



Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

Managing Fishery Resources in the U.S. Federal Waters of the Gulf of Mexico

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January 10, 2023

007088JAN2023

Dr. Clay Porch, Director
Southeast Fisheries Science Center
National Marine Fisheries Service
75 Virginia Beach Drive
Miami, Florida 33149

Dear Dr. Porch,

During its October 2022 meeting, the Gulf of Mexico (Gulf) Fishery Management Council (Council) requested an update to the Gulf Ecosystem Status Report based water quality and stock status concerns. However, with the many ongoing regional ecosystem efforts, the workload of Southeast Fisheries Science Center (SEFSC) staff resources, and given that the 2017 Ecosystem Status Report could help inform the Council's Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP), we propose having SEFSC staff give a presentation at the next Ecosystem Technical Committee meeting in early 2023.

The Council is currently developing a FEP with the advice of its Ecosystem Technical Committee. This technical committee can identify ecosystem indicators within the status report that can be updated and perhaps synthesized at a finer scale. These indicators could then serve as examples for the development of the Fishery Ecosystem Issues identification and prioritization process that will inform the Council's management decisions. We anticipate these efforts will help focus requests for the SEFSC on future iterations of the Ecosystem Status Report. The Ecosystem Technical Committee's recommendations will be reported back to the Council for feedback and next steps. We appreciate your assistance with this and future efforts in the Gulf.

Thank you for your attention to this request. Please contact Dr. Natasha Méndez-Ferrer if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dale A. Diaz".

Dale Diaz
Council Chair

cc: Council Members / Council Staff / John Walter, Ph.D. / Mandy Karnauskas, Ph.D.