the administrative/staff lead on Mackerel Amendment 18 and South Atlantic Council Staff will take the administrative/staff lead on Spiny Lobster Amendment 9. The Committee reviewed and approved the Gulf Council's scoping document with guidance that allocation alternatives should be developed for the following sectors: (1) recreational, (2) commercial trapping, (3) commercial diving, and (4) commercial bully netting. The Committee also provided guidance to staff on the range of alternatives to be analyzed:

1. Delete Action 1 that would address withdrawing the Spiny Lobster FMP because it would be unlikely that the FMP would be withdrawn given the recent approval of the prohibition of imports below the minimum size limit; Action 2 addresses delegating various aspects to the State of Florida and will be analyzed.
2. Action 2 (Delegate certain operational aspects to Florida) would be analyzed and the Councils/NMFS/State of Florida staffs will work on details for potential items that could be delegated.
3. Action 3 (Tailing Permit) – the Committee directed staff to analyze the following:
 - a. Alternative 1. No action.
 - b. Alternative 2. Do not allow tailing.
 - c. Alternative 3. Specify certain criteria that need to be met to obtain a tailing permit and limit the permit to certain areas/zones.
 - d. Alternative 4. Require that all lobsters be tailed or all landed whole on each trip for vessels with a tailing permit.
4. Action 4 (Use of Short Lobsters) – the Committee directed staff to analyze the following:
 - a. Alternative 1. No action.
 - b. Alternative 2. Prohibit possession and use of shorts as attractants.
 - c. Alternative 3. Allow use of 50 shorts and 1 per trap (tracks Florida regulations).
5. Action 5 (Update the management protocol) – this action will be analyzed.

6. Action 6 (ACLs, Allocations, AMs, etc.) – the Committee directed staff to get the most recent data on landings, mortality of shorts, etc. and prepare allocation alternatives (recreational, commercial diving, commercial trapping, and commercial bully netting).
7. The Committee directed staff to prepare a draft options paper with the existing SEDAR assessment results until the new assessment results are available in late 2010.

The committee approved the following motions:

MOTION #1: APPROVE THE GULF COUNCIL'S SPINY LOBSTER SCOPING DOCUMENT FOR SCOPING.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

MOTION #2: DIRECT STAFF TO WORK ON THE OPTIONS PAPER TO INCORPORATE THE DIRECTIONS GIVEN DURING THE MEETING, INCLUDE GULF SCOPING COMMENTS, AND BRING THE REVISED OPTIONS PAPER TO THE SEPTEMBER COUNCIL MEETING.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE