

**Modifications to Coastal Migratory
Pelagics, Gulf Reef Fish, Atlantic Dolphin
Wahoo, and South Atlantic Snapper
Grouper Fishery Management Plans:
Charter Vessel Reporting**

REVISED

**DECISION DOCUMENT
SHOWING GULF STAFF CHANGES**

**JOINT SAFMC/GMFMC MEETING
JUNE 11, 2015
KEY WEST, FLORIDA**

**Includes Motions from the SAFMC March 2015
and GMFMC March/April 2015 Meetings and
Gulf Staff Changes from Amendment Document**

JUNE 2, 2015

Background

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (GMFMC) and South Atlantic Council (SAFMC) are considering alternatives that would change the method, frequency, and required data elements of fishery data reporting by charter vessel operators. The Councils are considering several changes that would require electronic reporting for the reef fish, snapper grouper, dolphin wahoo, and coastal migratory pelagic species for this component of the recreational sector. The Councils recognize that improved data reporting in these fisheries could reduce the likelihood that ACLs are exceeded and accountability measures (AMs) are triggered. Additional data elements that could be collected could also improve estimates of discard mortality and bycatch, metrics characterized by imprecise estimates under the current reporting requirements. The harvest from charter vessels contributes to recreational landings that count towards the recreational ACLs and quotas. Charter vessel harvest is monitored with the MRIP dockside intercept survey while effort is calculated based on a 10% monthly phone sample of federally permitted charter vessels. The current management system is inadequate for in-season monitoring for stocks with short recreational seasons. Also, the survey methods can be imprecise for some species leading to greater scientific and management uncertainty that requires larger buffers to prevent ACL overages and may prevent the OY from consistently being achieved. The proposed changes could reduce uncertainty in catch and effort data for this component of the recreational fishery increasing the likelihood that the optimum yield will be achieved and ACL overages will be avoided.

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

- Responsible for conservation and management of fish stocks
- Consists of 17 voting members: 11 appointed by the Secretary of Commerce; 1 representative from each of the 5 Gulf states, the Southeast Regional Director of National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS); and 4 non-voting members
- Responsible for developing fishery management plans and amendments, and recommends actions to NMFS for implementation

South Atlantic Fishery Management Council

- Responsible for conservation and management of fish stocks
- Consists of 13 voting members: 8 appointed by the Secretary of Commerce, 1 representative from each of the 4 South Atlantic states, the Southeast Regional Director of NMFS; and 4 non-voting members
- Responsible for developing fishery management plans and amendments, and recommends actions to NMFS for implementation

National Marine Fisheries Service

- Responsible for data needed by the Councils for management
- Responsible for conservation and management of fish stocks
- Approves, disapproves, or partially approves Council recommendations
- Implements regulations

This amendment affects headboat and charter vessel reporting requirements for species managed in the Fishery Management Plans (FMPs) for Reef Fish Resources of the Gulf of Mexico (Reef Fish), Snapper Grouper Resources of the South Atlantic, South Atlantic Dolphin Wahoo and Coastal Migratory Pelagics of the South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico (CMP) (**Figure 1.1.1**).



Figure 1.1.1. Jurisdictional boundaries of the Gulf of Mexico (blue), South Atlantic (orange), Mid-Atlantic (green), and New England (peach) Fishery Management Councils. Modifications to the reef fish FMP would only affect the GMFMC; the snapper grouper FMP modifications would affect only the SAFMC; the coastal migratory pelagics FMP modifications would affect the MAFMC, SAFMC, and GMFMC; and the dolphin wahoo FMP modifications would affect the NEFMC, MAFMC, and SAFMC.

Actions/Alternatives/Purpose & Need Wording and Voting: Not in Gulf Staff Amendment

The wording shown for Purpose & Need and each Action/Alternative without highlight reflects the guidance provided by the South Atlantic Council during their March 2015 meeting and Gulf Council during their March/April 2015 meeting. Text shown in **yellow highlight** represents recommendations from the IPT/Council staff/Council Decisions to be made.

The wording for Purpose & Need and Actions/Alternatives will be projected during the Joint Council meeting and motions will be made to indicate the Councils' directions to Staff/IPT. Each Council will vote separately. The Gulf Council's Data Committee and the South Atlantic Council's Data Committee will review these decisions prior to the Joint Council meeting and any motions will be added to the Decision Document and

emailed to all Council members. The Decision Document with Committee Motions will be projected during the Joint Council meeting.

Purpose and Need

The purpose and need shown below was modified from the Joint Headboat Reporting Amendment in the South Atlantic and approved by the SAFMC in March 2015. The Gulf Council did not take action on this at their March/April meeting.

Purpose for Action

The *purpose* of the Joint South Atlantic/Gulf of Mexico Generic Charter Reporting Amendment is to: Improve **charter** data collection methods to increase the accuracy and timeliness of recreational **charter** data in the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic fisheries.

Need for Action

The *need* for the Joint South Atlantic/Gulf of Mexico Generic Charter Reporting Amendment is to: Improve data collection methods and timeliness of reporting to limit overages of annual catch limits, to improve stock assessments, and to improve compliance in Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic fisheries.

Note: If the Councils approve headboats being included, then the Title of the Document and the Purpose & Need would require modification by changing “charter” to “for-hire”.

Gulf Staff changes from Amendment:

The *purpose* of the Generic Modifications to Charter Vessel and Headboat Reporting Requirements Amendment is to increase the accuracy and timeliness of landings, discards, and effort of for-hire vessels participating in the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic regions.

The *need* for this action is to improve charter vessel and headboat fishery data used for stock assessments and to improve monitoring and compliance of for-hire vessels in the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic regions.

COUNCIL ACTION:

MOTION #1: APPROVE THE PURPOSE AS MODIFIED:

THE *PURPOSE* OF THE GENERIC MODIFICATIONS TO CHARTER VESSEL AND HEADBOAT REPORTING REQUIREMENTS AMENDMENT IS TO INCREASE THE ACCURACY AND TIMELINESS OF LANDINGS, DISCARDS, EFFORT AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC DATA OF FEDERALLY PERMITTED FOR-HIRE VESSELS PARTICIPATING IN THE GULF OF MEXICO AND SOUTH ATLANTIC MANAGED FISHERIES.

APPROVED BY SAFMC COMMITTEE

**MOTION #2: APPROVE THE NEED AS MODIFIED:
THE *NEED* FOR THIS ACTION IS TO IMPROVE CHARTER VESSEL AND
HEADBOAT FISHERY DATA USED FOR MANAGEMENT AND TO IMPROVE
MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE OF FEDERALLY PERMITTED FOR-
HIRE VESSELS IN THE GULF OF MEXICO AND SOUTH ATLANTIC
MANAGED FISHERIES.
APPROVED BY SAFMC COMMITTEE**

Option 1. Approve the Purpose & Need shown above.

