

1 GULF OF MEXICO FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

2  
3 MEETING OF THE STANDING & SPECIAL REEF FISH, ECOSYSTEM &  
4 SOCIOECONOMIC SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEES

5  
6 WEBINAR

7  
8 AUGUST 11, 2020

9  
10 **STANDING SSC VOTING MEMBERS**

- 11 Joseph Powers.....
- 12 Lee Anderson.....
- 13 Luiz Barbieri.....
- 14 Harry Blanchet.....
- 15 David Chagaris.....
- 16 Benny Gallaway.....
- 17 Bob Gill.....
- 18 Douglas Gregory.....
- 19 Walter Keithly.....
- 20 Kai Lorenzen.....
- 21 Camp Matens.....
- 22 James Nance.....
- 23 Will Patterson.....
- 24 Sean Powers.....
- 25 Ken Roberts.....
- 26 Steven Scyphers.....
- 27 Jim Tolan.....

28  
29 **SPECIAL REEF FISH SSC VOTING MEMBERS**

- 30 Jason Adriance.....
- 31 Judson Curtis.....
- 32 John Mareska.....

33  
34 **SPECIAL SOCIOECONOMIC SSC VOTING MEMBERS**

- 35 Jack Isaacs.....
- 36 Andrew Ropicki.....

37  
38 **SPECIAL ECOSYSTEM SSC VOTING MEMBERS**

- 39 Paul Sammarco.....

40  
41 **STAFF**

- 42 Matt Freeman.....Economist
- 43 John Froeschke.....Deputy Director
- 44 Beth Hager.....Administrative Officer
- 45 Karen Hoak.....Administrative & Financial Assistant
- 46 Lisa Hollensead.....Fishery Biologist
- 47 Mary Levy.....NOAA General Counsel
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9 Kevin Anson.....GMFMC  
10 Steven Atran.....FL  
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17 Erika Burgess.....FWC  
18 Shannon Calay.....SEFSC  
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20 Richard Cody.....NOAA  
21 Chad Courville.....  
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27 Katherine Ellis.....  
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29 Tom Frazer.....GMFMC Steven Garner  
30 Alisha Gray.....  
31 Martha Guyas.....GMFMC  
32 Chad Hansen.....Pew Charitable Trusts  
33 Sepp Haukebo.....EDF  
34 Frank Helies.....NOAA  
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36 Joseph Hudson.....  
37 Michael Jepson.....NOAA  
38 Joe West.....LA  
39 Costa Kouzounis.....  
40 Michael Larkin.....NOAA  
41 Ty Lindsey.....LA  
42 Julie Lively.....LA  
43 Allen Lowe.....  
44 Dan Luers.....NOAA  
45 Trevor Moncrief.....MS  
46 Richard Malinowski.....NOAA  
47 Vivian Matter.....SEFSC  
48 Paul Mickle.....GMFMC

1 Bud Miller.....  
2 Julie Neer.....SEDAR  
3 David Nieland.....LA  
4 Mike Norberg.....FWC  
5 Matthew Nuttall.....NOAA  
6 Robert Palmer.....  
7 Laura Picariello.....  
8 Clay Porch.....SEFSC  
9 Jeff Pulver.....NOAA  
10 David Records.....NOAA  
11 David Reeves.....FWC  
12 Ashford Rosenberg.....Shareholders Alliance  
13 Skyler Sagarese.....SEFSC  
14 Beverly Sauls.....FWC  
15 Chris Schieble.....LA  
16 Nancy Sheridan.....FWC  
17 Katie Siegfried.....SEFSC  
18 Elizabeth Silleck.....EDF  
19 Matthew Smith.....NOAA  
20 Joe Spraggins.....MS  
21 Kali Spurgin.....FWC  
22 Greg Stunz.....GMFMC  
23 CJ Sweetman.....FWC  
24 Savannah Swinea.....  
25 Michael Travis.....NOAA  
26 Alan Wilson.....  
27 Christian Winslow.....LA  
28 Ty Tannick.....  
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PAGE 61: Motion that the SSC recommends that management advice for Gulf of Mexico red snapper be derived using the unadjusted harvest estimates from the state surveys (TPWD, LA Creel, MS Tails 'n Scales, Alabama Snapper Check, and Florida Gulf Reef Fish Survey) until such time as the causal factors and relationships explaining the disagreement between the MRIP FES survey and the state surveys are established. Further, we recommend that the historical time series use the calibration between MRIP CHTS and the state surveys of red snapper for Louisiana, Alabama, Mississippi, and Florida. The motion was withdrawn on page 68.

PAGE 90: Motion that the SSC considers the methods proposed to generate conversion ratios between Gulf state surveys and MRIP data as appropriate for quota monitoring of the red snapper state specific ACLs. Specifically, these methods consist of: Florida GRFS to CHTS ratio of 1.0602 (2015-2017); Alabama Snapper Check to CHTS ratio of 0.4875 (CHTS data for 2018-2019); Mississippi Tails 'n Scales to CHTS ratio of 0.3840 (2015-2017); Louisiana LA Creel to CHTS ratio of 1.06 (2015). The motion carried on page 101.

- - -

1 The Meeting of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council  
2 Standing and Special Reef Fish, Ecosystem, and Socioeconomic  
3 Scientific and Statistical Committees convened via webinar on  
4 Tuesday morning, August 11, 2020, and was called to order by  
5 Chairman Joe Powers.

6  
7  
8

**INTRODUCTIONS AND ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

9 **CHAIRMAN JOE POWERS:** Good morning. My name is Joe Powers, and  
10 I welcome all of you as the Chair of the Scientific and  
11 Statistical Committee of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management  
12 Council. We appreciate your attendance on this webinar and  
13 input in this meeting.

14

15 Representing the Gulf Council is Greg Stunz. Council Staff in  
16 attendance are Ryan Rindone and Jessica Matos. Notice of this  
17 meeting was provided to the Federal Register, sent via email to  
18 subscribers of the council's press release email list, and was  
19 posted on the council's website.

20

21 Today's meeting will include the following topics: Adoption of  
22 the Agenda, Approval of Minutes, Meeting Objectives, and then a  
23 Workshop Summary of the Overview of the Gulf States Methods and  
24 Calibrations, the results of that and some tasks related to  
25 that, and then Public Comment and Other Business.

26

27 This webinar is open to the public and is being streamed live  
28 and recorded. A summary of the meeting and verbatim minutes  
29 will be produced and made available to the public via the  
30 council's website.

31

32 For the purpose of voice identification and to ensure you are  
33 able to mute and unmute your line, please identify yourself by  
34 stating your full name when your name is called for attendance.  
35 Once you have identified yourself, please re-mute your line. To  
36 signal you wish to speak during the meeting, please use the  
37 raise-your-hand function, and staff will display your name.  
38 Please remember to identify yourself before speaking and to also  
39 re-mute your line each time you finish speaking. Thank you.  
40 Can we begin with the call for attendance?

41

42 **MS. JESSICA MATOS:** Lee Anderson.

43

44 **DR. LEE ANDERSON:** Lee Anderson is here.

45

46 **MS. MATOS:** Luiz Barbieri.

47

48 **DR. LUIZ BARBIERI:** Luiz Barbieri is here.

1  
2 **MS. MATOS:** Harry Blanchet.  
3  
4 **MR. HARRY BLANCHET:** Harry Blanchet, here.  
5  
6 **MS. MATOS:** Dave Chagaris.  
7  
8 **DR. DAVID CHAGARIS:** David Chagaris is here.  
9  
10 **MS. MATOS:** Benny Gallaway.  
11  
12 **DR. BENNY GALLAWAY:** Benny Gallaway, here.  
13  
14 **MS. MATOS:** Bob Gill.  
15  
16 **MR. BOB GILL:** Bob Gill.  
17  
18 **MS. MATOS:** Doug Gregory.  
19  
20 **MR. DOUGLAS GREGORY:** Doug Gregory, here.  
21  
22 **MS. MATOS:** Walter Keithly.  
23  
24 **DR. WALTER KEITHLY:** Walter Keithly, here.  
25  
26 **MS. MATOS:** Kai Lorenzen.  
27  
28 **DR. KAI LORENZEN:** Kai Lorenzen, here.  
29  
30 **MS. MATOS:** Camp Matens.  
31  
32 **MR. CAMP MATENS:** Camp Matens, here.  
33  
34 **MS. MATOS:** Jim Nance.  
35  
36 **DR. JIM NANCE:** Jim Nance is here.  
37  
38 **MS. MATOS:** Will Patterson.  
39  
40 **DR. WILL PATTERSON:** Will Patterson.  
41  
42 **MS. MATOS:** Joe Powers.  
43  
44 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Joe Powers, here.  
45  
46 **MS. MATOS:** Sean Powers.  
47  
48 **DR. SEAN POWERS:** Sean Powers is here.

1  
2 **MS. MATOS:** Ken Roberts.  
3  
4 **DR. KEN ROBERTS:** Ken Roberts, here.  
5  
6 **MS. MATOS:** Steven Scyphers.  
7  
8 **DR. STEVEN SCYPHERS:** Steven Scyphers is here.  
9  
10 **MS. MATOS:** Jim Tolan.  
11  
12 **DR. JIM TOLAN:** Jim Tolan is here.  
13  
14 **MS. MATOS:** Jason Adriance.  
15  
16 **MR. JASON ADRIANCE:** Jason Adriance is here.  
17  
18 **MS. MATOS:** Judd Curtis.  
19  
20 **DR. JUDSON CURTIS:** Judd Curtis.  
21  
22 **MS. MATOS:** John Mareska.  
23  
24 **MR. JOHN MARESKA:** John Mareska.  
25  
26 **MS. MATOS:** Kari Buck. Jack Isaacs. Andrew Ropicki.  
27  
28 **DR. ANDREW ROPICKI:** Andrew Ropicki is here.  
29  
30 **MS. MATOS:** Cam Ainsworth. Mandy Karnauskas. Paul Sammarco.  
31  
32 **DR. PAUL SAMMARCO:** Paul Sammarco, here.  
33  
34 **MS. MATOS:** Greg Stunz.  
35  
36 **DR. GREG STUNZ:** Greg Stunz is here.  
37  
38 **MS. MATOS:** That's it. Thank you.  
39  
40 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** All right. Thank you. First off, we have the  
41 agenda, and, as I mentioned before, there is a place for public  
42 comment, which will take place tomorrow morning. This meeting  
43 is supposed to last all day and then through noon tomorrow, and  
44 so, in terms of the adoption of the agenda, are there any other  
45 agenda items, or may we go ahead and adopt the agenda? Is there  
46 a motion to adopt?  
47  
48 **MR. GILL:** Move to adopt, Mr. Chairman.



1  
2 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you, Bob. Is there a second?

3  
4 **DR. NANCE:** I will second.

5  
6 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES: JULY 21-23, 2020 WEBINAR MEETING**

7  
8 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Are there any objections to  
9 adopting the agenda as published? If not, the agenda is  
10 adopted. Then we have the Approval of the Minutes for the July  
11 21 and 22 meeting. Are there any additions or corrections to  
12 those minutes? If not, may we have a motion to adopt?

13  
14 **DR. TOLAN:** So moved, Mr. Chairman.

15  
16 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** We have a second by Bob Gill.

17  
18 **MR. GILL:** Roger that, Mr. Chairman.

19  
20 **MEETING OBJECTIVES**

21  
22 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** All right. Is there any objections to  
23 adopting the minutes? If not, the minutes are adopted. All  
24 right. The Meeting Objectives, there's a short paragraph there  
25 that Ryan has.

26  
27 You can all read it, but, basically, this entire meeting is more  
28 or less one agenda item, in terms of the calibration process, in  
29 terms of the activities that have already gone on, and, in  
30 particular, the workshop that was held last week, in terms of  
31 the methodologies that are being used to generate the  
32 calibration ratios, so that we can make recommendations to the  
33 council relative to those, in terms of their appropriateness for  
34 the calibration and monitoring of red snapper state-specific  
35 ACLs.

36  
37 Basically, what this whole process is trying to do is to convert  
38 the measurements, using the state-specific estimates, with the  
39 MRIP-FES estimates, as we go through this process, and it's  
40 primarily for the quota monitoring, and so let us begin then  
41 with the workshop summary and the overview of the Gulf states  
42 methods and so on.

43  
44 The first would be the meeting outcomes. Before we get into  
45 that though, there's a number of background materials and  
46 reports, technical reports, about this workshop, and I'm sure  
47 that we'll be referring to those as the day goes on, and so  
48 please have those handy. Dr. Froeschke.



1 of the four states gave a presentation about the data and  
2 methods, and so the states developed their own calibration  
3 recommendations, and then NOAA has also developed their own  
4 calibration recommendations, and so the states gave their  
5 recommendations, followed by sort of a review and some comments  
6 by the consultants, and then the SSC representatives had an  
7 opportunity to ask questions about them.

8  
9 Just to kind of orient you a little bit about how this works,  
10 this is -- I will describe the boxes, and then we can talk  
11 preliminarily about the numbers, but don't get too involved in  
12 those just yet, but each of the five Gulf states have their own  
13 data collection program, illustrated by the boxes on the left  
14 side of the screen.

15  
16 I will start with the bottom. Texas Parks and Wildlife, those  
17 numbers, there was no opportunity for calibration, and their  
18 program has existed on its own through the entirety, and so  
19 those numbers, for present purposes, are assumed to fit one-to-  
20 one into the CHTS, just as they always have, and so the  
21 calibration ratio down there is illustrated as one.

22  
23 In the middle box, the way this process works, the current  
24 information is collected in the MRIP Fishing Effort Survey,  
25 which has replaced the Coastal Household Telephone Survey in  
26 2017, and so the way that the information works is it's  
27 collected by the states in their program, and it is translated  
28 to the FES and then back-calibrated to the older Coastal  
29 Household Telephone Survey units for the purposes of quota  
30 monitoring.

31  
32 The boxes on the right side of the screen are the ratios to  
33 convert from the FES to the CHTS surveys, and this is based on  
34 work that MRIP has already done, and it was described in the  
35 white paper released last year, and it's fairly well documented,  
36 and so those calibrations really weren't the focus of the  
37 meeting.

38  
39 The focus was these estimates, these ratios, on the left side in  
40 the dashed-blue boxes, and these were values that would convert,  
41 and so, essentially, it's a multiplier. You take, for example,  
42 the Florida Gulf Reef Fish Survey, and it's multiplied, scaled  
43 up, by the value in the blue box, and then it's ultimately  
44 divided back down by the value in the black box to get the CHTS  
45 estimate, and so the ratios here were proposed by NOAA S&T at  
46 the beginning of the meeting.

47  
48 This next slide just decomposes all of this into doing the math,

1 and you get essentially the final ratio estimate from the  
2 individual state survey to the CHTS. This next slide, what this  
3 does is sort of identifies some of the areas that the states  
4 have proposed change as part of the methodology that we can get  
5 into and better explain by the states in their individual  
6 sections, and the two parts to notice are indicated in red, and  
7 so Alabama and the Snapper Check, and they have done additional  
8 work.

9  
10 They propose a calibration process that uses more recent data  
11 and does a conversion directly from the state survey to the CHTS  
12 and omits this FES conversion, and so that's one change to be  
13 considered.

14  
15 Then a second is the Mississippi Tails 'n Scales Program did  
16 some of their own analysis and recommended a calibration process  
17 that's different, based on a weighted ratio, I guess you would  
18 call that, and they have provided their own recommendation for a  
19 calibration coefficient here, and then this was discussed, and  
20 then, after the meeting, the statistical consultants provided  
21 their own review and recommendations, based on this process.

22  
23 Then this next slide combines the previous slide, in terms of  
24 those ratios, and I do realize that the Mississippi ratios  
25 should actually be closer to almost one, based on the math  
26 there, but these are not official estimates or endorsements, and  
27 these are just sort of what the states recommended at their  
28 meeting, and, again, I think most of the discussions today will  
29 focus on the values in red that are recommended by the states.

30  
31 Again, after each of the states had an opportunity to present  
32 their recommendations, NOAA provided their own review, and it  
33 was a brief review, just based on the information provided at  
34 the meeting. They did ask some follow-up questions, and some  
35 discussions were had. The SSC members in attendance also were  
36 able to ask questions, and primarily about Mississippi and the  
37 methodologies used to develop their ratio estimates.

38  
39 That's what I have for you now, and hopefully this will get the  
40 conversations going and can help fill in some of the gaps about  
41 the process and what we hope to accomplish at today's meeting.  
42 I am done, unless there's questions.

43  
44 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Are there any questions at this  
45 point? If not, then, in terms of the agenda, Dr. Cody would  
46 make a presentation about the review of these and some  
47 recommendations associated with that. Harry Blanchet.

48

1 **MR. BLANCHET:** I am trying to find it right now, but there was a  
2 letter that was also part of this agenda item, and I can't find  
3 my copy of that right now.

4

5 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** That was --

6

7 **MR. BLANCHET:** It was 04, and, on page 6 of that, it's talking  
8 about the Louisiana calibration, and it's got a statement saying  
9 that ratios presented were based on Waves 3 and 4 and consider  
10 area fished. The actual -- We discussed Waves 3 and 4, but the  
11 final ratios used was for the full year, for 1 through 6. I  
12 just wanted to correct that part of it.

13

14 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you for that. We'll go through that  
15 again, and we're talking about the last sentence there, and what  
16 would be a proper way of saying that?

17

18 **MR. BLANCHET:** 1 through 6.

19

20 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Okay. Thank you.

21

22 **MR. BLANCHET:** We presented information on 3 and 4, but our  
23 final presentation was -- Basically, the issue was we were not  
24 very comfortable with the seasonality of the effort, as  
25 characterized in the MRIP 2015 survey, and so we were just  
26 pointing that out, but we went with the full year.

27

28 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** All right. Thank you. We'll make a note of  
29 that, as this report gets passed on. I believe there were some  
30 other questions or comments. Ken Roberts.

31

32 **DR. ROBERTS:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. John, you mentioned that  
33 the public was able to listen in and participate in this, and  
34 were there any comments from the public, particularly about  
35 effort aspects of the questions?

36

37 **DR. FROESCHKE:** I don't think so. It was a public meeting, and  
38 they did have the opportunity to listen in, but I don't believe  
39 that we received any comment from the public at the meeting.

40

41 **DR. ROBERTS:** Thank you.

42

43 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Jason Adriance.

44

45 **MR. ADRIANCE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I may be jumping  
46 ahead, but, since Harry brought it up, in the consultant's  
47 report, it also mentions Louisiana omitting Wave 5 and needing  
48 justification for that, and that will need to be addressed. We

1 looked at that annually, and we did not omit any waves, and so  
2 that propagated through to the consultant's report. Thank you.

3  
4 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Jim Tolan.

5  
6 **DR. TOLAN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just to get at a point  
7 that Ken had brought up, that it was a public meeting, and I  
8 tried to sit in on it, as just a public member, and, apparently  
9 under the Google platform, it didn't like the email address that  
10 I was using, and so I'm looking forward to the outcome of it  
11 today, but, from Texas, I couldn't get in on it, on the  
12 workshop, as a public member.

13  
14 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** That should be noted. All right. Let's then  
15 -- If there's no other questions or comments, can we have Dr.  
16 Cody give comments about the consultant's report and so on and  
17 the recommendations of that?

18  
19 **CONSULTANT'S REPORT FROM AUGUST 5<sup>TH</sup> CALIBRATION WORKSHOP**

20  
21 **DR. RICHARD CODY:** I just wanted to address Harry's and Jason's  
22 points there. We received clarification from Chris Schieble  
23 yesterday about the inclusion of the entire year and not just  
24 Waves 3 and 4, and so that's been noted, and we'll make the  
25 changes. It doesn't impact the outcome of the consultant  
26 recommendations, but it is noted, and we'll make the changes.

