

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE



SSC Meeting Overview

October 15-17, 2019

**Crowne Plaza
Charleston, SC**

**VERSION
FINAL
September 30, 2019**

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- Attachment 5. SEDAR 72 Gag Schedule and Terms of Reference
- Attachment 6. Revised Schedules for Greater Amberjack, Red Porgy, Yellowtail Snapper, and golden Tilefish
- Attachment 7. Draft SOWs for Blueline Tilefish and Vermilion Snapper*
- Attachment 8. Draft NS1 Guidelines on Carryovers and Phase-Ins
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- Attachment 11. Ecopath with Ecosim Model of the South Atlantic Region: A Path Forward - September 2019*
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- Attachment 14. DW Amendment 12 Decision Document
- Attachment 15. SAFMC Work Plan, September 2019
- Attachment 16. SAFMC Amendments Overview, September 2019

*** 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, October 8, 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.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Documents

Agenda

Attachment 1. Minutes of the April 2019 meeting

Attachment 2. Minutes of the August 2019 SSC MRIP Workshop

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. ABC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR UNASSESSED STOCKS

3.1. Documents

Attachment 3. Landings Trends & ABC Comparisons for Unassessed Stocks

Attachment 4. ABC Control Rule

3.2. Presentation

Overview: Dr. Mike Errigo, SAFMC

ABC Workgroup Recommendations: Dr. Scott Crosson (Chair), SEFSC

3.3. Overview

When MRIP rolled out the new catch estimates calibrated for both the FES survey and the new APAIS design, the results showed a large difference in the amount of recreational effort and, therefore, recreational catch for almost all species across the board. This necessitated the recalculation of all ABCs to match the new survey output. The ABC Workgroup has gone through all the unassessed stocks and given preliminary recommendations for the full SSC to consider.

The Council would also like the SSC to consider the inclusion of Monroe County landings when calculating the ABC for and tracking the landings of Dolphin and Wahoo. There is a large number of landings coming from Monroe County that are not included in our current ABCs, nor do we track those landings. Consequently, the Gulf does not have an FMP for Dolphin and Wahoo, so they are also not tracking those landings. See the motion made at the March 2019 Council meeting below.

MOTION #1: ASK THE SSC TO CONSIDER MONROE COUNTY RECREATIONAL LANDINGS WHEN MAKING CATCH LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DOLPHIN AND WAHOO. APPROVED BY COMMITTEE. APPROVED BY COUNCIL.

3.4. Public Comment

3.5. Action

- Are the time series for calculating ABCs for unassessed stocks still appropriate given the changes in the catch data? If not, modify as appropriate.
- Are the previous decisions made while evaluating the Decision Tree stocks and the ORCS stocks still valid given the changes in the catch data? If not, update as appropriate.
- Given that a large portion of the Dolphin and Wahoo catch comes from waters off Monroe County, FL, the vast majority of which occurs in the South Atlantic region, and that the Gulf Council does not manage Dolphin or Wahoo in their jurisdiction, discuss and make recommendations on the inclusion of catch data from Monroe County for Dolphin and Wahoo for both setting ABCs and tracking them.
- Provide ABC recommendations for all unassessed stocks.

4. **SEDAR ACTIVITIES**

4.1. Documents

Attachment 5. SEDAR 72 Gag Schedule and Terms of Reference

Attachment 6. Revised Schedules for Greater Amberjack, Red Porgy, Yellowtail Snapper, and golden Tilefish

Attachment 7. Draft SOWs for Blueline Tilefish and Vermilion Snapper*

4.2. Overview

SEDAR is providing an opportunity to review the updated schedules for SEDAR 59, 60 and 66 as well as the appointed participants for 66. SEDAR is requesting approval of the TORs and schedule for SEDAR 71. SEDAR is also requesting approval of Spanish Mackerel, Black Sea Bass, and Red Grouper draft TORs.

4.3. Public Comment

4.4. Action

- Approve the SEDAR 71 Gag Assessment Schedule and TORs.
- Appoint SSC participants for the SEDAR 71 Gag Assessment.
- Approve TORs for 2021 assessments Spanish Mackerel, Black Sea Bass, and Red Grouper.

- Can those who volunteered for SEDAR 66 golden Tilefish still attend given the revised schedule? If not, is there anyone else interested in participating?