Option 2. Modify by changing “charter” to “for-hire” and Approve the Modified Purpose & Need.

Option 3. Approve Gulf staff wording for the Purpose & Need.

Option 4. Others??

Actions/Alternatives Wording

The wording for Action 1 shown below was modified slightly from the Joint Headboat Reporting Amendment in the South Atlantic. Some additional actions have been included. **The South Atlantic Council approved Action 1 during their March 2015 meeting.** At their March/April meeting, **the GMFMC approved a motion changing “via computer or internet” to “via NMFS approved hardware/software in Alternatives 2-5.**

Action 1: Amend the Gulf Reef Fish, South Atlantic Snapper Grouper, Coastal Migratory Pelagics, and Atlantic Dolphin and Wahoo Fishery Management Plans to modify data reporting for charter vessels

Alternative 1 (No Action). Retain existing permits and data reporting systems for the charter sector. Currently, the owner or operator of a vessel for which a charter vessel permit for Gulf coastal migratory pelagic fish, South Atlantic coastal migratory pelagic fish, Gulf reef fish, South Atlantic snapper grouper, or Atlantic dolphin and wahoo has been issued, or whose vessel fishes for or lands such coastal migratory pelagic fish, reef fish, snapper grouper, or Atlantic dolphin or wahoo in or from state waters adjoining the applicable Gulf, South Atlantic, or Atlantic exclusive economic zone (EEZ), and who is selected to report by the Science and Research Director (SRD), must maintain a fishing record for each trip, or a portion of such trips as specified by the SRD, on forms provided by the SRD. Completed records for charter vessels must be submitted to the Science and Research Director weekly, postmarked no later than 7 days after the end of each trip (Sunday). Currently, all headboats are required to submit fishing records to the Science and Research Director (SRD) weekly or at intervals shorter than a week if notified by the

SRD via electronic reporting (via computer or internet). Weekly = 7 days after the end of each week (Sunday).

Alternative 2. Require that charter vessels submit fishing records to the Science and Research Director (SRD) weekly via electronic reporting (via NMFS approved hardware/software ~~computer or internet~~). Weekly = 7 days after the end of each week (Sunday).

Alternative 3. Require that charter vessels submit fishing records to the Science and Research Director (SRD) daily via electronic reporting (via NMFS approved hardware/software ~~computer or internet~~). Daily = by noon of the following day.

Sub-Alternative 3a. Noon of the following day.

Sub-Alternative 3b. Prior to arriving at the dock.

Alternative 4. Require that charter vessels submit fishing records to the Science and Research Director (SRD) weekly or at intervals shorter than a week if notified by the SRD via electronic reporting (via NMFS approved hardware/software ~~computer or internet~~). Weekly = 7 days after the end of each week (Sunday).

Alternative 5. Require that charter vessels submit fishing records to the Science and Research Director (SRD) weekly or at intervals shorter than a week if notified by the SRD via electronic reporting (via NMFS approved hardware/software ~~computer or internet~~). Weekly = Tuesday following each fishing week.

The IPT recommends the following changes to the wording of the Action and the Alternatives

Action 1: Modify Frequency and Mechanism of Data Reporting Requirements for Charter Vessel Data Reporting Requirements for Gulf Reef Fish, South Atlantic Snapper Grouper, Coastal Migratory Pelagics, and Atlantic Dolphin and Wahoo Fishery Management Plans

Alternative 1 (No Action). Retain existing permits and data reporting systems for charter vessels. Currently, the owner or operator of a charter vessel for which a charter vessel/headboat permit for Gulf or South Atlantic coastal migratory pelagic fish, Gulf reef fish, South Atlantic snapper grouper, or Atlantic dolphin and wahoo has been issued, or whose vessel fishes for or lands such coastal migratory pelagic fish, reef fish, snapper grouper, or Atlantic dolphin or wahoo in or from state waters adjoining the applicable Gulf, South Atlantic, or Atlantic exclusive economic zone (EEZ), and who is selected to report by the Science and Research Director (SRD) must maintain a fishing record for each trip, or a portion of such trips as specified by the SRD, on forms provided by the SRD. Completed fishing records must be submitted to the SRD weekly, postmarked no

later than 7 days after the end of each week (Sunday). Information to be reported is indicated on the form and its accompanying instructions.

For South Atlantic snapper grouper, charter vessels selected to report by the SRD must participate in the NMFS-sponsored electronic logbook and/or video monitoring program as directed by the SRD. Completed fishing records may be required weekly or daily, as directed by the SRD.

Alternative 2. Require that federally permitted charter vessels submit fishing records to the Science and Research Director (SRD) weekly or at intervals shorter than a week if notified by the SRD via electronic reporting (via NMFS approved hardware/software). Weekly = Tuesday following each fishing week.

Alternative 3. Require that federally permitted charter vessels submit fishing records to the Science and Research Director (SRD) daily via electronic reporting (via NMFS approved hardware/software). Daily = by noon of the following day.

Alternative 4. Require that federally permitted charter vessels submit fishing records to the Science and Research Director (SRD) for each trip via electronic reporting (via NMFS approved hardware/software) prior to arriving at the dock.

Gulf Staff changes to IPT recommendations from Amendment; previously approved wording not shown in Amendment (in green and strikethrough):

Action 1: Modify Frequency and Mechanism of Data Reporting Requirements for Charter Vessel Harvesting Data Reporting Requirements for Gulf Reef Fish, South Atlantic Snapper Grouper, South Atlantic Dolphin Wahoo, or Coastal Migratory Pelagics, and Atlantic Dolphin and Wahoo Fishery Management Plans

Note: The DW FMP is Atlantic not South Atlantic.

Alternative 1 (No Action). ~~Retain existing permits and data reporting systems for charter vessels. Currently, the owner or operator of a charter vessel for which a charter vessel/headboat permit for Gulf of Mexico (Gulf) or South Atlantic coastal migratory pelagic (CMP) species fish, Gulf reef fish, South Atlantic snapper grouper, or Atlantic dolphin and wahoo has been issued, or whose vessel fishes for or lands such CMP species coastal migratory pelagic fish, reef fish, snapper grouper, or Atlantic dolphin or wahoo in or from state waters adjoining the applicable Gulf, South Atlantic, or Atlantic exclusive economic zone (EEZ), and who is selected to report by the Science and Research Director (SRD) must maintain a fishing record for each trip, or a portion of such trips as specified by the SRD, on forms provided by the SRD. Completed fishing records must be submitted to the SRD weekly, postmarked no later than 7 days after the end of each week (Sunday). Information to be reported is indicated on the form and its accompanying instructions.~~

For South Atlantic snapper grouper, charter vessels selected to report by the SRD must participate in the NMFS-sponsored electronic logbook and/or video monitoring program as directed by the SRD. Completed fishing records may be required weekly or daily, as directed by the SRD.