27  
28 The consultants, during the meeting, had a chance to deliberate,  
29 during the lunch break and then after the meeting, in a private  
30 session, and so they were able to include Jean Opsomer, who was  
31 not able to attend the meeting, but who had been involved in the  
32 Alabama review and in the review of the other methods previously  
33 as well, and he had been involved in all of the previous  
34 workshops with the states.

35  
36 The three consultants were Ginny Lesser from Oregon State  
37 University, and there was Lynne Stokes from Southern Methodist  
38 University, and Jean Opsomer from Westat, a survey company  
39 located in Rockville, Maryland. Jean was previously with the  
40 Colorado State University.

41  
42 The consultants had some general comments and then some state-  
43 specific comments, as far as the methodology that was presented,  
44 and their general comments really pertain to using, as much as  
45 possible, a consistent methodology, but, given the constraints  
46 of the different states of development of the surveys in the  
47 different states, they understand the difficulty with coming up  
48 with a common methodology that suits all surveys.

1  
2 This is pointed out also by the fact that there was only one  
3 year of side-by-side comparison for Louisiana, which was 2015,  
4 that included the FES, the APAIS, and the CHTS. Their  
5 recommendation was to try to improve the transparency, the  
6 general recommendation anyway, to improve the transparency of  
7 the process, and they called on MRIP to create a document that  
8 summarized how the calibrations had been done for each state,  
9 and they provided the ratio included for each state.

10  
11 They said that this didn't have to be a long document, and it  
12 could refer to the reference materials that were presented  
13 yesterday at the meeting and in any follow-up meetings, and so  
14 that was one thing that we've started to work on already, to try  
15 and come up with a documentation that we could have ready for  
16 the transition team working group meeting that we're hoping to  
17 schedule at some time in September.

18  
19 As far as the states were concerned, and I'll just go in order  
20 the way they've been presented in the text of the review, and  
21 the consultants started in Louisiana, and, as I mentioned, 2015  
22 was the only year available for that, and they were under the  
23 mistaken impression that not all of the waves had been included,  
24 and they asked that a brief justification be provided for  
25 excluding the waves, but, since that did not occur, that's not  
26 necessary at this point.

27  
28 They didn't have any major concerns with Louisiana's  
29 methodology, given the constraints, and Alabama as well, and  
30 these were -- They did mention that the comparisons were done in  
31 2017 through 2019 and that we should provide some additional  
32 details that led to the dropping of 2017 from the comparison and  
33 concentrating on the final two years for that.

34  
35 With Mississippi, Mississippi presented a new methodology, and  
36 it was different than what was reviewed previously by the  
37 consultants, which fell in line with the other ratio-type  
38 approaches that were presented, and, in this methodology that  
39 was presented, it was presented as a type of meta-analysis that  
40 produced a ratio based on quality scores calculated based on the  
41 PSEs, and so the consultants included the actual ratio that was  
42 calculated for the Mississippi calculation.

43  
44 You will notice that, in the numerator and the denominator,  
45 there is elements of both the FES and the TNS estimators, and so  
46 they are basically multiplicatively related, and so this means  
47 then that you can't really produce a ratio from one to the other  
48 that reflects going from the Tails 'n Scales current estimate to

1 the FES estimate.  
2  
3 They suggested that this is probably not -- This is not an  
4 appropriate ratio for converting between the two surveys, and  
5 they give justification for that too, in that there is no real  
6 interpretation of the ratio, because of their relatedness to the  
7 two components, the FES and the TNS.  
8  
9 They did say though that, if the objective was to produce a  
10 pooled estimate, that this is an appropriate methodology, but  
11 they pointed out that the correct way to produce the weights is  
12 to use the actual variances, and that wasn't the case in the  
13 calculation presented by Mississippi, and so they don't  
14 recommend that as a way to calibrate between the two survey  
15 estimates.  
16  
17 With Florida, basically, Florida presented a little bit of a  
18 different approach, and they produced ratios for both released  
19 and harvested catch, and they used an approach that was  
20 essentially a ratio of averages type of a methodology, and the  
21 consultants had no real concerns with the way the ratio itself  
22 was estimated. They did have some reservations about the way  
23 the variance for that was estimated and the choice of a  
24 correlation coefficient of 0.5.  
25  
26 They noted that, if you picked a correlation coefficient that  
27 basically splits the difference between no correlation and fully  
28 correlated, that you don't know which way the variance, or the  
29 bias, would be, and so it could be negative, or it could be  
30 positive, and then a more conservative approach would be just to  
31 assume that there is no correlation and that it's zero. That  
32 way, at least you know that the bias is positive, and so they  
33 suggested making that change.  
34  
35 They also suggested that, for the ratios and calculation of the  
36 variance, that there are two packages available, one in R called  
37 Survey and then the other a surveymeans procedure in SAS, that  
38 will calculate standard error, and even when there is  
39 correlation between the numerator and the denominator.  
40  
41 Overall, the consultants had no real concerns about the methods  
42 that were used by Alabama, Florida, and Louisiana. The only  
43 negative, I guess, was they weren't able to recommend the  
44 Mississippi method that was presented in the workshop, and so  
45 that's where we are right now with the recommendations.  
46  
47 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Is there any discussion about  
48 this? Sean.



1  
2 **DR. POWERS:** The other point that was discussed and debated,  
3 since I was there, was, if you average, which years you average,  
4 because there is a window of comparison between the Coastal  
5 Household Survey and FES, and there is, obviously, different  
6 windows for the different state comparisons to either the  
7 Coastal Household Telephone Survey or FES, and so that was a  
8 major point, with each state differing, if I remember correctly,  
9 in which years they would do the calibration of.

10  
11 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you.

12  
13 **DR. CODY:** Could I comment on that?

14  
15 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Yes, please.

16  
17 **DR. CODY:** I think some of that will be presented in Jeff's  
18 presentation later on, some of the rationale for the different  
19 years, but the surveys themselves were in different stages of  
20 development, and they had different constraints in place, and  
21 that's one thing that I think the consultants pointed out to me,  
22 that that needed to be set down in a document, side-by-side, so  
23 it could be clear to everybody what were the constraints in  
24 place, because they did have some concerns about the lack of  
25 consistency between the different methods.

26  
27 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Luiz.

28  
29 **DR. BARBIERI:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Sean already made one  
30 of the points that I was going to make about the block of years  
31 that was being used for the averages, and just a reminder,  
32 Richard, that that was a major point of discussion, and that we  
33 requested additional information regarding the precision of the  
34 data going into those years of the different surveys, the sample  
35 sizes. Jeff Pulver actually provided an updated presentation  
36 now that has those figures, and thank you, Jeff, for pulling  
37 that together. I imagine that we're going to go through that  
38 presentation at some point today, to kind of discuss those  
39 specific points, Joe?

40  
41 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Yes.

42  
43 **DR. BARBIERI:** Okay. Richard, on a separate issue, just in  
44 terms of understanding where we are today in this process, we  
45 have been discussing, we as different Gulf states have been  
46 discussing, this calibration process with you, with the MRIP  
47 office, for quite a while.

48

1 We submitted our paper, our write-up, describing our methodology  
2 in detail, and we presented our estimates in graphic and tabular  
3 form, and we had a follow-up conference call with your office  
4 and the consultants, and we received some comments then, but  
5 then this conversation -- We never really received any feedback  
6 regarding that submission, which was at the very beginning of  
7 June.

8  
9 Just for me to understand what it means today, the decisions,  
10 and we received now a three-page report from the consultants,  
11 which are making much more general comments, and sometimes  
12 revisiting some of the recommendations and comments that they  
13 made before, and some of the recommendations they made of  
14 methodologies for us to use are now being questioned, it appears  
15 to me, reading that brief report.

16  
17 I know this is a tough question, Richard, but can you give us an  
18 idea of where we are in the process? Does this mean that the  
19 SSC looks at this, these estimates or these methodologies, today  
20 and provides some recommendation, does that mean that our  
21 calibration method is now approved or not? How does that  
22 process work?

23  
24 **DR. CODY:** Well, Luiz, basically, the role of the consultants is  
25 just to provide their recommendations as to the reasonableness  
26 of the approaches that were presented, and I think that I am not  
27 -- I don't want to get them involved in the recommendation about  
28 numbers, but, basically, what they have recommended in their  
29 report is that the basic approaches that were presented by the  
30 states, and including the previous one presented by Mississippi  
31 prior to this new one, are a reasonable path forward and are  
32 adequate for the job that they are needed to do.

33  
34 They did make the point, or at least they tried to make the  
35 point, in the workshop, that one of the consultants, Genny  
36 Lesser, wasn't present for the Florida review, and so there was  
37 a little bit of a misstep there, in terms of communication  
38 between the consultants, and so I think that, that said, the  
39 only concerns they had about the Florida approach really had  
40 nothing to do with the actual ratio itself, but it just had --  
41 It was confined to the calculations of the variants, and that  
42 was -- They provided a detail there that should be able to fix  
43 that.

44  
45 I would say, from my perspective, once the consultants have made  
46 recommendations, and don't have any major reservations about the  
47 ratios used, or the calibration approach used, then it's up to  
48 the council's SSC to make recommendations based on the

1 calibrated estimates produced by them.  
2  
3 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you.  
4  
5 **DR. CODY:** Hopefully that makes sense.  
6  
7 **DR. BARBIERI:** If I may, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Richard.  
8 I think that helps me understand the process, and so, just to  
9 confirm, if I understand correctly, with a thumbs-up from the  
10 SSC today, our methodologies for calibration are officially  
11 accepted and approved, and is that correct?  
12  
13 **DR. CODY:** Well, that's up to you guys, but I will point out  
14 that there are considerations, and part of that is this  
15 transition team sub-group about revisiting the calibrations  
16 periodically, and, because they are ratios, and more data will  
17 become available, presumably, over the next few years, there may  
18 be an opportunity to revisit the calibrations, whether it's the  
19 methodology or the actual ratios calculated, to add data to the  
20 mix. I think that approval, in a sense, means that they're good  
21 to go this year, maybe, but it doesn't -- It shouldn't preclude  
22 future looks at potentially changing them, if needed.  
23  
24 **DR. BARBIERI:** That makes sense, Richard. Thank you.  
25  
26 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** But, ideally, as we move ahead, in the case of  
27 red snapper, and redo the stock assessment, everybody will be  
28 using that new set of statistics, and the ACLs will be based on  
29 that, and so hopefully this problem goes away, and am I correct?  
30  
31 **DR. CODY:** Well, the additional step of converting to the CHTS,  
32 which is no longer used, that will have disappeared, once we go  
33 to the new standard for the stock assessment, but I can't put a  
34 timeframe on when that might happen. That's up to those  
35 involved in the stock assessment process.  
36  
37 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Also, Dr. Cody, can you elucidate -- Agenda  
38 Item VI talks about the Gulf transition team, and what is this  
39 Gulf transition team, and who is on it, and is there a schedule  
40 of events?  
41  
42 **DR. CODY:** It evolved from the transition team that MRIP had put  
43 in place for the FES and APAIS, and it had -- That original  
44 transition team had regional representation from the Gulf and  
45 the Atlantic, and it had council as well as commission members,  
46 as well as NOAA, and so it was a broad group, or team, and the  
47 idea behind it was to bring some transparency to the process  
48 used for the calibrations of the FES and APAIS.

1  
2 This new transition team sub-group really is just an extension  
3 of that transition team. We felt that the transition team had  
4 worked well, in terms of providing a level of transparency that  
5 would be difficult to achieve otherwise, and that there was  
6 enough membership on the current transition team to do a  
7 breakout working group concentrated, or focused, on the Gulf and  
8 on transitioning.

9  
10 It would include partners from all the states, the commission,  
11 the council, and then the Regional Office and Science Center, as  
12 well as S&T, and so, in that forum, the idea would be to discuss  
13 needs for examining differences between the surveys, in terms of  
14 the estimates produced, and, also, visiting a schedule, or a  
15 timeline, for revisiting calibrations, if necessary, but, also,  
16 to come up with a way to provide for a more effective data  
17 management component, so that data is accessible to the partners  
18 and available and in a format where there is some standard to  
19 the way it's presented, and so that's basically the focus of  
20 that working group.

21  
22 They could make recommendations to the FIN Committee on data  
23 standards and data-related concerns, and possibly bring their  
24 concerns to the attention of the council, but they wouldn't have  
25 a regulatory component, and it's basically an advisory  
26 component. There would be an advisory scope to their function.

27  
28 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Okay. Thank you. Luiz, you're on this  
29 transition team, and am I correct?

30  
31 **DR. BARBIERI:** I am, yes, Mr. Chairman.

32  
33 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** All right, and we'll get into further  
34 discussion of this under Agenda Item VI. Returning to Agenda  
35 Item IX, we are being asked, basically, to make recommendations,  
36 and, implicitly, to thumbs-up or thumbs-down for certain things,  
37 and there is a list of background materials there. Were these  
38 planned to be actually presentations made here of the background  
39 materials?

40  
41 In some cases, I think it would be useful for provide some  
42 guidance for our discussions about what these ratios are,  
43 because, basically, some people that have been heavily involved  
44 in this, through things like the transition team, and, as  
45 mentioned, the activities coming up to the August 5 meeting,  
46 they have been heavily involved, and so are very aware of the  
47 pros and cons and things like that, and there has been reviews,  
48 but, largely, from a larger SSC perspective, I wouldn't say

1 we're seeing this completely new, and you know what was going  
2 on, but some of the details are sort of lost on us.

3  
4 I was wondering if it's possible to go through Agenda Items e  
5 through h, or whatever it is, and look a little bit more in  
6 detail, in terms of the approaches that have gone on thus far,  
7 and some of these background materials are in the form of  
8 presentations, and I just wondered if there is -- Because I  
9 believe these presentations were actually created for the August  
10 5 meeting, and is there a possibility that we could kind of go  
11 through these?

12  
13 **MR. RYAN RINDONE:** We have the representatives from the states  
14 on the webinar, and so, if that's something that you would like  
15 to do, we could go state-by-state and have them do a quick  
16 breakdown of what they went through with the August 5 group,  
17 which it sounds like that's what you're asking for.

18  
19 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Yes, that's essentially it, because I think we  
20 need to be all on the same page of what it is that we're dealing  
21 with here, because, like I said, for some of us, it's more of a  
22 broad picture, and you may want to know a little bit more about  
23 the details.

24  
25 **MR. RINDONE:** We can do that. We hadn't planned for them to  
26 present, but, if they're willing to kind of run through their  
27 materials, then they can certainly do that. I guess first would  
28 be Alabama, and so, Kevin, are you on the line?

29  
30 **ALABAMA PRESENTATION**

31  
32 **MR. KEVIN ANSON:** Dr. Powers, as I did at the August 5 meeting,  
33 for brevity, I just -- I will go right to the calibration  
34 portion of my presentation, but the first half of the  
35 presentation, essentially, is a summary of Snapper Check, just  
36 what it is and what it does, and so, if you want, or if you want  
37 me to go and talk about Snapper Check, if you think that would  
38 be valuable, I can do that.

39  
40 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** No, I'm more interested in the methodology at  
41 this point.

42  
43 **MR. ANSON:** Okay. The calibration ratios were calculated for  
44 Snapper Check and CHTS data and Snapper Check to FES data. Only  
45 private recreational data was used in the analysis, as both the  
46 MRIP and Snapper Check data assign state and federal charter  
47 boats differently, and so, for the estimates, they weren't  
48 really comparable. They weren't apples-to-apples, if you will,

1 and so we just concentrated on the private recreational data for  
2 the calibrations.

3  
4 The ratios are provided here that were developed for harvested  
5 fish, and then ratios were also developed for harvested pounds  
6 of fish, and harvested fish were calculated first because that's  
7 what was provided at the council meeting that the Southeast  
8 Regional Office had provided for the initial calibration  
9 discussion, I guess, at the council and those ratios, but,  
10 looking at it in the bigger picture, our point of view and  
11 recommendation would be that we look at ratios for harvested  
12 pounds of fish, because that's what we deal with, as far as the  
13 quota is concerned.

14  
15 That's what we monitor to, is in pounds of fish, and that's what  
16 the overfishing limit is and the allowable biological catch and  
17 the annual catch limits. They're all pounds of fish, and so  
18 that's what we also provided ratios for, and, again, make a  
19 recommendation for.

20  
21 We provided years of data for 2014, which was the first year of  
22 Snapper Check, through 2019, and the results for the time series  
23 are somewhat variable, when you look at not only within Snapper  
24 Check data, but also comparing to CHTS data during the earlier  
25 time series to Snapper Check data. There is some variability  
26 there, and so that's possibly due to the state seasons that were  
27 prevalent during that time series.

28  
29 Looking at the whole time series, Snapper Check data was MRIP  
30 certified beginning in 2017, and 2017 is a little problematic,  
31 because not only did it have a state season, but it also had  
32 that thirty-nine-day second federal season that was announced  
33 shortly after the first three-day season that was originally  
34 offered.

35  
36 Because of that variability, and because of the inconsistent  
37 seasons, and the way the data looked, we recommend using 2018  
38 and 2019 for the ratio calibrations. They are the most stable  
39 of the time series, and that's when the EFPs were issued to the  
40 Gulf states for the private recreational fishery, and they were  
41 the most stable, in terms of the FES estimates, when you're  
42 looking at Snapper Check.

43  
44 Again, I mentioned the harvested fish, and this is the  
45 calibrations to get it to the same metric that NOAA had  
46 originally provided their calibration to, and so here's the  
47 data, and you have the Snapper-Check-harvested fish and the  
48 CHTS-harvested fish and then the Snapper Check to CHTS ratio and

1 then the CHTS to Snapper Check ratio.  
2  
3 We took a mean of the time series, which is provided there, and  
4 then a mean of the three years that Snapper Check was MRIP  
5 certified, but, again, the recommendation that we propose is a  
6 mean of the ratios from 2018 and 2019, and that's what is  
7 offered there on the bottom.  
8  
9 This is the comparison of Snapper-Check-harvested fish to the  
10 federal FES data, and it's provided in the same format as the  
11 prior slide, and you can see the ratios there at the bottom.  
12 The mean ratio for the Snapper Check to FES-harvested fish is at  
13 the very last row there.  
14  
15 Jeff, I think, is going to address this in his presentation  
16 later on, but, when I performed the analysis for the August 5  
17 meeting, the data that we had available at the time had not  
18 produced CHTS estimates for 2019, and so I had to fill in the  
19 blank, so to speak, just to show the method and to use the two  
20 years.  
21  
22 I had to -- I used the CHTS to FES ratio for the time series of  
23 2014 through 2018, in order to use that ratio and multiply it by  
24 the FES pounds that were available at the time, in 2019, to fill  
25 in the blank, and that blank, if you will, with a question-mark  
26 is that number that is provided in the last row of the CHTS to  
27 FES ratio, the 1.95 million pounds, and so that is what I used,  
28 again, for the analysis, for just doing the calculations.  
29  
30 Here is the pounds of fish harvested from Snapper Check and  
31 comparing it to the CHTS time series, and we looked at the CHTS  
32 time series separate from converting through FES, just because  
33 it was easier that way.  
34  
35 As I understand it, 2017 is the last year that CHTS was actually  
36 being conducted, the survey itself, and so they have been  
37 estimating. Science & Technology has been providing an estimate  
38 of what those CHTS figures would be for 2018 and 2019, and, as  
39 you go further along in the time series, those numbers will  
40 become more suspect, but, at least initially, for the first  
41 couple of years after the CHTS has been terminated, that's what  
42 we have available, and, again, for the long time series  
43 comparison, it's a much simpler conversion.  
44  
45 That 1.95 million pounds in 2019, for the CHTS pounds harvested  
46 from the prior slide, has been put into this table, and the mean  
47 ratio for the target years of 2018 and 2019 from those two years  
48 is provided in the last row there.

