

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE



SSC Meeting Overview

April 3-5, 2012

Hilton Savannah DeSoto

15 Liberty Street

Savannah, GA

VERSION

Briefing Book Draft: March 20 2012

PURPOSE

This meeting is convened to:

- Review ABC recommendations and the ABC control rule
- Review revised recreational catch estimates
- Review CEBA 3
- Review the SAFMC research plan
- Consider an SSC peer review process

CONTENTS

1.	Introduction.....	4
2.	SEDAR Activities Update	4
3.	Fisheries Monitoring Principles	4
4.	ABC Control Rule Modifications	5
5.	Review of Landings and ABCs.....	5
6.	CEBA 3.....	8
7.	Review Boyle's Law	10
8.	Assessment and Technical Analysis Peer Review	10
9.	SAFMC Research Prioritization Plan	11
10.	Information and Updates.....	11
11.	Other Business	12
12.	Report and Recommendations Review	12
13.	Chair and Vice-Chair Elections	12
14.	Next SSC Meeting	12

Documents:

- Attachment 1. SEDAR project schedule
- Attachment 2. 2012 Update Info
- Attachment 3. MRAG Monitoring Principles
- Attachment 4. ORCS Report
- Attachment 5. SAFMC ORCS Subcommittee report
- Attachment 6. ORCS Application
- Attachment 7. Existing ABC Recommendations
- Attachment 8. Overview of MRIP revisions
- Attachment 9. South Atlantic MRIP Presentation
- Attachment 10. Updated landings trends
- Attachment 11. Final tilefish projections
- Attachment 12. CEBA 3 Options
- Attachment 13. SAFMC Letter on deep water species approaches
- Attachment 14. Allocation Committee Excerpt
- Attachment 15. SSC Job Description
- Attachment 16. SAFMC Research Plan 2012.
- Attachment 17. Regional Operating Agreement.

1. Introduction

1.1. Documents

Agenda
Minutes, November 2011

1.2. Action

Introductions
Review and Approve Agenda
Approve Minutes

2. SEDAR Activities Update

2.1. Documents

Attachment 1. SEDAR project schedule
Attachment 2. 2012 Update Info

2.2. Overview

SEDAR 28, South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico Spanish mackerel and cobia is underway. The Data workshop is completed and the Assessment workshop will be held in May.

Update Assessments of South Atlantic vermilion snapper and red porgy are planned for 2012. They are expected to begin later in the year, once final data for 2011 are available, and be provided to the SSC for review at the October 2012 meeting. The SSC is asked to comment on and approve the update TORs (Attachment 2).

2.3. Action

- Comment on TORs for vermilion snapper and red porgy updates

SSC RECOMMENDATION:

3. Fisheries Monitoring Principles

3.1. Documents

Attachment 3. MRAG Monitoring Principles

3.2. Overview

The consulting group MRAG Americas has a project to develop guiding principles for fisheries monitoring (Attachment 3). They requested this opportunity to present findings to the SSC.

3.3. Presentation

Monitoring Principles, Bob Trumble, MRAG Americas

3.4. Action

- Comment on the approach and provide recommendations on use

SSC RECOMMENDATION:

4. ABC Control Rule Modifications

4.1. Documents

Attachment 4. ORCS Report
Attachment 5. SAFMC ORCS Subcommittee report
Attachment 6. ORCS Application

4.2. Overview

The SSC reviewed the ORCS report (Attachment 4) at the previous meeting and convened a subcommittee to consider modifications to the SAFMC ABC control rule in response. The subcommittee met via conference call and discussed how the ORCS principles could be included (Attachment 5). Mike Errigo, SAFMC Staff, prepared an initial exploratory application of the ORCS principles as discussed by the Subcommittee (Attachment 6).

4.3. Presentations

ORCS Subcommittee Report and Recommendations: Luiz Barbieri
ORCS Application: Mike Errigo

4.4. ACTIONS

- Consider modifying the ABC control rule

SSC RECOMMENDATION:

5. Review of Landings and ABCs

5.1. Documents

Attachment 7. Existing ABC Recommendations
Attachment 8. Overview of MRIP revisions
Attachment 9. South Atlantic MRIP Presentation
Attachment 10. Updated landings trends
Attachment 11. Final tilefish projections

NOTE: There are 2 spreadsheet companions to Attachment 10.