Alternative 2. Require that federally permitted charter vessels submit fishing records to the ~~Science and Research Director (SRD)~~ weekly or at intervals shorter than a week if notified by the SRD via electronic reporting (via NMFS approved hardware/software). Weekly = Tuesday following each fishing week.

Alternative 3. Require that federally permitted charter vessels submit fishing records to the ~~Science and Research Director (SRD)~~ daily via electronic reporting (via NMFS approved hardware/software). Daily = by noon of the following day.

Alternative 4. Require that federally permitted charter vessels submit fishing records to the ~~Science and Research Director (SRD)~~ for each trip via electronic reporting (via NMFS approved hardware/software) prior to arriving at the dock.

COUNCIL ACTION:

Direction to Staff/IPT:

- Add sample forms of minimum data elements based on the current requirements in the SC and Headboat logbook programs and the proposed requirements for the NC logbook program.
- Add sample data forms for additional data elements (e.g., discards at specific sites, socio-economic data, etc.).
- Under Compliance Measure indicate that the timing would be Sunday or Tuesday based on the alternative chosen.

**MOTION #3: ACCEPT THE IPT RECOMMENDED WORDING FOR ACTION 1 AND THE ALTERNATIVES
APPROVED BY SAFMC COMMITTEE**

Option 1. Approve the range of original Action 1 alternatives, with the GMFMC change, shown above for detailed analyses.

Option 2. Approve the IPT recommendations for Action 1 and the alternatives and approve the modified range of Action 1 alternatives for detailed analyses.

Option 3. Approve Gulf staff wording for Action 1 and the alternatives.

Option 4. Add additional alternatives and/or modify the Action 1 alternatives and approve for detailed analyses.

Option 5. Others??

Compliance Measure

It is the Councils' intent that charter vessels must remain in compliance with the reporting requirements to be authorized to conduct trips to fish for reef fish, snapper grouper, dolphin wahoo, and coastal migratory pelagic species (compliance measure). NMFS has also specified measures to be used in cases of catastrophic conditions when electronic means to report data are not feasible. Under the alternatives with weekly reporting, Monday through Sunday is the fishing week and reports are due seven days after the end of each week that ends on Sunday. The reports are due by midnight of the following Sunday. This is contained in the current regulations for charter vessels. Under the alternative with daily reporting, reports would have been due by noon of the following day to ensure the data are available more frequently than weekly.

“No-fishing forms” must be submitted at the same frequency, via the same process as specified in **Action 1**.

Reporting is currently a condition of the permits issued for the reef fish, snapper grouper, dolphin/wahoo, and coastal migratory pelagic fisheries. Not reporting does not meet the conditions of the permit and the permit becomes invalid. Under the current reporting scenario, it is difficult to determine which permits have met the reporting frequency requirements due to the lag between the submittal of reports and the processing of the data. Electronic reporting would allow for better enforcement of current permit conditions. Any delinquent reports would need to be submitted and received by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) before a charter vessel could legally harvest and/or possess the affected species.

In situations where there is no fishing occurring, either by choice or due to a closed fishing season, “no fishing reports” are currently required to be submitted. These forms would still be required and could be submitted electronically, and should be submitted by the timeframe specified to remain in compliance with the permit requirements.

A charter vessel would only be authorized to harvest and/or possess species in the Reef Fish, Snapper Grouper, Dolphin/Wahoo, and Coastal Migratory Pelagic Resources Fishery Management Plans if the charter vessel's previous reports have been submitted by the charter vessel owner and received by the NMFS in the time specified. Any delinquent reports would need to be submitted and received by NMFS before a charter vessel could legally harvest and/or possess the affected species. Charter vessel reporting ahead of time if they are closed/not fishing for an extended period, meets the intent of the weekly reporting.

Catastrophic Measure

It is the Councils' intent that the charter vessel program would be allowed to use paper-based reporting only as a backup during catastrophic conditions, when electronic means to report data are not feasible. The Regional Administrator (RA) would determine when catastrophic conditions exist, the duration of the catastrophic conditions, and which participants or geographic areas are deemed affected by the catastrophic conditions. The RA would provide timely notice to affected participants via publication of notification in

the *Federal Register*, NOAA weather radio, fishery bulletins, and other appropriate means and would authorize the affected participants' use of paper-based components for the duration of the catastrophic conditions. The paper forms would be available from NMFS. The RA would have the authority to waive or modify reporting time requirements. The need for paper-based reporting is expected to occur infrequently and for relatively short time periods.

Discussion

Action 1 addresses the following recommendations from the Technical Sub-Committee:

1. Complete census of all participants.
2. Mandatory, trip level reporting with weekly electronic submission. Give flexibility to require submission more frequently than weekly if necessary. Give flexibility to declare periods of inactivity in advance.
4. Implementation of accountability measures to ensure compliance.
7. Maintain capability for paper-based reporting during catastrophic conditions.

The subcommittee agreed that the potential for bias is too great to recommend any voluntary reporting program and mandatory participation is necessary for vessel/owner-operators selected. This is recommended to best achieve the overarching objectives of the proposed program.

The technical subcommittee recommends the development and implementation of an electronic logbook *census* program (i.e., 100% reporting) to estimate catch and effort for southeast region charter vessels, including procedures for expanding for non-reporting. This recommendation was based in part on the inability of the current survey to meet the needs of science and management applications and the requirement of timeliness beyond which is readily achievable through a survey approach.

The technical subcommittee recommends trip level reporting with weekly submission due the Tuesday following each fishing week. This would include no activity reports that could be submitted in advance if periods of inactivity are known. The technical subcommittee discussed that a daily reporting requirement may not be feasible or enforceable, however, reporting systems and user interfaces should be designed to encourage "real-time" at-sea reporting of catch and catch related data elements (e.g. fishing location, fishing method, target species).

The subcommittee recommends accountability measures and reporting requirements similar to those implemented for commercial seafood dealers in the southeast region (i.e., weekly submission of trip level reports, including periods of no activity due Tuesday following each week). A charter vessel owner/operator would only be authorized to harvest or possess federally managed species if previous reports have been submitted by the charter vessel owner/operator and received by NMFS (NMFS) in a timely manner.

Any delinquent reports would need to be submitted and received by NMFS before a charter vessel owner/operator could harvest or possess federally managed species from the EEZ or adjacent state waters.

This measure would require that charter vessels remain current on their reports as a requirement to continue legally harvesting and/or possessing the affected species. This would improve timeliness and accuracy of charter vessel reporting, decreasing the likelihood of exceeding recreational annual catch limits (ACLs) for species that have in-season closures like black sea bass. For species with a recreational AM that shortens the length of the following fishing season, better and more timely data could help ensure landings do not exceed the ACL in the year following an overage. The requirement to submit no-fishing forms reduces the uncertainty of reported charter vessel landings. NMFS would be better able to differentiate between periods when charter vessels were fishing and periods with missing reports.

