

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE



SSC Meeting Overview

April 28-30, 2020

Meeting via Webinar

**VERSION
FINAL
April 1, 2020**

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Documents:

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- Attachment 2. Red Snapper ToRs and Schedule
- Attachment 3. Black Sea Bass ToRs and Schedule
- Attachment 4. Spanish Mackerel ToRs and Schedule
- Attachment 5. New vs. Old Wgt Est Landings & ABCs for Unassessed Species
- Attachment 6. SEFSC Wgt Conversion Presentation from MRIP Workshop
- Attachment 7. SEFSC Wgt Conversion Background from MRIP Workshop
- Attachment 8. SEDAR 38 Update Assessment Report
- Attachment 9. SEDAR 38 Update Assessment Presentation*
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- Attachment 13. SEDAR 60 Assessment Presentation*
- Attachment 14. MARMAP Supporting Document*
- Attachment 15. SAFMC Work Plan, March 2020
- Attachment 16. SAFMC Amendments Overview, March 2020

*** Indicates documents not available for the Briefing Book. These will be distributed as they become available.**

SAFMC PUBLIC COMMENT PROCESS

Written comment:

Written comment on SSC agenda topics is to be distributed to the Committee through the Council office, similar to all other Council briefing materials. Written comment to be considered by the SSC shall be provided to the Council office no later than one week prior to an SSC meeting. For this meeting, the deadline for submission of written comment is 12:00 pm Tuesday, April 20, 2019. Submit written comments to:

**SAFMC – SSC Comments
4055 Faber Place Drive
Suite 201
North Charleston, SC 29405**

Verbal comment:

Two opportunities for comment on agenda items will be provided at set times during SSC meetings. The first will be at the beginning of the meeting, and the second near the conclusion. Those wishing to comment should indicate such in the manner requested by the Chair, who will then recognize individuals to provide comment.

An opportunity for comment on specific agenda items will also be provided as each item comes up for discussion. Comments will be taken after all the initial presentations are given and before the SSC starts the discussion of the agenda topic. As before, those wishing to comment should indicate such in the manner requested by the Chair, who will then recognize individuals to provide comment. All comments are part of the record of the meeting.

Meeting Format:

Given the rapidly evolving situation with the outbreak of COVID-19 and potential health risks, this meeting will be held as a series of webinars from April 28-30. Each day will be a separate webinar with its own link, available on the Council's website at <https://safmc.net/safmc-meetings/scientific-and-statistical-committee-meetings/>.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Documents

Agenda

Attachment 1. Minutes of the October 2019 meeting

1.2. Action

- Introductions
- Review and Approve Agenda
- Approve Minutes

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

The public will be provided an opportunity to comment on SSC agenda items as they are being discussed during the meeting. Comments will be taken after any initial presentations are given on a particular topic, but before the SSC begins their discussion of the topic. There will also be an opportunity for comment at the start and end of the meeting. Those wishing to make comment should indicate their desire to do so to the Committee Chair.

3. SEDAR ACTIVITIES

3.1. Documents

Attachment 2. Red Snapper ToRs and Schedule

Attachment 3. Black Sea Bass ToRs and Schedule

Attachment 4. Spanish Mackerel ToRs and Schedule

3.2. Overview

SEDAR staff will present the draft TORs and schedules for the upcoming Red Snapper, Black Sea Bass and Spanish Mackerel assessments. SEDAR will request volunteers to participate in these three assessments for 2020 and 2021.

3.3. Public Comment

3.4. Action

- Red Snapper
 - Approve Terms of Reference and schedule.
 - Request participants.
- Black Sea Bass
 - Approve Terms of Reference and schedule.
 - Request participants.

- Spanish Mackerel
 - Approve Terms of Reference and schedule.
 - Request participants.
- Find replacement for Rob Ahrens on Scamp assessment.

Table 1. Current SEDAR projects and those planned but not yet scheduled, with SSC participants where applicable.