5.2. Overview

The SSC is asked to review current landings trends, current ABC recommendations, and consider possible ABC modifications in response to changes in trends, changes in input values, or changes in the ABC control rule process. Existing ABC recommendations, their basis, and date of SSC recommendation are summarized in Attachment 7. Also included in this attachment are excerpts from recent amendments where OFL, ABC, ACL, ACT, and AMs were specified, including the Comprehensive ACL amendment and Snapper-Grouper Amendments 17B and 24.

Revised ABCs are not required at this meeting. Moreover, some information that is pertinent to any ABC revisions, such as possible revised MRIP estimates prior to 1999, is not available at this time (Attachment 8, Attachment 9). Therefore, the committee may wish to discuss the issues below that may influence future ABC recommendations and develop a process for making revisions at the next meeting (scheduled for October 2012). The Committee should also discuss long-term strategies for updating ABC recommendations.

One concern affecting the timing of ABC recommendations is the process the SERO will apply when monitoring 2012 fisheries and evaluating existing ACLs. How monitoring can be affected is discussed for each item below. No final decision regarding monitoring of 2012 recreational landings has been provided.

Issues to discuss during this topic include:

- Inclusion of shore mode landings
Shore based landings were inadvertently omitted from the ACL database available to the SSC when ABC were specified for many unassessed stocks in April 2011. Therefore, existing ABCs do not reflect the complete landings of these species and are lower than the actual reported landings. SERO has indicated that landings could be monitored in 2012 by omitting shore-based modes.
- Revised MRIP estimates
Revised recreational estimates for 2004-2011 were recently released by the MRIP program. Standard queries now return estimates based on the revised procedures. The SSC is provided a comparison of the new and old values for managed stocks (Attachment 10), and an overview presentation of the changes provided at the March 2012 Council meeting by SERO staff (Attachment 9). SERO has indicated that 2012 monitoring could be conducted using estimates based on the MRFSS process. This is only feasible in 2012, as the MRFSS equivalent values will not be available beyond this year.
- Preliminary calibration workshop recommendations
A SEDAR-MRIP workshop is planned for March 27-29 to discuss further calibration of MRFSS to MRIP estimates. The 1998-2003 period is expected to be the initial focus. Participants will be asked to recommend whether calibration is possible during these years, and, if so, methods to consider. An

independent peer review will be conducted and final results are expected by July 1, 2012.

- ABC control rule application

The SSC directed that a subcommittee consider modifications to the ABC control rule in response to the ORCS committee report. Subcommittee recommendations are provided for discussion. The SSC may wish to consider revising ABC recommendations if the ABC control rule is modified.

- Stocks added back to the Fishery Management Unit (FMU) in August 2011

The SAFMC added several stocks back to the Snapper-Grouper FMU following the SSC meeting of April 2011. These stocks were not reviewed under the data poor tier as derived in April 2011. Council established an ABC equivalent to the third-highest value for 1999-2008 in the Comprehensive ACL amendment as submitted in Fall 2011 and recently approved. The SSC is asked to review trends for these stocks, as was done for other unassessed stocks in April 2011, and consider possible ABC recommendations.

- Time-specific ABCs provided previously

Initial ABC recommendations were made over several years. During that time the amount of agency guidance available increased and the ABC control rule evolved. Therefore, some of the earliest ABCs may not be specified in the same manner or based on the same principles as some provided later in the process. Additionally, in some cases the SSC provided ABCs based on time sensitive information, such as stock projections. Such recommendations may not be valid beyond a certain period of time, although such periods have seldom been formally established by the SSC. The SSC is asked to consider whether some ABC recommendations should be revised and whether time-specific limits should be placed on ABC recommendations. For an example, the SSC reviewed assessments of black sea bass and golden tilefish in November 2011. Black sea bass ABCs were recommended with a specific time limitation of 2 years based on projection uncertainty. Final projections were not available at that time so the SSC could recommend only an approach and P*, and did not recommend a time-specific ABC for tilefish.

