

1 GULF OF MEXICO FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

2  
3 GULF SEDAR COMMITTEE

4  
5  
6 Battle House Renaissance Mobile Mobile, Alabama

7  
8 October 20, 2014

9  
10 **VOTING MEMBERS**

11 Kevin Anson (designee for Chris Blankenship) .....Alabama  
12 Pamela Dana ..... Florida  
13 Harlon Pearce ..... Louisiana  
14 Robin Riechers ..... Texas

15  
16 **NON-VOTING MEMBERS**

17 Martha Bademan (designee for Nick Wiley) .....Florida  
18 Leann Bosarge .....Mississippi  
19 Doug Boyd ..... Texas  
20 Jason Brand ..... USCG  
21 Dale Diaz (designee for Jamie Miller) .....Mississippi  
22 Dave Donaldson ..... GSMFC  
23 Myron Fischer (designee for Randy Pausina) ..... Louisiana  
24 John Greene .....Alabama  
25 Campo Matens ..... Louisiana  
26 Corky Perret .....Mississippi  
27 John Sanchez ..... Florida  
28 Phil Steele (designee for Roy Crabtree) ..... NMFS  
29 Greg Stunz ..... Texas  
30 David Walker .....Alabama  
31 Roy Williams ..... Florida

32  
33 **STAFF**

34 Stephen Atran ..... Population Dynamics Statistician  
35 John Froeschke ..... Fishery Biologist  
36 Doug Gregory ..... Executive Director  
37 Beth Hager ..... Financial Assistant/IT Coordinator  
38 Mara Levy ..... NOAA General Counsel  
39 Charlene Ponce ..... Public Information Officer  
40 Ryan Rindone ..... Fishery Biologist/SEDAR Liaison  
41 Charlotte Schiaffo ..... Research & Human Resource Librarian  
42 Carrie Simmons ..... Deputy Executive Director

43  
44 **OTHER PARTICIPANTS**

45 Luiz Barbieri ..... GMFMC SSC  
46 Jeff Barger ..... Ocean Conservancy, Austin, TX  
47 Randy Boggs ..... Orange Beach, AL  
48 Steve Branstetter ..... NMFS

1 Gregg Bray ..... GSMFC  
2 Gib Brogan ..... Oceana  
3 JP Brooker ..... Ocean Conservancy  
4 Michael Drexler ..... Ocean Conservancy  
5 Cynthia Fenyk ..... NOAA  
6 Benny Gallaway ..... LGL Ecological, TX  
7 Sue Gerhart ..... NMFS  
8 Chad Hanson ..... PEW  
9 Ben Hartig ..... SAFMC  
10 Margaret Henderson ..... Gulf Seafood Institute  
11 Mike Jennings ..... Freeport, TX  
12 Robert Jones ..... EDF  
13 Kristen McConnell ..... EDF  
14 Herb Murphy .....  
15 Laurie Picariello ..... Audubon Nature Institute  
16 Bonnie Ponwith ..... SEFSC  
17 Katie Semon ..... LDWF  
18 Steve VanderKooy ..... GSMFC

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20 - - -

21  
22 The Gulf SEDAR Committee of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery  
23 Management Council convened at the Battle House Renaissance  
24 Mobile, Mobile, Alabama, Monday afternoon, October 20, 2014, and  
25 was called to order at 4:07 p.m. by Chairman Kevin Anson.

26  
27 **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**  
28 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**  
29 **ACTION GUIDE AND NEXT STEPS**

30  
31 **CHAIRMAN KEVIN ANSON:** That takes us to the next committee and  
32 that's the Gulf SEDAR Committee and that's my committee.  
33 Members on the committee include Dr. Dana, Mr. Pearce, and Mr.  
34 Riechers. First, you have the agenda, Tab I, Number 1, in front  
35 of you or you should. Are there any changes to the agenda? Do  
36 I have a motion to adopt the agenda?

37  
38 **MR. ROBIN RIECHERS:** Move to adopt.

39  
40 **DR. PAMELA DANA:** Second.

41  
42 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** It's been moved and seconded and anybody that  
43 doesn't want to approve the agenda? All right. Thank you. The  
44 next item is Approval of Minutes. Does anybody have any edits  
45 or changes to the minutes?