Plan Year	SEDAR #: Type	Stock	Terminal Data	Assessment Complete	SSC Participants
2020	B	Mutton Snapper	2020	Late 2021	
	68: RT	Scamp, Gulf + SA	2017	Summer 2021	DW & AW & RW: Rob Ahrens*, Marcel Reichert, Alexei Sharov
	U	Snowy Grouper	2018	Fall 2020	
	71: OA	Gag	2019	Spring 2021	Wilson Laney Scott Crosson Anne Lange
	66: OA	golden Tilefish	2018	Spring 2021	George Sedberry, Genny Nesslage, Churchill Grimes
	OA	Red Snapper	TBD	TBD	
2021	68: OA	Scamp, Gulf + SA	2020	Early 2022	
	OA	Spanish Mackerel	TBD	Early 2022	
	OA	Black Sea Bass	TBD	2022	

*Rob Ahrens will no longer be on the SSC and can no longer act as the SSC representative for Scamp.

4. NEW SCIENCE CENTER RECREATIONAL WEIGHT ESTIMATION PROCEDURE AND UPDATED ABC'S FOR UNASSESSED SPECIES

4.1. Documents

Attachment 5. New vs. Old Wgt Est Landings & ABCs for Unassessed Species
 Attachment 6. SEFSC Wgt Conversion Presentation from MRIP Workshop
 Attachment 7. SEFSC Wgt Conversion Background from MRIP Workshop

4.2. Overview

During the August 2019 MRIP Workshop, the Committee was informed of the SEFSC's methodology for converting recreational catch estimates from numbers of fish to weight in

pounds. This process involves collapsing across strata in a hierarchical fashion until a minimum sample size of 30 weighed fish is achieved. That average weight is then applied to all landed fish within those strata. The strata hierarchy, from lowest to highest, is area fished, wave, mode, state, year, region, and species.

This described methodology was what was in place when the Committee originally looked at the landings trends for unassessed stocks to make ABC recommendations in October 2019. Since that meeting, the SEFSC has updated this methodology to use a 15 fish minimum sample size rather than the original 30 fish minimum. This update has changed the landings trends seen by the Committee in October 2019 and, therefore, the ABC recommendations. The Committee is asked to look over the trends for the unassessed stocks and decide if the differences, caused only by the updated minimum sample size, are small enough to simply update the original ABC recommendations with the new landings data or if more consideration is needed. The Committee is not being asked to review the entire weight estimation methodology at this time.

At their March 2020 meeting, the Council also took a close look at the Dolphin ABC the SSC recommended, and the Council would like the Committee to take another look at this ABC. The discussion at the Council meeting focused on using the 3rd highest landing value for a time series of only 4 years. That means the SSC set the ABC at the 2nd lowest value in the time series, even though they felt there isn't any concern with the Dolphin stock at this time. The Council is asking the Committee to consider approaches such as a longer time series, a different time series, or the use of the ORCS approach to set the ABC for this stock.

4.3. Public Comment

4.4. Action

- Review new landings time series for all unassessed stocks due to the change in weight estimation methodology by the SEFSC.
 - Consider updating the previous ABC recommendations based on these new landings.
- Consider the use of ORCS and the use of alternative time series for setting ABCs for Dolphin and Wahoo.

5. **SEDAR 38 KING MACKEREL ASSESSMENT UPDATE REVIEW**

5.1. Documents

Attachment 8. SEDAR 38 Update Assessment Report

Attachment 9. SEDAR 38 Update Assessment Presentation*

5.2. Presentation

SEDAR 38 Update Assessment Overview: Dr. Matt Lauretta, SEFSC

5.3. Overview

The Committee is asked to review the King Mackerel Update assessment prepared through the SEDAR 38 Update and provide fishing level recommendations (Attachment 8). King Mackerel was last assessed in 2014 during SEDAR 38, where the stock was found to have not been overfished and not undergoing overfishing.

