

1 GULF OF MEXICO FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL  
2  
3 DATA COLLECTION COMMITTEE  
4  
5

6 Marriott Beachside Hotel Key West, Florida

7  
8 June 8, 2015  
9

10  
11 **VOTING MEMBERS**

12 John Greene.....Alabama  
13 Doug Boyd.....Texas  
14 Roy Crabtree.....NMFS, Florida  
15 Dave Donaldson.....GSMFC  
16 Myron Fischer (designee for Randy Pausina).....Louisiana  
17 Harlon Pearce.....Louisiana  
18 Greg Stunz.....Texas  
19 David Walker.....Alabama

20  
21 **NON-VOTING MEMBERS**

22 Kevin Anson.....Alabama  
23 Martha Bademan (designee for Nick Wiley).....Florida  
24 Leann Bosarge.....Mississippi  
25 Jason Brand.....USCG  
26 Pamela Dana.....Florida  
27 Dale Diaz (designee for Jamie Miller).....Mississippi  
28 Campo Matens.....Louisiana  
29 Corky Perret.....Mississippi  
30 Lance Robinson (designee for Robin Riechers).....Texas  
31 John Sanchez.....Florida  
32 Roy Williams.....Florida

33  
34 **STAFF**

35 Steven Atran.....Senior Fishery Biologist  
36 Assane Diagne.....Economist  
37 John Froeschke.....Fishery Biologist/Statistician  
38 Doug Gregory.....Executive Director  
39 Karen Hoak.....Administrative and Financial Assistant  
40 Ava Lasseter.....Anthropologist  
41 Mara Levy.....NOAA General Counsel  
42 Emily Muehlstein.....Fisheries Outreach Specialist  
43 Charlene Ponce.....Public Information Officer  
44 Ryan Rindone.....Fishery Biologist/SEDAR Liaison  
45 Bernadine Roy.....Office Manager  
46 Charlotte Schiaffo.....Research & Human Resource Librarian

47  
48 **OTHER PARTICIPANTS**

1 Adam Bailey.....NMFS SERO, St. Petersburg, FL  
 2 Steve Branstetter.....NMFS  
 3 Eric Brazer.....Reef Fish Shareholder's Alliance  
 4 J.P. Brooker.....Ocean Conservancy, St. Petersburg, FL  
 5 Charles Carter.....Key West, FL  
 6 Michael Drexler.....Ocean Conservancy, St. Petersburg, FL  
 7 Sue Gerhart.....NMFS  
 8 Chad Hanson.....Pew Environmental Trusts  
 9 Mark Hubbard.....  
 10 Van Hubbard.....FL  
 11 Judy Jamison.....FL  
 12 Joe Jewell.....DMR, MS  
 13 Bill Kelly.....FKCFA, FL  
 14 Kelli O'Donnell.....NOAA Contractor, Summerland Key, FL  
 15 Steve Tomeny.....LA  
 16 Dave Van Voorhees.....GSMFC

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18  
 19 The Data Collection Committee of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery  
 20 Management Council convened at the Marriott Beachside Hotel, Key  
 21 West, Florida, Monday afternoon, June 8, 2015, and was called to  
 22 order at 1:20 p.m. by Chairman Johnny Greene.

23  
 24 **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**  
 25 **APPROVAL MINUTES**  
 26 **ACTION GUIDE AND NEXT STEPS**  
 27

28 **CHAIRMAN JOHNNY GREENE:** If you will find your way to your  
 29 seats, we're going to go ahead and start the Data Collection  
 30 Committee. Chairman Pearce is not here, as many of you are  
 31 aware, and so I won't attempt to take his place, but I will  
 32 attempt to run the committee for him.

33  
 34 With that, I believe all the council members are present, with  
 35 the exception of Mr. Boyd. With that, we will move into  
 36 Adoption of the Agenda and do I hear a motion to adopt?

37  
 38 **MR. DAVE DONALDSON:** So moved.

39  
 40 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** It's moved by Mr. Donaldson and seconded by  
 41 Mr. Walker. Approval of the Minutes, any changes to the  
 42 minutes? Is there a motion to adopt the minutes as written? We  
 43 have a motion to adopt the minutes as written by Mr. Walker.  
 44 Thank you, Mr. Walker. It's seconded by Dave Donaldson.

45  
 46 The next item on the agenda, Item Number III, is Action Guide  
 47 and Next Steps, Tab F, Number 3, for your review. It is so  
 48 noted on there and available for you. Number IV is Draft

1 Options Paper for Joint Electronic Charter Vessel Reporting  
2 Amendment, Tab F, Number 4(a) and Mr. Froeschke, if you're  
3 ready.

4  
5 **DRAFT OPTIONS PAPER - JOINT ELECTRONIC CHARTER VESSEL REPORTING**  
6 **AMENDMENT**

7  
8 **DR. JOHN FROESCHKE:** Yes, I am ready. Good afternoon,  
9 everybody.

10  
11 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Hold on just a second. I hear Harlon chiming  
12 in and so I guess at this point I need to recognize him and is  
13 that the correct procedure?

14  
15 **MR. HARLON PEARCE:** Johnny, I would like to say a few words. I  
16 am not there today and maybe I can help give you guys some of my  
17 thoughts on this particular amendment and what's going on, if  
18 that's okay with you.

19  
20 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Yes, sir. Go ahead.

21  
22 **MR. PEARCE:** Okay. Thanks, everybody, for putting up with me  
23 being on the webinar. I appreciate it a lot. These meetings  
24 are important to me and I sure wish I could be there to  
25 aggravate all of you all together, but I guess I will have to do  
26 it by webinar.

27  
28 As far as the electronic reporting programs go, you know how  
29 dear it is to my heart. Listening to Corky at the last Mackerel  
30 meeting this morning, the differences between the Gulf and South  
31 Atlantic and the Gulf -- Whether they be subtle, they are still  
32 there and there's just definitely some differences there.

33  
34 I'm concerned that running the two together might create  
35 problems and that the possibility of splitting it between the  
36 Gulf and the South Atlantic as two separate programs -- In  
37 talking with Dr. Froeschke, he is concerned that the different  
38 mackerel regimes on the east coast could be really affected by  
39 some of the things that we're doing here today with this charter  
40 amendment.

41  
42 With that said, also the possibility in this amendment of having  
43 two sets of parameters for the Gulf and the South Atlantic in  
44 the same amendment for situations that we don't seem to agree  
45 on, whether it be VMS versus GPS or whatever. It doesn't matter  
46 what is it and I'm not saying we need to agree on all that, but  
47 whatever it is we don't agree on, possibly we could have  
48 different parameters for the different sides of the Gulf and the

1 South Atlantic.

2  
3 The other thing I want to hear some discussion on today too is,  
4 besides everything I just said, is I think it might be prudent  
5 to split the headboats out completely, so that we don't slow  
6 their growth down by what we're doing with this joint amendment.

7  
8 The headboats seem like we could get those guys going pretty  
9 quickly with their own amendment that would work right away and  
10 could run concurrently with what we're trying to do right now  
11 with these amendments that we're looking at with this joint  
12 amendment.

13  
14 With that said, those are the things I would like to hear some  
15 discussion on and those are the things I would like you guys to  
16 think about as you go through this amendment and as Corky said,  
17 sometimes it's just very difficult for us to get the South  
18 Atlantic and us on the same page and I can understand why.  
19 We're two different worlds, but with that, Mr. Chairman, I will  
20 give it back to you.

21  
22 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you, Harlon. We certainly miss you  
23 being here and we wish you a speedy, quick recovery and we  
24 appreciate your continued enthusiasm in working towards this and  
25 so we certainly all heard your comments and it worked out real  
26 well and so thanks to the staff for going through all that to  
27 make that possible for Harlon to weigh in on his committee that  
28 he's put a lot of effort into over the last nine years. With  
29 that, Dr. Froeschke, if you're ready, we will pick up and move  
30 forward.

31  
32 **DR. FROESCHKE:** Okay and so what I would like to do -- This is  
33 going to be covering Tab F, Number 4. There are three documents  
34 in here and so I will just make sure that we're all oriented.  
35 What I want to guide you through is Tab F, Number 4(a).  
36 Included for your review is Tab F, Number 4(b) and this is a  
37 technical subcommittee report that you all reviewed in January  
38 that we worked on last year. We used some of this as  
39 supplementary or guiding principles, if you will, and Tab F,  
40 Number 4(c) is the South Atlantic Council decision document.  
41 That's sort of their process and their iteration of this  
42 document that they will be reviewing at their meeting.

43  
44 Within Tab F, Number 4(a), this document, there are four actions  
45 which I will go over and a purpose and need, which I would like  
46 for us to discuss. What seems to make sense to me is to discuss  
47 the actions first, with kind of a feel of if we're going in the  
48 right direction collectively, and then we can circle back and

1 review if the purpose and need is adequate to address what we've  
2 envisioned in the actions.

3  
4 Unless that's problematic, I am going to move to page 15, Action  
5 1. I will give you a little bit of overview of what's changed  
6 in the document since you saw it last time. Last time, there  
7 were three actions in this document and really it was, in  
8 summary, one action to modify the reporting mechanism, e.g.,  
9 paper to electronic. A second one would specify the location  
10 reporting requirements and a third action for the data flow kind  
11 of thing.

12  
13 What we realized after we discussed this at the IPT level is  
14 that given that the charter vessels and the headboats have very  
15 different no action alternatives, if you will, it was  
16 problematic to include those in a single action and so the  
17 Action 1 will refer to the frequency and reporting for the  
18 charter vessels and Action 2 will refer to the headboats. I  
19 will stop there. I think there was a question.

20  
21 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Yes, sir, Mr. Fischer.