1  
2 Again, that 1.95 million pounds is different than what was  
3 actually generated since the August 5 meeting. Those numbers  
4 are available in CHTS units, and they're slightly higher than  
5 the 1.95 million pounds, and so that will change that ratio.

6  
7 Here is Snapper Check pounds of red snapper harvested, Snapper  
8 Check to FES data, and the mean ratio for the 2018/2019 time  
9 series there is provided.

10  
11 Just, in summary, we recommend using ratios between the  
12 Southeast Fisheries Science Center adjusted CHTS and FES data to  
13 Snapper Check data to resolve the issue of common currency.  
14 There is a minor adjustment that occurs at the Science Center  
15 from the CHTS, or FES, numbers that the Science & Technology  
16 unit in Silver Spring produces, and the Southeast Fisheries  
17 Science Center numbers are the ones that are used in the  
18 assessment.

19  
20 Again, just trying to keep it as close to what the numbers are  
21 going into the assessment as possible, it's to use those  
22 numbers, and then we recommend a simple ratio for ratio  
23 calculations between the two surveys, and that's a summary of  
24 what would be for the CHTS time series of data.

25  
26 Again, that number, that 0.5259, is going to change, based on  
27 the actual 2019 CHTS data, and that was something that I brought  
28 up at the time, just for consideration at least in the broader  
29 discussion, as we move into the next red snapper assessment,  
30 that the SSC should discuss, is the issue of counting  
31 recreational dead discards in-season and attributing that to the  
32 quota.

33  
34 In the recreational data, the federal recreational data, they  
35 have harvested fish, and it's harvested fish that is used in  
36 monitoring the pounds that are harvested, and it's what is used  
37 --

38  
39 **MR. RINDONE:** Kevin, are you still there?

40  
41 **MR. ANSON:** Can you hear me now?

42  
43 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Yes.

44  
45 **MR. ANSON:** Okay. I don't know when you lost me, but I was  
46 talking about the dead discards.

47  
48 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Yes.



1  
2 **MR. ANSON:** Okay. Just an issue, and, again, it doesn't  
3 necessarily fall into this, the calibrations, and it does make  
4 up a small portion of the overall quota, the dead discards, but  
5 just, for a state like Alabama, that only monitors, or uses, its  
6 monitoring tool in-season to estimate the harvest, probably  
7 landed fish would be a better metric for monitoring quotas,  
8 rather than harvested fish, which would include those that are  
9 discarded dead at-sea or those that are eaten by another fish or  
10 animal.

11  
12 The last comment is the above recommendations are made under the  
13 assumption that the FES survey is deemed the best scientific  
14 information available, and the federal survey data should be  
15 compared against the Great Red Snapper Count and other fishery-  
16 independent data prior to the next assessment, and that's all I  
17 have. Thank you.

18  
19 Wait. There is the supplement that was provided, based on some  
20 questions at the August 5 meeting, if you can pull that up,  
21 please. Some idea of the sample size was asked from the  
22 participants at the last meeting, the state reps, and so I  
23 provided two tables here in this one-pager.

24  
25 The first table is the number of observed vessel trips, and  
26 those are trips that our samplers that are conducting Snapper  
27 Check assignments interviewed, and then the matched vessel trips  
28 are those trips that were observed and then also matched with a  
29 landing report that was submitted by an angler or a vessel  
30 representative, and then the estimated vessel trips that Snapper  
31 Check estimated based on that matching procedure and combining  
32 that with the landed reports, and then, simply dividing the  
33 observed vessel trips by the estimated vessel trips, you get the  
34 number of trips observed, or observed of those that were  
35 estimated to have occurred through that time series, and a five-  
36 year time period was requested.

37  
38 The next table, Table 2, is some statistical measure of the  
39 accuracy of the data is provided in this table, and there is two  
40 metrics here, and it's the estimated vessel trips and then the  
41 estimated angler trips that were provided, and so you see there  
42 the reported vessel trips, the estimated vessel trips, and then  
43 the PSEs, and then the reporting rate of vessels is in the  
44 center there, with the percent.

45  
46 In 2015, it was estimated that 21.7 percent of the vessels were  
47 reporting, and you look at the rest of the time series there,  
48 and it varies to a high, in 2019, of nearly 50 percent of the

1 estimated vessels reporting, or, actually, it's 49.5 percent of  
2 the vessels that were observed in the field by our samplers  
3 reported, and then, those angler trips from those landings  
4 reports and the observed vessels, similar information is  
5 provided as well. That's all I have. Thank you.

6  
7 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. I think that was helpful. Does  
8 anybody have any questions relative to Alabama, quick questions?  
9 Will Patterson.

10  
11 **DR. PATTERSON:** Thanks. Kevin, I have a few questions. I  
12 haven't really followed this as closely as some members of the  
13 SSC, and so some of the details are not things that I have seen  
14 before, but I am curious. You mentioned this briefly, but I  
15 wonder if you could go into maybe some more detail about the  
16 rationale for proposing just using 2017 to 2019, versus 2014 to  
17 2019, in your time series, for comparison.

18  
19 **MR. ANSON:** In 2014, again, we began Snapper Check, and,  
20 actually, in early 2018, the consultants provided their report,  
21 and the MRIP folks had given certification to Snapper Check,  
22 based on some modifications that were incorporated into the 2017  
23 fishing season. There was some probability, proportional to  
24 size, inconsistencies, or some deficiencies, in how the  
25 assignments were doled out that were used in the 2016 and prior  
26 years, and so 2017 is when we made those changes, and those were  
27 deemed appropriate, and that's when the program was certified.

28  
29 From 2017 to 2019 would be ideal. However, I did not consider,  
30 or am recommending not considering, 2017, because we had a state  
31 season, and I think there is some information, and there's a  
32 table at the end of the agenda that provides some season days,  
33 and it lists the number of federal season days, as well as state  
34 season days, there.

35  
36 There were state season days in the earlier time series, and  
37 that ended in 2017, for Alabama, and we went strictly to a  
38 federal, if you will, federal season, but the states set their  
39 seasons, in 2018 and 2019, through the EFPs, and so that --  
40 Having that state season, when you look at the data by wave, not  
41 only for Snapper Check, but also for the CHTS, it showed some  
42 wild swings there, and the data and the estimates were much  
43 larger.

44  
45 Again, we had the second federal season in 2017, which, by the  
46 time it was announced, I think a lot of folks had made other  
47 plans, and so it just didn't really represent a typical fishing  
48 season in 2017, and so that's why I recommended focusing on 2018

1 and 2019.

2  
3 **DR. PATTERSON:** Thanks. That's a great explanation, and that  
4 makes sense. The second question I have has to do with you  
5 recommended using the ratios of biomass removed versus landings,  
6 but I am curious why those ratios -- I think, for the landings  
7 in numbers of fish, it was like around 0.52 for what you  
8 recommended, but, then, for biomass, it's around 0.18. I mean,  
9 that would imply the mean size of the harvested fish, or the  
10 landed fish, is quite a bit different coming from the MRIP  
11 method versus the Snapper Check method. Do you have a sense of  
12 why that is? Like what's the difference there?

13  
14 **MR. ANSON:** The 0.18 that you referred to and the 0.52 -- If you  
15 can go to the presentation, and so the 0.52 that you see here is  
16 in pounds of fish, and so this is to the Snapper Check to CHTS  
17 time series, and the next slide is the Snapper Check pounds to  
18 the FES, and so we're not -- This is the actual difference  
19 between the FES estimate, in this instance, and so the FES  
20 estimate of pounds of fish compared to Snapper Check is nearly  
21 five-and-a-half times for the two-year time series, the 2018 to  
22 2019.

23  
24 You can see, as you go in the longer time series, that that  
25 ratio gets larger, and so the actual pounds estimated through  
26 FES is 8.3 or 8.5 times, depending upon the time series that's  
27 used, compared to Snapper Check. Then, if you go to the  
28 previous slide, you can see here, for the CHTS to Snapper Check,  
29 it's 1.9 times different, or larger, than Snapper Check for the  
30 2018 to 2019, and then nearly three times for the whole time  
31 series different, and so the federal estimates are estimating  
32 larger harvest, larger pounds, of fish being calculated, and  
33 it's a similar trend.

34  
35 If you want, you can go back a couple of slides, and it's a  
36 similar trend for the fish. It's actually a little higher, and  
37 so there might be some differences in the average weight between  
38 the two, or, actually, it might be more similar, when you look  
39 at average weight and include average weight when you use pounds  
40 of fish versus just looking at numbers of fish. I hope I  
41 answered your question.

42  
43 **DR. PATTERSON:** Yes, thanks, and, actually, I think it's not  
44 0.52 to 0.18, and it's 0.16 to 0.18, and so they're actually  
45 quite similar. That's my mistake in reading your slides. The  
46 last question I have about this is really for Kevin, and I guess  
47 maybe Richard as well, but one thing that confuses me is, in  
48 Richard's initial presentation, when you put up -- Maybe it was

1 John's presentation, when he walked through the ratios being  
2 proposed, and it seemed like, for every state, the ratio being  
3 proposed to get from the state-specific survey to FES  
4 equivalency was 1.0, 1.09, very close, but, for Alabama, it was  
5 quite a bit lower.

6  
7 I'm just confused at how a state's methodology can be certified,  
8 yet, in this case, the biomass estimated is about five-and-a-  
9 half times less, using Alabama Snapper Check, than the FES  
10 estimates, and so you're scaling up to get to that calibration,  
11 and so how can something be certified if it's estimating such  
12 lower biomass being harvested?

13  
14 **MR. ANSON:** Richard, I think this is more --

15  
16 **DR. CODY:** I will try to address that, Kevin. First of all,  
17 just a reminder that it's the methodology that is certified, and  
18 so the survey design itself is what is certified. There are  
19 implementation concerns about all surveys, and a lack of --  
20 Let's say a lack of consistency between surveys would -- Well, I  
21 wouldn't use that as a gauge of how accurate a survey is, and  
22 especially in reference to the CHTS.

23  
24 I think it's a situation where there are differences between the  
25 surveys, first of all, and we don't know what they are, and we  
26 don't know what the differences are, in terms of the drivers, or  
27 the differences in the estimates between MRIP and the state  
28 surveys and then between the state surveys as well, and so I  
29 don't know if I'm answering your question or not, but I think my  
30 point is that, just because Alabama's estimate is lower, that  
31 doesn't necessarily mean that that design is a bad design.

32  
33 **DR. PATTERSON:** Nonetheless, if you're scaling to a different  
34 number, and if you're having to scale it up, implicit in that is  
35 you feel the FES estimates for those years in the calibration  
36 series were more accurate. If you're scaling to that -- You're  
37 not scaling the rest down to Snapper Check. You are scaling up  
38 to FES.

39  
40 **DR. CODY:** Well, I mean, the issue is that we have an ACL that  
41 is set in the MRIP standard, and so we have to find some way of  
42 getting there, and this ratio is basically a way to convert that  
43 estimate, even if it is low, to the FES-based estimate.

44  
45 **DR. PATTERSON:** What if the Snapper Check number is more  
46 accurate? What is the FES number, for whatever reason, is the  
47 one that's a greater departure from what real is?

48

1 **DR. CODY:** Well, and that could be the case, and we don't know.  
2 We just don't know what the drivers are for the differences  
3 between the estimates, and I think that's one of the functions  
4 of this, or it should be one of the functions, of this  
5 transition team working group, is that we can coordinate some  
6 way of investigating those estimates, or those differences, and  
7 that's probably going to involve side-by-side looks at what is  
8 contributing to the estimates that we see on either side.

9  
10 **DR. PATTERSON:** I guess I was under the impression that that was  
11 part of the certification process and that that work had been  
12 done.

13  
14 **DR. CODY:** The certification process really refers to the survey  
15 design itself, recognizing that there would be -- There are  
16 challenges to implementation of these survey designs, as there  
17 are with the FES and MRIP.

18  
19 **DR. PATTERSON:** Thank you.

20  
21 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** I think that discussion was helpful. Sean  
22 Powers.

23  
24 **DR. POWERS:** Thanks. Kevin, I want to build on Will's question  
25 with one of the points on your slide. My understanding is that  
26 you were asked for the calibration to FES, and that's not  
27 necessarily -- It's a question for each state, but that's not  
28 necessarily what the state feels is the best estimate, correct?

29  
30 **MR. ANSON:** That's correct, Sean, and that was in my last bullet  
31 on the slide, is that -- Dr. Patterson was kind of bringing up  
32 the question, if you will, as to, okay, which number is more  
33 real here, and that's really, I think, as the SSC and the  
34 assessment team goes through the next assessment, is there's  
35 lots of data out there on red snapper, at least as far as the  
36 fish that is commercially and recreationally-harvested, or at  
37 least the recreationally-harvested fish, and it probably has the  
38 most information of any fish in the country, and so there's lots  
39 to pull from and look at and kick the tires, so to speak, with  
40 all these datasets and kind of fit it into the assessment, fit  
41 it into the assessment output.

42  
43 We've got some pretty good resolution now, and you can look at a  
44 state level and see what that harvest is, or what the estimate  
45 is, and what these different datasets are showing, and there  
46 ought to be some reconciliation there, again, as the data is  
47 looked at, and so that was kind of my point of my last bullet.

48

1 **DR. POWERS:** Okay, and, real quick, when you have a matched  
2 survey, and so one that was self-reported, and then obviously  
3 one you had observers, did they agree, for the most part? Were  
4 the fishermen fairly accurate in what they reported as their  
5 catch?  
6

7 **MR. ANSON:** I provided some information in the presentation, and  
8 there's a summary of the matching process, and, basically, in  
9 order to get a match between the observed trip from our samplers  
10 and the reported trip by the anglers, we ask the same  
11 information that the anglers are supposed to be reporting from  
12 the anglers when we conduct our dockside survey.  
13

14 There is basically five elements, key elements, of the  
15 information that we collect at both points that need to match,  
16 and the one that doesn't match precisely is the time, and we do  
17 allow a window before and after the sampler indicates that the  
18 interview occurred that the trip can match, but, essentially,  
19 it's the number of anglers, it's the number of fish harvested,  
20 it's the vessel registration number, and then date are the other  
21 things that need to match. When we call it a matched trip, it's  
22 matched at that level, at those five points, or five items, of  
23 data. Did I answer your question?  
24

25 **DR. POWERS:** I am just wondering how the number of fish and  
26 number of anglers matched up.  
27

28 **MR. ANSON:** For number of fish, that's one of the things that --  
29 Number of landed fish, that's what we use to match, and so, for  
30 instance, if a boat is encountered and the registration number  
31 is the same on the landing report that the angler provides, as  
32 well as on the observed dockside interview, all that's the same,  
33 but, if the landed fish -- If there were three anglers on there,  
34 and they had a typo, and they entered a landing report on the  
35 app, and they reported seven fish, but then the sampler counts  
36 six fish on that trip, that would not be considered a match, and  
37 so there is probably some non-matching that's going on, because  
38 of typos on the angler side.  
39

40 We do QA/QC on the dockside interviews, and so we try to keep  
41 that as a minimum, but certainly there could be some  
42 discrepancies there, but the number of fish that are landed has  
43 to match, and that's one of the key elements.  
44

45 **DR. POWERS:** Okay. I understand now. Thanks.  
46

47 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Luiz.  
48

1 **DR. BARBIERI:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to make a  
2 point here, and it's not really a question for Kevin, but just  
3 make a point about how the landings are estimated, and I make  
4 this point just because a comment like this came up in the  
5 reviewers, consultants, report, regarding how the landings  
6 estimates are calculated for the different state surveys being  
7 calibrated.

8  
9 In that case, and, Kevin, to clarify, what is described there in  
10 your presentation as landed -- Harvested fish being landed and  
11 discarded dead, or dead due to depredation, and so basically  
12 what you're talking about is A plus B1, as the MRIP catch  
13 disposition codes?

14  
15 **MR. ANSON:** Correct.

16  
17 **DR. BARBIERI:** Right, and so this is exactly how we do it in  
18 Florida as well, and so, for the quota monitoring, we consider  
19 the estimated landings as A plus B1, and this doesn't involve  
20 the B2s, which is the total discards that happen during the  
21 season and outside of the season, and so just to make that  
22 clarification.

23  
24 In our case, and Bev going to probably go through our  
25 presentation next, but we estimate landings as A plus B1, and we  
26 have a separate calibration for the discards, but the discards  
27 represent really all the dead discards estimated by the B2s.  
28 Thank you.

29  
30 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Richard Cody, do you have another  
31 comment?

32  
33 **DR. CODY:** Actually, Luiz just said what -- I was just going to  
34 make a comment that I thought that Kevin was referring to the  
35 B1s, which is the unobserved dead discards, but also it includes  
36 harvest that was not seen or observed by the sampler, and it  
37 didn't pertain to the released-alive component of the catch, and  
38 so thanks, Luiz.

39  
40 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Paul Sammarco.

41  
42 **DR. SAMMARCO:** Thank you. Just reiterating something that was  
43 said before in a question, there are these significant  
44 disparities between these techniques, and you've got Snapper  
45 Check, which significantly underestimates what CHTS is  
46 estimating, which is less than FES and so forth, but I guess it  
47 comes back to Snapper Check, and this is both a point and a  
48 question.

1  
2 If it is underestimating, or appears to be underestimating, over  
3 a period of time, and then it's put into a system where it's  
4 averaged in, I guess the question is how much faith you really  
5 have in the technique.

6  
7 Is averaging it in, is it to the end of keeping it in there and  
8 trying to get a better idea of what's going on, or is it keeping  
9 it in there so that it can be adjusted for future use and it  
10 might actually serve a better purpose, or is it to the end of  
11 keeping it for the moment to the end of possibly deleting it  
12 from consideration, since you have the other systems, which seem  
13 to provide a more accurate estimate of your landings? These are  
14 pretty big differences, pretty big disparities, between these  
15 systems, and so that's my question, is, I guess, in the medium  
16 term, how do you deal with this? Thank you.

17  
18 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** That was essentially what the workshop was  
19 about, is how to deal with this in the medium term, and, Kevin,  
20 correct me if I'm wrong, but, basically, the agreement is to  
21 adjust things to the new FES system and use that as a quota  
22 monitoring sort of procedure, but recognize then that there are  
23 differences here, and, at some point, they will have to be dealt  
24 with, in terms of -- Because, quite likely, these sorts of  
25 differences are not the result of random error sorts of things.

26  
27 I think that's one of the bottom lines of our group, the SSC, is  
28 that we may have to use these sorts of methods over the interim,  
29 but it's -- At some point, you're going to have to deal with  
30 these sorts of problems. Kevin, did you want to say anything  
31 more about that?

32  
33 **MR. ANSON:** Thank you. Well, Snapper Check, in addition to  
34 other state surveys, were born out of very similar discrepancies  
35 that were discussed today, when we -- As Magnuson was  
36 reauthorized and had new rules for managing the nation's  
37 fisheries, the results have kind of led us down to ever-  
38 shortening seasons, and so Snapper Check was developed, one, to  
39 be able to capture, in a timely basis, those harvests, but,  
40 also, we hoped it would capture them more accurately.

41  
42 We utilize this for the federal role of monitoring the Gulf  
43 fishery, to provide another data stream for that, but, within  
44 that, we have used the information to develop a biomass estimate  
45 of red snapper and other species, reef fish species, since 2011,  
46 and so we can compare our Snapper Check numbers, the federal  
47 estimates, to that biomass estimate, and the Snapper Check  
48 estimate can look at life history and basic biology and some of



1 the fisheries principles and apply it to red snapper and the  
2 Snapper Check data.

3

4 It better characterizes and better explains and matches with the  
5 harvest and the biomass that is off of Alabama, and so, at least  
6 from Alabama's perspective, we intend to utilize it. How it's  
7 used for federal assessment and federal monitoring, that remains  
8 to be seen, and, again, Dr. Powers alluded to what that process  
9 could be, but, for Alabama's purposes, we feel that it  
10 characterizes the harvest off of Alabama fairly well, or at  
11 least better than the federal surveys do.