A preliminary list of data elements for charter vessels is shown in **Table 2.2.1**. South Carolina has already implemented a state logbook program for headboats and charter vessels (**Attachments 1 and 2**). They are in the process of moving from paper to electronic reporting. The final list of data elements for charter vessels in the South Atlantic would need to collect the same data as currently collected in South Carolina as a minimum; additional data may be collected from a sample of or all federally-permitted charter vessels.

Charter vessels are operationally defined as federally permitted for-hire vessels that carry six or fewer passengers. To date, none of these vessels have been selected by the SRD to submit fishing records as described in **Alternative 1** and have been monitored in combination through the MRIP For-Hire survey (effort) and the MRIP dockside intercept (catch). The MRIP For-Hire Survey includes charter vessels operating in the Gulf of Mexico from Louisiana through Florida and eastern Florida through North Carolina in the South Atlantic Management region are required to report all trips taken during selected weeks (effort only) whenever they are selected to participate in the survey. Charter vessel operators are contacted by telephone to collect these data (**Table 2.1.1**). Catch data are collected in a separate dockside intercept survey of anglers. Adjustment factors for active charter vessels that are not in the sample frame (new to fleet, no contact information known, etc.) are produced from field intercept survey questions and applied to the raw effort estimate.

Table 2.1.1. Required data reporting elements for charter vessels participating in MRIP For-Hire survey.

Reporting Elements
Area fished
Number of anglers who fished
Hours of actual fishing activity

Method of fishing
Target species (if any)

To enforce the mandatory reporting requirement for federally permitted charter vessels in the For-Hire Telephone Survey, permit holders who refuse the survey over the phone are notified by letter of their obligation to report as a condition for permit renewal. However, if a vessel operator cannot be contacted after five attempts for a selected week, the final interview status is “unsuccessful contact” and it is impossible to identify permit-holders who are passively evading the survey. Contact rates in the For-Hire Telephone Survey vary by wave (2 month sample period), state, and region, and the percent of selected vessels that are unable to be contacted by phone is quite high in some strata.

Charter vessel catch and effort in Texas are monitored via the Texas Parks and Wildlife Survey. This survey is a field-intercept survey of boat-based fishing, including for-hire vessels. This survey estimates fishing effort and catch (harvest only) on a seasonal basis.

Alternative 2 would require charter vessels participating in the fisheries (noted above) to submit fishing records weekly or at intervals shorter than a week if notified by the SRD via electronic reporting (via NMFS approved hardware/software). **Alternative 2** could improve fishery data in several ways. For example, fishery data would be available into the science and management process faster, potentially reducing the chance of exceeding ACLs. **Alternative 2** could also improve accuracy, as reports would be completed soon after each trip reducing problems associated with recall errors. However, **Alternative 2** would reduce flexibility for timing of report preparation by charter vessel operators and this could burden could be acute during peak season when trip intensity, passenger capacity, and catch are greatest. It is during these periods of high catches when data are needed more quickly to ensure ACLs are not exceeded.

Alternative 3 would require charter vessels participating in the fisheries (noted above) to submit a report for each day. As with **Alternative 2**, this report would be submitted electronically and received by NMFS (due by noon the following day). **Alternative 3** could further reduce the likelihood of exceeding ACLs with reduced recall error as compared to **Alternative 1** and **Alternative 2**. However, **Alternative 3** would add additional burden and reduced flexibility in comparison to **Alternatives 1** and **2**.

Alternative 4 would require charter vessels participating in the fisheries (noted above) to submit a report for each trip. This report would need to be submitted electronically and received by NMFS prior to returning to the dock and would require multiple reports per day if more than a single trip occurred on a given day. **Alternative 4** would offer the greatest ability to prevent ACL overages and add additional rigor to trip validation of catch and effort that are not possible with **Alternatives 1-3**. However, **Alternative 4** offers charter vessel operators the least flexibility in how and when they prepare and submit their fisheries reports and could be burdensome during periods of peak activity or inclement weather.

The IPT recommends a new Action 2 addressing headboats:

Action 2: Modify Frequency and Mechanism of Headboat Data Reporting Requirements for Gulf Reef Fish, South Atlantic Snapper Grouper, Coastal Migratory Pelagics, and South Atlantic Dolphin and Wahoo Fishery Management Plans

Note: The DW FMP is Atlantic not South Atlantic.

Alternative 1 (No Action). Retain existing permits and data reporting systems for headboats. Currently, the owner or operator of a headboat for which a charter vessel/headboat permit for Gulf or South Atlantic coastal migratory pelagic fish, Gulf reef fish, South Atlantic snapper grouper, or Atlantic dolphin and wahoo has been issued, or whose vessel fishes for or lands such coastal migratory pelagic fish, reef fish, snapper grouper, or Atlantic dolphin or wahoo in or from state waters adjoining the applicable Gulf, South Atlantic, or Atlantic exclusive economic zone (EEZ), and who is selected to report by the Science and Research Director (SRD) must submit an electronic fishing record for each trip of all fish harvested via the Southeast Region Headboat Survey. Electronic fishing records must be submitted at weekly intervals (or intervals shorter than a week if notified by the SRD) by 11:59 p.m., local time, the Sunday following a reporting week. If no fishing activity occurred during a reporting week, an electronic report so stating must be submitted for that reporting week by 11:59 p.m., local time, the Sunday following a reporting week.

During catastrophic conditions the use of paper forms for basic required functions may be authorized by the RA by publication of timely notice. During catastrophic conditions, the RA also has the authority to waive or modify reporting time requirements.

An electronic report not received within the time specified is delinquent. A delinquent report automatically results in a prohibition on harvesting or possessing the applicable species, regardless of any additional notification to the delinquent owner and operator by NMFS. This prohibition is applicable until all required and delinquent reports have been submitted and received by NMFS according to the reporting requirements.

For South Atlantic snapper grouper, headboats selected to report by the SRD must participate in the NMFS-sponsored electronic logbook and/or video monitoring program as directed by the SRD. Completed fishing records may be required weekly or daily, as directed by the SRD.

Alternative 2. Require that headboats submit fishing records to the Science and Research Director (SRD) weekly or at intervals shorter than a week if notified by the SRD via electronic reporting (via NMFS approved hardware/software). Weekly = Tuesday following each fishing week.

Alternative 3. Require that headboats submit fishing records to the Science and Research Director (SRD) daily via electronic reporting (via NMFS approved hardware/software). Daily = by noon of the following day.

Alternative 4. Require that headboats submit fishing records to the Science and Research Director (SRD) for each trip via electronic reporting (via NMFS approved hardware/software) prior to arriving at the dock.