22  
23 **MR. MYRON FISCHER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think before we get  
24 into this that I would like to address the definition of a  
25 headboat and a charter boat, which is on pages 9 and 10, 1.3 and  
26 I guess 1.4.

27  
28 That's going to make a grave difference as we go through the  
29 document and whatever this council chooses as the definition is  
30 fine, but what we list is -- It seems to me that charter boats  
31 are all six-pack boats and headboats are anyone who carries over  
32 six and that's not necessarily the standard definition that's  
33 been used through time to define what a headboat is and this may  
34 make a grave difference if we separate a management plan for  
35 headboats and charter boats.

36  
37 Now what we're going to have is a six-pack plan and anyone over  
38 six-pack in a different plan and so I think we have to start up  
39 here.

40  
41 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** We went through that with the Sustainable  
42 Fisheries meetings back in Houston several meetings back and  
43 that was a lot of my hang-up, is I didn't feel that it matched.  
44 However, in sitting through some of the AP meetings that just  
45 went on and how they handled it, it seems like they have kind of  
46 moved past that.

47  
48 I agree with you 100 percent that the definitions are not where

1 they should be, but as we came through all the findings of the  
2 other committee, I guess we'll just move on and all, but your  
3 point is duly noted.

4  
5 **MR. FISCHER:** Where I'm going with this is -- I don't know your  
6 business, but are you strictly what we would call a charter  
7 boat?

8  
9 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** That is correct.

10  
11 **MR. FISCHER:** But this would define you as a headboat and I  
12 don't think you want to be fishing on that very small quota. I  
13 think you would like to bring some fish with you.

14  
15 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** That is correct, except for the fact that I do  
16 not charge per person and that has been the definition. That's  
17 where they went down the road and that's one of those things and  
18 it's not a large number of vessels that carry over seven that  
19 are not a headboat, but there is a number of vessels and that's  
20 correct. I want to say a hundred or 200 boats and that's just  
21 right off the top of my head.

22  
23 **MR. FISCHER:** I just think this is something somewhere in the  
24 document we have to get straight and then therefore we have to  
25 see what's the quota that adjoins to that group of people.

26  
27 **DR. FROESCHKE:** To further confuse the matter, in practice, the  
28 way this works is you're a headboat essentially if you're  
29 selected to participate in the headboat survey and so that could  
30 differ slightly from what's in the regulations, but that's the  
31 way -- If you're a headboat and you participate in the survey,  
32 you're a headboat and if not, you're surveyed through the  
33 charter MRIP survey and you're not and so I agree this is  
34 greatly confusing to myself and others, but that's -- We tried  
35 to reflect what's in the regulations and that's what is in  
36 document, but there is this caveat that in practice it is a  
37 little different.

38  
39 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. Any other comments to Mr. Fischer's  
40 point? Dr. Crabtree.

41  
42 **DR. ROY CRABTREE:** It does seem to me though, because this  
43 amendment is about electronic reporting, that the key feature is  
44 whether the vessel participates in the Beaufort Headboat Survey  
45 or not and so if they do, then that's one reporting requirement  
46 and if they don't though, then they have to participate in  
47 whatever we decide the charter boat reporting is and I know  
48 that's not quite consistent with how the regulations define

1 them, but it seems to me for the purposes of these reporting  
2 requirements that that's the key feature and we're going to have  
3 to figure out a way to deal with that.

4  
5 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** I agree with you, because we certainly don't  
6 want to leave anyone out and have a loophole where some group of  
7 vessels does not have to report and so either you're in the  
8 headboat reporting program and have been selected by the SRD or  
9 you're not. Mr. Anson.

10  
11 **MR. KEVIN ANSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm not on your  
12 committee and to that particular point, something that we ought  
13 to consider is that right now when the states participate in the  
14 for-hire telephone survey -- Dave, if I am speaking off-base  
15 here, let me know, but the states routinely review the permit  
16 list that the agency maintains for the permits and then they  
17 contact the person that's on the permit and basically ask them  
18 what the status of that vessel is and whether or not they  
19 charter and if they do, they kind of ask some questions about  
20 their business and that kind of determines whether or not they  
21 get placed in the headboat Beaufort survey or the charter boat  
22 survey.

23  
24 Right now, we've got a situation that if they're not using that  
25 for charter purposes, whether it's head or charter fishing, as  
26 it's defined there, then they just don't get included on the  
27 survey and so any of the trips that are being made there,  
28 assuming they are not being chartered, they are just making  
29 those trips and they're supposed to be captured in the private  
30 portion of the effort survey and the dockside survey and so  
31 maybe some clarifications to that as we go forward in time to  
32 somehow designate in that initial contact as to, well, they're  
33 not a charter vessel, but yet they are still using that to  
34 access the resource, particularly as we've got separate sectors  
35 now, because they may not being captured effectively or  
36 appropriately in the private recreational survey.

37  
38 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** I agree with you and in looking through the  
39 document, I noticed Mississippi -- You know when you look at the  
40 number of headboats in Table 1.4.1, you notice the number of  
41 headboats throughout the Gulf and so on and so forth and  
42 Mississippi grew to five here several years back and I just  
43 would like to ask Mr. Diaz, if he's willing to answer, are there  
44 five partyboats in town or are some of them charter boats that  
45 are reporting to the Beaufort survey or do you know, Mr. Diaz?

46  
47 **MR. DALE DIAZ:** I am not sure I can answer that question,  
48 Johnny. I could do some checking and maybe answer it at a later

1 time. I think this whole issue is confusing and some multi-  
2 passenger vessels may be considering themselves headboats, but I  
3 would have to check on that. Do you have an answer, Joe?  
4

5 **MR. JOE JEWELL:** I think we have four, but we don't have any  
6 boat that meets that definition of a headboat. We have four  
7 boats that have multiple passengers, sometimes between six and  
8 fifteen. We have none that meet that definition and so if that  
9 definition is the one that we adopt, then we have none in  
10 Mississippi.

11  
12 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** I didn't hear anything he said and if there  
13 was an answer there and if you don't want to answer, I respect  
14 that as well.

15  
16 **MR. JEWELL:** We have no headboats that meet this definition. We  
17 have headboats that will vary in passengers at certain times  
18 between six and less than fifteen, but we have none that meet  
19 this definition right now and so if currently this is the  
20 definition of a headboat, Mississippi would have none.

21  
22 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. I just was reading through the  
23 document and so we'll move on there, unless there is any other  
24 comments relative to this point. Okay, Dr. Froeschke.

25  
26 **DR. FROESCHKE:** Thank you. What I would like to do is if you  
27 turn to page 15, Action 1, this refers to the mechanism and data  
28 reporting for charter vessels in the Gulf and South Atlantic and  
29 there really are three action alternatives and I will just  
30 summarize them briefly and then we can go over the finer points.

31  
32 The Alternative 2 is a weekly permit submitted to the SRD and  
33 it's really what we have in the headboat now and so it's weekly  
34 or shorter than weekly if notified by the SRD and it would be  
35 electronic reporting via NMFS software, which is language we  
36 added at the last meeting.

37  
38 It would be a weekly report due Tuesday the following or due  
39 Tuesday following the weekend. Currently in the headboat, you  
40 have seven days to report and what we've heard is that that can  
41 be problematic in that a shorter delay similar -- This mirrors  
42 what we have for the federally-permitted seafood dealers, this  
43 two-day lag, and so that's one option. It would be one report  
44 per week.

45  
46 Alternative 3 is a daily reporting and it's the same idea, but  
47 the reports would be due each day by noon of the following day  
48 and then Alternative 4 is new. Last time we had an alternative



1 with a subalternative in it, it was a daily reporting such that  
2 your trip information had to be submitted prior to returning to  
3 the dock.

4  
5 We talked about this and there are some seasons, some vessels,  
6 that do multiple trips per day and so that really wouldn't work  
7 in that confine and so what we did is Alternative 4 is a trip  
8 level -- It would be a trip level reporting as we envisioned it,  
9 such that your information would be submitted prior to arriving  
10 at the dock.

11  
12 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Any discussion? Ms. Levy.

13  
14 **MS. MARA LEVY:** Just a suggestion that given the prior  
15 discussion about headboat versus charter boat that one thing you  
16 could possibly do in this action for the different alternatives  
17 other than Alternative 1 is to specify that for the purposes of  
18 this reporting requirement that charter vessels are those that  
19 are not part of the headboat survey and so then you're capturing  
20 ones that are part of the headboat survey and throwing them all  
21 into this one regardless of whether they meet the definition of  
22 a headboat or charter in the definitions section. If that's the  
23 way that you want to go, that's an option for doing that.

24  
25 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** I absolutely agree with you, because my whole  
26 intent with the earlier conversation is just to make sure that  
27 you are reporting to someone somehow, because I just don't want  
28 there to be a loophole. I think that's well taken and we will  
29 make a note of that, unless someone wants to make a -- Seeing  
30 nobody, Dr. Froeschke.

31  
32 **DR. FROESCHKE:** Just to go over the key points, the key  
33 difference to me between Alternatives 2, 3, and 4 is that  
34 Alternative 4 the information would have to be submitted prior  
35 to returning to the dock and so it would be submitted prior to  
36 that person knowing whether they were going to be intercepted or  
37 not and so that would be a different level of burden on the  
38 vessel operator, perhaps, but it would also permit more robust  
39 ways of validating the catch and so I guess some discussion on  
40 whether that's appropriate or necessary would be helpful.

41  
42 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** I certainly agree that it would eliminate  
43 recall bias to look at Alternative 4. However, Dr. Stunz.

44  
45 **DR. GREG STUNZ:** Johnny, you hit on recall bias and I was going  
46 to point out that I think it's Alternative 4 that captures some  
47 of the concerns that I would have had of being heavily involved  
48 in this electronic reporting.