12

13 **DR. SAMMARCO:** Thank you.

14

15 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Kai Lorenzen.

16

17 **DR. LORENZEN:** This is sort of a bit of a reflection on this  
18 question of what's more real and which survey is better that has  
19 been asked by several people, and, fundamentally, we don't know  
20 what the true capture is, and so we have different methods of  
21 estimating catches, and they give us sometimes slightly  
22 different, and sometimes quite different, answers, and the  
23 reasons they do that probably have to do with specifics of the  
24 designs that we have, and we don't fully understand those yet.

25

26 For management purposes, obviously, since this is all fishing on  
27 the same stock, we need to be able to convert all of those to a  
28 single currency, and, by nature, that has to be a survey that  
29 covers a larger area, but it doesn't necessarily mean that, by  
30 converting the state survey estimates to CHTS or FES estimates  
31 that one is recognized as better science than the other, but  
32 it's simply a necessity to bring everything onto the same  
33 currency.

34

35 One could probably do assessments with one data series or the  
36 other, and those would tell us very similar things about the  
37 status of the stock and the fishery, but only that the estimates  
38 of management quantities that we get back would be different,  
39 due to the differences in the way the surveys estimate those,  
40 but it wouldn't fundamentally change our perception of what the  
41 stock is doing. Thanks.

42

43 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Probably not. Thank you, Kai. Paul Mickle.

44

45 **DR. PAUL MICKLE:** Really, it started with Will Patterson talking  
46 about the survey differences presented here by Kevin, and, when  
47 you have surveys that are so disparate from each other, as far  
48 as the landings that they are producing, it's really that

1 question that Kai brought up, and so, cleanly, it's which survey  
2 is better?

3  
4 You don't really know, because there is not a real metric within  
5 the calibration process to identify that, and so those comments  
6 that Kai brought up of looking at the surveys and getting into  
7 the methodologies, as well as historical outputs, can, in my  
8 opinion, probably provide a metric.

9  
10 I haven't gone yet to present ours, but we will, it sounds like,  
11 today, and Mississippi took a swing at it, of dragging in kind  
12 of weights into the calibration process, but it wasn't really  
13 accepted by the independent reviewers, which I agree with, but,  
14 again, it was just an attempt, because, very similar to Alabama,  
15 Mississippi has very different outputs from our landings systems  
16 from FES.

17  
18 Again, it's an attempt, and, really, when you think about the  
19 timeline process, this transition team, I think, has a real  
20 vital role, and I'm optimistic that they'll start at least  
21 looking at some way of quantifying a metric that can be brought  
22 into a weighting process of some type, and maybe ratio  
23 calibration is not the appropriate measure, but I want to make  
24 it very clear that, right now, what is occurring is they're just  
25 taking the state landings programs and doing a ratio, just  
26 dividing one and the other, and so they're assuming that the  
27 accuracies are, I guess, the same for all the surveys, and just  
28 dividing one into the other, which, sometimes, when there are  
29 such different landing outputs, it makes you think that, most  
30 likely, one is probably better than the other and maybe should  
31 be accounted for that in calibration, and so that's all I have  
32 to say. Thank you.

33  
34 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Clay Porch.

35  
36 **DR. CLAY PORCH:** Good morning, everyone. I can't comment on the  
37 relative accuracy of the different surveys, but Kai is exactly  
38 right. We need a consistent time series back in time for the  
39 stock assessment, and so, if you read that white paper that was  
40 produced by the National Marine Fisheries Service a year or so  
41 ago, we strongly recommended using the FES survey for the red  
42 snapper stock assessment because, at present, it's the only one  
43 that is calibrated back in time, so that we have the estimates  
44 back to 1981.

45  
46 In addition, some of the state surveys don't cover the entire  
47 year, or they don't estimate discards, and so, one way or  
48 another, we're still going to need some form of calibrations,

1 and so the current plan, as I said, for the upcoming stock  
2 assessment, is to use the FES estimates, and then we would use  
3 these calibration factors to convert the resulting ACL that  
4 would be in FES currency to the various state programs.

5  
6 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Any other comment? Richard Cody.

7  
8 **DR. CODY:** I will just add a little to what Clay and Kai  
9 elaborated on earlier on, and, basically, the white paper lays  
10 out the different options for the different calibration  
11 scenarios, and Option 1 really involves calibrating to the FES,  
12 and there are three different options laid out there, just so  
13 we're not -- Just to kind of get rid of the impression that  
14 something is calibrating in one direction only and the one that  
15 it's being calibrated to is the correct estimate.

16  
17 In the white paper, basically, what was presented were you could  
18 have status quo in the absence of calibrations. With  
19 calibration, you could have the option to manage or do the  
20 assessment, depending on calibrating back in time and getting a  
21 full time series, and so those are presented in the white paper  
22 for consideration, but the reason the workshop a year ago, or  
23 more than a year ago, went with that standard, the FES standard,  
24 was basically because we knew that, going forward, the CHTS  
25 survey wouldn't be maintainable, even though it was used in the  
26 stock assessment, the most current stock assessment, because we  
27 don't have it in place anymore, and there is pretty good  
28 evidence to show that it did underestimate, in the general  
29 sense, landings, or effort, and so all of the different  
30 statistical considerations I think are laid out pretty well in  
31 that white paper.

32  
33 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Sean.

34  
35 **DR. POWERS:** I just wanted to build on Clay's comment that,  
36 obviously, the stock assessment has need for the data, but  
37 remember that, as the SSC, the council also wants our advice on  
38 quota management, and this will have implications for  
39 allocation, potentially, and so it's more than just a stock  
40 assessment that the council wants our input in, and, in the  
41 workshop last week, we saw what some of those implications on  
42 the allocation would be, and so some of these extend well beyond  
43 the stock assessment implications, and that's just a point.

44  
45 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. All right. Thank you, Kevin.  
46 Being the first one, you probably got the brunt of questions  
47 about the system in general. Moving on then, next on the agenda  
48 item was Florida, and do you have any comments? I don't believe

1 you have a presentation, but do you have any comments about the  
2 Florida approach to the problem, Luiz?

3  
4 **DR. BARBIERI:** Actually, Mr. Chairman, I think Beverly Sauls,  
5 who heads our fisheries-dependent monitoring program, is on the  
6 webinar too, and I don't know if she has her presentation ready,  
7 or if she just would like to make some general comments, but  
8 she's the one who gave the presentation last week and would be  
9 better.

10  
11 **MS. BEVERLY SAULS:** Yes, I'm here.

12  
13 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** If she's prepared, that would be useful.

14  
15 **FLORIDA PRESENTATION**

16  
17 **MS. SAULS:** Yes, and that's no problem. Thank you. This is  
18 what I presented last week at the calibration workshop, and I'll  
19 try to run through it and also respond to some of the comments  
20 in the report that Richard Cody presented this morning.

21  
22 Just a little background. We initiated the development of our  
23 calibration method this year, early this year, after the white  
24 paper came out, and we still hadn't received many results from  
25 the 2018 calibration workshop, and we took it upon ourselves to  
26 initiate this process, and we contacted NOAA Fisheries, and we  
27 provided documentation for a proposed method.

28  
29 In March,, we had a webinar with two of the MRIP consultants,  
30 and Ginny Lesser and Lynne Stokes were present on the call, and  
31 Lynne Stokes had also spoken with Jean Opsomer and gave his  
32 feedback, and, by June, we had a revised methodology in place,  
33 based on their recommendations, which we provided a report to  
34 them for, and those are the methods that I'm going to present  
35 here at this workshop, or at this presentation.

36  
37 This is a quick overview of the survey as it pertains to how to  
38 calibrate it, and it was implemented in May of 2015, and it has  
39 run side-by-side with MRIP ever since. There is two main  
40 components. There is a monthly mail survey that measures  
41 fishing effort, and that mail survey is completely independent  
42 of the MRIP FES mail survey.

43  
44 The intercept survey measures catch per unit effort, which is  
45 used to expand landings and discard estimates, and that method  
46 is not independent of MRIP, because we actually use data from  
47 the Access Point Angler Intercept Survey, combined with  
48 supplemental GRS intercept surveys that we conduct side-by-

1 side, and so there is some lack of independence between the two  
2 survey methods.

3  
4 Just a quick overview of what's included in a GRFS estimate, and  
5 it only measures private boat fishing mode on the Gulf coast of  
6 Florida's peninsula, and it provides year-round monthly effort,  
7 landings, and discard estimates for the species that you see  
8 listed below, and it does not include charter mode or shore  
9 mode. Monroe County is excluded, but we address that in our  
10 calibration with MRIP, because MRIP does include Monroe County.  
11 It does not include the Atlantic coast of Florida or non-GRFS  
12 species.

13  
14 We don't need to cover this, I don't think, other than to make  
15 the -- I think it's pretty established that our estimates are  
16 pretty similar to the old CHTS estimates, when you calibrate  
17 back in time, but the FES estimates are two to three-times  
18 higher, which is why we need the calibration going ahead into  
19 the future.

20  
21 Our goal was to convert catch advice derived from future stock  
22 assessments using MRIP FES to the same currency as our state  
23 Gulf Reef Fish Survey, and we wanted to develop species-specific  
24 conversion factors that could be applied to that annual fully-  
25 calibrated MRIP estimate, so that it would be useful for  
26 tracking the ACL for red snapper in GRFS currency, and, also, in  
27 the event it's requested, we can provide a historic time series  
28 in the same currency as the Gulf Reef Fish Survey that can be  
29 used in a stock assessment.

30  
31 Our approach has to take into account the fact that, for the  
32 more recent years that the two surveys have overlapped,  
33 fisheries management in the Gulf has been very different. For  
34 example, for red snapper, it used to be open six to twelve  
35 months, and that was consistent in state and federal waters,  
36 but, since we implemented the GRFS survey, the red snapper  
37 season has been weeks or days long, and it has varied across  
38 state and federal jurisdictions, and so we didn't feel like it  
39 was appropriate to apply a calibration back in time at a very  
40 fine-scale, for example by month or area fished, and so the  
41 approach was to quantify the overall differences between the two  
42 estimates across all of the variable years and waves over which  
43 the two surveys have overlapped and just apply one single  
44 calibration factor to an annual FCAL estimate back in time.

45  
46 This is the method that was presented to the consultants, and  
47 they felt that this method for calculating the ratio was  
48 reasonable, and it simply sums up all of the landings from the

1 GRFS estimates for each two-month wave and area fished. It sums  
2 up the same estimates from the MRIP survey and divides those two  
3 sums to get a ratio, and we do the same thing with the  
4 variances. We add them all up and divide them into a variance  
5 ratio.

6  
7 This gives us eighteen pairs of GRFS and FCAL sums, six species  
8 times three variables, and variables meaning numbers of fish  
9 landed, pounds of fish landed, or number of fish released,  
10 depending on what you are wanting to convert from.

11  
12 This is just the ratio calculation. As I said, it's a simple  
13 division of the two summed estimates. When we met with the  
14 consultants back in March, we discussed how to calculate a  
15 variance on this ratio, and one of the methods that we discussed  
16 was the surveymeans methodology in SAS, which uses the Taylor  
17 expansion, which we were warned against using, because our two  
18 estimates are not fully independent of each other.

19  
20 The specific method that they recommended to us during that call  
21 was the delta method, to approximate the variance of the ratios,  
22 because the numerator and the denominator in this ratio both  
23 have error around it, and the delta method incorporates that  
24 error and estimates a variance for this ratio. We used the R  
25 package MSM to carry out the variance calculations, and so this  
26 is the methodology that was recommended to us in March, and it  
27 was presented in June to the consultants.

28  
29 The other thing that we discussed during our call in March was  
30 the fact that the two surveys are not independent and how to  
31 account for that correlation, and so we don't exactly know how  
32 much of the correlation is explained by the lack of independence  
33 between the two surveys, because they could also be tracking,  
34 and should also be tracking, the same trends, such as increases  
35 in effort seasonally or annually, and so we were asked to  
36 provide a range of correlation values, with zero being the most  
37 conservative, whereby we're ignoring any correlation between the  
38 two survey estimates.

39  
40 Our upper limit is a correlation of 0.9, which is based on a  
41 linear regression between the two time series of estimates, and  
42 we found that they were correlated, and 90 percent of the  
43 variation was explained by the correlation between the two  
44 surveys. Then we chose the middle value of 0.5.

45  
46 Last week, we recommended, or, actually, back in June, when we  
47 submitted our report, we recommended the middle value of 0.5,  
48 because we know that the two surveys are not completely

1 independent, and so correlation must be more than zero, but we  
2 didn't want to choose the upper limit, because of the other  
3 sources of correlation.

4  
5 The report that Richard presented this morning, the consultants  
6 recommend the more conservative value of zero, which Florida is  
7 completely fine with. This doesn't affect the actual ratio at  
8 all, and it only affects the width of the confidence interval  
9 around that ratio. Then, in order to convert MRIP to the FCAL  
10 estimate to GRFS currency, it's simply multiply times the ratio,  
11 and, again, this variance was calculated using the delta method.

12  
13 This is just an example of what the ratios look like for the red  
14 snapper landings in pounds, which is that first bolded row. All  
15 the way at the end, you can see -- On the far right, you can see  
16 the ratio of 0.38, and so that is the GRFS estimate on the  
17 numerator and the MRIP-FES estimate on the denominator, and that  
18 is our ratio, and you can see what the PSE looks like, depending  
19 on which level of correlation you choose.

20  
21 Then the next row below that just shows the ratio for landings  
22 in number of fish, which is the same ratio, with just a  
23 different error around that, and the bottom one is releases, or  
24 discards, in numbers of fish, live discards, and it's a very  
25 similar ratio for that value.

26  
27 In our report, which is, I believe, posted on the website for  
28 this meeting, we also present all of these results. I just  
29 wanted to point out that, if you're curious about what some of  
30 the other species look like, those ratios are reported in that  
31 report.

32  
33 Then the slides that follow just show you graphically what the  
34 conversion looks like, and so this is what red snapper  
35 conversions look like, and the blue is the FCAL time series, and  
36 the orange is the FCAL time series calibrated to the Gulf Reef  
37 Fish Survey back in time. This is what gag grouper looks like.  
38 The landings are on the left, and the discards are on the right.  
39 This is red grouper, and the last slide, I believe, is greater  
40 amberjack. With that, I will take any questions.

41  
42 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Richard Cody.

43  
44 **DR. CODY:** I am curious about the -- There seems to be -- The  
45 consultants and Florida don't seem to be on the same page when  
46 it comes to the methods proposed, and I do know that survey means  
47 does have -- It tailors the default method for variance in  
48 there, and so I think we probably need to just sit down and see

1 if we can clear up that misunderstanding, because, from what I  
2 understand, in the recommendations, Lynne is suggesting that use  
3 survey means because it can calculate a variance, even though two  
4 estimates might be correlated, and so we probably need to get  
5 something together to look into that.

6  
7 **MS. SAULS:** What we were told on that call, Richard, is the  
8 series is not appropriate, because the two surveys are not  
9 independent, and it wasn't just because they're correlated, but  
10 it's because they're not independent.

11  
12 **DR. CODY:** Yes, and I don't know if there's any --

13  
14 **MS. SAULS:** We followed that recommendation, and, honestly, the  
15 report is not clear, because, at the end of that recommendation,  
16 they also say that's not an appropriate method, and so I'm not -  
17 - We feel like what they recommended to us, which is the delta  
18 method, addresses the question of the two surveys not being  
19 completely independent.

20  
21 They didn't specifically say there was anything wrong with the  
22 delta method in their report, and so we're not really sure what  
23 to make of that suggestion, but we're perfectly willing to  
24 accept the more conservative correlation value around that ratio  
25 variance.

26  
27 **DR. CODY:** Yes, but I still think it would be good for them to  
28 clarify just what the understanding is at this point, because  
29 there is a little bit of confusion here, and I'm looking in  
30 terms of producing a report down the line that outlines the  
31 methods, and so it would be good for everybody, I think, and so  
32 I will try to arrange something.

33  
34 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you, but, of course, I think the  
35 conclusion was, in terms of the ratio itself, there isn't any  
36 disagreement between these things. Just for my own two-cents,  
37 it seems, to me, that how one -- Why one chooses a biased  
38 estimate, or less biased estimate, versus in terms of variance,  
39 really depends on what you're going to use it for, in terms of  
40 decision-making, and, at this point, it's not being used for  
41 anything, and so it's worth debate I think, but not here. All  
42 right. Paul Sammarco.

43  
44 **DR. SAMMARCO:** Thank you. If we can go back to Slide -- I think  
45 it's page 13. I am looking at these numbers, which are really  
46 interesting, actually, particularly the trends through time, and  
47 we have some pretty substantial variances here in standard  
48 deviations, and I was just going to suggest -- I realize this is



1 very elementary and will probably put people to sleep, but, if  
2 one uses a log transform on these data, or even a log log  
3 transform, if required, you can really get a handle on what's  
4 going on with these things, either through time or through  
5 space.

6  
7 Again, I realize that it's elementary, but it's very powerful  
8 stuff, and it will just knock those variances down, and it will  
9 allow you to -- Let's say in the graph that we saw before, which  
10 I think was 17 or something, it will allow you to see some hard  
11 trends with some realistic and meaningful variances, but that's  
12 just my suggestion. Thank you.

13  
14 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Are there any other questions of  
15 Beverly? If not, let's take a short break, let's say ten  
16 minutes, and we'll come back and go through Louisiana and  
17 Mississippi. Thank you. Ten minutes.

18  
19 (Whereupon, a brief recess was taken.)

20  
21 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** We'll go through Louisiana, and, in the  
22 background materials, there is a short presentation. Jason, can  
23 you address this, Jason Adriance?

24  
25 **LOUISIANA PRESENTATION**

26  
27 **MR. ADRIANCE:** Yes, Mr. Chairman. I will cover it. It's a  
28 fairly short presentation, since we concentrated it to be simply  
29 on the calibration, and there's not much LA Creel background in  
30 this presentation.

31  
32 We were tasked with getting a calibration of red snapper  
33 landings estimates that are needed to adjust those allowable  
34 catch limits established in SEDAR 52, and so we needed an  
35 adjustment from MRIP CHTS to APAIS, the A plus B1 currency, into  
36 our LDWF quota monitoring currency, which is the LA Creel  
37 landings.

38  
39 That required looking at the private mode landings estimates  
40 only, and the only year we had direct landings estimates  
41 available for, for comparison, were 2015, and that's the one  
42 year we had the side-by-side of the CHTS/APAIS and the LA Creel,  
43 and one note here is some of you may have seen, in the past,  
44 that we had a calibration document for our state-managed inshore  
45 species. However, this procedure differs from that, and I will  
46 cover that.

47  
48 Speaking of those inshore calibrations, when we looked at those

1 inshore species, those catch rates were very similar between our  
2 LA Creel catch rates and the APAIS catch rates, and those ratios  
3 were essentially one, and the only -- The biggest difference in  
4 those inshore species was the effort, and so, in that case, we  
5 calibrated to only the effort.

6  
7 However, when we got to red snapper, and, quite honestly, a lot  
8 of the federally-managed species, when you look at the catch  
9 rates, they do differ significantly compared to those inshore  
10 species. Those inshore species, there is no catch limits. With  
11 the federally-managed species, there's a lot of catch limits  
12 driving those catch rates, and so we needed a different  
13 procedure.

14  
15 We looked at those angler trips between the CHTS/APAIS and LA  
16 Creel and then those catch rates, and you can see those graphics  
17 there. Catch rates are on the far right, and angler trips are  
18 in the middle, and then the landings is the far left there, and  
19 so, while the catch rate estimate differences were larger than  
20 the estimate differences, and, ultimately, that's what ended up  
21 -- When you look at the landings, that 1.06 ratio, you can see  
22 there the specific ratio for the effort and then for the catch  
23 rates in that second bullet.

