

# **SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**

## **SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE**



**Meeting Overview**  
**Meeting via Webinar**  
**JANUARY 20, 2023**

VERSION  
FINAL  
1/17/23

## CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTIONS .....	5
2. PUBLIC COMMENT .....	5
3. SEDAR 680A: SCAMP OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENT REVIEW .....	5
4. SPANISH MACKEREL REVISED OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENT TERMS OF REFERENCE.....	9
5. OTHER BUSINESS .....	10
6. PUBLIC COMMENT .....	10
7. CONSENSUS STATEMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	10
8. NEXT MEETINGS.....	11

## FIGURES

*None*

## TABLES

Table 1. Scamp Catch Level Recommendations .....	7
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## DOCUMENTS

Attachment 1a: January 2023 Agenda .....	5
Attachment 1b: October 2022 meeting transcript.....	5
*Attachment 3a: SEFSC Presentation for SEDAR68OA Scamp.....	5
Attachment 3b: SEDAR 68OA Scamp: Stock Assessment Report .....	5
Attachment 3c: Diagnostics of the SEDAR68OA .....	5
Attachment 3d: Terms of Reference for SEDAR68OA Scamp.....	5
Attachment 3e: SSC Oct 2021 review of the SEDAR68 Research Track.....	5
Attachment 3f: Breakout Group Assignments .....	5
*Attachment 4a: Spanish Mackerel Summary Presentation.....	9
Attachment 4b: Revised Terms of Reference for Spanish Mackerel OA.....	9
Attachment 4c: Spanish Mackerel Workgroup Meeting Notes .....	9
Attachment 4d: Excerpts from CMP Framework Amendment 1 .....	9
Attachment 4e: NOAA-NMFS Procedure 01-101-11: Procedural guidance for changing assessed stock status from known to unknown .....	9
*Attachment 4f: Setting ABCs when stock status changes .....	9

\* Indicates documents not available for the Briefing Book. These will be distributed as they become available and added to Recent Documents section of the webpage.

## **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 9:00 a.m., January 20, 2023.

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 come up for discussion. This opportunity for comment will happen 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.

## 1. INTRODUCTIONS

### 1.1 Documents

Attachment 1a: January 2023 Agenda

Attachment 1b: October 2022 meeting transcript

### 1.2 Action

- Introductions
- Review and Approve Agenda
- Review and Approve October 2022 Meeting transcript

## 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.

## 3. SEDAR 680A: SCAMP OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENT REVIEW

### 3.1 Documents

\*Attachment 3a: SEFSC Presentation for SEDAR680A Scamp

Attachment 3b: SEDAR 680A Scamp: Stock Assessment Report

Attachment 3c: Diagnostics of the SEDAR680A

Attachment 3d: Terms of Reference for SEDAR680A Scamp

Attachment 3e: SSC Oct 2021 review of the SEDAR68 Research Track

Attachment 3f: Breakout Group Assignments

### 3.2 Presentation

Dr. Kyle Shertzer, SEFSC

### 3.3 Overview

SEDAR 68 Atlantic Scamp was the first Research Track stock assessment to be conducted in the South Atlantic through the SEDAR process. This assessment was completed in Fall 2021 and reviewed by the SSC at the October 2021 meeting, where the SSC deemed this assessment best scientific information available and determined that the assessment configuration was appropriate for providing stock status and fishing level recommendations upon completion of the Operational Assessment with an updated terminal year. During this review, the SSC made several research recommendations and guidance to the terms of reference for the Operational Assessment, and these recommendations were integrated into the assessment configuration where possible.

The SSC is asked to review, discuss, and provide feedback on SEDAR 68 Scamp Operational Assessment model configurations, projections, and uncertainties. Diagnostics for the assessment have been included as a separate document and should also be reviewed. If the assessment is determined to be suitable for providing management advice, the SSC will apply the South Atlantic Council's ABC Control Rule and make catch level recommendations.

### 3.4 Public Comment

### 3.5 Breakout Groups

### 3.6 Action

#### ➤ **Review assessment**

- Does the assessment address the ToRs to the SSCs satisfaction?
- Does the assessment represent Best Scientific Information Available?
- Does the assessment reliably capture past trends in the fishery and population?
- Does the assessment provide a reliable, quantitative estimate of current stock status?
- Does the assessment provide reliable predictions of future conditions to support 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.

#### ➤ **Provide advice on monitoring the stock until the next assessment**

- What indicators or metrics should be included in the SAFE Report to monitor and evaluate the stock until the next assessment? Current data will be included:
  - Total Landings relative to ABC from Amendment 29 until values from SEDAR 68 are adopted
  - Recreational (CHTS and FES values) and Commercial Landings
  - Trends in abundance included in SEDAR 68
  - Economic trends
    - Recreational – MRIP Directed Trips
    - Commercial – Ex-Vessel Value
  - Social trends
    - Observations of Closures
    - Comments from Fishery Performance Report
  - Recent management actions

➤ **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 1. Scamp Catch Level Recommendations

Criteria		Deterministic		Probabilistic	
Overfished evaluation (SSB/MSST)					
Overfishing evaluation (F/F <sub>MSY</sub> or F/F <sub>30%</sub> )					
MFMT (F <sub>MSY</sub> or F/F <sub>30%</sub> )					
SSB <sub>MSY</sub> (metric tons)					
MSST (metric tons)					
MSY (1000 lbs.)					
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 ww)	Discard (lbs ww)	Landed (number)	Discard (number)	
2023					
2024					
2025					
2026					
2027					
ABC RECOMMENDATIONS					
Year	Landed (lbs ww)	Discard (lbs ww)	Landed (number)	Discard (number)	
2023					
2024					
2025					
2026					
2027					

