SEDAR 71
South Atlantic Gag Grouper
Operational Assessment
Schedule of Events

Draft : 8/12/2019

TORS and Schedule Approved ..... December 2019
Workshop Appointments Final ..... December 2019

Data Scoping Webinar ..... Week of May 11, 2020
Unprocessed data deadline ..... July 24, 2020
MRIP landings and discards due ..... September 18, 2020
Updated final datasets & preliminary new datasets to Analytic Team ..... October 2, 2020

- *Includes length and age compositions*

Working Paper Submission to SEDAR Staff ..... October 9, 2020
Data review/Assessment webinar I ..... *Week of October 26, 2020*
Assessment webinar II ..... *Week of November 30 , 2021*
Assessment webinar III (if needed) ..... *Week of January 11, 2021*
Assessment webinar IV (if needed) ..... *Week of February 8, 2021*
Assessment Report Draft to panel for review ..... February 26, 2021
Assessment Report comments due to editors ..... March 12, 2021
Final Assessment Report to SEDAR staff ..... March 26, 2021

Complete Assessment Report Submitted to Council ..... March 31, 2021

[1]These are primary data milestones. See the data delivery timeline for specific details on when specific data components are due.

Assessment Information and Contacts

Prior Assessment: Update of SEDAR 10
Terminal year of prior assessment: 2012
Terminal year for this assessment: 2019
Lead Analysts and Agency: SEFSC, Kevin Craig (kevin.craig@noaa.gov)
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SEDAR 71
Gag Grouper
Terms of Reference

Terminal Year : 2019

1. Update the approved Update of SEDAR 10 Gag Grouper model with data through 2019. Provide a model consistent with the previous assessment configuration and revised models as necessary to incorporate and evaluate any changes allowed for this update. Apply the current BAM configuration incorporating approved improvements developed since the 2014 update. Evaluate whether the model is able to reliably estimate steepness at this time.
2. Evaluate and document the following specific changes in input data or deviations from the benchmark model.
   - Consider including the SERFS video index to address the need for additional fishery independent information.
   - Consider potential misidentification as Black Grouper in the estimate of Gag Grouper landings in the South Atlantic.
   - Evaluate data uncertainty with respect to the recreational landings
3. Document any changes or corrections made to model and input datasets and provide updated input data tables. Provide commercial and recreational landings and discards in pounds and numbers.
4. Update model parameter estimates and their variances, model uncertainties, estimates of stock status and management benchmarks, and provide the probability of overfishing occurring at specified future harvest and exploitation levels.
5. Convene a panel of several SSC representatives to meet via webinar, as needed to review model development and provide guidance.
6. Develop a stock assessment report to address these TORs and fully document the input data, methods, and results.

NOTE: This assessment will follow an Operational Assessment Approach similar to a standard assessment.

2021-2022 SAFMC SEDAR Operational Assessments Scope of Work

Red Snapper

- Model and Additional Data Years
    - Update the South Atlantic Red Snapper SEDAR 41 assessment from a terminal year of 2014 to 2019/2020. (This will add 5-6 years of new data, depending on the chosen terminal year.)
    - Apply the current BAM configuration
- Data updates
    - Include the revised MRIP recreational estimates.
    - Evaluate, and consider including as an estimate of recreational catch, the alternative (non-MRIP) estimates of catch during recent open seasons that are used to evaluate the Annual Catch Limit.
    - Evaluate information submitted voluntarily by fishermen, such as through MyFishCount, to inform assessment inputs such as discard mortality information, catch length composition, and other factors as appropriate.
    - Include any newly available information on steepness for similar species.
    - Include any new and updated information on discard mortality and life history.
    - Calculate different F metrics (other than apical F) to evaluate the status of the stock (to address shifts in the age of apical F throughout the assessment time series). As was done with Black Sea Bass.
        - Run alternative projections that incorporate the use of descending devices and venting tools when releasing Red Snapper, at varying levels of compliance.
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- Address SSC Selectivity Concerns
    - The SSC reviewed a paper detailing an experiment run by FL FWRI researchers comparing the size selectivities of Chevron traps, hook and line gear, and underwater cameras for Red Snapper and other reef fishes. The study concluded that the selectivity of underwater cameras and Chevron traps is different and that the selectivity pattern for Chevron traps is likely dome-shaped.
    - The SSC had this to say about the study: "*The SSC recommends that the results of this study be considered in upcoming assessments for Red Snapper. Although the SSC did not review the other aspects of this study, results may be relevant for other species evaluated in this study."*
    - The SSC also made the following recommendations:
        - *"The SSC recommends re-evaluating if different selectivities can be used within the combined Chevron trap/video (CVID) index or whether the Chevron traps and the video should continue to be combined as a single CPUE index given the differences in selectivity found in this study."*
        - "*The SSC recommends re-evaluating the shape of the SERFS Chevron trap selectivity curve (flat-topped vs. dome-shaped).*"
    - Reevaluate the use of the Chevron trap index further back in time due to Red Snapper being in the top ten most abundant species caught in these traps, indicating that Chevron traps are an efficient gear for sampling Red Snapper.

Process

- Hold an in-person Data Workshop, including a panel of SSC members, to review the new MRIP data series, the alternative recreational datasets that exist, and the selectivity issues regarding the Chevron trap and video indices. Hold an in-person

Assessment Workshop, including a panel of SSC members, to review model development and provide guidance

- Bring in external experts to be involved in the SEDAR Data Workshop, Assessment Workshop, and to participate in the review with the SSC. The recommendation includes experts with Red Snapper experience, and with general stock assessment and selectivity modeling expertise.

Vermilion Snapper

- Model and Additional Data Years
    - Update the South Atlantic Vermilion Snapper SEDAR 55 assessment from a terminal year of 2016 to 2020/2021. (This will add 4-5 years of new data, depending on the chosen terminal year.)
    - Apply the current BAM configuration.
- Data updates
    - Include any new and updated information on life history, discard mortality, and steepness.
    - Explore using measures of precision for recreational catch estimates that better capture the extent of the uncertainty around those recreational catch estimates.
    - Vermilion Snapper was one of the other species looked at in the FWRI selectivity study. As the SSC stated (see quote above) this study's "*results may be relevant for other species evaluated in this study."* Therefore, the same explorations and evaluations should be applied to the Chevron trap and video index data for Vermilion Snapper as was done for Red Snapper.
    - The SSC raised concerns that the decline in the Headboat Index since1992 could be due to changes in regulations and may not represent trends in the population. The SSC suggested evaluating this possibility by eliminating the index or truncating it at 1992.

Process

- Convene a panel of several SSC representatives to meet via webinar to review model development and provide guidance

Blueline Tilefish

- Model and Additional Data Years
  - Update the South Atlantic Blueline Tilefish SEDAR 50 assessment from a terminal year of 2016 to 2020/2021. (This will add 4-5 years of new data, depending on the chosen terminal year.)
  - Apply the current BAM configuration.
- Data updates
  - Include any new and updated information on life history, discard mortality, and steepness.
  - Explore using appropriate CVs for the landings data to capture the uncertainty in the model results.
  - Evaluate sensitivity runs with differing amounts of recruitment coming from outside the system to account for the possibility of transport of larvae and adults to the South Atlantic region from the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic.

Process

- Convene a panel of several SSC representatives to meet via webinar to review model development and provide guidance.
- Include the Mid-Atlantic Council in the assessment process