1  
2 The technology is getting there in many aspects and it's just  
3 not so much of a burden anymore to do this. You can do it while  
4 you're idling back into the harbor almost. It's becoming so  
5 simple and this validation is going to be key for a successful  
6 program like this and just piloting what's going on right now,  
7 today, during the snapper season, this Alternative 4 is going to  
8 make a big difference for the success of that program, in my  
9 opinion.

10  
11 **MR. PEARCE:** Mr. Chairman, I agree with Dr. Stunz completely.  
12 We were fortunate enough, with Bonnie's help, to get a grant  
13 that's going to be putting VMS on some charter vessels, up to  
14 350, to begin practicing exactly what Alternative 4 says, daily  
15 reporting at sea before you arrive at the dock.

16  
17 There is a lot of things in motion right now that is leading us  
18 down that path and with this particular grant proposal, we'll  
19 get a really clear idea of how it works and will it work with  
20 the charter vessels in the Gulf and so I agree with Dr. Stunz  
21 that that's the direction we need to go and we are going to be  
22 practicing that as we move into the next three or four or five  
23 months. Thank you.

24  
25 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Any further comments? Okay, Dr. Froeschke, go  
26 ahead.

27  
28 **DR. FROESCHKE:** My comment on this is, circling back to Harlon's  
29 earlier point, I think the South Atlantic, in terms of these  
30 alternatives, is gravitating to something like Alternative 2,  
31 which is quite different, and so when we have the joint meeting  
32 on Thursday I guess this will be something we either have to  
33 figure out if we can reconcile the differences or if we can't  
34 and if we can go down a separate path.

35  
36 That's just something for you all to think about and I don't  
37 know if you want to provide some sort of formal endorsement of  
38 an alternative or something to allow us to bring that forward in  
39 a decision document for consideration on Thursday. I don't  
40 think we're really at a point to pick preferred alternatives or  
41 something, but I guess any guidance might help facilitate that  
42 meeting on Thursday.

43  
44 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** It certainly seems that the conversation  
45 around the table points directly at Alternative 4, or that's my  
46 interpretation of it. I understand you saying we're not ready  
47 to make preferred alternatives at this point. I don't know that  
48 anything necessarily stops us from doing that, unless someone

1 tells me no, but if somebody wants to offer up a motion or  
2 something to select a preferred then go for it and if not, we  
3 will certainly leave it where it is. It's your call. Dr.  
4 Stunz.

5  
6 **DR. STUNZ:** I would be happy to make that motion for a  
7 preferred, Johnny, if you think that's appropriate now or if we  
8 need to wait, but I don't know how else we would do that to send  
9 a message that this is kind of where we're going. We can always  
10 change that I suppose, right?

11  
12 **DR. FROESCHKE:** We usually don't do those without the analyses  
13 and things, but, to me, it at least provides clarity for your  
14 perspective and so, like you say, I don't see a problem with  
15 that and I think it could be helpful, unless someone else has a  
16 problem with it.

17  
18 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** I don't know if there's another avenue other  
19 than a potential preferred alternative or some other wording,  
20 just to kind of send a message to the South Atlantic of what our  
21 intent is, unless --

22  
23 **DR. FROESCHKE:** I say we do that.

24  
25 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. That sounds fine to me.

26  
27 **MR. PEARCE:** Mr. Chairman, Dr. Froeschke, back to the  
28 differences between the South Atlantic and the Gulf. Is there a  
29 way to fashion this amendment that there are two alternatives,  
30 one for the Gulf and one for the South Atlantic? That would  
31 help me considerably and I agree with this motion and don't get  
32 me wrong, but I am just trying to think past this motion as to  
33 where we're going and maybe this isn't germane to the  
34 discussion, but I would like you to think about how we might be  
35 able to do that in this same action and that's all.

36  
37 **DR. FROESCHKE:** I'm not sure. I suppose we could craft it.  
38 What concerns me is in developing the rationale for the document  
39 as to why one way would be appropriate in the South Atlantic but  
40 yet a quite different way would be appropriate in the Gulf, but  
41 I guess that's probably a legal question.

42  
43 **MS. LEVY:** I don't know that that's a legal question. I mean  
44 either way you're going to have to explain why what you're doing  
45 is appropriate or the rationale for the decision. I mean you  
46 could potentially have different preferreds. We've done that  
47 before, where the different councils have had different  
48 preferreds. I guess ultimately it's your decision about how you

1 want to structure it.

2  
3 I suspect that the Science Center is going to have something to  
4 say about having different reporting methods for these very  
5 similar fisheries or sectors.

6  
7 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Good point. Dr. Crabtree.

8  
9 **DR. CRABTREE:** I mean I think ultimately -- One, I think it is  
10 correct that the South Atlantic Council, in the discussions that  
11 I've heard, are envisioning something closer to Alternative 2,  
12 but I think this is all a balance between our data needs and the  
13 amount of burden we are willing to put on those who are  
14 reporting the data.

15  
16 I think different councils can come to different judgment calls  
17 about that based on their experiences in their region and we've  
18 certainly had more issues with trying to track red snapper and  
19 closing the fishery. We have different legal constraints on us  
20 right now with red snapper, in that we're required to have a  
21 quota by the statute and required to close the fishery when it's  
22 caught.

23  
24 The South Atlantic doesn't have any specific language like that  
25 and so I think we could probably come to a rationale that would  
26 allow you to make different judgement calls and I guess there  
27 are ways you could restructure this to indicate one preferred in  
28 one region and another -- They're separate permits and so I  
29 think we could come to that.

30  
31 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. It almost seems like it's maybe two  
32 different programs with everything going on, but, with that, I  
33 will go back to Dr. Stunz, if he wants to carry on.

34  
35 **DR. STUNZ:** Well, I was just going to make a motion that we  
36 select a preferred alternative, but am I hearing from you, Roy,  
37 that we don't want to do that now?

38  
39 **DR. CRABTREE:** I think you can or somebody mentioned a potential  
40 preferred. I mean I think there are ways we can indicate to the  
41 South Atlantic Council that this is what our intent is, but I  
42 don't know if there's really a difference between a preliminary  
43 preferred and just a preferred.

44  
45 **DR. STUNZ:** I will make it simple. **I move to make Alternative 4**  
46 **our preferred alternative under 2.1, Action 1.**

47  
48 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** We have a motion on the floor and they're

1 going to get it on the board. David Walker seconds it. While  
2 she's getting it up there on the board, is there any other  
3 discussion or any other points that anyone would like to make?  
4

5 **MR. ROY WILLIAMS:** Just anticipating that there's going to be  
6 resistance from the South Atlantic, could we be more explicit  
7 and say for the Gulf of Mexico or for vessels in the Gulf or  
8 something like that, just so we do right away have that  
9 alternative the way we're going to do it and then they can do it  
10 a different way, so we don't end up with a stalemate?  
11

12 **DR. STUNZ:** That's fine and so is that coming as a friendly  
13 amendment or just to add for the Gulf of Mexico?  
14

15 **DR. FROESCHKE:** I think what we could do for the alternatives is  
16 we could just put a Subalternative a and b and then Gulf of  
17 Mexico and South Atlantic and note that more than one could be  
18 selected.  
19

20 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** That seems reasonable either way. You are  
21 basically accomplishing the same thing by doing either item and  
22 I don't really have a preference and whichever you prefer, Dr.  
23 Stunz. It's your motion.  
24

25 **DR. STUNZ:** I am just for what's going to make it simple and  
26 clean.  
27

28 **DR. FROESCHKE:** That will work and just next time you see it we  
29 might restructure it in that way to capture your intent and  
30 that's all.  
31

32 **DR. STUNZ:** Okay. That's fine.  
33

34 **MR. FISCHER:** I don't know who to direct the question to and Roy  
35 may answer for the Center, but is this what the Science Center  
36 would be looking for, would be daily reporting?  
37

38 **DR. CRABTREE:** I don't know if they're going to have a hard and  
39 fast rule on that, but you know if we have very short red  
40 snapper seasons that weekly reporting is going to be potentially  
41 a problem, but I think this really gets at the validation  
42 aspects of it and all that and so I don't know that that's  
43 something the Center is going to take a hard-over position.  
44

45 I think it seems to me that having them report before they hit  
46 the dock clearly has advantages in terms of validation, but  
47 that's not to say it couldn't be done in other ways and so, like  
48 I said, I think it's kind of a judgment call of is the reporting

1 burden of doing this justified by the increase in the quality of  
2 the data and I think the Center can give you advice on that, but  
3 ultimately it's going to be your call.

4  
5 **MR. FISCHER:** I anticipated the logbooks would encompass a lot  
6 more species than just red snapper and therefore stretch outside  
7 the bounds of the snapper season and I was looking to maybe  
8 morph Alternative 2 to where you could have a weekly reporting  
9 and maybe morph 2 and 3. I am trying to come up with something  
10 else where fishermen aren't required all year long to have daily  
11 reports, especially during the slower times or during the non-  
12 snapper seasons.

13  
14 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. We have a motion on the floor and is  
15 there any further discussion? All right. **Anybody in opposition**  
16 **to the motion? Seeing none, the motion carries.** With that,  
17 we'll go back to Dr. Froeschke.

18  
19 **DR. FROESCHKE:** Okay. Next I would like to move to Action 2,  
20 which is going to look very similar in terms of the  
21 alternatives, except that this will refer to the headboats  
22 instead of the charter and so if you recall, Harlon mentioned  
23 one option would be to split the charter and headboat into  
24 different amendments if we thought that was necessary.

