Standing, Shrimp, Reef Fish, and Socioeconomic SSC
Partial Meeting Summary – Stock Assessment Prioritization Discussion
Tampa, Florida
March 27-29, 2017

Stock Assessment Prioritization

Dr. Shannon Calay provided a presentation on the stock assessment prioritization developed for the South Atlantic Council. The stock assessment prioritization process has been under development for several years now and was released in August of 2015 as a NOAA Technical Memorandum. Dr. Calay highlighted six prioritization steps used in each region for stock assessment purposes. The final step of this process is important as the species considered for stock assessments should be used as objective guidance in selecting assessments for the upcoming cycle. She provided an overview of the roles for each agency in regional prioritization before the information is given to the SEDAR Steering Committee. Dr. Calay highlighted scoring factors and approaches, sources of data, and a range of scores that have been used by other Councils. She prepared a draft spreadsheet for the SSC to consider for all Gulf stocks that are currently within a fishery management plan. It was noted that there are several "scores" which need to be developed for a number of factors, including: commercial importance, recreational importance, importance to subsistence fisheries, non-catch value, constituent demand, rebuilding status, relative stock abundance, relative fishing mortality, key role in ecosystem, unexpected changes in indicators, new information available, and years assessment overdue. She noted the fishing mortality values that are available after stock assessment are completed for reef fish are not necessarily compatible with those completed for invertebrates. She explained that the non-catch value score was for use with species where there was little harvest and that similarly species that had not been assessment were ranked higher.

The SSC asked several questions about obtaining input for the process, including the process other Councils had used. The current method of prioritization is complicated, and simplifying the process and decision making paradigms will be helpful. One SSC member noted several species were clustered and had the same score. An SSC member suggested that sometimes an assessment is needed immediately but did not see how that fit into the spreadsheet. One SSC member noted that it would be interesting to include a metric for the cost of a stock assessment for a particular species, and to include the number of years an assessment was considered reliable. A process for multi-species assessments and prioritization was also discussed as a possibility, although it is not currently being considered. Another SSC member asked about the frequency of completing the prioritization process once it is finalized. Dr. Calay responded that the prioritization process should be revisited annually. Overall, the need for this prioritization was to ensure that stocks were not being missed for assessments and, at some point, stock status determinations are needed for all species in the fishery management plan. Executive Director Doug Gregory recommended Council staff assist Science Center staff with assigning management metrics for another review by the SSC at a subsequent meeting.

SSC Members Present

Standing SSC

Luiz Barbieri, Chair
Joe Powers, V. Chair
Lee Anderson
Harry Blannchet
Benjamin Blount
David Griffith
Jack Isaacs
Jeff Isely
Walter Keithly
Kai Lorenzen
Paul Mickle
Will Paterson
Sean Powers
Ken Roberts
Steven Scyphers[1]
Robert Shipp
James Tolan[1]

Reef Fish SSC

Jason Adriance
Marcus (James) Drymon
Robert Ellis
Jennifer Herbig
John Mareska

Shrimp SSC

Richard Burris[2]
Ryan Gandy[2]
Leslie Hartman[3]
Jeffrey Marx[2]
James Nance[2]

1 – Attended via webinar, days 1, 2, and 3
2 – Attended in-person, day 1 only
3 – Attended via webinar, day 1 only

Socioeconomic SSC

Steve Jacob

Council Staff

Steven Atran
Assane Diagne
Matt Freeman
John Froeschke
Doug Gregory
Morgan Kilgour
Ava Lasseter
Jessica Matos
Emily Muehlstein
Ryan Rindone
Charlotte Schiaffo
Carrie Simmons

Others

Shannon Calay, NMFS/SEFSC
Nancie Cummings, NMFS/SEFSC
Rick Hart, NMFS/SEFSC
Peter Hood, NMFS/SERO
Mara Levy, NOAA/GC
Patrick Lynch, NMFS/S&T[1]
Rich Malinowski, NMFS/SERO
Larry Perruso, NMFS/SEFSC
Jeff Pulver, NMFS/SERO
Skyler Sagarese, NMFS/SEFSC
Beth Wrege, NMFS/SEFSC
Michael Drexler, Ocean Conservany
Elizabeth Herdter, USF
Quinn Weninger, Iowa State Univ.[1]

1 – via webinar

Council Representative

Leann Bosarge