

GULF OF MEXICO FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL  
SHRIMP MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Omni Hotel Corpus Christi, Texas

August 20, 2018

**VOTING MEMBERS**

- 10 Dale Diaz.....Mississippi
- 11 Kevin Anson (designee for Scott Bannon).....Alabama
- 12 Leann Bosarge.....Mississippi
- 13 Robin Riechers.....Texas
- 14 John Sanchez.....Florida
- 15 Chris Schieble (designee for Patrick Banks).....Louisiana
- 16 Andy Strelcheck (designee for Roy Crabtree).....NMFS

**NON-VOTING MEMBERS**

- 19 Susan Boggs.....Alabama
- 20 Doug Boyd.....Texas
- 21 Dave Donaldson.....GSMFC
- 22 Jonathan Dugas.....Louisiana
- 23 Phil Dyskow.....Florida
- 24 Tom Frazer.....Florida
- 25 Martha Guyas (designee for Jessica McCawley).....Florida
- 26 Paul Mickle (designee for Joe Spraggins).....Mississippi
- 27 Greg Stunz.....Texas
- 28 Lt Mark Zanowicz.....USCG

**STAFF**

- 31 Steven Atran.....Acting Deputy Director
- 32 Zeenatul Basher.....Coral and Habitat Biologist
- 33 John Froeschke.....Fishery Biologist-Statistician
- 34 Morgan Kilgour.....Fishery Biologist
- 35 Mara Levy.....NOAA General Counsel
- 36 Jessica Matos.....Administrative Assistant
- 37 Emily Muehlstein.....Public Information Officer
- 38 Ryan Rindone.....Fishery Biologist & SEDAR Liaison
- 39 Bernadine Roy.....Office Manager
- 40 Carrie Simmons.....Executive Director

**OTHER PARTICIPANTS**

- 43 Luiz Barbieri.....SSC
- 44 Anna Beckwith.....SAFMC
- 45 Eric Brazer.....Shareholders Alliance
- 46 James Bruce.....Magnolia, MS
- 47 Nikki Burch.....Magnolia, MS
- 48 Rick Burris.....MDMR

1 Les Casterline.....TPWD  
2 Susan Gerhart.....NMFS  
3 Kelsey Gibson.....TX  
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5 Sepp Hankebo.....EDF  
6 Chad Hanson.....Pew  
7 Scott Hickman.....Galveston, TX  
8 Peter Hood.....NMFS  
9 Alison Johnson.....Oceana, FL  
10 Lawrence Marino.....LA  
11 Laura Picariello.....Texas Sea Grant  
12 Clay Porch.....SEFSC  
13 Dale Rankin.....Island Moon Newspaper, TX  
14 George Schmahl.....Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary  
15 Matt Streich.....TX

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17  
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PAGE 12: Motion to develop a plan amendment to look at reducing the effort threshold in the area monitored for juvenile red snapper bycatch to 60 percent. The motion carried on page 12.

- - -

1 The Shrimp Management Committee of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery  
2 Management Council convened at the Omni Hotel, Corpus Christi,  
3 Texas, Monday afternoon, August 20, 2018, and was called to  
4 order by Chairman Dale Diaz.

5  
6 **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**  
7 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**  
8 **ACTION GUIDE AND NEXT STEPS**  
9

10 **CHAIRMAN DALE DIAZ:** I would like to call the Shrimp Management  
11 Committee to order. The members of the committee are myself,  
12 Mr. Banks, Mr. Anson, Ms. Bosarge, Dr. Crabtree, Mr. Riechers,  
13 and Mr. Sanchez. First up on the agenda is the Adoption of the  
14 Agenda.

15  
16 **MR. KEVIN ANSON:** I move to adopt the agenda as written.

17  
18 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** So moved by Mr. Anson. It's seconded by Mr.  
19 Riechers. The agenda is adopted. The next item is Approval of  
20 the Minutes.

21  
22 **MR. ANSON:** Move to approve the minutes.

23  
24 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** It's moved by Mr. Anson and seconded by Mr.  
25 Riechers. Next up is the Action Guide and Next Steps. Dr.  
26 Kilgour, do you want to go over those?

27  
28 **DR. MORGAN KILGOUR:** Sure. Today, we just have really one  
29 agenda item and another item under Other Business. After we go  
30 over the review of the council request regarding the shrimp  
31 effort threshold reduction in the area monitored for juvenile  
32 red snapper bycatch, I would appreciate some guidance on if you  
33 wanted to move forward to modify the shrimp effort threshold,  
34 and so that's where we are.

