

Scientific and Statistical Committees
Scope of Work
May 10-11, 2022
Tampa, Florida

Agenda Item IV: Selection of SSC representative for the June 21-24, 2022 Gulf Council Meeting, to be held in Fort Myers, Florida

Action: Select SSC representative

Committee input and next steps: The SSC will select a member to participate in the June 2022 Council meeting. The representative will provide a summary to Council Committees, answer questions and provide insight into the SSC deliberations from this SSC meeting. The SSC representative will attend the meeting in-person in Fort Myers, Florida.

Agenda Item V: Presentation: National Standard 2 and the Best Scientific Information Available

Action: Presentation and discussion

Committee input and next steps: Dr. Patrick Lynch (National Marine Fisheries Service [NMFS] Headquarters) will provide a brief overview of National Standard 2 of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, which details the requirements for NMFS and the Council to use the “best scientific information available” when recommending management measures for fisheries. The SSC should consider the information presented and ask questions as appropriate.

Agenda Item VI: Review of ABC Control Rule: Tier 1

Action: Presentations, discussions, and recommendations

Committee input and next steps: The SSC will review presentations by the SEFSC on an alternative approach to the current Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) Control Rule, used by the SSC for determining the scientific uncertainty between the overfishing limit (OFL) and the ABC. This information was originally presented to the SSC in May of 2021; however, other Council priorities requiring the SSC’s time delayed further review of the ABC Control Rule. The current ABC Control Rule has been in place since 2011; however, SSC members have regularly expressed a desire to revisit the control rule. This stems from the propensity for the buffer determined by the P* approach generally resulting in a difference between the OFL and ABC that is not representative of the uncertainty identified in the stock assessment. The SSC will review these presentations and the background materials provided, and should focus its efforts on

how to revise Tier 1 of the ABC Control Rule. The SSC should make revisions and recommendations as appropriate.

Agenda Item VII: Public Comment

Action: Information

Committee input and next steps: Members of the public will be able to address the SSC directly with respect to the topics discussed during this webinar meeting, and other matters, as time allows.

Agenda Item VIII: Update on Royal Red Shrimp Landings and Market Information, Gulf Shrimp Permits, Economic Returns Estimates for Permitted Vessels

Action: Presentation, discussion, and recommendations

Committee input and next steps: Dr. Mike Travis (NMFS Southeast Regional Office [SERO]) will review the Royal Red shrimp landings and market information, update the SSC on the number of active shrimp vessel permits in the Gulf, and review economic returns estimates for the performance of the Gulf shrimp fishery. The SSC should consider the presentation and ask questions. This information does not require any formal SSC action.

Agenda Item IX: Review: SEFSC Analysis of Red Grouper Stock Assessments using Alternative Marine Recreational Information Program Landings Data

Action: Presentation, discussion, and recommendations

Committee input and next steps: Dr. Skyler Sagarese (Southeast Fisheries Science Center [SEFSC]) will review an analysis of the SEDAR 42 and SEDAR 61 stock assessments of Gulf red grouper, including the application of Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) recreational landings adjusted for the Fishing Effort Survey (FES) and applied to a corrected version of the SEDAR 42 base model. This correction was necessary for this analysis, to account for a computational error previously identified in the SEDAR 42 assessment, and allows the performance of the corrected SEDAR 42 and approved SEDAR 61 model variants to be compared in this analysis. The result is an examination of the probable catch limits resulting from these model variants. The SSC should examine the data and results of the analysis, ask questions, and make any recommendations as appropriate.

Agenda Item X: ~~Review of Additional Sector Allocation informed Projections for Gulf of Mexico Greater Amberjack~~

Action: None

Committee input and next steps: This item was removed from the SSC agenda for the May 2022 meeting after the Federal Register Notice was published.

Agenda Item XI: Discussion of Goliath Grouper Council Motion and Available Data

Action: Presentations, discussions, and recommendations

Committee input and next steps: Mr. Ryan Rindone (Council Staff) will review the SEDAR 47 stock assessment result for Gulf goliath grouper, the current state of fishery management for the species, and the Gulf Council's April 2022 motion for the SSC:

Motion: To request that the SSC reconsider the OFL and ABC for goliath grouper.

Dr. Luiz Barbieri will then review information provided by the State of Florida concerning recent research and the state's 2022 limited harvest program for goliath grouper in state waters. The SSC should evaluate the information presented and ask questions. In particular, the SSC should consider whether the overfishing limit (currently = 0) should be maintained or re-specified, and whether the acceptable biological catch should be reconsidered.

Agenda Item XII: Review: Terms of Reference for State Reef Fish Survey Run of SEDAR 72 Model for Gulf Gag Grouper

Action: Document, discussion, and recommendations

Committee input and next steps: Mr. Rindone will review the proposed terms of reference for the Council's requested State Reef Fish Survey (SRFS) run using the SEDAR 72 base model for gag grouper with the SSC. This additional model run, with complete diagnostics and projections, will be conducted in 2022, using data through 2021, and will substitute the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) data in the original and approved SEDAR 72 base model with SRFS landings data for the private vessel directed fleet. SEDAR 72 found gag grouper to be overfished and undergoing overfishing as of 2019, and the Council has initiated work on a rebuilding plan for the stock, which will need to be implemented by 2024. The SSC should evaluate the terms of reference and provide recommendations as appropriate.

Agenda Item XIII: Public Comment

Action: Information

Committee input and next steps: Members of the public will be able to address the SSC directly with respect to the topics discussed during this webinar meeting, and other matters, as time allows.

Agenda Item XIV: 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.