25  
26 A bit of history is in the dealer reporting -- That was sort of  
27 our first stab at these kind of generic joint amendments and we  
28 ran into all kinds of problems. I am not suggesting that we  
29 would here, but one concern I have is if something unanticipated  
30 comes up later with either the headboat or the charter sector in  
31 particular, it would be unfortunate if that delayed the entire  
32 thing and so that was one thing I was thinking about.

33  
34 In terms of the alternatives, it's really 2, 3, and 4. It's the  
35 daily reporting due Tuesday after -- Excuse me. The once a week  
36 due Tuesday after, which is Alternative 2, and the daily  
37 reporting due noon the following day is Alternative 3 and then  
38 the trip level reporting is Alternative 4.

39  
40 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** I understand your point is that having the  
41 charter boats and headboats lumped together is if one was to  
42 slow down that it could potentially affect the other and so  
43 there certainly could be the need to split those if necessary.  
44 Okay. We have a couple of alternatives in front of us and any  
45 further discussion by the committee on this? Mr. Donaldson.

46  
47 **MR. DONALDSON:** Roy, what's the required reporting period now  
48 with the Beaufort headboat or John?

1  
2 **DR. FROESCHKE:** As of last year, it's once per week and the key  
3 difference is now the week ends on Sunday and you have an  
4 additional seven days to complete the report and so Alternative  
5 2 would be still once per week, but it would be due the Tuesday  
6 after instead of the Sunday and so you just have five days fewer  
7 to turn it in.  
8  
9 **MR. DONALDSON:** So essentially Alternative 2 is the closest to  
10 what's currently being done.  
11  
12 **DR. FROESCHKE:** That's correct.  
13  
14 **MS. LEVY:** One thing I wanted to point out with respect to these  
15 alternatives is currently the no action is if selected by the  
16 SRD and so headboats, like we talked about before, regardless of  
17 how they're defined in the definition section, they are only  
18 required to report in the headboat survey if they're selected.  
19  
20 If you look at Alternatives 2, 3, and 4, that language is gone  
21 and so it just says require that headboats do X, Y, and Z. If  
22 the intent is still to allow the Science Center to select what  
23 headboats it wants for the headboat reporting system and capture  
24 everyone else in the charter piece, we need to make that clear  
25 and you just need to know that the language that's in here right  
26 now doesn't really reflect that with respect to the other  
27 alternatives.  
28  
29 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** I certainly understand and agree with you.  
30 Now, I believe there is some electronic reporting by the  
31 headboats currently and is that part of the collaborative? Is  
32 that correct or no? Am I misunderstanding?  
33  
34 **MS. LEVY:** All the headboats that are selected report  
35 electronically now, but, like John was saying, they have a week  
36 lag in which they can report, but the key is that they're  
37 actually selected and it's not the fact that you're a headboat  
38 as defined. You're a headboat that's chosen by the Science  
39 Center. Alternative 2, 3, and 4 don't have that "if selected"  
40 language and it just says headboats shall do this.  
41  
42 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** I understand. I just wanted to make absolute  
43 sure I understood what you're saying. Any further comments?  
44 Dr. Froeschke, did you have a comment?  
45  
46 **DR. FROESCHKE:** No, not at this time. I guess the one thing to  
47 think about in terms of the alternatives -- Since you selected  
48 Alternative 4 for the charter, it would seem odd to have less

1 restrictive requirements for the larger vessels.

2  
3 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** I certainly can understand where you're coming  
4 from on that. Now, I would assume that the headboats in the  
5 Gulf and the South Atlantic report to the Beaufort deal and so  
6 that's not anything new. They have both been doing it through  
7 the jurisdiction of both councils, correct?

8  
9 **DR. FROESCHKE:** That's correct.

10  
11 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. Just making sure I understand. Any  
12 comments on this? There's been some good points made. Dr.  
13 Stunz.

14  
15 **DR. STUNZ:** To Mara's point and forming my opinion on these  
16 alternatives, I am working under the assumption that this would  
17 be a full census and that everyone is going to be doing that and  
18 so I don't know where that comes into the document. I just read  
19 it that way with that intent and so if we need to make that more  
20 clear, John, or whatever -- Maybe that's not the intent of other  
21 folks around the table, but for me, for this or the other  
22 components if we're talking about it being successful, it's  
23 going to need to be a full census-type activity.

24  
25 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** That's a good point, because I was reading it  
26 thinking a full census, because you are selected by the SRD and  
27 I would assume that all of the ones they want are. Dr.  
28 Froeschke.

29  
30 **DR. FROESCHKE:** This is another layer of confusion and so the  
31 headboat is called a survey, but in practice it is really  
32 operated as a nearly complete census and so this sort of circles  
33 back to Mara's point earlier that would this Action 2 apply to  
34 vessels that were selected by the SRD if we put that "if  
35 selected" language back in there and then every other for-hire  
36 vessel would go for the other one.

37  
38 The only other thing is if they selected both, for example,  
39 Alternative 4 for both the charter and the headboats would it  
40 even matter, because they would have the same obligations.

41  
42 **MR. PEARCE:** Johnny, I tend to agree with Alternative 4 too, to  
43 make it simplified for both headboats and charter boats. I  
44 think that that way the requirements are for everyone and  
45 everyone does it the same way and it's easier for the Science  
46 Center and it's easier for everybody else involved and I think  
47 that -- I believe that the headboats would not have a problem  
48 doing it that way. I think they're really aiming and going in



1 that direction anyway and so I believe that Alternative 4,  
2 making it exactly the same as the charter vessels, helps us move  
3 this document along as a unified document for the charter and  
4 the headboats.

5  
6 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Good point. Any more comments by the  
7 committee?

8  
9 **DR. FROESCHKE:** I guess the question is would you want the "if  
10 selected" language in there and essentially that would be  
11 carrying forward the discretion of the SRD as it is now or would  
12 you want something slightly different? It seems to me the  
13 simplest approach would probably be to add that in, but perhaps  
14 I am missing something.

15  
16 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** I don't know that the SRD would choose  
17 Alternative 4 and I guess that the SRD would be a little unique  
18 in the sense of this action item, because they're the ones that  
19 are going to choose or mandate when that is done, as opposed to  
20 us as a council.

21  
22 Now, I may be way out of line and over my head here, but that  
23 was the intent. I do agree that having both of them the same  
24 and having -- If you're carrying passengers for hire of any  
25 nature that you are going to report equally the same throughout  
26 the fishery, whether you're carrying one passenger or a hundred  
27 passengers.

28  
29 It makes it a whole lot simpler, I would imagine, for  
30 enforcement and everyone else, but that's just my opinion and  
31 are there any other comments? Okay. Seeing none, I guess we'll  
32 go back to Dr. Froeschke.

33  
34 **DR. FROESCHKE:** Did we make a motion for this for a preferred  
35 Alternative 4? Did that happen?

36  
37 **MR. PEARCE:** Johnny, I can do that.

38  
39 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay, Mr. Pearce. Go ahead.

40  
41 **MR. PEARCE:** Let's make the same motion we did with the charter  
42 boats and the past action, but using -- I can't see as well on  
43 this, but choosing Alternative 4 for the headboats and add in  
44 for the Gulf of Mexico.

45  
46 **DR. CRABTREE:** I guess I need to see if you get a second first.

47  
48 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** I thought you were the second. Dr. Stunz, did

1 you --

2

3 **DR. STUNZ:** I second it.

4

5 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Stunz did second it. It's been seconded  
6 and go ahead, Dr. Crabtree.

7

8 **DR. CRABTREE:** Some of these headboats carry a lot of people,  
9 right, sixty or seventy people. It's one thing if you're on a  
10 six-pack to say you're going to report everything before you hit  
11 the dock, but if you're on a headboat with that many people  
12 onboard, does that then become overly burdensome to do? I don't  
13 know the answer to that.

14

15 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** I don't operate a headboat, but I would  
16 imagine that if you have a week to do it and you do carry sixty  
17 or seventy people that your recall bias is going to be through  
18 the roof. If I were operating a sixty or seventy or a hundred-  
19 passenger headboat, I would want to do it right then, so I  
20 wouldn't forget or make a mistake that could ultimately come  
21 back and affect me or the landings or anything else.

22

23 Now, as I said, I am not a headboat operator, but I do operate  
24 boats and I do carry twenty or twenty-five people or up to  
25 thirty or forty and if I was to have to report and make sure I  
26 got it correct, I would want to do it right then. Now, would it  
27 be burdensome? Potentially, but the outcome of not doing it may  
28 be far greater, but it's one of those things.

29

30 **DR. CRABTREE:** I agree with you that the recall bias is an  
31 issue. I just want to be careful that we don't get into a  
32 situation where the boat has to sit away from the dock for some  
33 unreasonable period of time while they do all their paperwork  
34 and all and so I am not saying this isn't a good idea and maybe  
35 it works, but I would like to have some notion of how long it  
36 takes and how they would actually do it and who would do it on  
37 these boats.

38

39 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** I don't disagree with you, because you  
40 certainly don't want a boat to sit in the water waiting on a  
41 report to be filed. I had a couple of hands go up. Dr. Stunz.

42

43 **DR. STUNZ:** Maybe we could hear from some of the headboat  
44 operators, Roy, because I have thought a lot about exactly what  
45 you were saying and that's why I didn't quite put forth the  
46 preferred here, but maybe a little perspective.

47

48 Back when we piloted the original iSnapper back in 2011, we had

1 headboats in that and they did it no problem for many species,  
2 but what made me think about this was that they have to keep  
3 track of how many fish they're catching to meet -- How many  
4 snapper onboard and how many certain species and so somehow that  
5 must occur and I just don't know how problematic that is to get  
6 it input by the time they hit the dock. My assumption is that  
7 it could be done.