5.4. Public Comment

5.5. Action

- Review assessment
 - Does the assessment address the ToRs to the SSCs satisfaction?
 - Does the assessment represent Best Scientific Information Available?
 - Does the assessment provide an adequate basis for determining stock status and supporting fishing level recommendations?
- Identify, summarize, and discuss assessment uncertainties
 - Review, summarize, and discuss the factors of this assessment that affect the reliability of estimates of stock status and fishing level recommendations.
 - Describe the risks and consequences of the assessment uncertainties with regard to status and fishing level recommendations.
 - Are methods of addressing uncertainty consistent with SSC expectations and the available information?
 - List (in order of the greatest contribution to risk and overall assessment uncertainty) and comment on the effects of those assessment factors that most contribute to risk and impact status determinations and future yield predictions.
- Provide fishing level recommendations
 - Apply the ABC control rule and complete the fishing level recommendations table.
 - Comment on any difficulties encountered in applying the Control Rule, including any required information that is not available.
 - Is adequate rebuilding progress being made? Comment on reasons why progress differs from projections.
- Provide advice on monitoring the stock until the next assessment
 - What indicators or metrics should the council monitor and could the SSC use to evaluate the stock until the next assessment?
 - Is there a recommended trigger level for these metrics? How should the Council respond if a trigger is activated?
- Provide research recommendations and guidance on the next assessment
 - Review the included research recommendations and indicate those most likely to reduce risk and uncertainty in the next assessment.
 - Provide any additional research recommendations the SSC believes will improve future stock assessments.
 - Provide guidance on the next assessment, addressing its timing and type.

SSC RECOMMENDATION:

Table 2. King Mackerel Recommendations

Criteria	Deterministic		Probabilistic	
Overfished evaluation (SSB/SSB _{MSY})				
Overfishing evaluation				
MFMT (F _{MSY})				
SSB _{MSY} (Units)				
MSST (Units)				
MSY (1000 lbs.)				
Y at 75% F _{MSY} (1000 lbs.)				
ABC Control Rule Adjustment				
P-Star				
M				
OFL RECOMMENDATIONS				
Year	Landed LBS	Discard LBS	Landed Number	Discard Number
ABC RECOMMENDATIONS				
Year	Landed LBS	Discard LBS	Landed Number	Discard Number

6. SEDAR 59 GREATER AMBERJACK ASSESSMENT REVIEW**6.1. Documents**

Attachment 10. SEDAR 59 Assessment Report

Attachment 11. SEDAR 59 Assessment Presentation*

6.2. Presentation

SEDAR 59 Assessment Overview: Dr. Kevin Craig, SEFSC

6.3. Overview

The Committee is asked to review the Greater Amberjack Standard assessment prepared through SEDAR 59 and provide fishing level recommendations (Attachment 10). Greater Amberjack was last assessed in 2008 during SEDAR 15, where the stock was found to have not been overfished and not undergoing overfishing. The major reasons for performing a Standard assessment were

due to the length of time between the last assessment and this one. There have been many advances in assessment science since SEDAR 15 was performed, as well as the development of a potential new index in the SERFS video fishery independent index of abundance.

6.4. Public Comment

6.5. Action

- Review assessment
 - Does the assessment address the ToRs to the SSCs satisfaction?
 - Does the assessment represent Best Scientific Information Available?
 - Does the assessment provide an adequate basis for determining stock status and supporting fishing level recommendations?
- Identify, summarize, and discuss assessment uncertainties
 - Review, summarize, and discuss the factors of this assessment that affect the reliability of estimates of stock status and fishing level recommendations.
 - Describe the risks and consequences of the assessment uncertainties with regard to status and fishing level recommendations.
 - Are methods of addressing uncertainty consistent with SSC expectations and the available information?
 - List (in order of the greatest contribution to risk and overall assessment uncertainty) and comment on the effects of those assessment factors that most contribute to risk and impact status determinations and future yield predictions.
- Provide fishing level recommendations
 - Apply the ABC control rule and complete the fishing level recommendations table.
 - Comment on any difficulties encountered in applying the Control Rule, including any required information that is not available.
 - Is adequate rebuilding progress being made? Comment on reasons why progress differs from projections.
- Provide advice on monitoring the stock until the next assessment
 - What indicators or metrics should the council monitor and could the SSC use to evaluate the stock until the next assessment?
 - Is there a recommended trigger level for these metrics? How should the Council respond if a trigger is activated?
- Provide research recommendations and guidance on the next assessment
 - Review the included research recommendations and indicate those most likely to reduce risk and uncertainty in the next assessment.
 - Provide any additional research recommendations the SSC believes will improve future stock assessments.
 - Provide guidance on the next assessment, addressing its timing and type.