24  
25 I think this is where some of the confusion came in in the  
26 consultants' report and the workshop report, and we put these  
27 slides in here simply to point out that Wave 5 of the -- While  
28 we used the entire annual numbers, all the waves, we just wanted  
29 to point out -- This goes to the points that were made earlier  
30 about getting at the differences, and I think Harry brought this  
31 up last week, and some others did, in the workshop, but getting  
32 at the driving differences between all of these surveys and what  
33 does influence the effort and the catch rates in all these  
34 surveys and getting at those things, to eventually hopefully  
35 lead to some better calibrations, but we just wanted to point  
36 out that, when we looked at Waves 5 and 6 in 2015, for that  
37 year, we did have the direct point estimates to compare.

38  
39 There appeared to be some anomalies, and they appeared to be  
40 more like summer effort than that traditional -- You can see the  
41 wave starts off low in the beginning of the year and kind of  
42 peaks in the summer and then tails off towards fall and winter,  
43 and it seemed a little different in 2015, and so we just wanted  
44 to point that out, that there is that difference, and hopefully,  
45 in future years, we can get some more, if not full-fledged side-  
46 by-side, individual side-by-side of varying components, to get  
47 at what drives some of this.

48

1 Building on that, we pulled some of the historical MRIP CHTS and  
2 the LA Creel, just to look at how those waves in 2015 fell out  
3 compared to over time, and you can see Wave 5 there, and not so  
4 much 6, but the MRIP Wave 5 appears to be a slight anomaly in  
5 2015, but, as we said, we used all the waves, and I just wanted  
6 to point this out, in the sense of future research and working  
7 towards better calibrations. Getting some more side-by-side,  
8 eventually, is likely a good thing.

9  
10 Just to summarize that, like I said, it's a brief presentation,  
11 since we just simply applied those ratios, and we had direct  
12 landings estimates only for 2015, and so it was the only year we  
13 could get a direct comparison.

14  
15 The 2015 landing estimates can be used to calibrate between the  
16 surveys, assuming the differences observed are consistent  
17 through time, and that ratio between the 2015 LA Creel and MRIP  
18 CHTS/APAIS, the A plus B1 private mode landings estimates, is  
19 considered the best available adjustment, and applying that  
20 method results in a landings ratio estimate of 1.06.

21  
22 I will also guide folks to -- There is a background document  
23 that has some more tables in it, and it goes through the process  
24 a little more than the slides, if folks wanted to look at that,  
25 and I think that's the last one, and I will take any questions.

26  
27 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Are there any questions? Sean.

28  
29 **DR. POWERS:** Jason, you ended with a calibration to CHTS. What  
30 is your calibration to FES going to be?

31  
32 **MR. ADRIANCE:** We don't have that, because the only -- That 2015  
33 year, we only had the CHTS/APAIS side-by-side, and we don't have  
34 a direct comparison from LA Creel to FES.

35  
36 **DR. POWERS:** In John Froeschke's document, where did the FES  
37 comparison come from? Is it a generic average over all the  
38 states?

39  
40 **MR. ADRIANCE:** I didn't see an FES in his graphic, and I think  
41 the LA Creel went straight over to the CHTS.

42  
43 **DR. POWERS:** But then CHTS has to go to -- It doesn't have to,  
44 but NMFS is recommending that CHTS go to FES, and so is that  
45 step going to be made?

46  
47 **MR. ADRIANCE:** Correct, and I may let Richard chime in on this,  
48 but I assume that would be handled on their end, in their

1 ability to go between FES and CHTS.

2  
3 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Richard, to that point?

4  
5 **DR. CODY:** I can address that. There was a side-by-side done  
6 for the calibration of the FES, 2015 through 2017, and that did  
7 extend to Louisiana, but, as was pointed out, the only year of  
8 APAIS data was 2015, and so, even though there were three years  
9 of the FES available, there is only one year of APAIS data, and  
10 so that, I think, resulted in the choice.

11  
12 Also, Louisiana is a different circumstance here. They are  
13 basically the only game in town in Louisiana, and so there isn't  
14 a side-by-side -- There isn't the ability to continue side-by-  
15 side comparisons beyond the two years that were already done,  
16 2015 through 2017. They have the ability to go directly to  
17 CHTS, and that's what they chose to do.

18  
19 **DR. POWERS:** So Louisiana data will not be translated to FES  
20 currency, and it's just going to assume that LA Creel is FES?

21  
22 **DR. CODY:** No, and it will depend on what's used in the next  
23 assessment, if there is a need for an FES adjustment at that  
24 point, and so, if the next assessment is conducted in the FES,  
25 and the indication is that it will be, then there would be a  
26 need for a calibration, going back in time to the fully-  
27 calibrated FES series, time series, and that could be done for  
28 LA Creel.

29  
30 **DR. POWERS:** But we don't know what that factor will be, that  
31 ratio will be, right now.

32  
33 **DR. CODY:** No.

34  
35 **DR. POWERS:** Okay. Thanks.

36  
37 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** So the implication is the 1.06 here will  
38 presumably be adjusted once you go to the FES, the new FES.  
39 It's a little bit not misleading, but people should understand  
40 that the 1.06 is measuring a ratio different than some of the  
41 others. Walter.

42  
43 **DR. KEITHLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chairman. Jason, just a quick  
44 question. You mentioned that, for inshore species, LA Creel  
45 versus CHTS numbers, estimates, of catch were very close, yet,  
46 on the offshore species, and you showed us the red snapper,  
47 there is significant differences in both the trips and the catch  
48 rates, which led to the 1.06 difference, or a relatively small

1 difference, only because trips were much smaller and catch rates  
2 were higher.

3  
4 You mentioned that offshore there is more regulations and so  
5 forth, and are you attributing that as the primary reason for  
6 the observed differences in the inshore versus offshore  
7 estimates that you have arrived at?

8  
9 **MR. ADRIANCE:** Not necessarily that that's the only difference,  
10 but those are -- You have essentially a lot more of a quota  
11 limitation, and, I guess, in the sense of a bag limit  
12 limitation, but the surveys themselves lead to those  
13 differences, and a lot of it is embedded in the number of  
14 offshore sites that end up getting selected between the two  
15 surveys and then the encounter rates of those offshore species.

16  
17 One thing we ended up, through LA Creel -- Well, it actually  
18 started before LA Creel, but that is our recreational offshore  
19 landing permit, and that helps better identify our offshore  
20 universe of anglers, so that, when it comes to an effort survey,  
21 we get a better handle on surveying who is actually going  
22 offshore. Then some of the differences between the APAIS and LA  
23 Creel was just the number of times offshore sites were drawn and  
24 just the number of samples, when you look at the number of  
25 samples of offshore sites that we collect, versus what was  
26 collected under that survey.

27  
28 **DR. KEITHLY:** Thank you.

29  
30 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. If there are no other questions,  
31 then perhaps we can go on then to Mississippi, and I don't  
32 believe you have a presentation, but if you want to make  
33 comments. Paul Mickle, you had made the comment before that the  
34 methodology, the weighted -- There is a presentation. Excuse  
35 me. Paul, you had made the comment before that the weighted  
36 estimate methodology really wasn't trying to estimate a ratio,  
37 but rather melding the two estimations together in some weighted  
38 form, and so I will let you make a comment on that, if you wish,  
39 but let's begin then with the presentation itself.

40  
41 **MISSISSIPPI PRESENTATION**

42  
43 **DR. MICKLE:** Joe, I think I'll answer your question through the  
44 presentation, and I will be brief, because weren't on the agenda  
45 as formal presenters, and that's fine, but, if I don't answer  
46 your question, Joe, just bring it back up, because I will  
47 probably forget, because I will get so into the weeds here, real  
48 briefly, but I will just start by saying that I'm going to go

1 through kind of what makes Mississippi a little bit different  
2 from the other landings programs in the Gulf, and being  
3 different doesn't always work out in regional approaches and  
4 things like this, and that's fine.

5  
6 I am in support of what NOAA recommended and the consultants,  
7 and I want to make that clear, that they didn't accept our  
8 current approach, which is fine, and it's really just a strategy  
9 that I wanted to make very clear to the group, NOAA and the  
10 consultants, that, because the differences between these  
11 programs are so great, that, most likely, a ratio-based  
12 calibration is not appropriate.

13  
14 Just on a lighter note, if I submitted -- Probably a lot of you  
15 all, if you submitted manuscripts and got them accepted the  
16 first time, without revision, then you would probably get to all  
17 of your duties, as I try to get to all of my duties in what we  
18 do, and so it's fine, and I like to move forward on things like  
19 that, but I just wanted to make sure that the group understands  
20 that, most likely, in a landings program as different as Tails  
21 'n Scales is from the FES effort-based MRIP survey, that a one-  
22 to-one ratio is very difficult, because the disparity is so  
23 large, and there really is a need for some sort of almost like  
24 an accuracy metric to be brought into such efforts of  
25 calibration.

26  
27 Really, we just began discussions, and this is background, and  
28 so, just overall, I want the group to really understand how  
29 different Tails 'n Scales is. It's a little Mississippi-based  
30 program that looks at red snapper only, and it has, by far, the  
31 smallest universe of anglers of any state program in the Gulf.

32  
33 We issue mandatory trip numbers before you leave the dock, and  
34 you have to have that trip number on you on the water, when  
35 you're checked on the water by law enforcement, and you have to  
36 have that number on you when you are intercepted by a biologist  
37 from the State of Mississippi to do verification.

38  
39 Compliance rates, because of those on-the-water and off-the-  
40 water verification checks, is greater than 95 percent, and so we  
41 believe that it's a very accurate program that accounts for  
42 highly-accurate estimates of catch. Less than one out of every  
43 twenty boats identified as non-compliant, and this is usually in  
44 the beginning of the season, when new people are coming into the  
45 fishery, and, by the second half of the season, compliance rates  
46 have been estimated to be around 99 percent.

47  
48 I want to briefly just show just how different Tails 'n Scales

1 is from the MRIP harvest estimates, and these figures on the  
2 right are -- The top one is just a regression line, with number  
3 of surveys on the X-axis and landings, in pounds, on the Y-axis  
4 for both figures, and, again, R-squared is -- You would think  
5 the correlation is really increased in number of surveys as  
6 increasing landings in pounds, and the R-squared value for MRIP  
7 is 0.2, and the R-squared value for Tails 'n Scales is 0.84. I  
8 just want to point out that it's very quantitatively-different  
9 estimates in that regression, so to speak, or that trend. I'm  
10 sorry.

11  
12 FES estimates, this is just looking at wave, and you would  
13 expect summer waves of Wave 3 to be the highest, and you just  
14 don't really see that in Mississippi with MRIP. Those trends  
15 that you really expect to see in a reef fish fishery are just  
16 not there, when you start thinking about MRIP and how it's  
17 performing in a very unique and small offshore reef fishery like  
18 Mississippi.

19  
20 Again, this is just the raw harvest comparisons with 2018 and  
21 2019, which is the two years that we went through with the EFPs,  
22 and this is showing Tails 'n Scales with much, much, much lower  
23 catches and percent standard errors than MRIP, and that's what I  
24 keyed in on. I'm trying to bring some type of metric in  
25 weighting, doing a weighted approach, within the calibration  
26 process, trying to bring in the inaccuracy metric, so to speak,  
27 and bring that into a ratio-based calibration.

28  
29 This is just really an estimated total of MRIP, assuming the  
30 average boat rate, and this is just to show another figure  
31 showing the disparities using the Tails 'n Scales data to ramp  
32 it up to the effort levels of MRIP, and each vessel within our  
33 universe, and within the Tails 'n Scales system, when they have  
34 their own memberships and log-ins to our own system, would have  
35 to take fifteen trips each year to have that actual effort level  
36 that MRIP is reporting for the State of Mississippi.

37  
38 Really, this was the slide that we came to the workshop to  
39 present, and I will just read it, and this is from the workshop  
40 last week. It was determine the best available science and  
41 conduct the red snapper stock assessment prior to promulgating  
42 any rules that would shift any state's established quota, and  
43 that's seasonal management there.

44  
45 Then this last point is continual review of the FES survey  
46 within the MRIP program to determine regional feasibility and  
47 explanations on why harvest estimates for all species have  
48 increased dramatically since its implementation.

1  
2 There is a lot of discussion on the council floor, as well as I  
3 think at the SSC and other meetings, where everyone has agreed  
4 that FES efforts seem unreasonably high, even outside of  
5 Mississippi, and so there is probably a very large need there to  
6 delve in a little bit more and look at maybe why the effort  
7 levels are so consistently higher than what's being seen in  
8 other surveys and really kind of look at it.

9  
10 I know that the FES methodologies have been certified, but a lot  
11 of the certifications are done by both fisheries biologists as  
12 well as a lot of other folks that don't have fisheries  
13 backgrounds, where some methodologies may need to be looked at a  
14 little bit more closely, to think about maybe why those effort  
15 levels are so much higher within the MRIP system.

16  
17 This is the updated calibration methodology that we presented.  
18 It was not accepted by the independent review, which is fine,  
19 but I just want to go through it very briefly, just to show our  
20 attempt at trying to bring in some sort of a weighted approach  
21 to the calibration process.

22  
23 I won't go through the justification, but, really, the idea is  
24 seasonal management, which is what Sean Powers brought up after  
25 Clay's comment of it's really important for the stock assessment  
26 data inputs, which we agree with, but, again, there's a lot more  
27 on the line of seasonal management of what has been done to this  
28 point, what has been done through the last couple of years, and  
29 then, also, the methods of both surveys are so different, and we  
30 chose the only metric that we had at the time of looking at  
31 percent standard errors, but there is probably more metrics,  
32 such as variation of things that the consultants did that show  
33 encouraging statements toward a variance within the programs can  
34 be used for estimating catch and combining catch estimates, and  
35 so that was encouraging on that part.

36  
37 Really, what we did was a meta-analysis approach, and this is  
38 some literature on methodologies in the meta-analysis approach.  
39 This is what NOAA produced with their estimates for CHTS to FES  
40 ratio, the table on the left, and Mississippi is the bottom  
41 part, where they just took numbers of fish, instead of weights,  
42 and looked at CHTS and FES and created a raw ratio, and, again,  
43 just for folks that aren't very familiar with this, this is the  
44 old MRIP with the new MRIP involving the FES estimates.

45  
46 They create ratios on the right column and then take the average  
47 of all the ratios, and that's what is in Column Number 4 on the  
48 right, which is the FES to CHTS ratio.



1  
2 What was produced initially was the FES-state ratio, which is  
3 the accepted current method right now, which you just take the  
4 raw FES landings and divide it by the state landings, and,  
5 again, like I pointed out previously, in the beginning of the  
6 presentation, the disparity is so large that you get a very  
7 inflated, or large, ratio, which carries into a dramatic  
8 difference in the target of ACL difference of a 95,000-pound  
9 decrease in estimated catch.

10  
11 This was our attempt, and I don't want to get into it, because I  
12 do agree with the review, but, again, it was an attempt to drag  
13 in the standard errors, as you see them in Column 4, which is  
14 standard error there in the table, and those are the actual  
15 PSEs, which we converted into inverse weights for them, and then  
16 we did a ratio-based weight estimation there for calibration,  
17 but, again, I think it's a good swing at trying to bring into a  
18 calibration process accuracies trying to be accounted for within  
19 the two different surveys.

20  
21 I will just end by saying that, when you have two pH meters, one  
22 reading 7.5 and one reading 1.5, you don't do a ratio and go out  
23 in the field and start thinking 4.5 is what it's reading out  
24 there in the Gulf of Mexico, and I will end with that.

25  
26 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Are there any questions? John  
27 Mareska.

28  
29 **MR. MARESKA:** Paul, can you discuss how Mississippi handled the  
30 dead discards in-season and out-of-season?

31  
32 **DR. MICKLE:** I want to be 100 percent sure how we handled that,  
33 and I don't think we have Trevor, and he might be able to be  
34 brought into this conversation, and is it okay if I ask the  
35 staff there if Trevor is there and is capable of being a  
36 contributor? Is that possible?

37  
38 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** You can ask.

39  
40 **MS. MATOS:** He is not on the webinar right now.

41  
42 **DR. MICKLE:** Okay. I apologize. I think discards are accounted  
43 for post-season.

44  
45 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Okay. Will Patterson.

46  
47 **DR. PATTERSON:** I enjoyed that presentation. It's interesting,  
48 the approach here in Mississippi, in which, Paul, you have -- If

1 your estimates are accurate, and you truly are getting 95  
2 percent at the beginning of the season, and upwards of 99  
3 percent of all trips captured in your data, then you have a near  
4 census of the effort directed at reef fish or red snapper, and  
5 so I'm curious. What are some of the things that could be  
6 happening, where you actually -- Where that's not an accurate  
7 estimate of the total coverage that you're getting? I mean, how  
8 could boats be getting by you that you don't see?

9  
10 I mean, it seems that, if you have that level of enforcement,  
11 and you have to have -- All trips have to register before they  
12 leave, and then you intercept people on the water, with  
13 biologists or officers, and, therefore, you have an estimate of  
14 the number of people who didn't register, and then you have an  
15 estimate of those numbers that didn't report catch, zeroes  
16 included, after the fact, it seems like you have a near census  
17 of what's happening in Mississippi, and, I mean, what are ways  
18 that could be incorrect?

19  
20 **DR. MICKLE:** What are ways that could be incorrect? I will  
21 answer that at the end, I guess, but Mississippi is Old  
22 Testament, and that's one of the reasons that I love living  
23 here, but our law enforcement go out, and, if you don't have a  
24 trip number on you, and you were targeting red snapper, or are  
25 in possession of red snapper, they are taken from you, and you  
26 are cited up to a \$500 fine.

27  
28 Then, when we do intercepts via biologists at the boat ramps and  
29 private launches, we are acquiring that data with hands-on, and  
30 that's how our efforts are calculated, and then, looking at what  
31 the mail survey does, it's a voluntary survey, and all of MRIP  
32 is voluntary, and ours is not, and it's enforced that way.

33  
34 How are they getting by us, ideas about how is it occurring, one  
35 of the reasons I think was stated in the white paper that NOAA  
36 produced is that Tails 'n Scales is not a year-long program, and  
37 we have very limited resources, and that's why we kind of go the  
38 Old Testament route, to get the biggest bang for the buck and  
39 get our accuracies as high as we can.

40  
41 We have a big advantage of being a tiny fishery, and so, if  
42 you're a boat out there, it's hard to get by our law  
43 enforcement, and we have barrier islands, which I know you're  
44 familiar with, Will, and they have passes in them, and we have  
45 the majority of our fleet sitting at the passes, and you can't  
46 get by them, and it's very difficult.

47  
48 We have a lot of intercepts, a whole lot of intercepts, for

1 that, and there's a lot of numbers behind that compliance rate.  
2 When I go fishing, and I go four or five times a year, they stop  
3 me every single time, and they check me just like everybody  
4 else, and you can't get by them, because of the anatomy of the  
5 Mississippi Sound, from a verification angle.

6  
7 Back to your question of what do you think could be causing  
8 what's being missed in Tails 'n Scales, I think NOAA had a good  
9 point that it's not run all year-round, but, again, they did say  
10 that it's probably a very small number. In that white paper,  
11 they do actually say that, which we appreciate, because we don't  
12 have a season open, and we're not running it.

13  
14 The only time you see it is maybe when a neighboring state is  
15 open when we're not, but that happens very rarely, because, up  
16 to this point, we have very little efforts, so to speak, and our  
17 allocation through Amendment 50 is exactly what we wanted, and  
18 so we have one of the longest federal seasons around, up to this  
19 point, and so it's very difficult to really understand maybe  
20 what is causing those large landings from the MRIP and maybe  
21 what Tails 'n Scales is missing.

22  
23 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you.