8  
9 **MR. PEARCE:** Give me a reference on how long these boats have to  
10 steam out and steam in time-wise. I know that these are slower  
11 boats, most of the bigger ones, and so they should have adequate  
12 time steaming back home to take care of their business and I  
13 don't think it's -- Like a charter boat that's very close to  
14 inshore and coming in and out quickly and I think these guys  
15 actually take a little bit longer to go out and longer to come  
16 in and maybe I'm wrong, but I do think that they have the time  
17 to do it and I do think they have to do it anyway and so if  
18 we're going to do it, let's do it right.

19  
20 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** I don't disagree and I don't know about  
21 steaming or travel times for different parts of the Gulf, but if  
22 it's something they have to do, I think they will do it, but I  
23 would hope that we would get some public comment and maybe some  
24 direction from the public as to how we handle this. I had Mr.  
25 Donaldson next.

26  
27 **MR. DONALDSON:** I would just kind of reiterate what Greg and  
28 Harlon said. I don't have firsthand knowledge on the steam time  
29 or how long it would take to enter it, but with the technology  
30 there, with iSnapper and some of the other apps, I think it  
31 would be fairly doable to accomplish it, but I agree that I  
32 think we need to get some comment during public testimony to get  
33 some real-world experience.

34  
35 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** I agree with you. Mr. Anson.

36  
37 **MR. ANSON:** Thank you and one small point might be to at least -  
38 - It would help in providing a little bit more time to the  
39 captain is prior to landing the fish rather than just arriving  
40 at the dock. The anglers have to get ready and everything and  
41 gather all their stuff and that might provide a little bit more  
42 time for them as well.

43  
44 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Good point and good discussion. Anybody else?

45  
46 **MR. FISCHER:** What data fields are we trying to capture prior to  
47 arrival?

48

1 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** I believe that will come a little bit later in  
2 the document and am I correct?

3  
4 **MR. FISCHER:** It may, but that might make a difference on how  
5 you feel about when they get this data in.

6  
7 **MR. DONALDSON:** I would think that we would want -- Whatever we  
8 determine is required to be reported would be -- We would  
9 require everything, but you're right that we could say we only  
10 need the number of fish and by species and that could -- If it  
11 turns out to be a problem and it may not be a problem.

12  
13 **MR. FISCHER:** I was just going to comment that that's right and  
14 we don't want a captain getting into the biological and you  
15 might just want a head count, but you would still need someone  
16 dockside not only to validate, but to get into the bio profile.

17  
18 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** I agree with you. I thought we were talking  
19 about the stuff we're going to come up to in Action 3. Dr.  
20 Froeschke.

21  
22 **DR. FROESCHKE:** This is actually something that the elements  
23 that are currently required are in the document, but I think  
24 some discussion on whether this is something that the council  
25 will provide guidance as to what elements they want the  
26 headboats to supply or if, in discussions, the Science Center  
27 said these are the elements that we need in order to provide the  
28 science and so I was hoping Bonnie was going to be here, but we  
29 could get some input from the Science Center on what they feel  
30 the need is and so we could have a dialogue about how to do  
31 this, because this is part of the document that hasn't been  
32 fleshed out as much as the other parts, partly for this reason.  
33 We want to know what's possible in terms of time and then what  
34 sort of elements we feel are necessary and reasonable to give.

35  
36 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** I would assume that they've been doing  
37 Beaufort Headboat Surveys for years and years and years and that  
38 they have a pretty good idea of what they already want in mind  
39 for the headboats and I would think this would be a whole lot  
40 simpler than what we're doing with the for-hire, because it's  
41 already there, but I certainly do not wish to speak for the  
42 Center and go from there. Any other comments?

43  
44 We have a motion on the floor and I'm fixing to bring it to a  
45 vote. Anybody else? Okay. The motion is on the board.  
46 **Anybody opposed to the motion as written? One in opposition.**  
47 **The motion carries.** Moving on, Dr. Froeschke.

48

1 **DR. FROESCHKE:** For your reference on that, Table 2.2.1 has the  
2 list of current data elements. Now I would like to move on to  
3 Action 3 and this is changing gears a little bit and it's sort  
4 of another area where we've had, at least at the IPT level and  
5 staff level, long discussions with the South Atlantic Council  
6 and maybe we have different visions.

7  
8 What this is referring to is the catch location reporting, if  
9 you will, for specific trips and there is really two different  
10 things to think about. One is in the past it's been something  
11 where a vessel self-reported the fishing area within a box or a  
12 grid or something and it wasn't the specific spot down to a ten-  
13 meter radius or something like that.

14  
15 Alternatives 2 and 3 would have location collected from a  
16 device, either some sort of tablet sort of device or a VMS, but  
17 the key difference between Alternative 1 is that the location  
18 information would be collected passively by a device and it  
19 wouldn't be something that someone self reported, which I'm sure  
20 you could think of both pros and cons for that.

21  
22 That part, from the councils' perspective, I think we agree on  
23 those kinds of ideas and the choices made and we don't provide  
24 guidance on what choice is made, but that concept. What we've  
25 talked about differently are what level of specificity is  
26 necessary.

27  
28 When I was working on this, it didn't seem to me that we would  
29 need -- We would want precise, but not ultra precise. You could  
30 sort of round off and get in a reasonable ballpark, such that we  
31 would know what area you're fishing and it could be used for  
32 depth range associations and things, but it wouldn't be mapping  
33 locations.

34  
35 The South Atlantic I think feels that a little more precision is  
36 necessary in that level of reporting and so, again, I think this  
37 would be an opportunity to get feedback from the Science Center  
38 on how they envision using this information and if it's  
39 something where we just want to use the information to determine  
40 if a trip occurred or not, then I don't see that much  
41 specificity is necessary.

42  
43 If it's to be used more in the stock assessment in saying these  
44 are the depths that it was caught and these are the fish that  
45 were caught at that depth and this is the bycatch mortality  
46 associated with this species caught at this depth and refining  
47 that process, then perhaps we could make use of that and so I  
48 think those are the elements that are worth considering.

1  
2 The difference between Alternative 2 and 3 is really the VMS for  
3 Alternative 3. The South Atlantic has indicated they do not  
4 want to use that technology in their region and so the  
5 alternatives are just reflective for the Gulf and this one  
6 includes both the headboats and the charter vessels as  
7 suboptions and so I will stop there.

8  
9 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. Any comments or questions? Leann.

10  
11 **MS. LEANN BOSARGE:** I am not on your committee, but I had a  
12 question about this. Alternative 2 is a NMFS approved  
13 electronic device that automatically records the vessel location  
14 at a specified time and I assume that there will be some sort of  
15 formula that will then convert that into the boat was fishing  
16 here and these were transiting points, sort of like we have our  
17 electronic logbooks on the shrimp boats.

18  
19 That is mainly for effort collection, it seems to me, to find  
20 out where you're fishing and how hard you're fishing in those  
21 areas, whereas Alternative 3 typically the VMS is more of an  
22 enforcement tool, so you can track that boat so you know that  
23 that boat has hailed in and hailed out and he's out fishing or I  
24 see this VMS out here and this guy has not hailed in or hailed  
25 out and what's going on here. Do you see what I'm saying?

26  
27 It's more of an enforcement tool and so I guess my question is  
28 can we have -- I am not on the committee, but when it gets to  
29 full council, can we have two preferred alternatives on this,  
30 because they address two different things? Could we possibly  
31 implement both?

32  
33 **DR. FROESCHKE:** I think we could have two preferreds in the  
34 sense that the Gulf could have a preferred and the South  
35 Atlantic could have a different preferred. One thing that I  
36 think is a little bit different is it seems to me that the VMS  
37 and the electronic device technology have converged, in that  
38 both are capable of doing very similar, if not identical things,  
39 now.

40  
41 The concept of converting the points into an activity kind of  
42 algorithm that is done with the VMS now for -- I think both of  
43 those could be done with either method if that is the desired  
44 use of the data.

45  
46 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Good point. Any more conversation or  
47 comments?

48

1 **MR. FISCHER:** I understand some of the needs in having a precise  
2 location or fairly precise location as it relates to water depth  
3 and possibly trying to enter in release mortality, but I do --  
4 We have to remember two important factors that -- One, unless  
5 it's entered at the time, you don't know what the boat was  
6 fishing for and, secondly, you don't know what water depth they  
7 were fishing.

8  
9 I maybe have to get better educated on charter boats around the  
10 Gulf and the 105 Louisiana active boats fish multiple species  
11 all day long and just because they're at these different dots on  
12 the map doesn't mean -- I might have caught my snapper in a  
13 hundred foot of water fishing fifty foot down, but then I went  
14 to fish amberjack during the open season for amberjack in a  
15 different water depth.

16  
17 We just have to be cautious on how this data is used down the  
18 road and it's not quite as empirical as it seems on the surface  
19 and maybe there is a solution out there other than entering in  
20 fish per location, per site location, as you catch them.

21  
22 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you, Mr. Fischer. Anyone else? Seeing  
23 no action out of the committee, Dr. Froeschke.

24  
25 **DR. FROESCHKE:** Do you want to provide some guidance on if you  
26 have a preferred direction on this? Two things I guess I'm  
27 interested in and one is if we wanted to change the language  
28 such that we -- When we say the location could be reported in  
29 degrees and minutes but not seconds or something like that, if  
30 you were concerned about the precision.

31  
32 Two is could Alternatives 2 and 3 be -- Could there be like a  
33 multiple choice option, where if it was a NMFS-approved device  
34 that they could use either VMS or whatever the device was and so  
35 if they had some app kind of device and they're collecting the  
36 same data -- Could we do something like that?