Gulf Staff changes to IPT recommendations from Amendment (in green and strikethrough):

Action 2: Modify Frequency and Mechanism of ~~Data Reporting for Headboats Harvesting Data Reporting Requirements for Gulf Reef Fish, South Atlantic Snapper Grouper, South Atlantic Dolphin and Wahoo, or Coastal Migratory Pelagics, and South Atlantic Dolphin and Wahoo Fishery Management Plans~~

Note: The DW FMP is Atlantic not South Atlantic.

Alternative 1 (No Action). Retain existing permits and data reporting systems for headboats. Currently, the owner or operator of a headboat for which a charter vessel/headboat permit for Gulf or South Atlantic coastal migratory pelagic fish, Gulf reef fish, South Atlantic snapper grouper, or Atlantic dolphin and wahoo has been issued, or whose vessel fishes for or lands such coastal migratory pelagic fish, reef fish, snapper grouper, or Atlantic dolphin or wahoo in or from state waters adjoining the applicable Gulf, South Atlantic, or Atlantic exclusive economic zone (EEZ), and who is selected to report by the Science and Research Director (SRD) must submit an electronic fishing record for each trip of all fish harvested via the Southeast Region Headboat Survey. Electronic fishing records must be submitted at weekly intervals (or intervals shorter than a week if notified by the SRD) by 11:59 p.m., local time, the Sunday following a reporting week. If no fishing activity occurred during a reporting week, an electronic report so stating must be submitted for that reporting week by 11:59 p.m., local time, the Sunday following a reporting week.

During catastrophic conditions the use of paper forms for basic required functions may be authorized by the RA by publication of timely notice. During catastrophic conditions, the RA also has the authority to waive or modify reporting time requirements.

An electronic report not received within the time specified is delinquent. A delinquent report automatically results in a prohibition on harvesting or possessing the applicable species, regardless of any additional notification to the delinquent owner and operator by NMFS. This prohibition is applicable until all required and delinquent reports have been submitted and received by NMFS according to the reporting requirements.

For South Atlantic snapper grouper, headboats selected to report by the SRD must participate in the NMFS-sponsored electronic logbook and/or video monitoring program as directed by the SRD. Completed fishing records may be required weekly or daily, as directed by the SRD.

Alternative 2. Require that headboats submit fishing records to the Science and Research Director (SRD) weekly or at intervals shorter than a week if notified by the SRD via electronic reporting (via NMFS approved hardware/software). Weekly = Tuesday following each fishing week.

Alternative 3. Require that headboats submit fishing records to the Science and Research Director (SRD) daily via electronic reporting (via NMFS approved hardware/software). Daily = by noon of the following day.

Alternative 4. Require that headboats submit fishing records to the Science and Research Director (SRD) for each trip via electronic reporting (via NMFS approved hardware/software) prior to arriving at the dock.

COUNCIL ACTION:

MOTION #4: APPROVE IPT RECOMMENDATION FOR ACTION 2 AND THE ALTERNATIVES WITH DELETING “SOUTH” AND APPROVE FOR DETAILED ANALYSES APPROVED BY SAFMC COMMITTEE

Option 1. Approve the IPT recommendations for new Action 2 and the alternatives, and approve the range of new Action 2 alternatives shown above for detailed analyses.

Option 2. Add additional alternatives and/or modify the Action 2 alternatives and approve for detailed analyses.

Option 3. Approve Gulf staff wording for new Action 2 and the alternatives.

Option 4. Others??

Discussion

Action 2 addresses the following recommendations from the Technical Sub-Committee:

1. Complete census of all participants.
2. Mandatory, trip level reporting with weekly electronic submission. Give flexibility to require submission more frequently than weekly if necessary. Give flexibility to declare periods of inactivity in advance.
4. Implementation of accountability measures to ensure compliance.
7. Maintain capability for paper-based reporting during catastrophic conditions.

The subcommittee agreed that the potential for bias is too great to recommend any voluntary reporting program and mandatory participation is necessary for vessel/owner-operators selected. This is recommended to best achieve the overarching objectives of the proposed program.

The technical subcommittee recommends the development and implementation of an electronic logbook *census* program (i.e., 100% reporting) to estimate catch and effort for southeast region for-hire vessels, including procedures for expanding for non-reporting. This recommendation was based in part on the inability of the current survey to meet the needs of science and management applications and the requirement of timeliness beyond which is readily achievable through a survey approach.

The technical subcommittee recommends trip level reporting with weekly submission due the Tuesday following each fishing week. This would include no activity reports that could be submitted in advance if periods of inactivity are known. The technical subcommittee discussed that a daily reporting requirement may not be feasible or enforceable, however, reporting systems and user interfaces should be designed to encourage “real-time” at-sea reporting of catch and catch related data elements (e.g. fishing location, fishing method, target species).

The subcommittee recommends accountability measures and reporting requirements similar to those implemented for commercial seafood dealers in the southeast region (i.e., weekly submission of trip level reports, including periods of no activity due Tuesday following each week). A for-hire vessel owner/operator would only be authorized to harvest or possess federally managed species if previous reports have been submitted by the charter vessel owner/operator and received by NMFS (NMFS) in a timely manner. Any delinquent reports would need to be submitted and received by NMFS before a for-hire vessel owner/operator could harvest or possess federally managed species from the EEZ or adjacent state waters.

This measure would require that for-hire vessels remain current on their reports as a requirement to continue legally harvesting and/or possessing the affected species. This would improve timeliness and accuracy of for-hire vessel reporting, decreasing the likelihood of exceeding recreational annual catch limits (ACLs) for species that have in-season closures like black sea bass. For species with a recreational AM that shortens the length of the following fishing season, better and more timely data could help ensure landings do not exceed the ACL in the year following an overage. The requirement to submit no-fishing forms reduces the uncertainty of reported for-hire vessel landings. NMFS would be better able to differentiate between periods when charter vessels were fishing and periods with missing reports.

Headboats are operationally defined as vessels participating in the Southeast Region Headboat Survey (SRHS). Historically, federally permitted headboat vessels reported using paper forms. As of January 1, 2013, vessel operators have begun electronic submission of their fisheries data. Vessel operators are required to report 100% of their vessel trips. This data collection method places responsibility for submitting required information directly on the permit holder, and compliance is monitored and enforced as a

condition for permit renewal. The obligation to report is periodically reinforced via certified letter to each permit holder.

The Southeast Region Headboat Survey (SRHS), which is administered by NMFS Southeast Fisheries Science Center, includes approximately 140 large capacity headboats operating in the Gulf of Mexico and U.S. South Atlantic from Texas through North Carolina. Vessels included in this survey are required to report catch and effort weekly to National Marine Fisheries Service (**Table 2.2.1**).