35  
36 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** All right. Dr. Kilgour, if you want to go ahead  
37 and move into Item Number IV.

38  
39 **REVIEW OF COUNCIL REQUEST REGARDING SHRIMP EFFORT THRESHOLD**  
40 **REDUCTION IN THE AREA MONITORED FOR JUVENILE RED SNAPPER BYCATCH**  
41 **AND SSC RECOMMENDATIONS**  
42

43 **DR. KILGOUR:** I get the easy part today, and then I am punting  
44 the hard part to Dr. Barbieri, but we wrote a letter, back in  
45 April, requesting that the Science Center do an analysis on  
46 reducing the baseline of the area monitored for juvenile red  
47 snapper bycatch, and that's Statistical Zones 10 through 21, in  
48 the ten to thirty-fathom-depth range.

1  
2 We asked for an analysis of 1 percent decreases all the way to a  
3 60 percent from the baseline, because that was what was outlined  
4 in Shrimp Amendment 14, and the Science Center provided us with  
5 the analysis, and we provided that information to the SSC.  
6

7 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** All right, Dr. Barbieri.  
8

9 **DR. LUIZ BARBIERI:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are going to  
10 start with a brief presentation that I put together to kind of  
11 walk you through, and Dr. Kilgour already explained to you what  
12 was the intent of this analysis and to address your previous  
13 request.  
14

15 In a simple statement, can shrimp effort be increased? There is  
16 that threshold value of shrimp effort reduced without harming  
17 the resource and impeding the rebuilding or reducing the red  
18 snapper ABCs, and we received, as in the SSC received, a  
19 presentation of a very thorough analysis conducted by the  
20 Southeast Fisheries Science Center staff that provided some  
21 perspective for us on the impact of this shrimp effort reduction  
22 on the red snapper in the Gulf.  
23

24 There were about three or four other slides that go into more  
25 detail about the methods that I decided that I would skip,  
26 because this is really something that the committee looked at,  
27 and it's something that you don't need to see all of those  
28 results, all those methods, but, in terms of results, it's  
29 basically that any moderate changes in the shrimp effort would  
30 have very little to moderate impact on the ABCs or the  
31 rebuilding schedule.  
32

33 Basically, the analysis came to the conclusion that this shrimp  
34 effort reduction to that 60 percent level would not really have  
35 too much of an impact, would not significantly impact, the  
36 rebuilding of the stocks or the ABCs for red snapper.  
37

38 The table there is just for you to see that the analysis  
39 involved a number of years, and it looked at different levels,  
40 and not just at one 60 percent or the 63 percent, but it looked  
41 a whole different number of levels, as compared to that  
42 standard, which was the fishing effort back in 2001 to 2003.  
43

44 Interpretation of why doesn't the shrimp effort threshold have a  
45 more substantial impact on the ABCs, and there were two reasons  
46 for that. One is that, with the evolution of the fishery, the  
47 expansion of the stock, and you remember, back in June, the  
48 presentation of the SEDAR 52 assessment, that a lot of that

1 fishing mortality on red snapper, Gulf red snapper, is coming  
2 from the closed season, for the recreational sector in the  
3 closed season, primarily on the eastern Gulf, where the effort  
4 is highest, and so that's one reason that the shrimp bycatch no  
5 longer has too much of an impact.

6  
7 Second is because the updated and upgraded estimates of natural  
8 mortality for juvenile red snapper actually now account for a  
9 much higher value that is removing the red snapper at that early  
10 stage, and so the impact of the shrimp bycatch has actually been  
11 lowered significantly, and so those two facts actually make  
12 sense, and they're in agreement and consistent with the results,  
13 indicating that this reduction in the threshold would not have  
14 too much of an impact on the rebuilding or the ABCs of red  
15 snapper.

16  
17 The SSC then recommended that the analysis of the shrimping  
18 effort threshold reduction be considered the best scientific  
19 information available. The analysis was well done and  
20 informative, and it followed all the methodologies that it had  
21 to follow, and that changing the shrimp effort reduction  
22 threshold to 60 percent in the area monitored for juvenile red  
23 snapper bycatch is unlikely to significantly impact yield  
24 streams associated with rebuilding the stock by 2032, but that  
25 is a long and fancy way to say that the committee did not see a  
26 significant impact of this threshold reduction on the health of  
27 the stock or the trajectory that we have in place for rebuilding  
28 the stock according to the existing rebuilding plan. That, Mr.  
29 Chairman, completes my presentation.