5.3. Presentations

Overview and Issues: John Carmichael
SAFMC Landings Trends: Mike Errigo

5.4. ACTIONS

- Recommend how to address the omitted shore-based landings for ABC recommendations.
- Recommend how to address revised MRIP estimates for ABC recommendations.

- Recommend how to address changes in the ABC control rule, if changes are proposed, for developing ABC recommendations.
- Consider how to address ABC recommendations for stocks added to the FMU after April 2011.
- Recommend how to address time-specific aspects of existing ABC recommendations.
- Provide guidance on ABC monitoring approaches for 2012.

SSC RECOMMENDATION:

6. CEBA 3

6.1. Documents

Attachment 12. CEBA 3 Options

Attachment 13. SAFMC Letter on deep water species approaches

6.2. Overview

Staff Contact: Anna Martin

1. Expansion of Coral HAPCs - Anna Martin (CE-BA 3 document lead)
2. Speckled Hind and Warsaw Grouper protections – Myra Brouwer
3. Permits and Data Reporting – Gregg Waugh

In CE-BA 3, the Council is addressing place-based management measures and improvements in tracking of annual catch limits. CE-BA 3 was approved for public scoping during the December 2011 Council meeting, scoping meetings were held in January/February 2012, and the measures were further refined at the March 2012 Council meeting. Measures being developed in CE-BA 3 include: expanding Coral Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (HAPCs); establishing MPAs across the mid-shelf for speckled hind and Warsaw grouper; and modifying permits, data reporting (for-hire and commercial sectors), and bycatch monitoring to ensure ACLs are not exceeded.

Among options the Council is considering as alternatives to the depth based closure proposed for removal through Snapper-Grouper Regulatory Amendment 11 are focused spatial closures directed at speckled hind and Warsaw grouper. The SSC is asked to carefully consider the information available to support such closures, as well as best scientific practices that can be used to guide their size and location.

The SAFMC Staff presentation will outline a simplified approach based on the known occurrence of speckled hind to target the extent and areas of closure. This is outlined in the CE-BA 3 Options Paper. Modifications to existing MPAs and/or specification of new MPAs will be influenced by targeting the inclusion of known Warsaw grouper occurrence, spawning

locations for speckled hind/Warsaw grouper, and habitat for these two species. The intent of this approach is to add the occurrence data to the existing habitat data on the Council’s IMS system and allow the public to use this system to develop their own recommendations for potential MPA sites. The staff presentation will allow the SSC to view the occurrence/habitat data directly through a GIS application. The SSC is asked to provide guidance on what percentage to be targeted (Council is evaluating 20%, 30% and 40%).

NMFS SERO staff will provide a presentation that considers occurrence observations along with habitat and bathymetry data to quantify areas where the species may be expected to occur along with those where they have been observed to occur. This presentation builds on information provided to the SSC in November 2011, in support of Regulatory Amendment 11, and includes some additional analyses intended to refine the spatial resolution of the available data. The approach is detailed in the attached presentation in the briefing documents, with supporting documentation and references located in the references documents folder.

The SSC is asked to review the data available on landings and locations of the deepwater species speckled hind and Warsaw grouper.

6.3. CEBA-3 Schedule

NOI	
Scoping Complete.....	January/February 2012
Council reviews options & makes recommendations.....	March/June 2012
SSC review.....	April 2012
APs review.....	April/May 2012
Council review & approve for Public Hearing	June 2012
Public Hearings.....	August 2012
SSC Final review	October 2012
Final Review & Submission	September or December 2012
Regulations implemented	2013

6.4. Presentations

- Overview and Issues: Anna Martin
- Deepwater species data and approach: Roger Pugliese, SAFMC
- Deepwater species data and alternatives: Nick Famer, SERO

6.5. ACTIONS

Provide a recommendation for each action, as appropriate. If no recommendation is provided, state why the issue is not addressed (i.e., it is an administrative action and the SSC has no input).

The SSC may provide input on any other items pertaining to the amendment.