46  
47 **MR. RIECHERS:** Move to adopt.

48

1 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** We have a motion to move to accept the minutes  
2 as written and it's been seconded. Anybody that has a problem  
3 with that? All right. Seeing none, we will move on to Item  
4 Number III, Action Guide and Next Steps, Tab I, Number 3. You  
5 see the steps that we would like to accomplish or the items that  
6 we're going to review here today. That will take us to Item  
7 Number IV, SEDAR 38: Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic King  
8 Mackerel, and Mr. Rindone.

9  
10 **SEDAR-38: GULF OF MEXICO AND SOUTH ATLANTIC KING MACKEREL**

11  
12 **MR. RYAN RINDONE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is largely  
13 just an update with where we stand with this for the council and  
14 so the SSC was not able to review the king mackerel assessment  
15 at its last meeting, due to some logistical issues with getting  
16 the analysts there to be able to present and also being able to  
17 have all of the yield streams ready on time and so those are  
18 actually going to be done sometime at the end of this month.

19  
20 The SSC will have an opportunity to review those assessments at  
21 their next meeting and so we're a little bit behind on that, but  
22 that's where the status of king mackerel is.

23  
24 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you. Does anybody have any questions for  
25 Ryan? All right and that will take us to Item Number V, SEDAR  
26 Steering Committee Update, and Mr. Gregory.

27  
28 **SEDAR STEERING COMMITTEE UPDATE**

29  
30 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DOUG GREGORY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The  
31 Steering Committee met the first week in October in Charleston,  
32 as it does every year. We also have a webinar in February of  
33 each year and there will be some things that this council needs  
34 to make a decision on in January that we can take to the  
35 February meeting.

36  
37 The Steering Committee is made up of the Executive Directors and  
38 the Council Chairs of the three Southeast councils, the  
39 directors of the Gulf and South Atlantic Marine Fish Commissions  
40 and a representative from the Highly Migratory Species group and  
41 is chaired by Dr. Bonnie Ponwith.

42  
43 I think she and Chairman Anson will have some comments as I  
44 finish this. This is a very brief overview of what happened at  
45 the Steering Committee. We discussed a data procedures  
46 workshop that's being planned to establish standard methods of  
47 handling data, in an effort to streamline the data workshop.

1 We've been having problems recently with datasets and data  
2 summaries coming out of the data workshop late and causing the  
3 assessment itself to be late in our benchmark timelines.

4  
5 There is also going to be a data-poor procedures workshop that  
6 will focus on Caribbean species and some of us from the other  
7 councils may want to participate in that, because the results of  
8 that workshop could be applicable to some of our species, even  
9 if they're not the same species.

10  
11 At this meeting, I will point out that Dr. Luiz Barbieri also  
12 was there representing FWC and not as a committee member, but as  
13 an observer, because FWC does a number of stock assessments,  
14 like the mutton snapper, black grouper, yellowtail snapper, and  
15 hogfish.

16  
17 The other thing we discussed was headboat data evaluation. You  
18 may have seen some emails and stuff related to some concerns  
19 about headboat data and there was a data workshop for South  
20 Atlantic red grouper and some concerns were raised about the  
21 validity of the headboat data prior to 1992 in the South  
22 Atlantic area and so the data workshop halted until the  
23 Southeast Fisheries Center could have a chance to evaluate those  
24 concerns, but it does not look like -- We are confident that  
25 it's not going to affect any of the Gulf species.

26  
27 For one thing, our headboat survey in the Gulf didn't start  
28 until 1986 and by then, most of those problems were probably  
29 worked out and it was not a -- From 1986 to 1992 is only six  
30 years and so the red grouper benchmark assessment for the Gulf  
31 is moving forward as planned and that's not being halted or  
32 jeopardized in any way.

33  
34 The other thing we discussed was the Southeast Fisheries Science  
35 Center assessment program review. Both Ryan and I went down to  
36 listen to that and we had a couple of our SSC members, Will  
37 Patterson and Sean Powers, to observe that as well.