30  
31 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Thank you, Dr. Barbieri. Are there questions  
32 for Dr. Barbieri? Go ahead, Mr. Riechers.

33  
34 **MR. ROBIN RIECHERS:** Andy or Mara, remind me, just because my  
35 memory back to 2011 isn't going to allow me to remember this  
36 myself, how did we institutionalize the change that had occurred  
37 from the 2001 to 2003, Shrimp Amendment 14, to the current  
38 change value or the current effort reduction value at the time,  
39 based on baseline comparison to 67 percent, because that's  
40 basically the analysis we asked for, which is now, I think,  
41 suggesting, even though they looked at a range, it's suggesting  
42 that it could be reduced to 60 percent, as compared to that  
43 baseline, based on all the changes we've seen in red snapper  
44 since that time. How did we formalize that, because I am just  
45 not remembering.

46  
47 **MR. ANDY STRELCHECK:** Robin, unfortunately, I don't think we're  
48 remembering either, and we need to look it up. If history

1 serves me well, I think the original rebuilding plan, or the  
2 revision back in 2007, started with a 74 percent reduction.  
3 Then it went down to 67 percent, but it was intended to  
4 gradually decrease down to 60 percent. We never instituted the  
5 gradual decrease, and so it was fixed at 67 percent.

6  
7 **MR. RIECHERS:** Yes, and it kind of makes sense that we wouldn't  
8 have been gradually doing it, because the only time we can  
9 really get a snapshot is when we do a new full what we used to  
10 term benchmark, and so it makes sense that we're doing it in a  
11 staggered approach, because we're getting those in an every  
12 three or five or six-year period, whatever it is.

13  
14 Again, this is just the evolution of that and a thought process  
15 about -- Like I said, I'm with you all. Maybe we can, between  
16 now and Full Council, just decide whether it has to go in an  
17 amendment or whether it was done just as a policy action,  
18 because the way we framed it in 14 that maybe it can be, and I  
19 just don't remember or recall.

20  
21 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Dr. Kilgour.

22  
23 **DR. KILGOUR:** I didn't understand the question, but now I think  
24 I do. In the Amendment 14, we outlined a 74 percent reduction.  
25 Then, by 2011, it would go down to 67 percent in that amendment.  
26 Also, in that amendment, it established that it could go down to  
27 60 percent by 2032, but it didn't establish -- It said through a  
28 framework procedure, but it didn't establish a procedure, and so  
29 it would be a full amendment to go to a lower than 67 percent  
30 reduction, but those two, 74 and 67 percent, were outlined in  
31 Amendment 14, and they were given a timeline. That 60 percent  
32 was more nebulous, and there wasn't a timeline given to that  
33 one, other than 2032.

34  
35 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Mr. Anson.

36  
37 **MR. ANSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Dr. Barbieri, did the SSC  
38 consider, or did a motion come up relative to, reducing it to 56  
39 percent? I mean, there is only 0.1 million pounds difference in  
40 the ABC from 2032 compared to 60 percent, and were they using  
41 the 60 percent reference in Amendment 14, or can you describe  
42 some of that discussion? Thank you.

43  
44 **DR. BARBIERI:** Again, this is what we were discussing earlier,  
45 in terms of what questions we are asking the SSC to address and  
46 how much we're leaving it up to the committee to basically  
47 interpret what is being asked and what it's trying to provide.

48



1 The committee saw the letter going to the Center, and it was  
2 explicit for that going from the 67 to the 60 percent, and so it  
3 stayed within that lane, basically, even though the analysis was  
4 more inclusive, at your request, because you wanted to see  
5 different levels, and so we just stuck with that 60 percent,  
6 basically saying that, for the direct question that you asked on  
7 whether bringing that effort threshold down to 60 percent,  
8 whether this would impact the rebuilding plan, the rebuilding  
9 trajectory, or the current sustainability of the stock, and we  
10 said no, given the analysis that we were presented with.  
11 Refresh my memory if I am misremembering, Dr. Kilgour, but --

12

13 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Mr. Riechers.

14

15 **MR. RIECHERS:** I am not certain that I'm prepared to make a  
16 motion to start it, because I think I would rather wait and have  
17 another shrimp action as this to be a sole action in a shrimp  
18 document, and so I would probably want to at least have a notion  
19 of when our next assessments are coming up and so forth, so that  
20 we can maybe time it with something else.