SSC RECOMMENDATION:

Table 3. Greater Amberjack Recommendations

Criteria	Deterministic		Probabilistic	
Overfished evaluation (SSB/SSB _{MSY})				
Overfishing evaluation				
MFMT (F _{MSY})				
SSB _{MSY} (Units)				
MSST (Units)				
MSY (1000 lbs.)				
Y at 75% F _{MSY} (1000 lbs.)				
ABC Control Rule Adjustment				
P-Star				
M				
OFL RECOMMENDATIONS				
Year	Landed LBS	Discard LBS	Landed Number	Discard Number
ABC RECOMMENDATIONS				
Year	Landed LBS	Discard LBS	Landed Number	Discard Number

7. SEDAR 60 RED PORGY ASSESSMENT REVIEW**7.1. Documents**

- Attachment 12. SEDAR 60 Assessment Report*
- Attachment 13. SEDAR 60 Assessment Presentation*
- Attachment 14. MARMAP Supporting Document*

7.2. Presentation

SEDAR 60 Assessment Overview: Dr. Nikolai Klibansky, SEFSC

7.3. Overview

The Committee is asked to review the Red Porgy Standard assessment prepared through SEDAR 60 and provide fishing level recommendations (Attachment 12). Red Porgy was last assessed during the 2012 Update to SEDAR 1, where the stock was found to be overfished and

undergoing overfishing. There had been very little recovery in the stock due to what was thought to be a recruitment failure. The major reasons for performing a Standard assessment were due to the length of time between the last benchmark assessment and this one. There have been many advances in assessment science since SEDAR 1 was performed, as well as the development of a potential new index in the SERFS video fishery independent index of abundance.

7.4. Public Comment

7.5. Action

- Review assessment
 - Does the assessment address the ToRs to the SSCs satisfaction?
 - Does the assessment represent Best Scientific Information Available?
 - Does the assessment provide an adequate basis for determining stock status and supporting fishing level recommendations?
- Identify, summarize, and discuss assessment uncertainties
 - Review, summarize, and discuss the factors of this assessment that affect the reliability of estimates of stock status and fishing level recommendations.
 - Describe the risks and consequences of the assessment uncertainties with regard to status and fishing level recommendations.
 - Are methods of addressing uncertainty consistent with SSC expectations and the available information?
 - List (in order of the greatest contribution to risk and overall assessment uncertainty) and comment on the effects of those assessment factors that most contribute to risk and impact status determinations and future yield predictions.
- Provide fishing level recommendations
 - Apply the ABC control rule and complete the fishing level recommendations table.
 - Comment on any difficulties encountered in applying the Control Rule, including any required information that is not available.
 - Is adequate rebuilding progress being made? Comment on reasons why progress differs from projections.
- Provide advice on monitoring the stock until the next assessment
 - What indicators or metrics should the council monitor and could the SSC use to evaluate the stock until the next assessment?
 - Is there a recommended trigger level for these metrics? How should the Council respond if a trigger is activated?
- Provide research recommendations and guidance on the next assessment
 - Review the included research recommendations and indicate those most likely to reduce risk and uncertainty in the next assessment.
 - Provide any additional research recommendations the SSC believes will improve future stock assessments.
 - Provide guidance on the next assessment, addressing its timing and type.