38  
39 That was an in-depth, two-day review of all the assessment  
40 procedures of the Southeast Fisheries Science Center. It was  
41 very enlightening and it was a peer review by people from other  
42 regions, other areas.

43  
44 The review focused on the science and technical approach to  
45 assessments, the assessment and peer review process and, of  
46 course, SEDAR was a major component of that, interagency  
47 communications, research efforts, and integration of ecosystem  
48 information and the Center's organization, priorities, and

1 accomplishments and this is just a part of NMFS's overall  
2 ongoing review system. Other Centers are being reviewed and  
3 last year, the data aspect of the Southeast Fisheries Center was  
4 reviewed and Ryan went to that in 2013.

5  
6 Then we reviewed the overall SOPPs for SEDAR. At the request of  
7 the Gulf Council representatives, the SEDAR SOPPs will be  
8 modified to make the data workshop draft working papers  
9 available to the public at the meeting. Up to now, because they  
10 are draft, they had not been made available to the public and  
11 only after the workshop and so it's made it difficult for  
12 observers to kind of keep up with the discussion if they can't  
13 read the working papers.

14  
15 Future working papers will be made to the public and it will be  
16 emphasized that these are draft and not for distribution and I  
17 think Bonnie might speak to that later, but the concern was that  
18 people would take something in the draft format that may be  
19 incorrect and later corrected during the data workshop and  
20 report it later and confuse the issue, but I think the people  
21 involved in that can always point out that that data had been  
22 corrected if it's misused later.

23  
24 Then we looked at the assessment project schedule, which Ryan is  
25 going to go over in detail, but we discussed the council's  
26 request to do a red snapper assessment in 2015, right after we  
27 receive an update assessment, and Dr. Ponwith indicated that  
28 there's just not enough resources at the Science Center to do  
29 two stock assessments two years in a row and there's not going  
30 to be that much difference in the data and what can be  
31 accomplished in that regard. We didn't really get into a  
32 discussion of whether it should be a standard or a benchmark  
33 assessment at that point.

34  
35 We also -- I will just save this part for Ryan, but we talked  
36 about what we're going to do in 2015 and what we're going to do  
37 in 2016 and 2017 and what the council needs to decide on in  
38 January is the semi-final 2016 assessment schedule and a  
39 preliminary 2017 assessment schedule and with that, that  
40 concludes my report of the Steering Committee and I welcome any  
41 comments by yourself or Dr. Ponwith.

42  
43 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Any committee members have any questions of Mr.  
44 Gregory? Ryan, do you have something to add?

45  
46 **MR. RINDONE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. So you guys might remember  
47 a while back, I think it was actually in August in San Antonio,  
48 we had talked about the idea of having a more IPT-style approach

1 to the assessment workshops and that's something that the  
2 Steering Committee approved and so that's going to make going to  
3 the assessment workshops a whole lot more smooth and a better  
4 cooperative process for the analysts and for the SSC members and  
5 for the AP members involved and basically what it means is that  
6 if one of the analysts has a question for a specific SSC member  
7 that they just email them and ask them, instead of everything  
8 having to occur in a 100 percent public environment like a  
9 webinar. This eliminates the need for having fifteen or twenty  
10 webinars like we had with gag and greater amberjack.

11  
12 It doesn't mean that there won't be public involvement. There  
13 will still be steps along the way where you'll have a public  
14 webinar where all the things, all the communications that have  
15 taken place prior to that, and the decisions that have been made  
16 will be made open to the public to comment on before the process  
17 moves forward any more, but it just allows significant progress  
18 to be made along the way without having to wait for another  
19 webinar to make a decision and so if anybody has any questions  
20 about that -- I hope I explained that well.

21  
22 **DR. BONNIE PONWITH:** I think you did a really good job of  
23 covering that and I think of all the changes that we made,  
24 that's the one that's going to have some of the most sweeping  
25 repercussions, that and the data methods workshop.

26  
27 We talked about getting the data methods workshop scheduled for  
28 the spring and what that will do is decide in framework some of  
29 these analytical approaches to the data and do it once and  
30 document it, so it's perfectly clear how those decisions were  
31 made and how those analyses are being done.