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
2019	64: B	Yellowtail Snapper	2017	Spring 2020	DW: George Sedberry, Luiz Barbieri AW: Fred Serchuk, Anne Lange RW: Amy Schueller, Alexei Sharov
	58: B	Atlantic Cobia	2017	Early 2020	DW: George Sedberry, Marcel Reichert AW: Jeff Buckel, Anne Lange RW: Rob Ahrens, Jeff Buckel
	59: S	Greater Amberjack	2017	Spring 2020	Anne Lange, Fred Serchuck
	60: S	Red Porgy	2017	Spring 2020	Fred Scharf, Marcel Reichert, George Sedberry
	U	King Mackerel	2017	Spring 2020	
2020	B	Mutton Snapper	TBD	Late 2021	
	68: RT	Scamp, Gulf + SA	2017	Summer 2021	DW & AW & RW: Rob Ahrens, Marcel Reichert, Alexei Sharov
	U	Snowy Grouper	2018	Late 2020	
	71: OA	Gag	2019	Spring 2021	
	66: OA	golden Tilefish	TBD	Spring 2021	Luiz Barbieri, Genny Nesslage, Churchill Grimes
2021	68: OA	Scamp, Gulf + SA	2020	Early 2022	
	OA	Red Snapper	TBD	TBD	
	OA	Spanish Mackerel	TBD	2022	
	OA	Black Sea Bass	TBD	2022	
	OA	Red Grouper	TBD	2022	
	OA	Vermilion Snapper	TBD	TBD	
	OA	Blueline Tilefish	TBD	TBD	

5. REVIEW DRAFT NS1 GUIDELINES ON CARRYOVERS AND PHASE-INS

5.1. Documents

Attachment 8. Draft NS1 Guidelines on Carryovers and Phase-Ins

5.2. Presentation

Overview: Dan Holland, NWFSC

5.3. Overview

The Committee is provided an opportunity to review and comment on the draft NS1 Guidelines on Carryovers and Phase-Ins. The Council will consider these draft guidelines and the SSC's comments at its December 2019 meeting.

5.4. Public Comment

5.5. Action

- Review and provide comments and recommendations on the draft NS1 Guidelines.

6. REVIEW DRAFT MODERNIZING RECREATIONAL FISHERIES ACT – REPORT TO CONGRESS

6.1. Documents

Attachment 9. Draft MRFA Report to Congress

6.2. Overview

The Committee is provided an opportunity to review and comment on the draft Modernizing Recreational Fisheries Act – Report to Congress. Below is an excerpt from an email from David Detlor, the acting director of the Office of Science and Technology, explaining what this document is and what he needs from the Committee.

“The NMFS Office of Science and Technology has developed a draft Report to Congress as required in Section 201 of the Modernizing Recreational Fisheries Management Act of 2018. This draft Report addresses improvements in data collection by state and nongovernmental organizations to facilitate greater incorporation of that data. The Report draws on many existing guidance documents, including the Stock Assessment Improvement Plan, National Standard 2 Guidelines, and Marine Recreational Information Program Procedural Directives which provide guidance on best scientific information and data collection and

analysis. The draft Report also provides (non-binding) recommendations for facilitating greater incorporation of these data sources.

NOAA Fisheries is directed to produce this report "in consultation with the SSCs of the Councils and the Marine Fisheries Commissions." Thus, we are seeking SSC, Council, and Commission review and feedback on the draft Report to Congress."

6.3. Public Comment

6.4. Action

- Review and provide comments and recommendations on the draft Report to Congress.

7. CORAL HABITAT DISTRIBUTION MODEL REVIEW

7.1. Documents

Attachment 10. Coral Habitat Distribution Model Presentation

7.2. Presentation

Overview: Matthew Poti, NCCOS

7.3. Overview

The SAFMC created Coral Habitat Areas of Particular Concern in the Coral, Coral Reef, and Live/Hardbottoms (Coral) FMP (1983) and Coral Amendment 6 (2008) and expanded CHAPCs in Coral Amendment 4 (2001) and Coral Amendment 8 (2014) based on observed locations and likely distribution of coral and coral reefs. Since, new observations from remotely operated vehicles have identified coral mounds outside of current CHAPCs and additional mapping data was collected to refine past coral habitat probability models. The methods and data used in coral habitat probability models have not been reviewed by the SSC for use in managements. If approved as usable for management, the coral habitat probability models would be considered in development of Coral Amendment 10, Golden Crab Amendment 10, and Shrimp Amendment 11, which the Council discussed at their September 2019 Meeting.

7.4. Public Comment

7.5. Action

- Review and discuss the uncertainties and assumptions associated with occupancy models to describe habitat probability.
- Determine whether this analysis is the Best Scientific Information Available and is appropriate for use in managing fisheries resources.

8. UPDATE ON SEFSC RESEARCH EFFORTS

8.1. Documents

None.

