

SEDAR Committee Summary
June 5, 2019
Dr. Tom Frazer, Chair

SEDAR Steering Committee Summary

Council staff provided an overview of the many topics discussed by the SEDAR Steering Committee at its May 16-17, 2019 meeting in Charleston, South Carolina. The Committee reviewed modifications to the stock assessment schedule due to the government shutdown, key stocks/stock prioritization, progress on interim assessments, best scientific information available (BSIA), and the requested scope of work process.

Interim analyses were discussed, which can be used for stocks with reliable fishery-independent indices of abundance. This approach will be further explored between the SSC and the SEFSC in the coming months. A benefit of this approach is the ability to use the most current data to inform catch advice on a regular basis and could serve the purposes of the carryover and payback provisions by regularly updating that catch advice. The Committee requested that the SEFSC develop a list of stocks which would be able to be assessed in this manner, and preferred a scenario whereby the interim analyses could be requested annually for those species. The Committee also requested a brief presentation from the SEFSC on interim analyses at a future meeting.

SEDAR Assessment Schedule

Staff reviewed the SEDAR schedule for Gulf stock assessments as approved thus far by the SEDAR Steering Committee. The SEFSC indicated that the two years currently blocked off for the red snapper research track may not be necessary, as the items which are currently being considered for modification may be able to be addressed in less time.

The Committee was concerned about the timing of the West Florida hogfish stock assessment, presently requested to begin in late 2021 with a terminal year of 2019. The Council increased the minimum size limit for West Florida hogfish in 2017; thus, a terminal year of 2019 only gives the assessment a few years of data to observe the effects of the minimum size limit increase. The Committee requested that the West Florida hogfish assessment begin in 2022, with data through at least 2020.

Committee members queried how the MRIP FES/APAIS calibrations, and the inclusion of state survey data, would be incorporated into the upcoming stock assessments. The SEFSC indicated that by early 2020 a calibration from NMFS would be in place for each survey to be used in stock assessments. All effort data are currently being included in the stock assessments in MRIP FES currency; however, catch limits may be in another currency, to which the data can be calibrated.

The GSMFC has completed a species profile for cobia which can be incorporated into the scheduled update assessment. Staff will ensure that this information is provided to the analytical team.

This concludes my report.