32  
33 Then in the future, when an assessment is done, all you have to  
34 do is cite that documentation, as opposed to over and over and  
35 over again revisiting that same decision and writing a long,  
36 elaborate discussion of that decision.

37  
38 That has two bonuses. You do it once and you document it once  
39 and you're going to end up with a lot shorter stock assessment  
40 report, which makes them more approachable. They are easier to  
41 read and the IPT approach to these meetings I think will  
42 encourage a smooth flow of the deliberations of the analysts and  
43 then pause at three key decision points to be able to hold the  
44 public meetings and make sure that we're being attentive to the  
45 transparency of the process in that way.

46  
47 Another thing that was discussed was the SEDAR Committee of the  
48 Gulf Council is fairly new and one thing that we haven't done is

1 kind of a SEDAR-101 of how the SEDAR Steering Committee  
2 functions and how those decisions are made and how the Gulf  
3 Council can position itself to be the most effective possible in  
4 that decision making process.

5  
6 Mr. Anson had recommended that at the January meeting we  
7 actually have a special agenda item and that's kind of a SEDAR-  
8 101, so that council members, whether they be seasoned veterans  
9 or whether they be brand new, can actually see sort of the  
10 beginning to the end process, so they can see the best way to  
11 plug into that and reap the most benefits from that.

12  
13 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Any comments or questions from committee  
14 members? That will take us to -- I do appreciate it, Bonnie, if  
15 you can put that together and have that available. I think it  
16 would be helpful. We did have some discussion about that and  
17 going to the SEDAR Steering Committee certainly helped myself to  
18 get in the frame of mind as to the planning and the timing and  
19 the outcomes and you know if you start here, you get this over  
20 here and then how that could relate to the council.

21  
22 I am hoping that would be something of benefit to the other  
23 council members and help, again, try to -- When we have these  
24 discussions and we start thinking about update assessments and  
25 standards and what you get from them, how much it takes and the  
26 resources and the time and then when we get the information  
27 available back to us, that it hopefully will be set up in such a  
28 way that we can use it immediately for setting future  
29 management.

30  
31 We have no other questions on that and that will take us to Item  
32 Number VI, SEDAR Schedule Review, Tab I, Number 4, and Mr.  
33 Rindone.

#### 34 35 **SEDAR SCHEDULE REVIEW**

36  
37 **MR. RINDONE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. 2014 assessments are  
38 obviously going to stay as they are and in 2015, we're looking  
39 at finishing the assessment review workshops for red grouper and  
40 that should be delivered to the council either by August or  
41 October of next year and the same goes for a standard assessment  
42 of gray triggerfish, which there's a typo on this. That should  
43 be a terminal year of 2013 and that's because the standard  
44 assessment is starting this winter or early spring and so the  
45 most recent data that we can apply is 2013 there.

46  
47 A standard assessment of vermilion snapper is also scheduled to  
48 start later in 2015 and using 2014 data and that should be

1 available to the council early the following year and the FWC  
2 assessments of mutton snapper and black grouper are also  
3 scheduled to start.

4  
5 2016 and 2017 are proposed and this is where some council  
6 feedback would be really helpful. We have update assessments  
7 for gag and greater amberjack proposed for 2016 and these would  
8 begin in the last half of the year, to be able to use 2015 data  
9 and hopefully it would be able to be delivered by the end of the  
10 year, so that the council can see them and take action on them  
11 at their first meeting in 2017.

12  
13 Then the last meeting you guys had made a decision to shift one  
14 of the slots in 2016 from a benchmark for red drum to a data-  
15 poor assessment which would include red drum. If you wanted to  
16 make recommendations about what other species you might  
17 consider, that would be very helpful to help inform the schedule  
18 and then we have an FWC update assessment of yellowtail snapper  
19 listed.

20  
21 2017, we have it on the list to try to assess two species that  
22 have never been assessed before by SEDAR, which are gray snapper  
23 and scamp, and also a standard assessment for yellowedge grouper  
24 and then also, and this is also at the recommendation of the  
25 Joint South Florida Group, to look at goliath grouper again.