Alternative 1 requires headboat participating in Gulf Reef Fish, South Atlantic Snapper Grouper, Atlantic Dolphin Wahoo, or Gulf and South Atlantic Coastal Migratory Pelagic fisheries to submit electronic reports weekly (or at intervals less than a week if requested by the SRD) due seven days after the end of each week (Sunday).

Table 2.2.1. Required data reporting elements for headboats participating in the Southeast Regional Headboat Survey (SRHS).

Reporting Elements
Depart Date:Time
Return Date:Time
Vessel Name
Captain Name
Number of Anglers
Number of Paying Passengers
Number of Crew
Fuel used (gallons)
Price per gallon (estimate)
Minimum depth fished
Maximum depth fished
Primary depth fished
Latitude/Longitude Degrees
Latitude/Longitude Minutes
Species caught
Number kept
Number released

Alternative 2 would require headboats participating in the fisheries (noted above) to report weekly or at intervals shorter than a week if notified by the SRD via electronic reporting (via NMFS approved hardware/software). The difference between **Alternative 1** and **Alternative 2** is the difference in delay between the end of the fishing week (Sunday) and report submission. **Alternative 1** allows 7 days to prepare and submit reports while **Alternative 2** allows two days. **Alternative 2** could improve fishery data in several ways. Fishery data would be available into the science and management process faster, potentially reducing the chance of exceeding ACLs. **Alternative 2** could also improve

accuracy, as reports would be completed soon after each trip reducing problems associated with recall errors. However, **Alternative 2** would reduce flexibility for timing of report preparation and this could be acute during peak season when trip intensity, passenger capacity, and catch are greatest. It is during these periods of high catches when data are needed more quickly to ensure ACLs are not exceeded.

Alternative 3 would require headboats participating in the fisheries (noted above) to submit a report for each day). This report would be submitted electronically and received by NMFS (due noon the following day). **Alternative 3** could further reduce the likelihood of exceeding ACLs and reduce recall error as compared to **Alternative 1** or **Alternative 2**. However, **Alternative 3** would add additional burden and reduced flexibility in comparison to **Alternatives 1** or **Alternative 2**.

Alternative 4 would require headboats participating in the fisheries (noted above) to submit a report for each trip. This report would need to be submitted electronically and received by NMFS prior to returning to the dock. **Alternative 4** would require trip-level reporting where each report is submitted and received by NMFS prior to arriving at the dock. **Alternative 4** would offer the greatest ability to prevent ACL overages and add additional rigor to trip validation of catch and effort that are not possible with **Alternatives 1-3**. However, **Alternative 4** offers headboat operators the least flexibility in how and when they prepare and submit their fisheries reports and could be burdensome during periods of peak activity or inclement weather.

Action 32: Amend the Gulf Reef Fish, South Atlantic Snapper Grouper, Coastal Migratory Pelagics, and Atlantic Dolphin and Wahoo Fishery Management Plans to require vessel or catch location reporting for charter vessels

Alternative 1 (No Action). There are no requirements for charter vessels to report vessel location electronically. Fishing location is required to be reported on the vessel logbook report using designated grids.

Alternative 2. Require charterboats to report catch location:

Sub-Alternative 2a. By latitude/longitude in degrees and minutes.

Sub-Alternative 2b. By headboat grid.

Alternative 3. Require the use of an electronic device that automatically records vessel location for later transmission along with the logbook information:

Sub-Alternative 3a. In the South Atlantic.

Sub-Alternative 3b. In the Gulf of Mexico.

Alternative 4. Require the use of Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) for charter vessels in the Gulf of Mexico.

The IPT recommends the following changes to the wording of the Action and the Alternatives

Action 3: Modify Electronic Reporting Requirements Gulf Reef Fish, South Atlantic Snapper Grouper, Coastal Migratory Pelagics, and Atlantic Dolphin and Wahoo Fishery Management Plans to Require Vessel or Catch Location Reporting

Alternative 1 (No Action). Charter vessels participating in the For-Hire survey are required to report area fished (inshore, state, or federal waters), if selected as part of the survey. Headboats participating in the SRHS self report latitude and longitude of area fished (degrees and minutes only; within 1 nm² area).

Alternative 2. Require the use of a **NMFS approved** electronic device that automatically records vessel location at specified time intervals for later transmission:

Sub-Alternative 3a. In the Gulf of Mexico (headboat)

Sub-Alternative 3b. In the Gulf of Mexico (charter vessel)

Sub-Alternative 3c. In the South Atlantic (headboat)

Sub-Alternative 3d. In the South Atlantic (charter vessel)

Alternative 3. Require the use of a NMFS approved Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) to record vessel location at specified time intervals for selected for-hire vessels in the Gulf of Mexico:

Sub-Alternative 3a. In the Gulf of Mexico (headboat)

Sub-Alternative 3b. In the Gulf of Mexico (charter vessel)

Gulf Staff changes to IPT recommendations from Amendment; previously approved wording not shown in Amendment (in green and ~~strikethrough~~):

Action 3: Modify Electronic Reporting Requirements Gulf Reef Fish, South Atlantic Snapper Grouper, Coastal Migratory Pelagics, and Atlantic Dolphin and Wahoo Fishery Management Plans to Require Vessel or Catch Location Reporting

Alternative 1 (No Action). Charter vessels participating in the For-Hire survey are required to report area fished (inshore, state, or federal waters), if selected as part of the survey. Headboats participating in the SRHS self **are required to** report latitude and longitude of area fished (degrees and minutes only; within 1 nm² area).

Alternative 2. Require **federally permitted for-hire vessels to use** ~~the use of a~~ **NMFS approved** electronic device that automatically records vessel location at specified time intervals for later transmission:

Sub-Alternative 3a. In the Gulf of Mexico (headboat)

Sub-Alternative 3b. In the Gulf of Mexico (charter vessel)

Sub-Alternative 3c. In the South Atlantic (headboat)

Sub-Alternative 3d. In the South Atlantic (charter vessel)

Alternative 3. Require **federally permitted for-hire vessels to use** ~~the use of a~~ NMFS approved Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) to record vessel location at specified time intervals ~~for selected for-hire vessels in the Gulf of Mexico:~~

Sub-Alternative 3a. In the Gulf of Mexico (headboat)

Sub-Alternative 3b. In the Gulf of Mexico (charter vessel)

COUNCIL ACTION:

MOTION #5: DIRECT STAFF TO ADD AN ALTERNATIVE TO ACTION 3 THAT WOULD ALLOW FOR CHARTER VESSELS TO REPORT LOCATION MANUALLY BY LATITUDE/LONGITUDE IN DEGREES AND MINUTES OR BY CLICKING ON A HEADBOAT GRID APPROVED BY SAFMC COMMITTEE

MOTION #6: APPROVE ACTION 3 AND THE ALTERNATIVES AS MODIFIED WITH THE PROPOSED GULF STAFF CHANGES TO THE WORDING APPROVED BY SAFMC COMMITTEE

Option 1. Approve the IPT recommendations for Action 3 and the alternatives, and approve the range of Action 3 alternatives shown above for detailed analyses.

