

Tab I, No. 5(a)

Red Snapper Stock Assessment Schedule

Staff discussed the current SEDAR assessment schedule for the years 2020 and 2021, focusing on the type and timing of assessment for red snapper. The Gulf SEDAR schedule currently has red snapper scheduled for a research track assessment in 2020 followed by an operational assessment in 2021. The SSC discussed whether or not a research track stock assessment is necessary for red snapper. The research track assessment is the most comprehensive; however, it would not provide management advice, and would require a subsequent operational assessment (anticipated to be completed the following year) to provide management advice. Research track assessments may be appropriate when new information is available that is not encompassed within the current model framework. The SSC discussed whether there is (or will be) enough new information to warrant a research track assessment (e.g., ‘Great Red Snapper Count’, lionfish information, and results from oil spill impacts studies) but this information may not be available by 2020 as currently scheduled.

The SSC also discussed the SEDAR schedule process more generally, noting that the current schedule consumes more analytical time (i.e., data weeks) than is available for the Gulf in 2020 and 2021. The SSC would benefit from additional information about the number of data weeks required for each species to be reviewed at the October 2018 SSC meeting. This would allow further discussion of the SEDAR schedule and may allow the SSC to provide advice on the timing and need of assessments for various Gulf stocks.