26  
27 There have been a lot of data that have been collected in recent  
28 history and a lot of things that are on the docket to be  
29 collected over the next couple of years, including close kin  
30 analyses, which use genetic markers to track parentage and use  
31 that as an estimate for population abundance. It's some  
32 actually really interesting work and so we're looking at doing a  
33 standard assessment of goliath grouper with FWC in 2017. Any  
34 input?

35  
36 **MR. ROBIN RIECHERS:** You had mentioned in 2016 the addition of  
37 some priorities there and the thought being that because we're  
38 doing a data poor that there might be an option for another  
39 assessment or another data-poor species? Expand on your  
40 thinking a little bit there so that we can possibly think about  
41 that before full council.

42  
43 **MR. RINDONE:** What I meant was that it would be a data-poor  
44 assessment, which would include an examination of red drum and  
45 other species. It still takes up one spot, but other species  
46 that you might consider might be warsaw or speckled hind or  
47 other things that they're not preeminent, high-landing species,  
48 but they're ones that we have and ones that we manage and we



1 don't have an assessment on the books for.

2  
3 **DR. PONWITH:** The contribution that the Science Center could  
4 make to that is we've got kind of a list of the species and  
5 there are the regular ones where we've accumulated good data and  
6 we have good, solid fishery-dependent data and we have at least  
7 one index, if not more indices, of fishery-independent data.

8  
9 Then there are some species that are in that sort of midrange,  
10 where we've got some data, but not necessarily enough that would  
11 enable us to conduct a traditional stock assessment and those  
12 would be the ones that we would put in sort of a basket to  
13 choose from for these data-poor species analyses and the benefit  
14 of this is that instead of going deep on any one species, you go  
15 wide on several species and so the council could weigh on a  
16 collection of those and we would do an evaluation of how many  
17 could be included and take that broader approach and get a  
18 result that may be more informative than just some of the triage  
19 approaches that we took when we were coming into compliance with  
20 the reauthorization of the Magnuson Act, which was to have ACLs  
21 by certain deadlines for all stocks.

22  
23 We used evaluations of historic landings and this would take  
24 into consideration much more information than just that and give  
25 us a more robust mechanism for setting those ACLs.

26  
27 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** I apologize, Bonnie, and I may have missed it,  
28 but that analysis that you mentioned regarding some of these  
29 species and doing the inventory of available data and such,  
30 would that be available at our January meeting?

31  
32 **DR. PONWITH:** We could come up with a short list of species we  
33 think that are in that kind of the sweet spot for application of  
34 data-poor techniques, yes.

35  
36 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you. Does anybody have any comments on  
37 the SEDAR schedule that goes through 2017, proposed for 2016 and  
38 2017?

39  
40 **MR. ROY WILLIAMS:** Ryan referenced warsaw grouper and speckled  
41 hind, perhaps, as species that could be added for data-poor  
42 species and any consideration of that? I would at least like to  
43 know if it's possible.

44  
45 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Being at the SEDAR Steering Committee, Bonnie  
46 had made mention that we could go as late as January's meeting  
47 with the data-poor species and provide that to the Science  
48 Center and that would still fit into the 2016 slots, if you

1 will, and be able to be done, some of those species, if not all.

2  
3 Is that still the case, Bonnie, that we could come back in  
4 January with your information that you're going to provide as  
5 far as those species and the priority or the rankings of those,  
6 relative to data and such, have those available in January and  
7 we can make a decision on the data-poor stocks then?

8  
9 **DR. PONWITH:** That's correct, as long as the winter of SEDAR  
10 meeting is scheduled after the Gulf Council meeting. We would  
11 be able to provide sort of a shopping list of the species,  
12 purely from a data availability standpoint, and then we can  
13 merge that with the council's best thinking of which stocks they  
14 would prioritize from within that basket and provide that as the  
15 list.

16  
17 Even if the SEDAR Steering Committee were scheduled in a way  
18 that precluded that, because we're holding the slot for data-  
19 poor species, I think that that's satisfactory for ensuring  
20 that's what we're going to do and it gives us kind of some  
21 latitude on identifying which stocks we're going to do within  
22 their.