Option 2. Add additional alternatives and/or modify the Action 3 alternatives and approve for detailed analyses.

Option 3. Approve Gulf staff wording for Action 3 and the alternatives.

Option 4. Others??

Discussion

Action 3 addresses the following recommendations from the Technical Sub-Committee:

6. Minimize reporting burden to anglers by reducing (or preferably eliminating) paper reporting and eliminating duplicate reporting.

The South Atlantic Council is interested in charter vessels and headboats using a GPS enabled laptop, tablet, phone, or other electronic device similar to the one recently demonstrated by ACCSP to the Council and the Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel. The South Atlantic Council has concluded that VMS is not feasible for South Atlantic Council fisheries at this time due to cost and issues related to the operation of VMS on small vessels prevalent in many fisheries.

The vessel location data would be collected automatically and would be treated as highly confidential information. Fishing locations would not be available to the public. These data would only be used to conduct analyses to support stock assessments, describe fishing operations, and inform law enforcement for future operations.

The Gulf Council has directed staff to begin developing a charter vessel reporting plan amendment that would consider the use of VMS.

Charter vessels that are surveyed using the For-Hire survey (i.e., 10% weekly) are asked to report area fished among other elements (See Chapter 2.1). **Action 3** considers changing the location reporting element for charter vessels and headboats from a self-reported system to an electronic system where location information is recorded passively by a device on board the vessel. **Alternative 1** would maintain the current self-reporting systems in place (i.e., report area fished if selected in the For-Hire survey (charter vessel) or latitude/longitude of area fished within 1 nm² area (headboat). **Alternative 2** would require the use of a NMFS approved electronic device to record and later transmit specific location information (latitude/longitude). Four sub-alternatives are considered that would require this for Gulf of Mexico headboats (**Sub-Alternative 3a**); Gulf of Mexico charter vessels (**Sub-Alternative 3b**); South Atlantic headboats (**Sub-Alternative 3c**); or South Atlantic charter vessels (**Sub-Alternative 3d**). **Alternative 2** and **Sub-Alternatives** would permit improved accuracy, timeliness, and effort validation protocols relative to **Alternative 1**; they would also improve the estimates of bycatch

mortality used in stock assessments by incorporating depth of capture. **Alternative 3** would apply only to the Gulf of Mexico and would require the use of VMS technology to monitor and report location information. **Alternative 3** is expected to yield similar benefits to **Alternative 2** as compared to **Alternative 1**.

Action 43: Amend the Gulf Reef Fish, South Atlantic Snapper Grouper, Coastal Migratory Pelagics, and Atlantic Dolphin and Wahoo Fishery Management Plans to specify certain aspects of reporting for commercial and for-hire vessels

Note: The revised Action 4 should only refer to for-hire vessels and should not include commercial.

Alternative 1 (No Action). There is no specified time for data to be made available to the public and to the Councils.

Alternative 2. Specify the following data flow for and timing aspects of electronic reporting:

- a) Logbook data collected via authorized platform, ex. web, tablet, phone, or VMS application
- b) Data submitted to ACCSP or GulfFIN;
- c) Data integrated by ACCSP or GulfFIN into single composite data set;
- d) Composite data set distributed to appropriate agencies for analyses and use.

Sub-alternative 2a. Apply to charterboat reporting.

Sub-alternative 2b. Apply to headboat reporting.

Alternative 3. Specify the following aspects of electronic reporting:

- a) NMFS and/or ACCSP/GulfFIN are to develop a compliance tracking procedure that balances timeliness with available staff and funding resources.
- b) NMFS is to use validation methods developed in the Gulf of Mexico logbook pilot study as a basis to ensure that the actual logbook report is validated and standardized validation methodologies are employed among regions.
- c) NMFS is to require and maintain a comprehensive permit/email database of participants.
- d) NMFS is to include procedures for expanding estimates for non-reporting.
- e) NMFS is to allow multiple authorized applications or devices that can transmit data from sea to report data as long as they meet required data and transferability standards.

Sub-alternative 3a. Apply to charterboat reporting.

Sub-alternative 3b. Apply to headboat reporting.

Not in Gulf Staff Amendment

The above changes were considered by the Gulf Council but not approved; South Atlantic Council Staff recommends the above changes to the wording of the Action and the Alternatives. NOAA GC and the SEFSC have concerns about Action 4. The Technical Sub-Committee developed these recommendations.

Gulf Staff changes to IPT recommendations from Amendment; previously approved wording not shown in Amendment (in green and strikethrough):

Action 43: Amend the Gulf Reef Fish, South Atlantic Snapper Grouper, Coastal Migratory Pelagics, and Atlantic Dolphin and Wahoo Fishery Management Plans to specify certain aspects of reporting for commercial and for-hire vessels

Alternative 1 (No Action). There is no specified time for data to be made available to the public and to the Councils.

Alternative 2. Specify the following data flow via for and timing aspects of electronic reporting:

- a) Logbook data collected via authorized platform, ex. web, tablet, phone, or VMS application
- b) Data submitted to ACCSP or GulfFIN;
- c) Data integrated by ACCSP or GulfFIN into single composite data set;
- d) Composite data set distributed to appropriate agencies for analyses and use.

Sub-alternative 2a. Apply to charterboat vessels reporting.

Sub-alternative 2b. Apply to headboat reporting.

Alternative 3. Specify the following aspects of electronic reporting:

- a) NMFS and/or ACCSP/GulfFIN are is to develop a compliance tracking procedure that balances timeliness with available staff and funding resources.
- b) NMFS is to use validation methods developed in the Gulf of Mexico logbook pilot study as a basis to ensure that the actual logbook report is validated and standardized validation methodologies are employed among regions.
- c) NMFS is to require and maintain a comprehensive permit/email database of participants.
- d) NFMS is to include procedures for expanding estimates for non-reporting.
- e) NMFS is to allow multiple authorized applications or devices that can transmit data from sea to report data as long as they meet required data and transferability standards.

Sub-alternative 3a. Apply to charterboat vessel reporting.

Sub-alternative 3b. Apply to headboat reporting.

COUNCIL ACTION:

MOTION #7: MOVE ACTION 4 AND THE ALTERNATIVES INTO THE DISCUSSION OF THE JOINT AMENDMENT APPROVED BY SAFMC COMMITTEE

Option 1. Approve the above recommendations for Action 4 and the alternatives, and approve the range of Action 4 alternatives shown above for detailed analyses.

Option 2. Add additional alternatives and/or modify the Action 4 alternatives and approve for detailed analyses.

Option 3. Approve Gulf staff wording for Action 4 and the alternatives.

Option 4. Others??

