

Scientific and Statistical Committees
Scope of Work
January 5-7, 2021
Webinar

Agenda Item II: Approval of SSC Minutes

Action: Review, modify (if necessary), and approve minutes

Committee input and next steps: The Committees will review, modify if necessary, and approve the minutes from the September 14-15, 2020, webinar meeting of the Standing, Socioeconomic, Reef Fish, Mackerel, and Ecosystem SSCs; and, the October 30, 2020, joint meeting of the Gulf and South Atlantic SSCs.

Agenda Item IV: Selection of SSC representative for the January 25-28, 2021, Gulf Council Meeting, to be held via webinar

Action: Select SSC representative

Committee input and next steps: The Committees will select a member to participate in the January 2021 Council meeting. The representative will provide a summary to Council Committees, answer questions and provide insight into the SSC deliberations from this SSC webinar meeting.

Agenda item V: Review of SEDAR 70 – Gulf of Mexico Greater Amberjack

Action: Presentations, discussion, and recommendations

Committee input and next steps: The Committees will review presentations of the model, results, and projections for the SEDAR 70 stock assessment of Gulf of Mexico (Gulf) greater amberjack from the Southeast Fisheries Science Center (SEFSC), recommending any modifications as appropriate. The Committees will determine whether the assessment represents the best scientific information available, and inform the Council of the stock status of greater amberjack based on status determination criteria. The Committees will also determine whether the assessment is suitable for management advice and, if suitable, will recommend values for the overfishing limit (OFL) and acceptable biological catch (ABC) using the Council's ABC Control Rule or other method. The Committees should consider both annual and constant catch yields. The Committees will also review the results of the Council's Something's Fishy tool for greater amberjack. Lastly, the Committees will review the Stock Assessment Executive Summary, and provide any feedback to SEFSC staff.

Agenda item VI: Discussion of Sea Grant/NMFS Greater Amberjack Research Program

Action: Presentation, discussion, and recommendations

Committee input and next steps: The Committees will review a presentation from Dr. Kai Lorenzen, from the University of Florida, on the Sea Grant and National Marine Fisheries Service's (NMFS) proposed Greater Amberjack Research Program. The visioning for the project has been completed by the project committee, and the request for proposals will be released in early January 2021. The Committees should consider the information presented and offer feedback to Dr. Lorenzen as appropriate.

Agenda item VII: Review of Red Grouper Recreational Landings Data

Action: Presentation, discussion, and recommendations

Committee input and next steps: The Committees will review red grouper recreational landings data used in the SEDAR 61 stock assessment, as well as those recorded in the ACL Monitoring Landings dataset by the NMFS Southeast Regional Office. The Council would like the SSC to consider, with the SEFSC, the differences in these estimates and the drivers behind those differences. The Committees should review the materials provided and presented and provide feedback to the Council as appropriate.

Agenda item VIII: Review of Council Proposed Interim Analysis Schedule

Action: Discussion and recommendations

Committee input and next steps: The Committees will review the proposed interim analysis schedule generated by Council staff, and provide feedback on any modifications. The Council will use this schedule to help determine for what species it should request interim analyses from the SEFSC, considerate of when the data from the representative index of abundance can be made available, and of the regulatory environment for that species. Staff will work with the Council to incorporate the SSC's recommendations as appropriate, and will update the interim analysis schedule as necessary to reflect evolving Council needs. Of note, the interim analysis process consists only of the Council and its SSC, and the SEFSC, and operates outside of the SEDAR stock assessment process.

Agenda item IX: Red Snapper Supply Chains and Markets

Action: Presentation and discussion

Committee input and next steps: Dr. Frank Asche of the University of Florida will summarize and discuss a study on supply chains and markets for red snapper. Dr. Asche will characterize changes to the red snapper demand following the introduction of catch share programs in the

Gulf and discuss the effects of the catch share programs on red snapper prices. The Committees should discuss the study presented and ask questions.

Agenda item X: Preview of Great Red Snapper Count

Action: Presentation, discussion, and recommendations

Committee input and next steps: Dr. Greg Stunz from Texas A&M University at Corpus Christi's Harte Research Institute will present a preview of the results of the Great Red Snapper Count to the Committees. This presentation will be followed by a more thorough review of the project and its results, including the project report, at a subsequent SSC meeting. The SEFSC will also discuss with the Committees its plan for incorporating the Great Red Snapper Count into the scheduled interim analysis for red snapper, which is currently scheduled to be received by the Council for SSC review in late March/early April of 2021. The Committees should review the materials presented and provide feedback on the SEFSC's approach as appropriate.

Agenda item XI: Review: *Testing assumptions about sex change and spatial management in the protogynous gag grouper, Mycteroperca microlepis*

Action: Presentation, discussion, and recommendations

Committee input and next steps: Dr. Susan Lowerre-Barbieri of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's (FWC) Fish and Wildlife Research Institute (FWRI) will review the results and potential implications of FWRI's work to further address gaps in knowledge about the eastern Gulf gag populations in and around the Steamboat Lumps marine protected area. The Committees should consider these results and their potential implications and make recommendations for Council response and future research as appropriate.

Agenda item XII: Habitat Research Presentation

Action: Presentation, discussion, and recommendations

Committee input and next steps: Dr. Steve Murawski from the University of South Florida College of Marine Science will present the results from field work done in the Gulf, which includes mapping of benthic habitat and associated fish density estimates. The Committees are encouraged to discuss these and other mapping efforts in the Gulf, and how these tools can help inform fisheries management decisions.

Agenda item XIII: Request for Participants: SEDAR 79: Southeastern U.S. Mutton Snapper

Action: Recommendations

Committee input and next steps: Council staff will solicit the Committees for volunteers to participate in the SEDAR 79 benchmark stock assessment of southeastern U.S. mutton snapper. This assessment will be conducted by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Research Institute, and will include workshops or webinars for the Data Workshop, Assessment Process, and Review Workshop, after which the results will be evaluated by the SSC as a whole. Committee members may volunteer to participate in the workshops; however, if a Committee member serves on the Data or Assessment Panel, they may not serve on the Review Panel, except as the Chair.

Agenda item XIV: Consideration of carryover of uncaught commercial quota for IFQ managed species

Action: Presentation, discussion, and recommendations

Committee input and next steps: Dr. Jessica Stephen (NMFS-SERO) will present commercial landings for 2020 for species managed in the Gulf individual fishing quota (IFQ) programs. Dr. Stephen will discuss recent and historical average trends in landings and IFQ quota utilization rates, and implications of potential carryover of unused IFQ quota. Council staff will briefly summarize the presently-tabled generic amendment that was considering carryover for the recreational sector of several Council-managed species. The Committees are expected to review and discuss the information presented and make recommendations to the Council relative to the relevance and feasibility of carryover of unharvested quota within the IFQ programs. The Committees should also consider whether it would be appropriate to modify the ABCs for certain species to accommodate carryover of unharvested quota from 2020 to 2021, if appropriate.

Agenda Item XV: Other Business

Action: Discussion

Committee Input and Next Steps: Additional items may be brought up for discussion by SSC members, time permitting. If the SSC wishes to pursue action, then action can be scheduled at a future SSC meeting. Public comment will also be heard by the SSC.