--- LUNCH BREAK ---



## 4. SPANISH MACKEREL REVISED OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENT TERMS OF REFERENCE

### 4.1 Documents

- \*Attachment 4a: Spanish Mackerel Summary Presentation
- Attachment 4b: Revised Terms of Reference for Spanish Mackerel OA
- Attachment 4c: Spanish Mackerel Workgroup Meeting Notes
- Attachment 4d: Excerpts from CMP Framework Amendment 1
- Attachment 4e: NOAA-NMFS Procedure 01-101-11: Procedural guidance for changing assessed stock status from known to unknown
- \*Attachment 4f: Setting ABCs when stock status changes

### 4.2 Presentation

Dr. Judd Curtis, SAFMC Staff

### 4.3 Overview

For the SEDAR 78 assessment, data compilation and assessment methods were guided by methodology of SEDAR 28 (2012), as well as by current SEDAR practices and recommendations by the SEDAR 28 review panel. The assessment period is 1986–2020. The base-run estimate of terminal (2020) spawning stock was above the MSST ( $SSB_{2020}/MSST = 1.40$ ), as was the median estimate from the MCBE ( $SSB_{2020}/MSST = 1.42$ ), indicating this stock is not overfished. The estimated fishing rate has been at or below the maximum fishing mortality threshold (MFMT), represented by  $F_{MSY}$ , every year except for the terminal year (2020). The terminal estimate, which is based on a three-year geometric mean, was below  $F_{MSY}$  in the base run ( $F_{2018-2020}/F_{MSY} = 0.77$ ) and in the median of the MCBE ( $F_{2018-2020}/F_{MSY} = 0.74$ ). Thus, this assessment indicated that the stock is not experiencing overfishing.

The SEDAR 78 South Atlantic Spanish Mackerel operational assessment was reviewed by the SSC at their August 2022 meetings. The SSC noted several concerns with the assessment, and determined it was not suitable for providing management advice until some issues could be resolved (specifically: recreational landings, natural mortality, MCBE distributions and likelihood profiles, growth models, and steepness). This recommendation was given to the Council at the September 2022 meeting. During Council discussions, the SEFSC indicated that one of the SSC's primary concerns (the recreational landing estimates in the terminal year of the assessment) could be further investigated and adjusted. The SEFSC updated 2020 and 2021 recreational landings in the SEDAR 78 assessment model. The updated estimates had little impact on the assessment results.

To address the remaining concerns (natural mortality, MCBE distributions and likelihood profiles, growth models, and steepness), a Spanish Mackerel workgroup comprised of four SSC members, one SEFSC representative, and Council staff, was convened and tasked with further exploration and elaboration of the requested changes to the operational assessment expressed by the SSC. The workgroup distilled their findings to several key recommendations that were thought to be most feasible in terms of potential workload and timing (and potential impact on

the OA). Based on their findings, the workgroup developed terms of reference for the changes. The SSC is to review these notes and finalize the draft terms of reference generated by the workgroup before providing to the SEFSC analysts.

Lastly, the Council at their December meeting expressed their frustration with the Atlantic Spanish Mackerel Assessment (SEDAR 78) and the importance of having accurate catch level recommendations to move forward with needed management discussions. To this end, they made a motion:

**MOTION: DIRECT THE SSC TO PROVIDE CATCH LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ATLANTIC SPANISH MACKEREL AT THEIR APRIL 2023 MEETING, EITHER FROM THE UPDATED ASSESSMENT OR USING A DATA-LIMITED APPROACH.**

The SSC should discuss alternate methods of setting ABCs in the event that the SSC recommends the updated assessment does not satisfy the remaining concerns and determine an appropriate pathway forward to satisfy the Council's motion. The ABC Control Rule for the Coastal Migratory Pelagics FMP was developed in CMP Amendment 18.

#### 4.4 Public Comment

#### 4.5 Action

- Finalize Terms of Reference
  - Review workgroup notes
  - Discuss feasibility of these modifications in terms of workload and timing.
- Discuss alternate methods of setting ABCs

## **5. OTHER BUSINESS**

- Unassessed Stocks Workgroup Update

## **6. PUBLIC COMMENT**

The public is provided one final opportunity to comment on SSC recommendations and agenda items.

## **7. CONSENSUS STATEMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

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 5 p.m. on Friday, February 10, 2023 (approximately 3 weeks from the end of the meeting) for inclusion in the briefing book for the September Council meeting.

## **8. NEXT MEETINGS**

### **8.1 Scientific and Statistical Committee Meetings**

- SEP: April 17-18, 2023 in Charleston, SC
- April 18-20, 2023 in Charleston, SC
- July/Aug (webinar) if needed
- October 24-26, 2023 in Charleston, SC

### **8.2 South Atlantic Fishery Management Council Meetings**

- March 6-10, 2023 in Jekyll Island, GA
- June 12-16, 2023 in St. Augustine, FL
- September 11-15, 2023 in Charleston, SC
- December 4-8, 2023 in Beaufort, NC

**ADJOURN**