24  
25 **DR. MICKLE:** We do have Trevor on to approach the discards  
26 question, and I would really appreciate if you all let him  
27 approach that, so we can have all the questions answered.

28  
29 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Can you sort of reiterate what the question  
30 was?

31  
32 **MR. MARESKA:** The question was I'm just curious about how  
33 Mississippi was handling the in-season discards, if they're  
34 included in the landings, and how they were handling out-of-  
35 season discards.

36  
37 **MR. TREVOR MONCRIEF:** Essentially, we collect discard  
38 information from the anglers, and it's reported for every trip,  
39 but the only way it's validated currently is by them reporting  
40 the number of discards dockside. Typically, what we've seen is  
41 that those are reported in intervals of five and range anywhere  
42 from zero up to 300 for a given day, and so it's hard to really  
43 tie down the accuracy.

44  
45 What we have experimented with is tying it into a discard per  
46 angler rate, trying to remove out the outlying outlier rates  
47 first and then producing a mean and then tying it to the number  
48 of angler trips that we've actually had.

1  
2 As far as our season, since the app and everything is shut down  
3 after the season is closed, we don't collect out-of-season  
4 discards, and that was certainly a discussion point, I think, at  
5 the Red Snapper Workshop Number IV, with the out-of-season  
6 discards. I hope that answers your question.

7  
8 **MR. MARESKA:** It does. Thank you, Trevor.

9  
10 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** All right. Thank you. Sean Powers.

11  
12 **DR. POWERS:** This is for Trevor or Paul. The discrepancy  
13 between the calibrations is really the effort data, right, and  
14 not the catch rate, and that's something that was a general  
15 conclusion from the workshop last week from the states, and they  
16 all felt that it's the effort determination and not the catch  
17 rates that were different.

18  
19 **DR. MICKLE:** I will probably let Trevor answer, but it's my  
20 understanding that we do have a little difference just with the  
21 catch, but the effort is obviously magnifying it and has caused  
22 the major disparity. Trevor, do you have anything to add?

23  
24 **MR. MONCRIEF:** That's correct, and so the difference between the  
25 effort rates are really what's driving the overall differences.  
26 I think where we really get into the largest disparities, and I  
27 think we tried to point that out with the first figure on the  
28 first slide, is that, when you have survey counts below twenty,  
29 those are during times where either our season was open only a  
30 few days, such as Labor Day in September, or our state season  
31 was not open at all and Louisiana was open.

32  
33 We intercepted just a couple of anglers, and so the overall  
34 proportion of anglers targeting red snapper was likely  
35 increased, because we got a few, and then our effort levels were  
36 elevated, and all of that coupled into those large estimates,  
37 and so I've got one number here that I will point out.

38  
39 We had seven surveys in a given wave, and it led to 16,000  
40 pounds, and then we had six surveys in another wave that was  
41 414,000 pounds, and so that's kind of the lead-in. When we get  
42 below twenty surveys, it seems like we have a large disparity  
43 that's occurring, and that's why that relationship between the  
44 number of surveys and the harvest estimates really -- You don't  
45 see it.

46  
47 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. I think this is very helpful to  
48 me, even though it really wasn't on the agenda, other than

1 through the background information, but, at this point, where we  
2 are left in this agenda item is the SSC Discussion and  
3 Recommendations. We have certainly discussed it, but are there  
4 some recommendations that we wish to make now?

5  
6 I will leave this item open as we go through the rest of the  
7 meeting, because, essentially, our recommendations -- Other  
8 things will come up, and we'll make recommendations relative to  
9 that, and I would certainly welcome recommendations to this,  
10 even if it comes up later in the discussion, but, at this point,  
11 then are there some things that we want to recommend now  
12 relative to this?

13  
14 It seems that the calibration recommendations that came from the  
15 workshop are pretty much agreed to by the workshop, in the sense  
16 of, if you're going to convert from the states to the new FES,  
17 then here's a set of ratios that ought to be used, and I think  
18 another thing that has sort of been reiterated by this  
19 discussion here is that, at some point, you're going to have to  
20 come to some understanding of why these estimates are different,  
21 because they do have implications, as Sean pointed out, in terms  
22 of things like allocations, that are probably not going to go  
23 away. Let me open the floor, and are there any recommendations  
24 or further discussions at this point in time? Sean.

25  
26 **SSC DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

27  
28 **DR. POWERS:** I would like to back up a step from the  
29 calibrations, and I know that the white paper from NMFS  
30 recommends that we calibrate to FES, but I would like to have  
31 some conversation amongst the SSC whether we agree with that.

32  
33 We have seen that, obviously, we don't calibrate Texas data, and  
34 we take it as-is, and it sounds like LA Creel might be similar,  
35 and there's a possibility that we're going to take it as-is, and  
36 the other states will have to be calibrated to FES currency, but  
37 they don't necessarily have to be. I mean, to me, if we make  
38 the determination that these state surveys are better, and we  
39 can go through some reasons why we think they're better, I don't  
40 think -- At least I am not totally onboard that the FES currency  
41 is the answer.

42  
43 We have NAS, National Academy of Sciences, that several members  
44 of the SSC are on, that is reviewing the implications for in-  
45 season management, and the clear indication from the last NAS  
46 report was it's not suitable for in-season management, and so  
47 the discussion -- The only point I would have there is what do  
48 we do about out-of-season discards, and that would be a major

1 one, but I would like to see if there's any discussion on  
2 whether we think that, as an SSC, that the FES is the standard.

3  
4 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** All right. At this point, I don't think -- I  
5 certainly can't answer that, but let's continue the discussion  
6 along those lines. Will Patterson.

7  
8 **DR. PATTERSON:** Thanks, Joe. I haven't really been that engaged  
9 in this whole conversation about calibration and scaling that's  
10 been going on for it seems like years in our region, and for a  
11 couple of reasons.

12  
13 It has always kind of frustrated me, because it seems like we're  
14 spinning our wheels, a lot of time, and we've been through some  
15 of these discussions multiple times, where it's like, you know,  
16 eventually, we're really going to have to calibrate this and  
17 figure out where biases exist and why we're getting differences  
18 in estimates from different methodologies and what are the  
19 inherent weaknesses or strengths.

20  
21 Years ago, when we had the conversion just to MRIP, we, as an  
22 SSC, recommended simulation studies to be done to carefully  
23 consider some of those methodological changes that hadn't really  
24 been in that format, and it seems like that could still be a  
25 recommendation to do with some of this stuff.

26  
27 I realize that it's easier for me, as an academic scientist, who  
28 hasn't really been involved working with any of the states with  
29 trying to come up with a means to estimate catch and effort, and  
30 I know some other folks on the SSC are agency scientists that  
31 are intimately involved, and have been with that, and others are  
32 academic scientists who have been working with different states  
33 to come up with approaches, and so they've been more engaged,  
34 but, for me, it's always been this frustration about are we  
35 actually moving forward.

36  
37 That's kind of a long-winded preamble here, but the thing is --  
38 It gets back to this idea of calibration, and what do we mean by  
39 calibration, because simply taking an estimate from a state and  
40 scaling it to the FES landings is not calibrating it. It's  
41 scaling it. If we really were concerned about calibration, then  
42 we would be digging into the methods from each state, which now  
43 it seems, and maybe there are some examples that I missed, have  
44 been, quote, unquote, certified.

45  
46 Well, if something is certified, you say this method is best  
47 available, right, and use it, and so why can't you use the  
48 estimate that it produces? That makes no sense to me

1 whatsoever, and so, if we're talking about calibration, that's  
2 one thing.

3  
4 If we're talking about simply scaling to FES, then why are these  
5 states spending hundreds of thousands to millions of dollars to  
6 produce independent estimates of catch and effort for red  
7 snapper, when the estimate is just going to be taken and scaled  
8 by some ratio, based on a very limited time series, to the FES  
9 estimate?

10  
11 You're basically using the FES estimate, and so a true  
12 calibration is understanding why the differences exist and  
13 really digging into the methods and looking at the biases and  
14 potential shortcomings, and we're not really doing that.

15  
16 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you for your optimism. Jim Tolan.

17  
18 **DR. TOLAN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To Sean's point as to  
19 whether FES needs to be the standard moving forward, I will go  
20 back to a comment that Will made about the Mississippi  
21 presentation, and, if they have a near census of the effort,  
22 and, again, this is all about the effort side of it being so  
23 very different, it has major implications, going down the line,  
24 and I think it may be that the states' data collections now are  
25 a much better standard to go to than this conversion and, like  
26 Will is saying, this scaling and this conversion over to these  
27 FES numbers. We have seen, routinely, that they're almost  
28 double, for all the species, when we've looked at this new data  
29 stream, and so states' data may be as good as it gets. Thank  
30 you.

31  
32 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Let me skip ahead to Clay Porch,  
33 because I think he may want to address some of the recent  
34 comments.

35  
36 **DR. PORCH:** Thank you, Dr. Powers. A couple of points. First,  
37 I just wanted to respond to Will Patterson's point about  
38 certification and just emphasize what Richard Cody had said  
39 earlier, that certified does not mean best available. All  
40 certified means is that, if the assumptions are met, and that  
41 "if" is important. If the assumptions are met, the methods that  
42 are being employed would be appropriate.

43  
44 They are certifying the method, but they are not certifying the  
45 execution of the method, and they're not even evaluating whether  
46 the fundamental assumptions behind the method are necessarily  
47 true, and so it's really important to keep that in mind.

48

1 MRIP certification does not mean it's the best available, and  
2 I'm not making a comment on whether the FES estimates or the  
3 state estimates are better, and that's not my area of expertise,  
4 and so I will leave that for others to debate, but the other  
5 point that I wanted to make is that it's really important to  
6 have a consistent time series in the assessment.

7  
8 If the recreational estimates, for instance, are scaled too  
9 high, then, yes, your ACL will end up being too high, but it's  
10 predictably higher, and then you're just -- If you wanted to  
11 scale down to the state currencies, then you just scale down  
12 that ACL. You could, alternatively, try and rescale the FES  
13 into some magnitude that is along the lines of the state  
14 currencies, and then what will happen is you'll get a lower ACL  
15 that is already in the state currencies, and probably, at the  
16 end of the day, it will be almost the same thing.

17  
18 What we don't want to do is use one currency for part of the  
19 time series and then suddenly switch to another currency for  
20 another part of the time series, because then you're just  
21 inserting a change of scale, and the assessment will interpret  
22 that as an actual change in mortality rates, when it's really  
23 just a change in scale, and so, in other words, you wouldn't use  
24 the FES estimates back in time and then suddenly insert current  
25 estimates from the various state surveys in there.

26  
27 What would happen is it looks like you have a big drop in  
28 catches, when really it's just a drop in currency, and so it's  
29 really important to have consistent currencies, whatever we end  
30 up doing. Thanks.

31  
32 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Kai Lorenzen.

33  
34 **DR. LORENZEN:** I think Clay has already said a lot of the things  
35 that I wanted to say. I think, if you have a situation where we  
36 have two different surveys of what we think is the same thing,  
37 the recreational catch, and they give us quite different  
38 answers, then we do have to calibrate them somehow, and it  
39 doesn't particularly matter which one we calibrate to which, but  
40 only that, out of the stock assessment, we tend to get our  
41 management quantities in FES or CHTS currency, and then we  
42 cannot use a different currency to monitor quota against that.

43  
44 The other point that I wanted to make there is that, if we do  
45 the calibration correctly, that will result in the states having  
46 exactly the allocations that were originally intended, and so I  
47 think there's a lot of confusion here about the allocation  
48 issue, but, since this is really just converting from one survey



1 currency into the other, by doing that, we're not reallocating.  
2 Rather, if we're calibrating correctly, it will result in the  
3 originally-intended allocations to the states.

4  
5 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Luiz Barbieri.

6  
7 **DR. BARBIERI:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't disagree with a  
8 lot of what was just said before me, and I'm onboard with all of  
9 that, but I just want to make a point. From the very beginning,  
10 and I think, last week, Richard gave a little review of the  
11 process that has been in place since 2013 between the MRIP  
12 program and the Gulf states, through the Gulf States Commission  
13 process, to develop, test, and implement these state surveys.

14  
15 Some of them now are no longer supplemental surveys, and some of  
16 them have become really -- I guess LA Creel is now a substitute  
17 survey for MRIP, but, when we started this conversation back in  
18 2013, all of us got together, through the Gulf States Commission  
19 and with the direct involvement and participation, and there was  
20 guidance from the MRIP Program, to develop the supplemental  
21 surveys, with the idea of addressing survey limitations that a  
22 general survey like the MRIP cannot avoid to have, because it's  
23 surveying a large number of species over a broad geographic  
24 area, and you can't really address all the complexities.

25  
26 It's almost like having a nested system of complexities there  
27 that will be very, very difficult to address through a general  
28 survey that doesn't have additional processes in place to take  
29 care of those differences, and so, basically, we started this  
30 conversation, instead of being either/or, and I'm not saying  
31 that MRIP is wrong and the state surveys are right, and perhaps  
32 that's not the discussion to be had.

33  
34 I wonder if we should just go back to the process of trying to  
35 generate some kind of an integrated estimate and/or develop a  
36 process that we can use the state surveys, that are actually  
37 more focused and specialized, to supplement a general survey  
38 that by itself may not be able to capture the informational  
39 content that that data entails that we want to capture.

40  
41 I think the case about Mississippi is the best example. It's a  
42 small state with a small fishery and a small number of access  
43 points, and, considering the design of the Mississippi Tails 'n  
44 Scales, I mean, it's difficult to imagine that they are not  
45 estimating those landings accurately, and so, basically, the  
46 issue of -- Can we perhaps go back in looking at this and that  
47 more supplemental survey process, and recognize that the goal of  
48 these state surveys was, from the very beginning to add on top

1 of MRIP in a more focused way and address some of these  
2 fisheries that may not be well captured by MRIP?

3  
4 Number 2 is just a recommendation. Richard, we've been  
5 discussing this for years and years and years, and I think that  
6 there's a lot of lack of understanding from a lot of us on what  
7 the certification process actually entails, and I think having  
8 that process clarified, and I know that this is described in  
9 documents that are posted on your website, and there are NMFS  
10 procedural directives that outline all of these things clearly,  
11 but the idea of certifying something and then not accepting that  
12 as having gone through peer review and representing something  
13 that is scientifically sound to me is conflicting. It's  
14 difficult to understand.

15  
16 I mean, when I look at the certification process, and, Sean,  
17 help me explain this, because you served on the last MRIP review  
18 committee as well, the National Academies review committee, with  
19 me, and we never, in that committee, through that review  
20 process, reviewed implementation of MRIP FES. All we reviewed,  
21 as a committee, was the design, the blueprint, of the surveys,  
22 both of the APAIS and for the FES.

23  
24 We looked at the calibration process and the review documents  
25 that entailed the calibration process, but the MRIP survey was  
26 not really fully implemented until 2018. That was after our  
27 report was produced and after our review was completed, and so,  
28 in the same, I think, spirit of what we discussed earlier today  
29 about the fact that some of these calibrations -- We may approve  
30 them for now, and consider them adequate for now, but, as time  
31 goes by and we have additional information brought to the table,  
32 perhaps some of these things need to be revisited.

33  
34 I think that calibrating for stock assessment purposes, and  
35 having a time series there for stock assessment, that's fine,  
36 but, at some point, we're going to have to understand why we're  
37 getting these differences, because there are implications here  
38 that go way beyond just the stock assessment process, and I will  
39 stop there, Mr. Chairman. That was a long-winded way to make my  
40 point, but thank you.

41  
42 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. We have, on the list to speak,  
43 Paul Mickle and Sean Powers, but we're also setting up for  
44 lunchtime, and I would suggest that we take our hour of lunch  
45 now, and then we can continue this discussion with Paul, Sean,  
46 and also Richard Cody, and anybody else, at that point. Let's  
47 adjourn for an hour, and recognize that this discussion has not  
48 been completed, and we'll come back at 1:00 then. All right.

1 Thank you.

2  
3 (Whereupon, the meeting recessed for lunch on August 11, 2020.)

4  
5 - - -

6  
7 August 11, 2020

8  
9 TUESDAY AFTERNOON SESSION

10  
11 - - -

12  
13 The Meeting of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council  
14 Standing and Special Reef Fish, Ecosystem, and Socioeconomic  
15 Scientific and Statistical Committees reconvened via webinar on  
16 Tuesday afternoon, August 11, 2020, and was called to order by  
17 Chairman Joe Powers.

18  
19 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Where we left it, we were in discussions about  
20 the state-by-state calibration process, and, to kind of  
21 summarize, there were several points that people were making.  
22 One was that we need to have a -- For stock assessment purposes,  
23 you need to have a time-consistent time series of catches to use  
24 in the assessment, and it's been suggested that the FES is the  
25 standard, or, right now anyway, the FES is the standard to use  
26 for that.

27  
28 It's been noted though that there are some drawbacks to this, in  
29 terms of other uses, and one of them, in particular, is how  
30 people interpret those catches when making allocation decisions,  
31 and the third thing that was brought up overall, in terms of the  
32 comments, is there really needs to be some understanding about  
33 why these differences occur and getting into great detail, which  
34 is not going to happen at this meeting, of course. There were  
35 three people on the list to talk now, Paul Mickle, Sean Powers,  
36 and Richard Cody, and so let me start with Paul.

37  
38 **DR. MICKLE:** Thanks, Joe. I appreciate it, and I'm no longer an  
39 SSC member. I was demoted to the council, but I just want to  
40 bring information to you all. There was some background  
41 materials included in the agenda, and that really -- I want to  
42 just highlight it.

43  
44 Item VIII(a) is the Red Snapper IV Workshop Summary from  
45 September 18, 2018, which kind of was the major, I guess,  
46 kicking-off point as to when all this kind of began, and, if you  
47 go to page 5, and I haven't read this in quite a long time, but  
48 there is all sorts of ideas here of composite estimation.

1  
2 The bottom of page 5 begins discussions of small-area estimation  
3 models, and calibration is just below that, and so all these  
4 things were talked about, and I think it was the intent, in the  
5 beginning, to dive into these and to take these different  
6 surveys, such as the state and the FES-MRIP, and to really look  
7 at all sorts of different ways to get into a currency, so to  
8 speak, for the two goals of both stock assessment data input as  
9 well as ACL identification and seasonal management.

10  
11 I think we should continue down that road, in my opinion, and  
12 I'm not a member, of course, of this committee, but it really  
13 didn't seem to be a big rush until recently, and looking at  
14 different models and things like that, composite estimations, I  
15 don't think were fully looked at, or gotten into, quite as much  
16 as calibration.

17  
18 Calibration may just be the easiest one, and I want to make the  
19 committee aware that there is some potential litigation that is  
20 occurring that is saying that it's currently overharvested  
21 because of the different landings program and that this was  
22 kicked into high gear about a week or two before the last  
23 council meeting. I just want everybody to understand that on  
24 this committee, because I just don't see the rush in doing this  
25 right now, this simplest method, and I think these other ones  
26 can be looked at.

27  
28 I took the biggest swing that I could, in a couple of days prep  
29 time, to bring it to the surface, about there may be different  
30 ways to do this that more properly represent what is actually  
31 being landed, and I just, as a scientist, would want the best  
32 data to go into our stock assessments.

33  
34 Scaling it up and down after the data goes into the model is one  
35 thing, but I think, just from an efficiency standard, you want  
36 the best data going in on the frontend of the stock assessment.  
37 thank you.

38  
39 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Sean.