Discussion

The South Atlantic Council is concerned about the extensive delays in tracking headboat catches even though headboats are required to report electronically every weekly beginning in 2014. The 2014 headboat data was not available until April of 2015. The current blueline recreational ACL versus recreational catches is currently unknown pending receipt of the first wave of MRIP data (should be available 45 days after the end of February) and any headboat catches. Part of the headboat delay is that the Council has specified the recreational ACL in pounds and this requires the numbers of fish to be converted to pounds. This adds an unspecified period of time after the MRIP data are released for the SEFSC to apply their conversion factors and provide a catch estimate. The South Atlantic Council is considering specifying recreational ACLs in numbers of fish so that the headboat sector (and the charter vessel sector once this amendment is approved) can be tracked weekly. Specifying the recreational ACL in numbers of fish will also reduce the delay in using the MRIP data to track recreational ACLs.

Action 4 addresses the following recommendations from the Technical Sub-Committee:

3. Development of compliance tracking procedures that balance timeliness with available staff and funding resources.
5. Use validation methods developed in the Gulf of Mexico logbook pilot study as a basis to ensure that the actual logbook report is validated and standardized validation methodologies are employed among regions.
8. Require and maintain a comprehensive permit/email database of participants.
10. Include procedures for expanding estimates for non-reporting.
11. Allow multiple authorized applications or devices to report data as long as they meet

required data and transferability standards.

The subcommittee recommends a multi-faceted approach where a number of reporting platforms can be used so long as the minimum data standards and security protocols are met. Data standards would need to be developed and the subcommittee agreed that NOAA Fisheries, the GulfFIN, and ACCSP could work collaboratively to develop appropriate standards.

The subcommittee recommends this process for data storage and management:

1. Logbook data collected via authorized platform, ex. web, tablet, phone, or VMS application
2. Data submitted to ACCSP or GulfFIN;
3. Data integrated by ACCSP or GulfFIN into single composite data set;
4. Composite data set distributed to appropriate agencies for analyses and use.

This process could eliminate duplicate reporting for some participants (e.g., South Carolina headboats and charter vessels) so long as appropriate data standards are in place and the respective agencies agree to confidentiality standards, which would allow sharing and accepting one another's data for use. Elimination of duplicate reporting (e.g., separate state and federal reports) would be a substantial benefit to participants in this survey program and could mitigate any additional reporting requirements for comparison to the current MRIP survey program.

The technical subcommittee recommends building upon the validation methodology developed in the Gulf MRIP pilot study.

The subcommittee recommends use of an MRIP certified methodology for validation with the following elements: Gulf MRIP pilot study methodologies, including dockside validation of catch and vessel activity, and maintenance of site and vessel registries.

The subcommittee recommends dual survey methods (existing and new) for no less than three years. Data from the new program would not be expected to provide management advice during the first year of operation. Moreover, this would allow the possibility of an initial phase-in or limited implementation to identify and solve significant problems prior to implementation for all participants.

The subcommittee recommends that the Councils move forward with development of a reporting system that includes federally permitted for-hire vessels while also exploring ways to determine the impact of state permitted vessels on landings estimates of federally managed species. Long term, the subcommittee recommends that both state and federally permitted charter vessels participate in this census to include the entire fleet of charter vessels harvesting federally managed species.

Weekly electronic dealer and headboat reporting are fully implemented. However, there are still delays in having updated landings available to the public for their use in planning trips and to the Councils for monitoring ACLs. A solution, in the Atlantic, would be to have the raw weekly data fed to ACCSP and made available to the public via the ACCSP

website. The “official” numbers for quota closures would continue to be the numbers maintained by NMFS and available on the NMFS website but this would provide more timely and useful updates to the public.

The result would be updated and current catch data available on a daily basis for the public, states, NMFS, and the Councils to use in monitoring ACLs and planning fishing trips.

Not in Gulf Staff Amendment

MAFMC AND NEFMC FOR-HIRE VESSEL REPORTING

The CMP FMP includes the Mid-Atlantic Council’s area of authority. The Atlantic Dolphin/Wahoo FMP includes both the Mid-Atlantic and New England Councils’ areas of authority. All federally permitted for-hire vessels fishing in the Mid-Atlantic and New England areas are required to report via the northeast Vessel Trip Report (VTR) program (<http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/aps/evtr/index.html>).

The South Atlantic and Gulf Councils could choose to extend this amendment through New England and the Mid-Atlantic or they could choose to use the VTR data to track recreational ACLs in the area north of North Carolina. The Councils should provide guidance to staff on how they wish to proceed.

COUNCIL ACTION:

Option 1. Extend the requirements of this amendment through the Mid-Atlantic Council’s area for CMP species and through the New England Council’s area for Atlantic Dolphin/Wahoo.

Option 2. Use the existing VTR data from the Mid-Atlantic and New England areas to track recreational ACLs.

Option 3. Others??

Direction to Staff/IPT:

- **Add wording to clarify that we are extending the reporting requirements of this amendment through the Mid-Atlantic and New England Councils’ areas for federally permitted for-hire vessels harvesting species managed in our FMPs (Atlantic Dolphin/Wahoo, Coastal Migratory Pelagics, South Atlantic Snapper Grouper, and Gulf Reef Fish).**
- **Add wording to clarify that we don’t want to duplicate reporting by individual vessels; one report submitted to, for example, ACCSP would then be available to each agency needing the data.**

TIMING – Based on timing approved by the SAFMC in December 2014

- A. ✓ Technical Sub-Committee finalized report – November 2014.
- B. ✓ Council reviews final report
 - a. ✓ SAFMC – December 2014
 - b. ✓ GMFMC – January 2015
- C. ✓ Council reviews options and provide guidance to Staff/IPT
 - a. ✓ SAFMC – March 2015
 - b. ✓ GMFMC – March 30 – April 2, 2015
- D. Council reviews and approves for public hearings
 - a. SAFMC – June 2015
 - b. GMFMC – June 2015
- E. Public hearings – July (GMFMC)/August (SAFMC) 2015
- F. Council reviews public hearing input and approves actions
 - a. SAFMC – September 2015
 - b. GMFMC – August/October 2015
- G. Councils approves for final review
 - a. SAFMC – December 2015
 - b. GMFMC – October 2015/January 2016

Not in Gulf Staff Amendment

COUNCIL ACTION:

MOTION #8: INCLUDE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON DATA ELEMENTS, CLARIFICATION ON HOW NE VESSELS WOULD REPORT WITHOUT DUPLICATE REPORTING AND APPROVE THE JOINT FOR-HIRE REPORTING AMENDMENT, AS MODIFIED, FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS APPROVED BY SAFMC COMMITTEE

Option 1. Approve the Joint For-Hire Reporting Amendment, as modified, for public hearings.

Option 2. Direct staff to further develop the amendment and bring back to each Council at their next meeting for approval to take to public hearings.

Option 3. Others??