

# **SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**

## **SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE**



**SSC Meeting Overview**

**February 11, 2022**

**Meeting via Webinar**

**VERSION  
FINAL  
January 27, 2022**

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**Documents:**

- Attachment 1. Minutes of the October 2021 meeting
- Attachment 2. SAFMC Public Comment Process
- Attachment 3a. SEDAR 71 Gag: New Projections Presentation
- Attachment 3b. SEDAR 71 Gag: New Projections Report

## **SAFMC PUBLIC COMMENT PROCESS**

### **Written comment:**

Written comment on SSC agenda topics is provided to the Committee through an [online form](#), similar to all other Council briefing materials. Written comment can be submitted at [this link](#). For this meeting, the deadline for submission of written comment is 12:00 pm EST on Friday, February 11, 2022.

### **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:**

This meeting will be held as a half-day webinar on Friday, February 11, 2022 from 8:30 am – 12:30 pm EST. The entire meeting will be on a single 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

- SSC February 2022 Agenda
- Attachment 1. Minutes of the October 2021 meeting

### 1.2. Action

- Introductions
- Review and Approve Agenda
- Approve Minutes

## 2. PUBLIC COMMENT

The public is provided this comment period for any general comments pertaining to any items on the agenda. There will also be time provided for public comment during each specific agenda item as they are discussed. Those wishing to make comment should indicate their desire to do so to the Committee Chair.

### 2.1. Documents

- Attachment 2. SAFMC Public Comment Process

## 3. SEDAR 71 GAG GROUPER PROJECTIONS REVIEW

### 3.1. Documents

- Attachment 3a. SEDAR 71 Gag: New Projections Presentation
- Attachment 3b. SEDAR 71 Gag: New Projections Report

### 3.2. Presentation

SEDAR 71 Gag Projections – Dr. Erik Williams, SEFSC

### 3.3. Overview

The SSC is asked to review new SEDAR 71 Gag catch and rebuilding projections requested by the SAFMC at the December Council meeting (Attachment 3b), provide fishing level recommendations, and discuss uncertainties. Gag was last assessed during SEDAR 71 in 2021, where the stock was found to be overfished and undergoing overfishing. The terminal (2019) base-run estimate of spawning stock was below the minimum stock size threshold ( $SSB_{2019}/MSST=0.20$ ), indicating that the stock is overfished, and the estimated terminal fishing rate based on a three-year geometric mean is above  $F_{msy}$  ( $F_{2017-2019}/F_{msy}=2.15$ ), indicating overfishing is occurring. Several rebuilding scenarios requested by the Council at the September 2021 meeting were reviewed by the SSC at their October 2021 meeting and included additional catch projections for Gag using model estimated recruitment from the stock-recruitment curve and using recent low recruitment (most recent 10-year average) scenarios, and with 70% and 50% probabilities of rebuilding in 10 years. The SSC recommended the Council select the

scenario with a 70% probability of rebuilding using projections that incorporate recruitment estimates from the stock-recruitment curve. At the December 2021 meeting, the Council requested the SSC review an additional projection scenario with a 60% probability of rebuilding in 10 years using recruitment estimated by the model.

### 3.4. Public Comment

### 3.5. Action

- Provide fishing level recommendations
  - Discuss the 10-year rebuilding probabilities at 70% and 60%. What are the potential consequences of adopting  $P_{\text{rebuild}}$  of 60% over the SSC-recommended  $P_{\text{rebuild}}$  of 70%?
  - Complete the catch level recommendations table using the SSC's fishing level recommendations.
  - Comment on any difficulties encountered in applying the ABC Control Rule, including any required information that is not available.

## **SSC RECOMMENDATION:**

**Table 1.** Gag recommendations using  $P_{\text{rebuild}} = 60\%$ . Landings and discards are expressed in both numbers (1000s of fish) and gutted weight (1000s of lbs).

Criteria	Deterministic		Probabilistic	
Overfished evaluation (SSB/SSB <sub>MSY</sub> )	0.15		0.14	
Overfishing evaluation	2.15		2.27	
MFMT (F <sub>MSY</sub> )	0.37		0.35	
SSB <sub>MSY</sub> (Units)	1563.9		1659.4	
MSST (Units)	1172.9		1244.5	
MSY (1000 lbs.)	1455.1		1453.5	
Y at 75% F <sub>MSY</sub> (1000 lbs.)				
ABC Control Rule Adjustment				
P-Star				
SSC recommended P <sub>Rebuild</sub>				
M				
OFL RECOMMENDATIONS				
Year	Landed (lbs gw)	Discard (lbs gw)	Landed (number)	Discard (number)
2023	367	42	36	10
2024	494	48	45	11
2025	605	54	53	13
2026	706	60	60	14
2027	808	64	68	15
ABC RECOMMENDATIONS				
Year	Landed (lbs gw)	Discard (lbs gw)	Landed (number)	Discard (number)
2023				
2024				
2025				
2026				
2027				

## **4. OTHER BUSINESS**

TBD

## **5. PUBLIC COMMENT**

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

## **6. 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 Friday, February 18, 2022 for inclusion in the briefing book for the March Council meeting.

## **7. NEXT MEETINGS**

### **7.1. SSC MEETINGS**

2022 Meeting Dates:

- April 25-28, 2022 (Joint SEP/SSC) in Charleston, SC
- June/July 2022 (webinar) - TBD

### **7.2. SAFMC Meetings**

2022 Council Meetings

- March 7-11, 2022 in Jekyll Island, GA
- June 13-17, 2022 in Key West, FL
- September 12-16, 2022 in Charleston, SC
- December 5-9, 2022 in Wrightsville Beach, NC

**ADJOURN**