40  
41 **DR. POWERS:** I agree with Paul that it seems like we're rushing  
42 all of a sudden on this, with numerous unknowns out there that  
43 time will help, and certain projects will help, and we have the  
44 National Academy of Sciences review going on right now on in-  
45 season management, and we have the Great Snapper Count results  
46 that we're waiting on, and there's numerous things that would  
47 help us resolve the discrepancies, but I dove into this a little  
48 bit, and, while we all want to get into the specifics of each

1 one, there are reasons for the differences between the surveys.  
2  
3 I mean, the sample sizes are much different, and the temporal  
4 frequency is much, much different, and the sampling frame that  
5 you're using that sampling effort on is very different, with  
6 each of the states really defining a smaller sampling frame, and  
7 so there's several things that go into why, right now, I think  
8 the state harvest data is what should be used.  
9  
10 It's interesting, and I think the temporal frequency is the key,  
11 because, if you look at Jason's data, along with Beverly's data,  
12 what it shows you is, when you look at different stocks, when  
13 you start to narrow the timeframe of the season, you start  
14 getting larger and larger disagreements between the two surveys.  
15  
16 I would like, if it's appropriate, Joe, to propose a motion for  
17 us to move forward with discussion, and I sent that motion just  
18 now to gulfmeetings and CC'd it to John Froeschke.  
19  
20 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Sean, are you still on? I can't hear you.  
21  
22 **DR. POWERS:** Yes, and I was just waiting for them to put the  
23 motion up.  
24  
25 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Okay. Thank you. You want to just read it to  
26 us and give a little short summary?  
27  
28 **DR. POWERS:** Sure. **The SSC recommends that management advice**  
29 **for Gulf of Mexico red snapper be derived using the unadjusted**  
30 **harvest estimates from the state surveys, and then I list the**  
31 **surveys, until such time as the causal factors and relationships**  
32 **explaining the disagreement between the MRIP-FES survey and the**  
33 **state surveys are established. Further, we recommend that the**  
34 **historical time series used in calibration between MRIP-CHTS and**  
35 **the state surveys of red snapper for Louisiana -- It should be**  
36 **Alabama and Mississippi.**  
37  
38 The reason that I propose this is this takes care of the time  
39 series. If we remember, from the state differences, the Coastal  
40 Household Telephone Survey and their state surveys seem to agree  
41 much more, and it's a little bit strange, because, obviously,  
42 the FES was designed to improve the Coastal Household Telephone  
43 Survey, but the main point is it gives us some stability, to  
44 Paul's point, right now, when the council is looking for what  
45 they need to do immediately for management advice until we have  
46 enough time, and we're waiting for some of these other surveys  
47 and panels to come back, and so that's the rationale for the  
48 motion.

1  
2 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Is there a second?

3  
4 **MR. MARESKA:** I will second it for discussion.

5  
6 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. There are a number of people. On  
7 the original list are Richard Cody and Will Patterson. Let's  
8 deal with those first. Richard Cody.

9  
10 **DR. CODY:** Thanks. I just wanted to just clarify, for the  
11 record, that there may be a mistaken impression that the FES is,  
12 unlike state surveys, is not certified. The FES was certified  
13 in 2014, and the APAIS was certified back in 2012.

14  
15 Also, there may be this mistaken impression that there hasn't  
16 been a lot of research related to those certifications, and I  
17 will point to the numerous pilot studies that went into  
18 development of the FES. Now, I'm not trying to make your job  
19 any more difficult, but I am pointing out that the FES has had  
20 quite a bit of testing, and it continues to do so.

21  
22 We have a couple of studies that are either ongoing or about to  
23 start related to non-response and where to push design  
24 comparisons, and so we have been testing it, and it is going on,  
25 but it's just that it may not be widely known. I wanted to make  
26 that known, so that people understand that not just the state  
27 surveys are certified, and there's a report on our website that  
28 summarizes the testing and development of the FES, if people are  
29 interested.

30  
31 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Will Patterson.

32  
33 **DR. PATTERSON:** Another thing, with respect to what Richard just  
34 said, is we had a meeting recently where we said that FES is the  
35 best scientific information available, and we met and talked  
36 about these specific issues of recalibrating and going from  
37 APAIS to FES, and so that's problematic for this motion, and I  
38 fully understand this idea that's being discussed about currency  
39 and the FES currency.

40  
41 The issue that I have is that we have different sources of  
42 difference between some of the state estimates and the FES-  
43 derived estimates. Scaling it up to FES from the current state  
44 estimates, there is still a difference between the state  
45 estimates and APAIS, or MRIP without APAIS, and so there's a  
46 fundamental difference there that it doesn't feel like, for the  
47 Alabama survey, for example -- It's not five-and-a-half-times  
48 different, as it is with FES versus the -- I forget the name of

1 the Alabama -- Is it Snapper Check?

2  
3 Whatever the name of the Alabama survey is, that five-and-a-  
4 half-times difference doesn't exist when you go back to APAIS or  
5 the CHTS, but there's still fundamental differences in the way  
6 that estimates are being produced, and maybe it's an issue of  
7 you have a certified methodology, but the assumptions aren't  
8 being met, or aren't likely to be met, or maybe the amount of  
9 effort required is not being realized, and, whatever it is,  
10 that's a whole different thing, but it's a source of error that  
11 is independent of then scaling that estimate up to FES.

12  
13 We clearly see differences among the states and how much scaling  
14 has to occur to get to what's being referred to as the common  
15 currency of FES, and so, if that were just an FES issue across  
16 states, then we wouldn't see the amount of divergence that we  
17 see among them, if there weren't fundamental differences here in  
18 the surveys and how things were being estimated.

19  
20 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Clay Porch.

21  
22 **DR. PORCH:** Thank you. I agree with the comments that Will just  
23 made, and that's been one of the issues, that the state surveys  
24 themselves, if they were repeated in -- If each survey was  
25 repeated in each of the states, we suspect that there would be  
26 fairly large differences, but the comment that I wanted to make  
27 is that I'm actually not quite sure what this motion really  
28 means, because the details matter quite a lot.

29  
30 For instance, what it appears to be saying in the last sentence  
31 is that it's recommending to use the MRIP CHTS estimates back in  
32 time and just recalibrate them, so that they are scaled to match  
33 the various state surveys, and the problem with doing that is we  
34 know that the sampling frame for the CHTS changed in time,  
35 because people stopped using their telephones, and so the MRIP  
36 folks went to a lot of trouble hiring contractors to work with  
37 them to figure out how the usage of landlines changed through  
38 time, as people moved to use cellphones and other factors, to  
39 come up with this calibration between the FES and the CHTS.

40  
41 It's gotten to the point now where I think the sampling frame,  
42 if we were to continue with the CHTS, is a very small subset of  
43 the total number of fishermen, because not many people use their  
44 landlines for anything more than screening calls these days, and  
45 so I think this is a very important issue, and, again, they went  
46 to a lot of work to calibrate the FES survey back in time, and  
47 it's not just a constant calibration with the CHTS. They went  
48 to a lot of work to account for changes in landline usage

1 through time, and so anything we would do like that with the  
2 state surveys would need equal care.

3  
4 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. I would reiterate something that  
5 Will said about that this SSC went through a long discussion  
6 about the conversion of the old MRIP to the new MRIP, and we  
7 essentially said that it was the best available information at  
8 this point in time. Doug Gregory.

9  
10 **MR. GREGORY:** Thank you. My question is more mundane, and it's  
11 the first line, and I don't know what you mean by "management  
12 advice", and is that just for the states to develop an  
13 allocation scheme among themselves, or does that include  
14 establishing ACLs from a stock assessment, which I don't see how  
15 the latter could be done, using the state surveys, from a stock  
16 assessment. Thank you.

17  
18 **DR. POWERS:** Joe, to that point?

19  
20 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Yes.

21  
22 **DR. POWERS:** I mean this to be as broad as it is, and so stock  
23 assessment, derivation of ABC or ACL recommendations, as well as  
24 in-season quota monitoring. To Clay's point, I am very familiar  
25 with the calibrations, obviously, and the studies that went in,  
26 and I served on that Academy of Sciences panel, and there is no  
27 doubt that the scientific community, and all of us, recognize  
28 the improvements that FES has over the Coastal Household  
29 Telephone Survey.

30  
31 That's not the issue. The issue is that the discrepancy seems  
32 to be less, for some reason, between the Coastal Household  
33 Telephone Survey and the states, and we don't understand what is  
34 driving that. There is a lot of studies that are proposed, and  
35 a lot of studies that are going on, but, I mean, for now -- I  
36 mean, that's the currency we're using now, and I don't see why  
37 that would be a problem for the stock assessment.

38  
39 I mean, going forward, obviously, they're not going to go back  
40 to the old Coastal Household Telephone Survey, but, going  
41 forward, we have the state surveys, and all of them are  
42 consistently two to three to six-times higher than the state  
43 surveys, and so, while the magnitude of the difference differs,  
44 all of them are indicating that FES is oversampling, or  
45 overestimating, something.

46  
47 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Luiz Barbieri.

48



1 **DR. BARBIERI:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Sean, first, to your --  
2 First of all, I agree with everything that you just said  
3 regarding the other issue, but, regarding the motion, I think  
4 the point here, Sean, just as we're having this discussion, is  
5 that, because the assessment, the last red snapper assessment,  
6 and the actual quotas are in CHTS units, if we don't calibrate  
7 to those units, it is impossible, really, to maintain the  
8 quotas, the state quotas, in line with what would be expected  
9 coming out of that assessment and the recommendation that we  
10 made in terms of catch advice as an SSC, the ABC that  
11 essentially was converted into ACL.

12  
13 I understand what you're trying to do here, and I don't disagree  
14 that us continuing to look into this issue has merit, but I  
15 think that, for the purposes of managing the stock, the catch  
16 advice being produced in one currency, and now these other  
17 surveys producing results that are not in the same currency,  
18 create a problem with data monitoring of the landings, the quota  
19 monitoring, that the council is now trying to get resolved, and  
20 so I would not be supportive of this motion, for that reason.

21  
22 If I may, Mr. Chairman, just to make one statement regarding the  
23 conversation prior about FES versus the state supplemental  
24 surveys, the issue here that I think -- It's not that MRIP is  
25 right or wrong, that the MRIS-FES is right or wrong, or the  
26 state surveys are right or wrong, but it's that we need to have  
27 an understanding, and Sean just made that point, an  
28 understanding of why the differences.

29  
30 Keep in mind, for those of you who have not been following that  
31 process from the very beginning, starting in late 2012, that the  
32 states have worked consistently and integratively, with the NMFS  
33 Office of Science & Technology for the development of these  
34 programs. These were not produced in a vacuum independently and  
35 now put on the table completely out of the blue.

36  
37 I mean, we have had the MRIP consultants and all the MRIP staff  
38 in the room from the very beginning, and we are very  
39 appreciative of all their support throughout the years to bring  
40 all the surveys to completion, in terms of design, and then  
41 helping us with the implementation, which they have, and the  
42 supplemental surveys, the way that we perceive them, from the  
43 very beginning.

44  
45 To me, if there is something -- This is why we submitted our  
46 design through the MRIP certification process, to be peer  
47 reviewed and evaluated, and, if there is something with the Gulf  
48 Reef Fish Survey, for example, to speak about Florida only, that

1 is a problem, by all means, just let me know what that is, and  
2 we can make those modifications accordingly.

3  
4 We also want to use a survey that is producing the best data to  
5 be used in assessment and management, and so that's the idea,  
6 and we don't want to just say, no, we're going to stick with  
7 this set of design or these survey components, and, I mean,  
8 we've been working with the program, through our Gulf States  
9 Commission process, the states and the MRIP Program, to develop  
10 these surveys in a way that they would be supplementary.

11  
12 Those of you, again, who haven't been following the process  
13 along the way, the way we saw this, as we saw this whole process  
14 generating, is something like generating something that would be  
15 akin to the large pelagic surveys that are under that same  
16 umbrella of MRIP surveys that is supplemental to the general  
17 survey for a specific component of the fishery, in this case the  
18 large pelagics, the tunas and billfishes, off the Atlantic coast  
19 that are not properly captured by a general survey like MRIP.

20  
21 It would be supplementary to that, like a modular approach that  
22 you add on top, or why the MRIP Program itself, in its family of  
23 surveys, has something separate for the for-hire sector that is  
24 called the for-hire survey, and that there is something separate  
25 for the headboat program that is not under the regular MRIP type  
26 of general survey that we talk about with APAIS and FES.

27  
28 Those are specialized surveys that are addressing components of  
29 the fishery and have their own attributes and characteristics,  
30 and so, again, if we can get to a point that we can reconvene as  
31 a group, and I think Richard's suggestion is that, through the  
32 implementation group, or the transition group, and there is a  
33 Gulf sub-group that can engage in this discussion, so we can try  
34 to understand whether we should continue conducting these  
35 surveys, which are costing time and money and investment, or if  
36 the advice from the agency is that, no, these surveys are  
37 inappropriate, and so do not waste your time and effort into  
38 implementing something that will have no value for assessment  
39 and management, and why would we do this, but I think we need to  
40 get the issue resolved with the advice received, so that we can  
41 proceed accordingly. Thank you.

42  
43 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Jason Adriance.

44  
45 **MR. ADRIANCE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A couple of points. I  
46 think Will brought up a great point that we have the conflicting  
47 issue that this body blessed FES, at a previous meeting, and  
48 then, more specific to the motion, and maybe Sean can help me,

1 and maybe I've got the post-lunch groggies, but I can't quite  
2 follow exactly what the motion is trying to do, because it seems  
3 to me that it's two separate things that kind of counter each  
4 other out.

5  
6 We're talking about using management advice using the unadjusted  
7 harvest estimates, but then using the calibrated timeline for  
8 the historical time series later on, and so maybe Sean can  
9 elaborate a little more.

10  
11 **DR. POWERS:** Sure, and what I'm trying to do is -- The intent of  
12 the motion is to move us into the currency of the state, and we  
13 already do it for Texas, and it's not that different, but we  
14 can't -- We obviously need something to go back into time, and  
15 so, from the state survey forward, we would use the state data,  
16 but we need, as Clay has pointed out, some way to reconstruct  
17 the historical, and so that was my effort, to get the closest  
18 match to the historical.

19  
20 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Kai and then Clay Porch.

21  
22 **DR. LORENZEN:** I obviously have an issue with the idea of using  
23 the unadjusted state survey estimates, mostly because -- I mean,  
24 we know, for a fact, that those surveys produced, in some cases,  
25 very different estimates for the same sort of unknown catch in  
26 the same period, and we have our management advice in MRIP, in  
27 this case, CHTS units, and so monitoring the quota against those  
28 surveys that we know are giving very different results for the  
29 same quantity is just not a very good idea.

30  
31 Like everyone else, I think I am startled by the magnitude of  
32 some of the differences that we see, and I think it's very  
33 important that we do more work to understand those differences  
34 better, and there may be, as has been pointed out, different  
35 ways of getting to other composite estimates and so on, and I  
36 think we should continue to explore those, but, for the time  
37 being, really, the calibrations are the best thing we have, and  
38 using the calibrations is a lot better than not using the  
39 calibrations, and I think, if we're not doing that, we will find  
40 ourselves in a -- We will basically compound the problems we  
41 have already, because I guess the need for calibration wasn't as  
42 fully appreciated when all the different surveys started up, but  
43 it will compound this problem into the future, and I think it's  
44 really important that we don't do that.

45  
46 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Clay Porch and then Will  
47 Patterson.

48

1 **DR. PORCH:** Thank you. Ideally, of course, we would reconcile  
2 all of these various surveys and come up with a single best  
3 estimate, and then that would be what we need for computing  
4 allocations and for ACL monitoring, but we can't go back in  
5 time, and so, getting back to the point that Sean was making,  
6 the issue for me is that the trends in the CHTS survey are known  
7 to be increasingly biased through the recent years.

8  
9 The FES tries to adjust for that bias, because people stopped  
10 using landlines, and so, if we were to calibrate a historical  
11 time series to the state surveys, it should be using the FES  
12 time series.

13  
14 The scale issue isn't as important, because you would be, on the  
15 one hand, computing, in the way that Sean suggests, a  
16 calibration comparing the state surveys to the CHTS, and, in the  
17 way that NMFS is suggesting, you would just be using a different  
18 calibration to get it to the same scale, and it would just be  
19 developing the FES versus state calibrations, and so, if we were  
20 to calibrate a historical time series, it should be  
21 recalibrating the FES time series, because it explicitly deals  
22 with the bias that is known to exist in the CHTS time series.

23  
24 The problem, of course, that comes with that is how does -- How  
25 would that relative bias back in time change if those state  
26 surveys had been executed all the way back, and that could get a  
27 little bit tricky.

28  
29 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Will.

30  
31 **DR. PATTERSON:** It's been said. Pass.

32  
33 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Sean.

34  
35 **DR. POWERS:** I will just make my last point, and that is that  
36 the fundamental problem I have is one that actually Will brought  
37 up. I mean, when you calibrate two things, you're assuming both  
38 are correct. I mean, you're essentially equal weighting them,  
39 and we know that's not the case, and, when we look into the  
40 surveys, there is inherent differences in sampling size, sample  
41 frame, all those things, especially in in-season short seasons,  
42 that make me think that the state surveys are better, but I  
43 appear to be in the minority, and that's fine. **I can probably**  
44 **withdraw the motion for now.**

45  
46 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** So you are withdrawing the motion, Sean?

47  
48 **DR. POWERS:** For now, yes. **I withdraw it.**

1  
2 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** All right. Thank you. So we -- As I  
3 mentioned before, I think, indirectly, all of us have sort of  
4 indicated some very broad recommendations, in terms of a  
5 consistent time series, a need to address what these differences  
6 -- What causes these differences. The third thing is that these  
7 have implications for allocations, which are different from  
8 those of the assessment.

9  
10 If I don't hear anything else, then we can go on to the next  
11 agenda item, recognizing that these issues are all sort of  
12 related, and so I would fully expect that, if somebody wants to  
13 bring up anything later on, we can certainly do that. All  
14 right.

15  
16 Then, Jeff Pulver, we're at Agenda Item V, which is -- Jeff is  
17 going to be making the presentation for the results of the  
18 individual state calibrations. Jeff.

19  
20 **RESULTS OF INDIVIDUAL STATE CALIBRATIONS AND STATE-SPECIFIC**  
21 **ANNUAL CATCH LIMITS**  
22 **PRESENTATION**  
23

24 **DR. JEFF PULVER:** Thank you, Dr. Powers. Thank you for the  
25 opportunity to present. I am from the Regional Office, and I'm  
26 going to give you a presentation of the last week, but I added  
27 some additional information, at the request of Dr. Barbieri and  
28 Dr. Powers, to try to let the SSC make some objective  
29 determinations on what is the best time series to use.

30  
31 The focus of this presentation is on a ratio of CHTS and FES,  
32 which is needed for two of the states, Mississippi and Florida,  
33 to get into the CHTS currency.

34  
35 This has already been discussed quite a bit today, but it's just  
36 the previous assessment, SEDAR 52, used MRIP CHTS units in the  
37 assessment, and so the current ACLs are based on that, and so  
38 there's a need to calibrate between individual state surveys,  
39 which are currently being used to monitor red snapper, through  
40 Amendment 50.

41  
42 This is updated, based on last week's presentation, for Alabama.  
43 Prior to last Wednesday, we were using two ratios for Alabama.  
44 Based on Kevin Anson's presentation, Alabama is preferring to  
45 use a single ratio, as well as Louisiana, between the state  
46 survey and MRIP CHTS. For Florida and Mississippi, two ratios  
47 will be needed to get from the state survey to the CHTS.  
48

1 The table down below has each of those four states, the percent  
2 of the current annual catch limit, or ACL, for each of those  
3 states, the current ACL for the private component, which is a  
4 little under 4.3 million pounds whole weight, and the middle  
5 column is the current quota in MRIP CHTS units.

6  
7 This is a slide that I just added this morning, and I didn't  
8 realize that Alabama was going to update their presentation, and  
9 so I have included an update of landings here, and Alabama did  
10 not have the Alabama CHTS landings for 2019 included earlier,  
11 and so I have input that value, in the second column from the  
12 right, which is about 2.259 million pounds whole weight.