8.2. Overview

The Committee will be updated on research projects currently ongoing within the SEFSC, with a particular focus on those directly affecting stock assessments. This update will include a discussion on the possibility of a Wreckfish assessment in 2019-2020.

8.3. Public Comment

8.4. Action

- No specific actions required.

9. CLARIFICATION ON BLUELINE TILEFISH OFL AND ABC

9.1. Documents

None.

9.2. Overview

The SSC reviewed SEDAR 50 Blueline Tilefish at their October 2017 meeting and subsequently formed a Workgroup to devise a means of splitting the ABC recommendation from the portion of the stock north of Cape Hatteras, NC into South Atlantic and Mid-Atlantic components. That was done at the May 2018 SSC meeting, leaving us with the ABC previously calculated using the P* from the Production model for the southern portion of the stock and this new ABC derived for the stock north of Cape Hatteras, NC to the NC-VA border. The implicit intent was to combine these two ABCs into a single South Atlantic ABC. We would like to have this intent stated explicitly to clarify the record.

9.3. Public Comment

9.4. Action

- Clarify if the intent of the SSC in setting the OFL and ABC for Blueline Tilefish in the South Atlantic's jurisdiction was to add the estimated values of OFL and ABC from the portion of Blueline Tilefish south of Cape Hatteras and those north of Cape Hatteras to the NC-VA border together to get a single OFL and ABC for the entire South Atlantic.

10. SOUTH ATLANTIC ECOSYSTEM MODEL UPDATE

10.1. Documents

Attachment 11. Ecopath with Ecosim Model of the South Atlantic Region: A Path Forward - September 2019*

Attachment 12. Presentation: Update on Construction of the Ecopath Diet Matrix

Attachment 13. Presentation: Information Supporting Development of Ecospace*

10.2. Presentation

Update on Construction of the Ecopath Diet Matrix: Lauren Gentry, FWRI
Information Supporting Development of Ecospace: Luke McEachron, FWRI

10.3. Overview

The Committee will be provided two presentations providing an overview of outcomes associated with the South Atlantic Ecopath with Ecosim Model Coordination Meeting held on July 24-25, 2019 at FWRI in St. Petersburg, Florida. The meeting was attended by members of newly formed South Atlantic Ecopath Model Review Workgroup and invited participants. Two presentations are being made to the Committee to highlight outcomes of the meeting. Lauren Gentry will provide the Committee an overview of the process of diet data collection and analysis for the South Atlantic Ecopath model, with an update on Model Workgroup decisions about data-deficient species. Luke McEachron will discuss advances and guidance provided supporting future development of Ecospace for the SA Ecopath model.

The updated SA EwE Path Forward (Attachment 10) highlights the background/process and the SSC subsequent establishment of the Ecopath Model Review Workgroup endorsement and initiation of the South Atlantic Ecopath with Ecosim Model review which will start in November/December 2019. Once initiated it will be followed by 2-3 additional Webinars to complete the review for presentation during the April 2020 SSC meeting with an in-person meeting possibly being scheduled in February 2020 if needed.

10.4. Public Comment

10.5. Action

- Approved the timing of the Workgroup's model review and path forward.

11. DOLPHIN WAHOO AMENDMENT 12: BULLET AND FRIGATE MACKEREL

11.1. Documents

Attachment 14. DW Amendment 12 Decision Document

11.2. Presentation

Overview: John Hadley, SAFMC

11.3. Overview

In March 2018, the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Mid-Atlantic Council) requested that the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (South Atlantic Council) consider managing bullet mackerel (*Auxis rochet*) and frigate mackerel (*Auxis thazard*) as ecosystem component (EC) species in the Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for the Dolphin and Wahoo Fishery of the Atlantic (Dolphin Wahoo FMP). The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) disapproved inclusion of these two species in the Mid-Atlantic Council's Unmanaged Forage Omnibus Amendment. NMFS stated that the reasons for disapproval included the following: 1) inconsistency with National Standard 2 and an insufficient connection to that Council's FMPs; 2) not meeting the Mid-Atlantic Council Scientific and Statistical Committee's (SSC) size criteria for forage species; and 3) inconsistency with criteria for EC species as outlined in the NS guidelines at 50 C.F.R. § 600.305 that explains EC species should not include target stocks that are caught for sale or personal use. NMFS went on to state that the mackerel species "are caught and sold by commercial vessels and are retained for personal use as bait by recreational fisheries in Federal waters, creating competing interests and conflicts among user groups, both of which are criteria that could exclude consideration of bullet and frigate mackerel as EC species under the National Standard Guidelines."