21

22 It seems to me we've got two choices, and that's to lower -- We  
23 have now redone the calibration, and so you can lower that  
24 effort threshold, but still have a target, as Shrimp Amendment  
25 14/27 said, of 60, or, Kevin, I think you're suggesting there  
26 may not be much difference.

27

28 It's still benchmarking when that threshold should be, and so  
29 that has to be 2032. Now, the question is whether it can be  
30 reduced now and stay that way all the way to 2032, with that as  
31 your frame of reference if it rises above that level and then we  
32 have an issue.

33

34 This was just brought to us because we had a slight tick-up in  
35 effort last time that was getting a little closer to the  
36 threshold, I think a few percentage points, but it was a little  
37 bit up, and so we just need to redo this based on the discussion  
38 in 27/14 and the way the model was done then, as compared to  
39 what it would show us now, and so, again, I will maybe have a  
40 discussion offline about what other things we have going on in  
41 the Shrimp Committee possibly coming up.

42

43 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Any other questions for Dr. Barbieri? I guess I  
44 will make a comment off of what Mr. Riechers just said. Do we  
45 have any update on where we're at -- We don't have anything for  
46 this year to know where we're at in effort in that area, and  
47 it's probably way too soon for that, I would assume.

48

1 I would hate for us to wait for another action to add it into  
2 another document and then they would slightly go over this  
3 effort that we currently have on the books, when we know that  
4 the recommendation is that the 60 percent effort would have very  
5 little impact, and so that would be my concern on waiting. Does  
6 that make sense? Dr. Kilgour.

7  
8 **DR. KILGOUR:** The closest that the shrimp industry has gotten to  
9 meeting this threshold is in 2014, when they had a 67.4 percent  
10 reduction from that baseline, and so there's been a -- There  
11 might have been a slight increase compared to previous years  
12 this past year, but, really, conditions were perfect in 2014 for  
13 the shrimp fishery, and so they got really close, but they have  
14 been well below the threshold every year, and there is all of  
15 those permits that are not being renewed, and it's an aging  
16 fleet, and so I just wanted to put that on the record.

17  
18 It's not like their effort is increasing every year and they're  
19 getting closer and closer. There are those rare years where  
20 they get close, but they have been below that threshold every  
21 year.

22  
23 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Mr. Riechers.

24  
25 **MR. RIECHERS:** Well, and I certainly agree with that, and I  
26 don't think anyone was trying to sound an alarm. It's just  
27 that, procedurally, we were trying to date back to something  
28 that had occurred somewhere around sixteen years ago, when we  
29 were all struggling around the council table last time to say,  
30 okay, here's what's been done, and we need to take a look at it,  
31 and then, more importantly, how do we procedurally now move  
32 forward, and I'm not even certain, procedurally, we necessarily  
33 -- I will look to NMFS, but whether we necessarily have to do  
34 anything, given this analysis. I think what you're saying is,  
35 by 2032, you have to do something, but --

36  
37 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Mr. Anson.

38  
39 **MR. ANSON:** I was hoping that someone from NMFS would answer or  
40 respond to Robin's comment.

41  
42 **MR. STRELCHECK:** We don't think that you have to do anything.  
43 You don't have to act here. That was part of the original  
44 rebuilding plan, but there's been modifications that have taken  
45 place since that time.

46  
47 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Mr. Anson.

48

1 **MR. ANSON:** But the procedure is still in place, and, if the  
2 fishery does change, if economic conditions or consumers  
3 attitudes towards foreign-imported shrimp go down and they want  
4 to buy more domestic shrimp, then that could cause effort to  
5 come back, and more boats could be built.

6  
7 I mean, things could happen, and so I would rather take care of  
8 it, through some mechanism, and not have us -- You know, have a  
9 little bit more cushion, if you will, and the SSC -- The Science  
10 Center has done the analysis, and the SSC has reviewed it, and  
11 we've got a number that we could use and start to implement and  
12 do a new -- I would assume that it would be a framework action,  
13 but I don't know, and that's, I guess, what I was trying to look  
14 at over at NMFS, was to see what would be required or needed.

15  
16 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Ms. Levy.