23  
24 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** In my mind, Roy, that was what I had thought  
25 of, was to go ahead and use that information. Again, being at  
26 the SEDAR Steering Committee, Bonnie had mentioned that she  
27 could go ahead and develop that list and so we would have that  
28 available and make that decision in January, since there was  
29 still time to do that. Nobody else has any comments on that and  
30 so that would take us to Item Number VII, Updated List of  
31 Fishery Research and Socioeconomic Priorities for 2015 to 2019.  
32 That would be Tab I, Number 5 and, Dr. Simmons, are you ready?

33  
34 **UPDATED LIST OF FISHERY RESEARCH AND SOCIOECONOMIC PRIORITIES**  
35 **FOR 2015-2019**  
36

37 **DR. CARRIE SIMMONS:** Yes and thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will be  
38 walking through Tab I, Number 5. I have to apologize. This is  
39 one of the last items that made it into the briefing book,  
40 because the Standing SSC and Reef Fish SSC wanted to make some  
41 additional changes to the document and we wanted to make sure  
42 that they could do that via email before we got to the council,  
43 because they did review a previous, an earlier, draft that we  
44 made some changes to that are reflected in what you have before  
45 you.

46  
47 Every five years, each council has to update their list of  
48 monitoring and research priorities and those are submitted to

1 the Science Center and I believe the Science Center uses those  
2 for a multitude of reasons, for various research grant  
3 priorities as well as other internal research, I believe, that  
4 occurs at NOAA. Maybe Dr. Ponwith can elaborate on that a  
5 little bit later.

6  
7 The way we've done it in the past, and this is similar to the  
8 structure that we used the last five-year period, we've made  
9 some additional modifications by including or better integrating  
10 the socioeconomic priorities and the ecosystem-based management  
11 priorities, we feel, from the last five-year research and  
12 monitoring priorities.

13  
14 We've divided it up into four sections, four main sections,  
15 Broad, Multipurpose, Research/Monitoring, and Survey Programs,  
16 and we've given those the following priority codes. The highest  
17 priority, A, would be surveys to meet critical needs for stock  
18 assessments and management.

19  
20 B, our second priority, surveys to improve indices of abundance,  
21 life history, or human dimension data that complements or adds  
22 to those priorities that were listed in A and then C, third  
23 priority, is surveys to characterize stocks or parameters for  
24 assessments and so those are those broad priorities that you see  
25 on page 1 through the top of page 4.

26  
27 Just to tell you a little bit more about what the SSC was  
28 concerned about, if you see on the bottom of page 2, we did  
29 incorporate the ecosystem-based management data collection  
30 priorities. That was previously in the ecosystem section and  
31 it's now been moved up to these broad priorities and we've  
32 incorporated or integrated more of the socioeconomic indicators  
33 information under B, ecological relationships, linkages, and  
34 networks, under that main header, to try to get at some of their  
35 concerns.

36  
37 For the next section, the priorities associated with individual  
38 species or specific research topics, many of these species, if  
39 not all, have had an assessment and so the priority codes for  
40 this particular section were A, highest priority, stocks  
41 designated as overfished and undergoing overfishing or in  
42 critical need of an assessment; B, second priority, stock  
43 designated as overfished or undergoing overfishing or just in  
44 need of an assessment; third, C priority, is stocks with SEDAR  
45 assessments, but not classified as A or B; then we added D, not  
46 yet prioritized, criteria needed to prioritize non-SEDAR  
47 recommendations.

48

1 I think the one we gave the D was some of the royal red shrimp.  
2 That's the only current species we have a D priority there  
3 listed currently.

4  
5 Then for the last two sections, the economic and sociocultural  
6 recommendations, they begin on page 7 and the ecosystem-based  
7 management recommendations, which were greatly pared down from  
8 what the SSC reviewed. We kept to a priority C and that was  
9 primarily the ecosystem modeling development.

10  
11 Both those last two sections are based on the following priority  
12 codes: A is the highest priority, critical research and data  
13 needs for socioeconomic analyses; B, second priority,  
14 supplementary data collection and research needs; and then C,  
15 third priority, is longer term data needs and research efforts.