37  
38 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** I don't see why we couldn't. I mean it's  
39 pretty well laid out that it's a NMFS-approved electronic  
40 device. It seemed like the South Atlantic was more toward a  
41 tablet or GPS-based deal and then the Gulf seemed like it was  
42 more of a VMS type of thing as well, but I think you're correct  
43 when you spoke earlier that the technologies have almost merged  
44 and integrated and become one and so you could ask -- The  
45 council wants this tablet to do this set of parameters and this  
46 council wants this tablet to do another set and I don't see it  
47 being an issue.

48

1 I think that you can get information from one-mile squares if  
2 you want to get down to that and I don't think many fishermen  
3 would have a problem with that, but if it's not necessarily that  
4 it needs to be that precise -- Maybe it's ten-mile squares or  
5 hundred-mile squares. I don't know and that would be something  
6 for the Science Center to speak on.

7  
8 I am certainly not trying to push my own items here in leading  
9 us through this committee, but if there is any other committee  
10 members that have any comments on this, I would sure like for  
11 you to speak now, before we hand it back over.

12  
13 **DR. STUNZ:** I will just make a quick comment. I think my point  
14 is captured within these alternatives. I just don't know where  
15 we would be at a point for really any preferred or anything like  
16 that, because I think we need to hear some more public comment.

17  
18 I am not sure that the charter captains have fully bought into  
19 the VMS or not and maybe some really have and maybe some haven't  
20 and there is a big difference in what VMS will do in terms of  
21 when you're out at sea versus what another device might do,  
22 which you can still go fishing and necessarily not hail out on  
23 an approved electronic device that you wouldn't necessarily be  
24 able to do that with a VMS and then there's the whole cost issue  
25 going on and other things.

26  
27 I mean I guess I would recommend everything that's captured  
28 here, but we probably need to have a lot more discussion before  
29 we move further.

30  
31 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Certainly with two different councils and  
32 trying to go in two different directions, it complicates it.  
33 Mr. Pearce.

34  
35 **MR. PEARCE:** Johnny, I agree with Dr. Stunz that we need to  
36 listen to some public testimony and I favor the VMS. I think it  
37 just gets a better job done for us, but I think we do need to  
38 listen to some other people, listen to some of the charter guys,  
39 and see exactly how they feel about this and take into  
40 consideration what the South Atlantic wants to do as well, but I  
41 don't think we could pick a preferred right now either. I think  
42 we've just got to have a little more discussion.

43  
44 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. Any more comments? Okay, Dr.  
45 Froeschke.

46  
47 **DR. FROESCHKE:** Okay. The last action in the document is Action  
48 4 and this action -- This is primarily a South Atlantic idea,



1 but really what this concept is, it's a data flow specifying  
2 where the data would be transmitted from when the data are  
3 reported by the vessel operator to ultimately where it's housed  
4 and made use of.

5  
6 The idea of this is that it could -- If there was a specified  
7 flow, it would be faster. The specifics in the alternatives are  
8 based on the technical subcommittee document that we produced  
9 last year that you reviewed in January.

10  
11 The rationale for the specific alternatives were that that was  
12 the recommendation of the technical subcommittee and I am going  
13 to take -- That was the South Atlantic's -- That is their  
14 rationale, is my understanding of that. I am going to take a  
15 little bit of liberty and speak on behalf of the technical  
16 subcommittee, because I was on there.

17  
18 My recollection of how this was, in looking at the document, is  
19 the subcommittee did recommend a flow like this, but really what  
20 they recommended is coordination between the FINs and the  
21 Science Center to develop something like this. I don't recall  
22 that something as prescriptive as this was recommended and the  
23 concern that I have is that if we have it hard-coded in the  
24 regulation and some unanticipated problem comes up that it's  
25 going to make it much slower in response to that. It would also  
26 make it more difficult to respond and incorporate new  
27 technologies as they become available.

28  
29 I don't see where, in my view, where having this improves the  
30 quality of the product, because this is what's going to be done  
31 anyway and so the IPT and many of the IPT members recommend just  
32 removing this action from the document. I don't think this  
33 would degrade the quality of the product in any way, but it  
34 would give us more flexibility in meeting changing needs or  
35 opportunities.

36  
37 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. I certainly understand. Dr. Crabtree.

38  
39 **DR. CRABTREE:** It does seem to me this is far too into the  
40 minutia and the details of it that really need to be worked out  
41 by the Center and GulfFIN and those that we work with and so it  
42 seems overly prescriptive to me. **I would make a motion that we  
43 remove Action 4 to considered but rejected at this point.**

44  
45 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. We have a motion to remove Action 4.  
46 Is there a second for this motion? Dr. Stunz seconds the  
47 motion. We'll take just a second to get it on the board.

48

1 **DR. CRABTREE:** I think we're trying to remove Action 4 in its  
2 entirety. I think you could just say motion to remove Action 4  
3 to considered but rejected.

4  
5 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. I believe we've got the motion straight  
6 on the board now and any opposition to doing so? With no  
7 opposition, the motion carries. All right, Dr. Froeschke, does  
8 that complete your --

9  
10 **DR. FROESCHKE:** Yes, that completes my review of the document  
11 and so what I plan to do, in working with Carrie and whomever  
12 else, is we're going to compile your discussion into our  
13 committee report and decision document and this is going to be  
14 provided to the South Atlantic Council and so we're going to  
15 have to coordinate this for the joint council meeting on  
16 Thursday, but that's what I plan.

17  
18 **MR. FISCHER:** Could John explain, if you don't mind, late in the  
19 game, what species this covers for the Gulf Council? Would it  
20 be just reef fish or would it also include coastal migratory  
21 pelagics?

22  
23 **DR. FROESCHKE:** It would include reef fish and CMP.

24  
25 **MR. FISCHER:** Okay, because just the way the title -- It's just  
26 minor housekeeping, but okay. To me, it was not totally evident  
27 in reading the titles of each amendment.

28  
29 **DR. FROESCHKE:** Yes, we've had a long discussion about that and  
30 normally the way that we do that is we just put the affected  
31 FMPs in the title and we don't include them in each subheading  
32 like this and so that probably is how you'll see it in the  
33 future. I think it's a little easier to discern what's going  
34 on.

35  
36 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. Thank you. That concludes your portion  
37 of it, Dr. Froeschke, and is that correct?

38  
39 **DR. FROESCHKE:** Yes.

40  
41 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Next up, Item 5, is MRIP Fishing Effort Survey  
42 Transition Plan Presentation and are we ready for that? Next up  
43 is going to be a presentation and I believe it was emailed out  
44 to you earlier this morning. I believe that's correct.

45  
46 **MRIP FISHING EFFORT SURVEY TRANSITION PLAN PRESENTATION**

47  
48 **MR. DAVE VAN VOORHEES:** Thank you for the opportunity to address

1 the Data Collection Committee today. I am going to do a very  
2 brief overview of the Marine Recreational Information Program  
3 and an update on its status, but, most importantly, I'm going to  
4 be presenting today on the design of a new mail survey that  
5 we've developed to monitor recreational private boat and shore  
6 fishing effort and I'm going to describe our plans to transition  
7 from the historical telephone survey design that we've been  
8 using for over thirty-five years to implementation of this new  
9 approach.

10  
11 Estimating recreational fishery catch is not easy, but catch  
12 statistics are essential to management decisions that lead to  
13 sustainable fisheries.

14  
15 The NRC report produced back in 2006 acknowledged that, quote,  
16 recreational fisheries surveys may be the most complex national  
17 surveys currently conducted, unquote. This slide just  
18 illustrates the major sources of data that go into recreational  
19 fishing catch estimates.

20  
21 Effort estimates, or the number of angler trips, or it could be  
22 the number of boat trips, are combined with estimates of catch  
23 rate. A catch rate is measured as the mean number of fish  
24 caught per angler trip or it could be the mean number of fish  
25 caught per boat trip, depending on your design.

26  
27 These two components are usually estimated through two  
28 independent, but complementary, survey approaches. We have  
29 already implemented an improved method to estimate catch rate on  
30 the Atlantic and Gulf coasts with the new access point angler  
31 intercept survey design that was put in place in 2013. We are  
32 now embarking on improvements to the effort component of the  
33 total catch estimate for shore and private boat fishing and  
34 that's what I will be talking about today.

35  
36 This map just illustrates that we have a variety of different  
37 types of recreational fishery survey programs in the different  
38 regions of the U.S. and the mail survey that I'm going to be  
39 discussing today will replace the current telephone survey  
40 that's represented in the circled area.

41  
42 This little circle here represents the survey approach that  
43 we're using on the Atlantic and Gulf coasts. In particular, the  
44 access point angler intercept survey, or APAIS/CHTS, the Coastal  
45 Household Telephone Survey, that's the part that we're talking  
46 about today. The new mail survey will replace this Coastal  
47 Household Telephone Survey.

1 The Marine Recreational Information Program was designed as a  
2 partnership among NOAA Fisheries, regional fishery management  
3 councils, interstate fisheries commissions, state natural  
4 resource agencies, and recreational fishing stakeholder groups.

5  
6 This partnership, through a clearly defined governance  
7 structure, establishes program priorities and coordinates the  
8 development and administration of research projects and oversees  
9 implementation of improved survey methods and data management  
10 tools.

11  
12 Initially, MRIP priorities focused on identifying and addressing  
13 fundamental survey design issues, many of which were identified  
14 by the National Research Council in their 2006 review of  
15 recreational fisheries survey methods.

16  
17 More recently, as improved survey methods have been designed and  
18 tested, our priorities have begun to shift towards broad  
19 implementation of the improvements that we've developed. As new  
20 methods are being introduced, priorities will continue to shift  
21 toward addressing regional needs for better precision,  
22 timeliness, and resolution of survey estimates.