17  
18 **MS. MARA LEVY:** Well, I think, as Morgan had indicated, I think  
19 you're going to have to do a plan amendment. This was sort of  
20 set up, in a way, where it automatically went down, and then, at  
21 some other point, you were going to reevaluate and see whether  
22 you could reduce it more, and it references a framework  
23 procedure, but there is not actually a framework procedure that  
24 was put in place to do it, and so, as far as I can tell, there  
25 is no framework procedure that allows you to do that, and so you  
26 would do a plan amendment to change the threshold.

27  
28 I mean, really, a plan amendment, a framework, they're pretty  
29 much equivalent. It requires a little bit different comment  
30 period, but the analysis is what the analysis is, regardless of  
31 what you're going to call it.

32  
33 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Mr. Boyd.

34  
35 **MR. DOUG BOYD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm not on the  
36 committee, but I have a question for Dr. Barbieri. At this stat  
37 level, what other species are in the bycatch, and are those  
38 significant?

39  
40 **DR. BARBIERI:** Oh, gosh. To tell the truth, I would have to --  
41 I wouldn't know, off the top of my head, to tell the truth, and  
42 I would have to reach out to other people. We do have Dr.  
43 Gallaway here, who has a history of analyzing that type of data,  
44 the shrimp bycatch in the Gulf, especially in that area, as you  
45 know, and so --

46  
47 **MR. BOYD:** Well, I will just see him offline then, and I won't  
48 hold up the council.

1  
2 **DR. BARBIERI:** Absolutely, yes.

3  
4 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Mr. Anson.

5  
6 **MR. ANSON:** I would like to make a motion then that we instruct  
7 staff to proceed with developing a plan amendment for the shrimp  
8 fishery to look at reducing the effort to 60 percent relative to  
9 the red snapper bycatch.

10  
11 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** I will let them get that on the board, and then  
12 I will see if there's a second. Mr. Anson, is that your motion?

13  
14 **MR. ANSON:** Thanks to Dr. Kilgour it is, yes.

15  
16 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** All right. We have a motion. Do we have a  
17 second? It's seconded by Ms. Bosarge. Is there discussion?  
18 Mr. Anson.

19  
20 **MR. ANSON:** Well, it's just some opportunity here. We did this  
21 to kind of constrain the shrimp fishery, to avoid any impacts on  
22 one species, and it appears that species is at a point now where  
23 some of those constraints can be reduced, relaxed, a little bit,  
24 and we ought to, I think, take advantage of that, so that we can  
25 provide the maximum opportunity for the shrimp fleet while still  
26 trying to achieve the rebuilding target for red snapper. It  
27 appears like the data shows that we can do that.

28  
29 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Any further discussion? **Seeing none, is there**  
30 **opposition to the motion on the board? Seeing none, the motion**  
31 **carries.**

32  
33 Is that it for you, Dr. Kilgour? Thank you. I think that takes  
34 care of everything under Item Number IV, and so we're going to  
35 move to Other Business, and I believe Dr. Porch is going to take  
36 care of that. Dr. Porch.

37  
38 **OTHER BUSINESS**  
39 **SEA TURTLE BYCATCH MEMO**

40  
41 **DR. CLAY PORCH:** I will just go through this really quickly, if  
42 you could move to Table 9, which is on page 23. The gist of it  
43 is we developed a statistically-defensible method for estimating  
44 the total bycatch of various species of sea turtles in the  
45 shrimp fishery, and so that's turtles both caught in the try  
46 nets and then also caught in the main nets that don't get  
47 extruded through the turtle excluder device.

1 This method is generally a Bayesian-type statistical model that  
2 assumes a negative binomial distribution, and so it's kind of  
3 standard statistical techniques, and I won't get into the  
4 technical details beyond that, but it's a great improvement over  
5 the methods that were used in the past, which had to make a  
6 number of assumptions.

7  
8 The results are shown here in Table 9, and what you can  
9 generally see is not only the estimates of bycatch mortality are  
10 lower, but, generally, they have been decreasing since 2007 for  
11 Kemp's ridley and loggerheads and more or less level for green  
12 sea turtles in the Gulf of Mexico. That's all I have to say  
13 about that.

14  
15 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Any questions for Dr. Porch? Thank you for  
16 bringing that to our attention, Dr. Porch, and thank you all for  
17 doing everything you can do to improve this data. Is there any  
18 other business to come before this committee? Seeing none,  
19 we're adjourned.

20

21 (Whereupon, the meeting adjourned on August 20, 2018.)

22

23

- - -