At their December 2018 meeting, the South Atlantic Council received a presentation on the presence of bullet and frigate mackerel in the diets of dolphin and wahoo, noting a particularly strong reliance of wahoo on the two *Auxis* mackerel species as forage. At subsequent meetings, the Council reviewed mechanisms and regulatory parameters for adding EC species to a FMP, ways that other Councils have addressed EC species in their FMPs, species that have been identified as notable forage for dolphin and wahoo, background information on fisheries for the two *Auxis* mackerel species, and scoping comments on adding the two *Auxis* mackerel species as EC species to Dolphin Wahoo FMP. In June 2019, the Council directed staff to start work on Amendment 12 to the Dolphin Wahoo FMP that would add bullet and frigate mackerel to the FMP as EC species and provide an options paper for development of the amendment. The Council reviewed an options paper for this amendment at the September 2019 meeting and requested guidance from the National Marine Fisheries Service on parameters regarding the Council's ability to add EC species to an FMP and implement regulatory measures.

11.4. Public Comment

11.5. Action

- Does the SSC support consideration of bullet mackerel and frigate mackerel as ecosystem component species in the Dolphin Wahoo FMP?
- Review and provide recommendations regarding actions and alternatives as necessary.

12. COUNCIL WORKPLAN AND SSC WORKGROUP UPDATE

12.1. Documents

Attachment 15. SAFMC Work Plan, September 2019

Attachment 16. SAFMC Amendments Overview, September 2019

12.2. 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 amendment under each of our managed FMPs, as summarized below.

There is also a table below (Table 2) which lists all the active SSC workgroups and their members.

- Corals Amendment 10/Golden Crab Amendment 10/Shrimp Amendment 11 (Access Areas) – Chip Collier
- Fishery Ecosystem Plan – Roger Pugliese
- SG Amendment 46 (Red Snapper & Recreational Reporting) – Chip Collier
- Abbreviated Framework 3 (Blueline Tilefish) – Roger Pugliese
- DW Amendment 10 (Revise Dolphin and Wahoo Management Measures) – John Hadley
- Joint Commercial Logbook Amendment – John Carmichael
- Bycatch Reporting Amendment – Chip Collier
- Recreational AMs (SG Reg 31/CMP Framework 7/DW Reg 2) – Brian Chevront
- Regulatory Amendment 33 (modifications to red snapper seasons) – Myra Brouwer
- ABC Control Rule Amendment? – John Carmichael

Table 2. Currently active SSC workgroups and their membership.

Workgroup	Members
ABC Workgroup	Scott Crosson (Chair)
	Jeff Buckel
	Eric Johnson
	Marcel Reichert
Ecopath Model Review Workgroup (Chair?)	Marcel Reichert
	Eric Johnson
	Rob Ahrens
	Alexei Sharov
	Fred Scharf
	Luiz Barbieri*

* Dr. Barbieri is no longer a member of the SSC and should probably be removed from this list. Although he can remain on the workgroup given there are still 5 other SSC members on it.

12.3. Public Comment

12.4. Action

- No specific actions required

13. OTHER BUSINESS

14. PUBLIC COMMENT

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

15. 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, November 12, 2019 (approximately 3 ½ weeks from the end of the meeting) for inclusion in the briefing book for the December Council meeting.

16. NEXT MEETINGS

16.1. SAFMC SSC MEETINGS

2020 Tentative Meeting Dates

Spring

- The SSC will be reviewing 4 SEDAR assessments during this meeting (Red Progy, Greater Amberjack, King Mackerel, and Yellowtail Snapper).
- Two of these assessments should be completed by mid-March. The other two should be completed by the end of March or beginning of April.
- An earlier meeting gives more time for report writing, but potentially less time for assessment reports to come in leading to less review time.
- A later meeting gives less time for report writing but can potentially allow the SSC to get a head start on reading and reviewing the assessment reports. (This option leaves only a little over a week to complete the report, which may be difficult given the content).
 - ❖ April 21-23, 2020 in Charleston, SC
 - ❖ April 28-30, 2020 in Charleston, SC
 - Overlaps with MREP.
 - ❖ May 5-7, 2020 in Charleston, SC

Fall

- ❖ October 13-15, 2020 in Charleston, SC
- ❖ October 20-22, 2020 in Charleston, SC

16.2. SAFMC Meetings

2019-2020 Council Meetings

December 2-6, 2019 in Wilmington, NC

March 2-6 in Jekyll Island, GA

June 8-12 in Key West, FL

September 14-18 in Charleston, SC

December 7-11 in Wrightsville Beach, NC

ADJOURN