16  
17 One of the other concerns the SSC had is when they first  
18 reviewed this, there was no priority codes for the economic and  
19 sociocultural section. Those have been added and I just  
20 mentioned what those priorities were and then for the ecosystem-  
21 based section, the only standalone part currently that's not  
22 integrated in our broad research priorities is the ecosystem  
23 model development. With that, I will stop there and see if  
24 there's any questions or additions.

25  
26 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Any questions from the committee? I guess,  
27 Carrie, I've got one question. If you look at -- I have read  
28 the priority codes and I just might be overthinking this, but on  
29 page 6, you listed vermilion snapper as priority code C and so  
30 using that as an example, could you kind of explain why it was  
31 vermilion snapper and was it related to those specific items and  
32 their need or how they fit into the need of the species or was  
33 it something else?

34  
35 **DR. SIMMONS:** I kind of missed the question. The question is  
36 why is vermilion snapper coded as a C?

37  
38 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Yes and is it the -- Is it more so the items  
39 that have been selected and that's what's driving the C or is it  
40 just a C because the vermilion snapper is -- Based on the latest  
41 assessment and such as you described it and so I just wanted to  
42 make sure I'm clear on the priorities and how you set those.

43  
44 **DR. SIMMONS:** Right and so what we were using is the fact that  
45 the results of management were not overfished or undergoing  
46 overfishing and I think, in recent times, we have heard some  
47 testimony that there is more concern about vermilion snapper and  
48 potential problems with the stock, but there has been no other

1 real information that has been brought forth, whereas compared  
2 to gag, we've talked in length about the episodic mortality  
3 events, the red tide event, et cetera, and so we currently have  
4 a C, but we can certainly modify it.

5  
6 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you. I just wanted more clarification  
7 and thank you.

8  
9 **MR. DOUG BOYD:** Is there a plan and a timeline to accomplish the  
10 A items?

11  
12 **DR. PONWITH:** How I wish I could say yes. The carrying out this  
13 work is all totally dependent on the availability of funds, but  
14 the beauty of having a prioritized list is that when funds are  
15 available or if we are engaged in an activity that we view as  
16 lower priority than some of these research priorities,  
17 activities can be redirected to focus on these and Dr. Simmons  
18 made a remark that we use this list and that is absolutely true  
19 and, in fact, the most recent very influential use of the  
20 priorities that all of the councils are putting forward is those  
21 were taking into direct consideration when the very recently  
22 released call for Saltonstall-Kennedy Grants was put together.

23  
24 The focus areas of the SK Grant call for proposals that hit the  
25 streets last Thursday used each of the councils' list of  
26 research priorities as the basis for generating that call for  
27 proposals and so this is very, very valuable information and  
28 having the priority list ensures that if resources are available  
29 or if we are looking for cooperative research to be able to  
30 collaborate with the fishing industry on, we will go to this as  
31 our shopping list of ideas to tackle first.

32  
33 **DR. SIMMONS:** I think I read a draft of that, but just to be  
34 sure, it will use the most recent priorities we submit or is it  
35 the older 2010-2014 research priorities?

36  
37 **DR. PONWITH:** Since the call just came out last week, it was  
38 more than likely the preceding list of priorities. It depends  
39 on the timing.

40  
41 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Any other comments from committee members? All  
42 right. Bonnie, just if you can refresh my memory, at least, on  
43 -- So you get a suite of proposals in and you have X number of  
44 dollars available that you know relative to the councils'  
45 priority list here and what is that process then? They go  
46 through a scientific review as far as matching or merging the  
47 priorities and then the scientific merits of the project and you  
48 try to match I guess an A with -- A submitted priority project

1 with a ranking of A with a project and that type of thing? Are  
2 there agencies or other policy drivers in that decision making  
3 process?  
4

5 **DR. PONWITH:** The answer to that is convoluted because there are  
6 many, many different call for proposals and each of them have  
7 their own mechanism. The way I approach it is this information  
8 is available. It's posted in a publicly-available spot.  
9

10 If I were an academic researcher and I wanted to give my  
11 proposal a competitive edge, I would cite that and I would say  
12 this proposal, by the way, is not only phenomenal in its  
13 scientific merit and being conducted by a world-class  
14 researcher, but it actually handles Priority Number 7B that was  
15 stated by the fishery management council and it gets at  
16 relevance.  
17