SSC RECOMMENDATION:

Table 4. Red Porgy Recommendations

Criteria	Deterministic		Probabilistic	
Overfished evaluation (SSB/SSB _{MSY})				
Overfishing evaluation				
MFMT (F _{MSY})				
SSB _{MSY} (Units)				
MSST (Units)				
MSY (1000 lbs.)				
Y at 75% F _{MSY} (1000 lbs.)				
ABC Control Rule Adjustment				
P-Star				
M				
OFL RECOMMENDATIONS				
Year	Landed LBS	Discard LBS	Landed Number	Discard Number
ABC RECOMMENDATIONS				
Year	Landed LBS	Discard LBS	Landed Number	Discard Number

8. COUNCIL WORKPLAN UPDATE**8.1. Documents**

Attachment 15. SAFMC Work Plan, March 2020

Attachment 16. SAFMC Amendments Overview, March 2020

8.2. Overview

These documents are provided at each meeting to keep the Committee informed of Council activities. Regular detailed reviews of each amendment are no longer requested of the SSC as amendments are developed; instead the Committee is asked to comment on specific technical items that may arise. However, members are welcome to review any ongoing amendments and to provide comments and suggestions directly to staff. Current versions of each amendment are included in the Council Briefing Books distributed to SSC members. Questions or comments about specific items should be addressed to the staff assigned to each FMP, as summarized

below. Items with a question mark next to them do not currently have an assigned staff member in charge of them due to the shuffling around of positions within the office this year. An assignment will be made when the vacant tech staff position is filled.

There is also a table below (Table 5) which lists all the active SSC workgroups and their members. There is currently only the Ecopath Model Review Workgroup that is active, but it should have finished its charge by the time this meeting occurs.

- Corals Amendment 10/Golden Crab Amendment 10/Shrimp Amendment 11 (Access Areas) – Chip Collier
- Fishery Ecosystem Plan – Roger Pugliese
- SG Amendments 43 & 46 (Red Snapper & Recreational Reporting) – Chip Collier
- SG Regulatory Amendment 31 (Recreational AMs) – Brian Chevront
- SG Regulatory Amendment 34 (SMZs off NC and SC) – Myra Brouwer
- DW Amendment 10 (Management measures for Dolphin and Wahoo) – John Hadley
- DW Amendment 12 (Bullet and Frigate Mackerel as EC species) – John Hadley
- Spiny Lob Regulatory Amendment 5 (Comm trip limits for SG1 and LT permits off GA-NC) – Christina Wiegand
- Bycatch Reporting Amendment – Chip Collier
- Comprehensive ABC Control Rule Amendment – ??

Table 5. Currently active SSC workgroups and their membership.

Workgroup	Members
Ecopath Model Review Workgroup	Rob Ahrens (Chair)
	Eric Johnson
	Marcel Reichert
	Alexei Sharov
	Fred Scharf

8.3. Public Comment

8.4. Action

- No specific actions required

9. **OTHER BUSINESS**

- National SSC Meeting Update

10. PUBLIC COMMENT

The public is provided an additional opportunity to comment on SSC recommendations and agenda items.

11. CONSENSUS STATEMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS REVIEW

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

The Final SSC report will be provided to the Council by 9 am on Tuesday, May 19, 2020 (approximately 2.5 weeks from the end of the meeting) for inclusion in the briefing book for the June Council meeting.

12. ELECTIONS

13. NEXT MEETINGS

13.1. SAFMC SSC MEETINGS

2020 Meeting Dates

- October 13-15, 2020 in Charleston, SC
 - Preferred week
 - NEFMC SSC has not scheduled their Oct meeting yet.
- October 20-22, 2020 in Charleston, SC
 - Some SSC members indicated these dates were not good.

13.2. SAFMC Meetings

2020 Council Meetings

June 8-12, 2020 in Key West, FL

September 14-18, 2020 in Charleston, SC

December 7-11, 2020 in Wrightsville Beach, NC

ADJOURN