23  
24 I am not going to go over these milestones for the MRIP Program  
25 in detail today, but this just maps out sort of the progress  
26 we've been making in MRIP from the start in 2008, following the  
27 NRC report and directions from the Reauthorized Magnuson-Stevens  
28 Act on how to improve recreational fishery survey methods.

29  
30 We've been doing research and pilot studies since 2008. The  
31 National Saltwater Angler Registry was launched in 2010 and we  
32 implemented an improved estimation method for onsite surveys of  
33 catch in many different regions, starting with the Atlantic and  
34 Gulf, in 2011 and then we implemented the new onsite catch  
35 survey design in 2013 for the Atlantic and Gulf.

36  
37 The new mail survey was developed over a period of years and  
38 I'll be talking more about that in later slides. I do want to  
39 point out that we are planning to do another National Research  
40 Council review in 2016 and we'll be getting the Marine  
41 Recreational Information Program reviewed to see if we've  
42 actually been doing it appropriately and we're making sufficient  
43 progress.

44  
45 On the Atlantic and Gulf coasts, we've now addressed the major  
46 NRC recommendations for improving catch estimates for shore and  
47 private boat fishing. I want to point out that we're also very  
48 concerned about improving estimates for the for-hire sector, but

1 for-hire, charter boat and headboat fishing, but I'm only  
2 talking today about improvements for estimates for private boat  
3 and shore fishing.

4  
5 The new fishing effort survey, which uses a mail survey design,  
6 will address the NRC recommendations for improving estimates of  
7 the numbers of shore and private boat fishing trips.  
8 Transitioning to this new survey will take three years and  
9 require a continuing collaboration with partners and  
10 stakeholders.

11  
12 The initiative to develop a more accurate fishing effort survey  
13 for shore and private boat fishing was launched in response to  
14 concerns about the ongoing telephone survey, which I mentioned  
15 earlier that we've been using for over thirty-five years. Over  
16 the past eight years, we've explored a variety of sample frames,  
17 including saltwater license frames, postal address frames, and  
18 combinations of the two, as well as different data collection  
19 modes, including telephone, mail, and mixed mode designs that  
20 include both telephone and mail data collection.

21  
22 This testing has resulted in the design of the MRIP Fishing  
23 Effort Survey, or FES, as we've abbreviated it, which was  
24 finally tested in 2012 to 2014 and recommended based on a report  
25 of that pilot study for implementation. Subsequently, we had it  
26 peer reviewed and the peer reviews recommended that this is an  
27 appropriate method to put in place for taking the place of the  
28 telephone survey.

29  
30 This testing has resulted in recommendations to make a  
31 fundamental change from the current telephone survey design to a  
32 mail survey design. It might sound a little strange to some  
33 people and we've heard comments of why are you going back to a  
34 mail survey and that sounds like going back into the past and I  
35 will tell you more about it.

36  
37 We did extensive pilot testing validated through independent  
38 peer reviews, indicating that the mail survey approach results  
39 in, number one, significantly higher response rates than the  
40 telephone survey design. Number two, it can be conducted within  
41 the timeframe of the telephone survey and so it will not have a  
42 negative impact on the timeliness of survey estimates. Finally,  
43 it is likely to result in more accurate reporting of  
44 recreational fishing activity by survey responders.

45  
46 There are a few problems that most of you are aware of with the  
47 current telephone survey. It's a random digit dialing survey of  
48 households and, as NRC pointed out, it's a relatively

1 inefficient way to contact people who fish recreationally in  
2 saltwater. We end up contacting many households with no fishing  
3 participation at all. Only 5 to 10 percent of the households  
4 contacted in the survey actually report recreational fishing.

5  
6 It only covers coastal zone households and so it doesn't reach  
7 anglers who live more than twenty-five to fifty miles from the  
8 coast and industry-wide, the response rates for telephone  
9 surveys are dropping precipitously in recent years and most of  
10 you are well aware of the fact that nowadays very few or far  
11 fewer households actually have landline telephones or use them.  
12 With the incidence of cell phones and many people now using cell  
13 phones only, this survey doesn't really have the ability to  
14 contact a lot of households.

15  
16 There are many advantages to using a mail survey contact method.  
17 As I mentioned earlier, the response rates, we're getting 40  
18 percent and higher, or nearly three times greater than the  
19 current phone survey response rates, about 14 percent. I should  
20 point out that nationwide our random digit dialing telephone  
21 surveys are now getting response rates under 20 percent pretty  
22 typically. People just don't answer their phone that much  
23 anymore, not like they used to.

24  
25 Getting responses by mail, as I pointed out, does not negatively  
26 impact the timeliness. We found out that the returns coming  
27 back from the mail survey come back quick enough that the  
28 majority of the responses are received within the same timeframe  
29 that we normally get telephone survey data delivered from the  
30 current telephone survey and we've seen that the later responses  
31 that come back through the mail are not significantly different  
32 in terms of the level of effort reported than the early returns  
33 have come back and so it will be possible to still produce  
34 estimates on the same sort of timeframe.

35  
36 Also, we can reach a lot more households now by mail than you  
37 can by phone and that's a very important thing, because the  
38 people who you can't reach, that have cell phones only, through  
39 a phone survey could fish very differently than the people who  
40 actually do have landline phones.

41  
42 Also, the response rates are declining so much that we could  
43 find out that the people who aren't responding, aren't answering  
44 the phone, could have very different fishing behavior than the  
45 people who are answering the phone. These are potential sources  
46 of bias that we need to worry about.

47  
48 In contrast to the telephone survey, the mail survey samples

1 from the U.S. Postal Service delivery sequence file, which is a  
2 database that includes every valid postal address in the U.S.  
3 Sampling from this database essentially eliminates the risk of  
4 under coverage. It can reach households with cell phones only  
5 and households with both types of phones but they only answer  
6 their cell phone, et cetera.

7  
8 To increase the efficiency of the survey, address samples from  
9 the postal database are matched with the National Saltwater  
10 Angler Registry, the mailing addresses that we have there, based  
11 on state licensing programs and state registry programs.

12  
13 This allows us to identify households that are actually likely  
14 to have licensed anglers or registered anglers that fish in  
15 saltwater. In fact, what we actually do is in the pilot study  
16 is we drew the addresses from the delivery sequence file and  
17 matched them up against the license frame, or Saltwater Angler  
18 Registry, and the ones that matched, we kept all of those in the  
19 sample, but the ones that did not match, only a third of those  
20 were kept in the sample and so we can vary the level of sampling  
21 for the unmatched addresses, decreasing it more or increasing it  
22 or whatever, but we can always focus more of our sampling effort  
23 on the households with mailing addresses that match to the  
24 Saltwater Angler Registry. That definitely increases  
25 efficiency.

26  
27 In summary, looking at the pilot study results -- This is based  
28 on doing the mail survey in four different states for one whole  
29 year, one in each of the subregions of the Atlantic and Gulf.  
30 This was New York and Massachusetts and North Carolina and  
31 Florida.

32  
33 We found that, on average, the estimates for fishing effort for  
34 private boat fishing were about two-and-a-half times higher in  
35 the mail survey than they were in the current coastal household  
36 telephone survey. For shore fishing, the estimates were quite a  
37 bit higher, as much as six times higher.

38  
39 Therefore, it's pretty clear that using this new mail survey  
40 method will produce higher catch estimates, because there will  
41 be higher effort estimates for private boat and shore fishing  
42 and that's the multiplier that's used for the catch rates that  
43 we get from the onsite catch survey.

44  
45 This increase is driven by a higher proportion of households  
46 reporting fishing in the mail survey than in the phone survey.  
47 The average number of trips per household is really not very  
48 different between the mail and telephone and so what are the

1 implications?

2  
3 Higher estimates and you might react and think that means we're  
4 catching a lot more fish and it indicates that we're overfishing  
5 and that's not necessarily the case, because it's very important  
6 to recognize that the new estimates that would come out of this  
7 mail survey cannot be directly compared to catch limits that  
8 have been based on assessments that used the legacy survey  
9 estimates. In other words, that used the phone survey estimates  
10 of effort.

11  
12 The annual catch limits that are set right now are not in the  
13 same currency as the estimates that would come out of this new  
14 survey and so it's important that we actually measure the  
15 differences between the two survey designs and get a good handle  
16 on how to calibrate that through time to adjust past catch  
17 statistics to better match what the mail survey would have  
18 produced instead of the phone survey.

19  
20 There are potentially significant impacts on historical data  
21 time series and assessments, management decisions, such as  
22 allocation decisions, cannot really be made immediately based on  
23 this new mail survey design, because we need to be able to  
24 convert the past statistics to better match what we get with the  
25 new approach.

26  
27 In order to address the implications, recognizing that the new  
28 estimates and the historical time series would not be in the  
29 same currency and therefore annual catch limits would not be  
30 comparable to the estimates coming out for the new design, we  
31 felt it was important to develop a transition team that would  
32 actually figure out how we should transition to the new survey  
33 design.

34  
35 We formed a transition team that has members including folks  
36 from NOAA Fisheries, from the Science Centers, Regional Offices,  
37 and Headquarters, but also from the fishery management councils,  
38 the interstate marine fisheries commissions, and a number of  
39 different state natural resource agencies.

40  
41 That team worked together over a period of three months with  
42 weekly conference calls to develop a timeline for a transition  
43 to this new mail survey approach and it's important that there  
44 is specified transition period so that everybody knows exactly  
45 when the new survey design would be put in place and used for  
46 management purposes.