- Review options for expansion of Coral HAPCs as recommended by the Coral AP and shrimp industry representatives.

- Review approaches for evaluating possible closed areas for speckled hind and Warsaw grouper.
- Provide guidance on placing and evaluating closed areas that will protect speckled hind and Warsaw grouper.
- Provide recommendations or guidance for the amount of area to be closed.
- Provide recommendations for monitoring deepwater species.

SSC RECOMMENDATION:

7. Review Boyle's Law

7.1. Documents

Attachment 14. Allocation Committee Excerpt

7.2. Overview

"Boyle's Law" is a method of allocating fishery yield among different sectors while balancing current and historical participation as required by the Magnuson-Stevens Act. It was devised by the SAFMC Allocation Committee, and attributed to member Robert Boyles. The casual moniker stuck to the method and often appears in committee discussion, although the method is not officially named. An excerpt from the committee minutes is provided with the documents (Attachment 14), and the full committee minutes are included in the reference document. It is based on a combination of short-term and long-term catch averages by sector, calculated as follows:

Sector apportionment = (50% * average of long catch range (lbs) 1999-2008) + (50% * average of recent catch (lbs) 2006-2008).

(NOTE: Actual time periods may vary by species)

7.3. ACTIONS

- Comment and provide recommendations on this approach vs. other methods.

SSC RECOMMENDATION:

8. Assessment and Technical Analysis Peer Review

8.1. Documents

Attachment 15. SSC Job Description

8.2. Overview

At the November 2011 meeting the SSC asked that time be allotted during the next meeting for a discussion of the SSC peer review process for technical analyses. Analyses reviewed by the SSC include stock assessments, such as Standard and Update

assessments through SEDAR or assessments conducted by other organizations, and management alternative evaluations in FMP Amendments. The SAFMC SSC does not currently have a formal peer review process or document submission guidelines. Process recommendations of the SSC will be presented to the SSC Selection Committee for consideration and approval. Issues to consider in this discussion include:

- TORs for reviews
- Document submission guidelines and deadlines
- Use of SSC sub-committees to develop recommendations
- Types of documents to be reviewed
- Presentation needs and expectations

8.3. ACTIONS

- Recommend a peer review process

SSC RECOMMENDATION:

9. SAFMC Research Prioritization Plan

9.1. Documents

Attachment 16. SAFMC Research Plan 2012.

9.2. Overview

The Revised MSA requires that Councils regularly provide prioritized research needs to NOAA Fisheries. Plans addressing SAFMC needs are prepared annually, reviewed by the SSC, and approved by the Council. The SSC is asked to comment on the current version (Attachment 16).

9.3. ACTIONS

- Review and comment on the plan

SSC RECOMMENDATION:

10. Information and Updates

10.1. Documents

Attachment 17. Regional Operating Agreement.

10.2. FMP REPORTS

Staff contact: Gregg Waugh

10.2.1. Coastal Migratory Pelagic Update

10.2.2. Snapper Grouper Amendments Update

10.2.3. Golden Crab

10.3. SEDAR

SEDAR 28, Gulf and South Atlantic Spanish mackerel and cobia
Assessment Workshop: May 7-11, Miami FL
Review Workshop: August 6-10, Atlanta GA

10.4. SAFMC

- A. June 11-15, 2012 – Florida
- B. September 10-14, 2012 – South Carolina
- C. December 3-7, 2012 – North Carolina

11. Other Business

12. Report and Recommendations Review

The Committee is provided an opportunity to review its report and final recommendations.

The Final SSC report should be provided to the Council by April; 23, 2012.

13. Chair and Vice-Chair Elections

14. Next SSC Meeting

October 23 - 25, 2012, Charleston SC

Expected Topics

- Review SEDAR 28, Spanish Mackerel & Cobia Benchmark Assessments
- Review updates of Vermilion Snapper & Red Porgy
- Final Review CEBA-3
- Final Review Shrimp Amendment 9
- Final Review Mackerel Amendment 19 and Mackerel Amendment 20
- Final Review Joint Dealer Amendment
- Provide ABC Recommendations