18 I will tell you every call for proposals has its own criteria of  
19 what good is, but I have never met a call for proposals that did  
20 not have as one of their key criteria the relevance to  
21 contemporary issues.  
22

23 By having this available, researchers who are competing for  
24 MARFIN money, Saltonstall-Kennedy money, Cooperative Research  
25 Program money, all of these calls for proposals, if they can  
26 cite one of these and say this tackles one of the councils very  
27 dearly-held priorities, that should have bearing on how fundable  
28 that proposal is.  
29

30 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you. Any other questions?  
31

32 **DR. SIMMONS:** That being said, I'm just curious. Does the South  
33 Atlantic Council keep this on their website or do other councils  
34 keep these priorities on their website or do they just submit it  
35 to the Science Center and that's available? How would one go  
36 about finding these if you're submitting a proposal if these  
37 aren't available within the call for proposals?  
38

39 **MR. BEN HARTIG:** That's a good -- I am not sure if we have them  
40 on our website. I know we continually resend them every year.  
41 We haven't had a lot of activity answering many of the questions  
42 over time, but to Bonnie's point, I have worked on several  
43 cooperative research projects and there, researchers who  
44 actually get in contact with you are trying to answer an  
45 assessment-grade question and that's great, but how do we  
46 broaden that to fishermen who have these -- They want to answer  
47 these questions, but yet, you don't have a researcher who is  
48 ready and available to do this.

1  
2 I ran into this problem when I tried to do my last king mackerel  
3 project that I initiated. I could never get anybody to bite,  
4 because, for one thing, it was the year of the Gulf oil spill  
5 and so all hands on deck for that. Obviously there were  
6 extenuating circumstances, but still, how can the council  
7 actually start moving ahead?  
8

9 **DR. PONWITH:** That's a very good question and one of the vexing  
10 things about cooperative research is it takes a long time and a  
11 lot of work to get a really, really successful proposal and then  
12 ultimately a really successful project and the reason is because  
13 there is nobody who knows more about the fishery than the people  
14 who participate in it.  
15

16 They are on the water on a day-to-day basis and they see things.  
17 They are on the leading edge of environmental change in that  
18 system. They are the first eyes to see those changes and then,  
19 on the flip side, you have scientists who are experts at writing  
20 proposals, but they're not at sea every day.  
21

22 The whole idea of cooperative research is you get those two  
23 things together and magic happens. The problem is one fisherman  
24 and one scientist getting together and you run out of fishermen  
25 and you run out of scientists really, really fast.  
26

27 One idea that I've been thinking about that gets at Ben's very  
28 question is what would stop the council from working with a  
29 collection of fishermen and a collection of scientists and  
30 instead of putting in these one-off little ideas of, hey, if you  
31 give me \$10,000, I will run my boat out and I will catch twelve  
32 fish and I will learn something about those twelve fish versus  
33 taking something that's bigger and perhaps longitudinal, a two-  
34 year or a three-year study, that's big and comprehensive and  
35 very carefully thought out that addresses some of those issues  
36 that are near and dear to the council and to the scientists and  
37 tackles it in a really comprehensive way. I don't think there  
38 is anything that would prevent that sort of a business model  
39 from being approached.  
40

41 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you. Dr. Simmons, any more comments or  
42 questions?  
43

44 **DR. SIMMONS:** I guess would you like us to consider putting a  
45 place for this on our website or a link to the SEDAR website, so  
46 that they can get access to these priorities or we can talk  
47 about it at a later time, but it's just a suggestion.  
48

1 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** I talked with Doug just a minute ago and I  
2 think that's something that he is going to bring up with staff.  
3 That's something I think that we can do, but certainly what's  
4 the best way that we can do that, whether it is linking to their  
5 website or what have you. I think that's what we'll attempt to  
6 do and do that as soon as possible. That takes us to the last  
7 item, Other Business, and we didn't have any other business that  
8 was presented at the adoption of the agenda and is there any  
9 other business? In that case, we will conclude the SEDAR  
10 Committee.

11  
12 (Whereupon, the meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m., October 20,  
13 2014.)

14  
15 - - -  
16