47  
48 I must say when we started out that there were a lot of



1 differing opinions about how long we should wait before  
2 implementing the new approach and how many years do we need to  
3 have side-by-side comparing the phone survey with the mail  
4 survey before we feel confident we know what the differences are  
5 and how those differences would translate into past years, but  
6 we ended up, after three months, all agreeing on a three-year  
7 timeline.

8  
9 I want to point out that a number of members of this transition  
10 team are in the room today and I am not going to name everybody,  
11 but there is quite a few here and they contributed greatly to  
12 the development of this plan.

13  
14 The phone survey estimates will be used for science and  
15 management over the next three years until the calibration  
16 models that are needed to revise past statistics have been  
17 developed and peer reviewed and adopted to revise those  
18 historical catch estimates. At that point, the revised  
19 estimates can then be incorporated into rerun stock assessments  
20 for key stocks and ultimately be used to set annual catch  
21 limits.

22  
23 As I mentioned, this was an effort, extensive effort, involving  
24 a lot of input from a lot of different stakeholders. In this  
25 transition, this is really sort of an example of the ideal way  
26 we should move to any sort of new survey design.

27  
28 We started out by engaging external experts and we reviewed the  
29 current survey designs, much like NRC did. We had to go in and  
30 look in more detail than NRC did at all of our current surveys  
31 and figure out where the problems lie and what we needed to do  
32 to improve.

33  
34 We developed those improved designs with the help of the experts  
35 and we developed pilot studies to test those new designs and  
36 then, based on the results, we came up with recommendations as  
37 to whether we would move forward to implement the improvements.  
38 We need to get an external peer review to endorse that you've  
39 come with an appropriate approach and then you begin a  
40 transition and the transition itself includes a few steps.

41  
42 First all, benchmarking the differences between the method  
43 you're replacing and the new method that you're going to put in  
44 place. In this case, we decided on a three-year benchmarking  
45 period for the new mail survey design. During those three  
46 years, we will be doing both surveys and we actually started the  
47 new mail survey in 2015 and so it's ongoing right now alongside  
48 of the Coastal Household Telephone Survey.

1  
2 Based on the comparisons, we're going to develop an appropriate  
3 calibration, but we'll look at the differences -- Not only just  
4 the differences today, but we'll have to project backward and  
5 hindcast what the differences would have been in previous years.  
6 That's the tricky part and that's going to take a bit of work  
7 with help from expert consultants to help us figure that out.

8  
9 Once we have that, then we can incorporate -- We can revise the  
10 past statistics using the calibration model that's approved and  
11 we can then incorporate revised catch statistics into  
12 assessments and management decision making.

13  
14 The transition we've developed in this case has basically five  
15 steps. For 2015 to 2017, we will be doing both surveys side-by-  
16 side for the benchmarking. At the end of the first two years,  
17 in 2017, we are hoping to have a calibration model developed  
18 based on the first two years of comparisons and that calibration  
19 model would be peer reviewed and approved for use to produce  
20 revised historical catch statistics in mid-2017.

21  
22 Those revised statistics can then be incorporated into stock  
23 assessments for key stocks in late 2017 and when I say key  
24 stocks, we're only looking at the most important stocks in terms  
25 of the recreational fishery catch component. These will be the  
26 stocks that have a high proportion of catch taken from  
27 recreational fishing versus commercial.

28  
29 That's going to require some rescheduling of assessments and  
30 it's going to be very important to stack up the key stocks for  
31 new assessments in late 2017 and that will allow us then to move  
32 forward in 2018 with ACLs that have been based on catch  
33 statistics that are now in the currency of the new mail survey  
34 design and it will allow us to move forward then with management  
35 measures, reference points, for 2018. Projections could be made  
36 based on the revised historical catch statistics to set  
37 management regulations for 2018.

38  
39 We will have that third year of side-by-side comparisons that we  
40 can fall back on for revising the calibration based on three  
41 years, but we don't expect that that will be very much different  
42 from what we generate from the two years.

43  
44 What does this mean on the ground? The phone survey will be  
45 used for management purposes until 2018 and at that point, we  
46 would be pulling the plug on the phone survey and going forward  
47 with just the mail survey approach. We will be working with the  
48 states, councils, and commissions over the next three years to

1 understand the new mail survey estimates and incorporate them  
2 into management and assessments.

3  
4 Progress and findings will be shared publicly throughout the  
5 transition process. The impacts are likely to vary from species  
6 to species and are difficult to predict, because we're not  
7 absolutely sure at this point what the curve is going to look  
8 like in the hindcasting portion of the calibration.

9  
10 It's possible that the differences will be relatively constant  
11 back through time, but it's also possible that the differences  
12 we're seeing today are greater than the differences would have  
13 been in earlier years in comparing the results of a mail survey  
14 versus a telephone survey.

15  
16 I have one last slide here and that's just to point out that  
17 there a few other important improvements that MRIP is still  
18 working on, some of which was discussed here today. We are  
19 working with a number of partners here in the Gulf of Mexico to  
20 develop, test, and certify specialized survey methods focused on  
21 red snapper and other rare event or pulse fisheries.

22  
23 A number of you are involved in that effort and so I think  
24 that's fairly familiar to a number of you, but if you have any  
25 questions about that, I would be glad to field them.

26  
27 Also, we're working closely with some our state agency partners  
28 to develop, test, and certify for-hire electronic logbook  
29 reporting and validation designs. I know there's a couple of  
30 references in the document that we looked at earlier to using  
31 MRIP validation designs.

32  
33 We have currently a project ongoing with the states of North  
34 Carolina and South Carolina. They are both interested in  
35 implementing logbook reporting for the charter boats and  
36 headboats in their state using electronic reporting mechanisms  
37 and using validation components based on dockside sampling and  
38 potentially at-sea sampling.

39  
40 Finally, we're working with all of our regional partners to  
41 develop strategic implementation plans for each of the regions  
42 that will help us make key decisions on what methods to  
43 implement for recreational fishing surveys and what levels of  
44 investment we're going to make in terms of sample sizes moving  
45 forward for the regional programs. With that, I will be glad to  
46 take any questions.

47  
48 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you for your presentation. Any

1 questions? Corky.

2  
3 **MR. CORKY PERRET:** I just wonder is the transition team and the  
4 people involved with this -- They are setting the priorities  
5 with species and naturally I think around this table, if we ever  
6 had a unanimous vote, it would probably be unanimous on red  
7 snapper and is red snapper one of the top-priority species for  
8 this?

9  
10 **MR. VAN VOORHEES:** Yes, indeed and yes, Corky, the transition  
11 team will be making the decisions as to what stocks are the  
12 high-priority stocks to be addressed in 2017.

13  
14 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Dr. Crabtree.

15  
16 **DR. CRABTREE:** When you look at this and if it actually comes to  
17 pass that after the benchmarking is done and the side-by-side in  
18 the Gulf -- If there is a difference as much as twofold in the  
19 magnitude of the recreational catches for all of the species we  
20 manage in the Gulf, you can see that this going to have a huge  
21 impact and it means virtually every allocation we have will have  
22 to change and all of our catch limits will change and the  
23 estimates of stock productivity would change.

24  
25 The estimates of how much catch is in the eastern Gulf versus  
26 the western Gulf would change and so this has the potential to  
27 have huge impacts on everything we're doing and just we need to  
28 be aware of that and at some point when we have a better idea of  
29 how this is playing out, we really need to start thinking about  
30 how we're going to put all those pieces together, because we're  
31 going to need to take actions to deal with this relatively  
32 quickly and as we've all seen when we start touching on  
33 allocations and things like that, it's very difficult to move  
34 forward sometimes.

35  
36 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Any other comments? Harlon, if  
37 you're still there, I'll give you an opportunity to speak.

38  
39 **MR. PEARCE:** Thank you, Johnny. Mr. Van Voorhees, I sure  
40 appreciate the discussion you just gave us. I also appreciate  
41 all the hard work you put into helping us get this volunteer 350  
42 charter boats electronic reporting off the ground that we're  
43 going to be starting in a couple of months, working in  
44 conjunction with MRIP.

45  
46 I think that's a very important step for us moving forward in a  
47 lot of things that you talked about today as well as the  
48 electronic reporting programs that we're putting together, but I

1 really want to thank you and your team for working very hard  
2 with us to get this program with the 350 vessels we're going to  
3 put in the water with VMS off the ground. Thank you very much.

4

5 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. Mr. Anson.

6

7 **MR. ANSON:** A follow-up on Dr. Crabtree's point and, Dr.  
8 Crabtree, is that something that maybe the IPT can start -- I  
9 guess now that there's this timeline that the MRIP transition  
10 team has come out with that kind of outlines landmarks or points  
11 in time when certain things would be completed and is there any  
12 way that the IPT maybe could come together and provide some  
13 feedback to the councils, or at least to this council, as to,  
14 hey, this is what we might be able to do to kind of get ahead of  
15 the curve, so to speak, as much as possible?

16

17 **DR. CRABTREE:** Yes, I think that's something that Steve and  
18 Carrie and maybe someone from the Science Center could sit down  
19 and at least think about timing and the steps that we would have  
20 to go through. For example, if it affects allocations, it's  
21 going to have to be done through a plan amendment rather than a  
22 framework action and so I think this probably would be a wise  
23 thing to start planning towards.

24

25 **MR. ANSON:** Of course, the SSC and the Science Center will be  
26 integral with this as well and of course Bonnie is not here, but  
27 when I see her next, I will mention it to her and let her know  
28 that that's going to be occurring. Thank you.

29

30 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. Any other comments? Thank you. We  
31 appreciate the presentation. There was no other business noted  
32 when we adopted the agenda earlier and so with that, we are  
33 complete and done.

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35 (Whereupon, the meeting adjourned at 2:25 p.m., June 8, 2015.)

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