13  
14 These are landings for the private mode only, and it does not  
15 include state charter estimates for 2018 and 2019, which is what  
16 is being preferred by Alabama for Snapper Check. They have  
17 their landed fish and dead discards for their total, and that's  
18 being compared to the MRIP CHTS landings, which are the A and B1  
19 estimates, in pounds whole weight.

20  
21 The mean of those two year of landings is being used to develop  
22 a ratio. The ratio, using that, between Snapper Check and MRIP  
23 CHTS is about 0.49.

24  
25 For the two states of Louisiana and Alabama, they are using a  
26 single ratio to convert the current CHTS quota into the new  
27 calibrated state quota. Louisiana presented their estimate of  
28 1.06 earlier today, and that results in approximately a 6,000  
29 pound increase from the current state quota. For Alabama, using  
30 the 0.49 estimate that I just showed, that reduces the current  
31 quota by a little more than half.

32  
33 For the other two states, they decided to use two different  
34 ratios. We go from the current CHTS quota to the state survey  
35 quota, and we have two options here, the reason being is I was  
36 provided information either from the state survey to FES or FES  
37 to state survey, and so we're starting at the very first line.

38  
39 We take the current quota in the ratio of FES to CHTS, and we  
40 have a couple of options there, and then we divide that by the  
41 ratio of FES to the state survey, which is what I have for  
42 Mississippi, and that results in a state quota in the second  
43 line. In this case, if you have a state survey to FES estimate,  
44 which in the case of Florida provided, you can just multiply  
45 both of those ratios, to result in a state quota that is  
46 equivalent.

47  
48 Then, as I carry through the ratio there to the next two steps,

1 you can see that, just using these two ratios, the MRIP FES  
2 estimates cancel out, and you're left with state survey to CHTS  
3 ratio, or scalar, as you heard mentioned earlier.

4  
5 For the two states that have an FES to CHTS calibration, there  
6 is two options given, and so, for a little background, for the  
7 first three years of the five-year timeframe, 2015 through 2017,  
8 estimates from the CHTS and FES surveys are direct estimates,  
9 and they were conducted side-by-side and used to develop the  
10 calibration model. However, after 2017, and so for 2018 and  
11 2019 data, the CHTS landings are being estimated from MRIP FES  
12 using the previously-certified calibration model.

13  
14 I am going to present average annual landings from two time  
15 periods, which were used in the FES to CHTS ratio options in  
16 this presentation, and the first is that three-year option of  
17 2015 through 2017, when both surveys were in place, and the  
18 second option is a five-year time period, which is the initial  
19 three years plus two extra years. I have tried to include  
20 additional information, as requested last week, to aid the SSC  
21 in making an objective determination on which is a better  
22 option. Landings being presented are for the private component,  
23 and so that includes private mode and state charter estimates,  
24 and, as I said earlier, it's only needed for Florida and  
25 Mississippi.

26  
27 This slide was presented by Dr. Cody's group, as well as the  
28 following few slides after this, and this table here tries to  
29 capture some of the pros or cons of each of the two different  
30 time series being presented, and so, starting in the left  
31 column, and this is the 2015 to 2017 data, one of the advantages  
32 of just using this time period is that it's the benchmarking  
33 period for FES, and so the estimates for CHTS are actual  
34 estimates, versus, if you use later years, the CHTS estimates  
35 are actually being estimated from the FES calibration model.

36  
37 One of the disadvantages of using this three-year timeframe are  
38 that the FES sample sizes, which you'll see in the next slide,  
39 were smaller in that three-year timeframe than in subsequent  
40 years. On the far right, this is the five-year, 2015 through  
41 2019, timeframe. One of the advantages of this is that it  
42 includes those benchmarking years, and an additional two more  
43 years for comparison, and so a larger sample size.  
44 Additionally, it takes advantage of the sample size increase for  
45 the FES after 2017.

46  
47 One of the disadvantages of using the five-year timeframe is  
48 that it relies on the calibration model to project or estimate

1 CHTS-based catch for the last two years, and it was also noted  
2 that the calibration model is also expected to become less  
3 reliable moving forward.

4  
5 This information was provided yesterday by NOAA Science &  
6 Technology, and so this is for the MRIP FES. This is the number  
7 of completed surveys by year and states, on the far-left column,  
8 and we have the years in ascending order, from 2015 through  
9 2019, in each of the four states.

10  
11 We can just look at the first column there for Alabama, and you  
12 can see that the number of completed FES survey range from a  
13 little over 2,000 to a little over 3,000 in 2015 to 2017, and  
14 those are the higher surveys completed in the most recent two  
15 years of the time series. Similar trends are also present for  
16 Florida and Mississippi, and, in Louisiana, no survey  
17 information was collected after 2017.

18  
19 This slide here was also provided very recently, and it's the  
20 FES response rate for the mail survey, and you can see a general  
21 trend, and most of the percentages are right around the 30  
22 percent response rate for the mail survey.

23  
24 This slide here is for the CHTS, or the phone survey, and so,  
25 for the three years of overlap being presented here, and so we  
26 have completed surveys, or the N value, and response rate. On  
27 the far left, we have 2015 through 2017, once again for each of  
28 the four states, and you can see, for the percent for Alabama  
29 and some of the other states, the response rate decreases over  
30 the three-year timeframe, and, generally, the number of  
31 completed surveys across the three years remains relatively  
32 constant.

33  
34 In addition to some information on the time series on effort, we  
35 also tried to include some additional information about the  
36 intercepts, and so this is from the APAIS, and so the Access  
37 Point Angler Intercept Survey, and so this is the number of  
38 private mode intercepts that have a red snapper harvest, and so  
39 an A or B1 recorded by year and state for the five-year  
40 timeframe, and this is for Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi.

41  
42 Once again, we have the far-left column that is the year, 2015  
43 through 2019, and you see the average of the five years in the  
44 bottom row. Alabama had an average number of intercepts of  
45 about 200 per year, and so Florida had lower than that, about  
46 150, and Mississippi had the lowest number of intercepts. In  
47 2015, only thirteen intercepts were being recorded, and it  
48 hovers right around fifty or so.



1  
2 In addition to as much information that I could try to provide  
3 since last Wednesday on the surveys, I also thought it would be  
4 beneficial to include some information about the private angling  
5 seasons also during this timeframe, since management has been so  
6 dynamic, and so, beginning in 2015 and 2016, these years were  
7 under federal seasons, and so short seasons, ten and eleven  
8 days.

9  
10 In 2017, there was initially a three-day season that was  
11 projected, and then the season was extended for another thirty-  
12 nine days, through early September. Also, under federal  
13 management, it should also be noted that, in these first three  
14 years, 2015 through 2017, some states did have individual state  
15 seasons as well that were outside of the federal season in state  
16 waters.

17  
18 For 2018 and 2019, the states were managed under an exempted  
19 fishing permit. Florida had forty days, both in 2018 and 2019.  
20 For 2019, they had initially projected a thirty-two-day season  
21 and ended up extending that in the fall. For Mississippi, it  
22 was slightly under eighty days for each of the two seasons, with  
23 2018 and 2019 managed under the EFP.

24  
25 These next two slides are going to be very similar. The first  
26 one here is for Florida, in alphabetical order, and so, in the  
27 far-left column, we have the year, once again, the 2015 through  
28 2019, and, at the bottom, there are two averages, and so this is  
29 the first three years, 2015 through 2017, and the bottom is the  
30 2015 through 2019 option.

31  
32 Then we have CHTS and FES landings, and these are for the  
33 private component, in numbers of fish, and we have the ratio  
34 between the FES and the CHTS in the fourth column, and the far-  
35 right column has been added since the presentation last week,  
36 and we have put in the percent standard error, the PSE, as a  
37 measure of uncertainty in some of the estimates.

38  
39 Just note that the PSE is just for the FES private mode red  
40 snapper landings, and I did not have time to recreate a PSE for  
41 the CHTS. Also, it does not include any state charters, that  
42 estimate, but, typically, state charters are a pretty small  
43 proportion of the overall landings.

44  
45 Looking at the ratio, in the second column from the right, for  
46 2015 through 2019, you can see that, for Florida, the FES ranged  
47 from a little over two-and-a-quarter times to about 3.6 times  
48 higher than the CHTS. Taking an average of the annual landings,

1 using the ratio between those two for the first three years, it  
2 results in a ratio between FES and CHTS of 2.79. If you expand  
3 that to the entire five years, it results in a ratio of 2.99.

4  
5 This is a similar slide, and this is for Mississippi. It's a  
6 similar structure, and so the first column is year, and then we  
7 have, once again, CHTS and FES landings in the next two columns,  
8 and the fourth column is the ratio between the FES and CHTS, and  
9 you can see here, in this fourth column, that 2015 to 2019 shows  
10 quite a bit of range between the two surveys, from a low of 1.46  
11 in 2016 to the high of 3.54 in 2017. Also, I have highlighted  
12 the top-right cell in the table, and the reason being is the PSE  
13 for Mississippi's landings in 2015 was greater than fifty.  
14 Since then, it has gone down a bit.

15  
16 Once again, if you look at the bottom two rows of the table, it  
17 takes the average of the annual landings for each of the two  
18 time series and results in a ratio between those average  
19 landings. If you take the 2015 through 2017 landings, you get a  
20 ratio between FES and CHTS of 2.25. Taking the larger  
21 timeframe, 2015 through 2019, it results in a ratio of 2.03.

22  
23 Using information previously presented by Beverly Sauls on the  
24 Gulf Reef Fish Survey, they provided an estimate between that  
25 and the FES of 0.38 earlier today, and we're using that to  
26 combine with either a three or five-year options, as given below  
27 in this slide.

28  
29 Using the three-year FES to CHTS ratio of 2.79, multiplied by  
30 the 0.38, it results in a calibration ratio, or scalar, of  
31 1.0602, and so approximately a 6 percent increase from the  
32 current quota of a little over 1.9 million pounds. At the very  
33 bottom, you can see the higher FES to CHTS ratio of 2.99, based  
34 on the five-year option, once again multiplied by the 0.38,  
35 results in a higher calibration ratio, or scalar, of 1.1362,  
36 which results in about a 250,000, or 260,000, pound increase  
37 from the current quota.

38  
39 This is the final slide, and this is for Mississippi, and I  
40 wasn't sure what to do, and so I left the original estimate, and  
41 this was obtained from Dr. Cody's group in late May or early  
42 June, and they provided some information, and I believe it was  
43 from the consultants, that estimated an MRIP FES to Tails 'n  
44 Scales estimate of 5.86, using data from 2018 and 2019.

45  
46 When the estimate of 5.86 is combined with the three-year or  
47 five-year FES to CHTS ratios, as you see down at the bottom  
48 there, the 2.25 from the three-year option, divided by the 5.86,

1 you come up with a calibration ratio, or scalar, of 0.384, and  
2 so about a 90,000-pound reduction from the current quota. When  
3 combined with the five-year timeframe for the FES to CHTS ratio  
4 of 2.03, it results in the very bottom there that's highlighted,  
5 that 0.3464. I believe Dr. Cody or myself could provide the  
6 Mississippi FES to Tails 'n Scales estimate of 5.86, if desired,  
7 as well. I think that's all I have right now, and so I will  
8 take any questions at this time, and thank you for the  
9 opportunity to present.

10

11 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Luiz.

12

13 **DR. BARBIERI:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Jeff, thank you again  
14 for putting all of this together, the additional information  
15 that we requested last week, and I know that was kind of like a  
16 tall order, and a last-minute request, and we really, really  
17 appreciate you going through the trouble of pulling all this  
18 information together and working with other folks to pull a lot  
19 of this together and add it to the presentation. It's great to  
20 have this here, and so I really appreciate it.

21

22 If I could get back to your Slide Number 9, just a clarification  
23 for me, and so FES completed surveys, and so that's the number  
24 of FES completed surveys, and does that mean that the surveys  
25 were -- That's the number of surveys that were returned,  
26 completed and returned?

27

28 **DR. PULVER:** I will refer to Dr. Cody on this. This information  
29 was just provided late yesterday, and I thought it was mail  
30 surveys that were completed and returned, but I'm not positive  
31 on that, and so I would seek clarification from him, if  
32 possible.

33

34 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Dr. Cody.

35

36 **DR. CODY:** Yes, those are completed surveys, surveys that have  
37 been returned, and so they've been responded to.

38

39 **DR. BARBIERI:** Okay, and so, if I can have a follow-up, Richard,  
40 I am just -- When I saw this, and maybe I should know this  
41 already, and I don't know why it took me by surprise, but I am  
42 looking at states, like Mississippi and Alabama, that have much  
43 smaller coastlines.

44

45 In the case of Mississippi, they have fisheries that are a much  
46 smaller proportion of the red snapper private recreational  
47 catch, and they seem to have quite a bit more sample size than  
48 what is, and that seems consistent throughout the years, than

1 Florida, and so, looking at just the number of -- Looking at  
2 picking the different years there for the different time series,  
3 I am trying to understand how precision of those estimates in  
4 different years may have been influenced by the sample size and  
5 then as that compares to other Gulf states. Can you help me  
6 with that?

7  
8 **DR. CODY:** Sure, or I can try to, and I may have to get you some  
9 additional information on this as well, but, essentially, we  
10 used the Nieman method to optimize sample allocation, and so  
11 it's based on having the total amount of sample available to  
12 you, and so it's basically what you can afford, what is your  
13 total sample size, and then you try to achieve a certain level  
14 of precision, and so the sample sizes kind of reflect what's  
15 needed to achieve a certain level of precision at the state  
16 level.

17  
18 In the case of Florida, where fishing trips are easier to  
19 encounter, that sample size is a little bit smaller, and there's  
20 another thing at play here as well, and that's the quality of  
21 the license information that's available. States generally  
22 provide their license information to us about once a wave, or  
23 once a month, I think it is, and we use that to make the  
24 sampling a little bit more efficient, and so we identify, or try  
25 to match, the license information to the USPS address  
26 information.

27  
28 We draw known anglers at a higher rate, and they are  
29 downweighted, of course, but they are drawn at a higher rate,  
30 and so that's generally how it works, and I can send you, or  
31 make it available to you, some of the methodology details that  
32 Rob Andrews could probably -- He would be a better source for  
33 that information.

34  
35 **DR. BARBIERI:** No, and that makes perfect sense, Richard, but I  
36 just have to go back, and I'm sure I've seen some of this, in  
37 general, and not necessarily applicable to Florida, but the  
38 general explanation that you just gave, in terms of the design  
39 and implementation of FES, and I'm sure that I can find that,  
40 and so thank you.

41  
42 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Are there additional comments or  
43 questions or recommendations? Paul Sammarco.

44  
45 **DR. SAMMARCO:** Thank you. It's more of a comment, I suppose,  
46 than anything else, but, just from a previous talk that was  
47 given on Mississippi, and, also, it's, I think, underscored  
48 here, but I was impressed with the efficacy of their program to

1 collect data, and, I mean, it's amazing, the response they got,  
2 and also how reliable they felt their data was, and not that the  
3 other states weren't, and the other states came up with great  
4 data too, but it's just that Mississippi seems to somehow ring a  
5 bell with their system.

6  
7 It looks like it wasn't one person designing the program, but it  
8 was many people involved in a couple of departments and so  
9 forth, and so I just wanted to say congratulations to them, and  
10 I think there's perhaps something to be learned from that.  
11 Thank you.

12  
13 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. All right. Any other questions or  
14 comments? Paul Mickle.

15  
16 **DR. MICKLE:** We appreciate that comment, Paul, and I'm not going  
17 to comment really much about anything, and I'm not an SSC  
18 member, and I presented the information as we are at this point,  
19 but, again, I just want to emphasize two things.

20  
21 We have a very small fishery of reef fish, and it's very  
22 seasonal, and we have customized our program to give us the best  
23 ways that our statutory authority gives us to manage  
24 sustainably, and it's just very different on how we have to do  
25 it, because our universe is so small, and we don't talk about  
26 the federal for-hire, or charter boat, side of it, but, again,  
27 there's like thirteen captains.

28  
29 If there's an issue with them, we just pull up a picnic table  
30 and social distance and get through it, and the data on that  
31 side is more even accurate, believe it or not, but the overall  
32 goal is -- Really, we have identified an amount of pounds that  
33 we see as a sustainable harvest, at around 150,000 pounds, and  
34 that's why we put so much effort into it, is to make sure that  
35 we hit as accurately as we can, so that we have a very stable  
36 fishery, and we've just put a lot of very limited resources into  
37 this program, but it's really a -- There is a very large need  
38 here, and I just want to say it to the group, of taking more  
39 time and looking at such a different small-scale program,  
40 compared to a large regional program, such as MRIP, and maybe  
41 look at different ways to do calibration and the need for that.

42  
43 It just definitely needs more time for the seasonal side of it  
44 and the ACL seasonal management angles to move forward on, and I  
45 just want to emphasize that to the group, that there's a lot of  
46 other things that can be done here, and probably should be done,  
47 because, currently, what is proposed at this meeting is to  
48 accept the calibrations and the ratios that were presented by

1 NOAA.

2  
3 Just as a scientist, when you think about -- You are essentially  
4 not weighting anything, or a weight of one, and, when you do  
5 that, you're just dividing one number into the other, and you're  
6 not properly recognizing the differences in the methodologies of  
7 each survey, and you're treating them as equal, and I think  
8 everybody in the group here is understanding that all the  
9 surveys are not equal, all of them, all the state surveys and  
10 the MRIP. They're not equal at all, and that's how they're  
11 being treated. Thank you.

12  
13 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Any other comments? Luiz, did you  
14 have another comment?

15  
16 **DR. BARBIERI:** I do, Mr. Chairman, and thank you. It's just  
17 trying to now go back to when you asked for us to move forward  
18 some recommendations, and I am wondering if it would be worth it  
19 for us to discuss a little bit the block of years, the specific  
20 years that are being used for the ratios for all the states, in  
21 case we may want to see what would be the advantages of having  
22 some level of consistency in the years that are used for the  
23 ratios for different states.

24  
25 Jeff's presentation emphasized the need to have this for Florida  
26 and Mississippi, and I think this is because, Jeff, and tell me  
27 if I'm wrong, but it's because those two states require a  
28 conversion from FES back to CHTS, but there will be blocks of  
29 years that are going to be used for ratios for all the states,  
30 in terms of the CHTS component, correct?

31  
32 **DR. PULVER:** Correct, and so I think, for Louisiana, there is  
33 really only one year available. For Alabama, I'm not sure what  
34 year Snapper Check started, and I think 2014 or 2015, but, based  
35 on that presentation, they were preferring to use the most  
36 recent two years of landings data, just because the seasons have  
37 been longer, due to the exempted fishing permits during those  
38 years, and that was discussed earlier.

39  
40 **DR. BARBIERI:** Right. Exactly.

41  
42 **DR. PULVER:** The reason for the FES to CHTS conversion is that's  
43 sort of just because I think that's what each of the states --  
44 It was kind of the information that was initially provided for  
45 Florida and Mississippi, was a conversion from FES to each of  
46 the state surveys, and so it did require that additional step.

47  
48 **DR. BARBIERI:** Right, but, thinking about the fact that there

1 will be a ratio between the state survey and the CHTS, and  
2 that's going to involve a number of years of data, and Alabama  
3 has proposed using 2018 and 2019, and, if I can get back to your  
4 Slide 13, Jeff, it's easy to see there that 2017 is kind of  
5 complicated by a number of factors, with initially a very short  
6 three-day season that eventually was supplemented later on, and  
7 I guess it's just weekends only between June 16 and September 3,  
8 but the years 2015 and 2016 had short seasons as well, which, in  
9 2018 and 2019, you actually have longer seasons during the EFP  
10 time period.

11  
12 I am just raising this issue because, one, I would like to hear  
13 comments from other committee members on whether it would be  
14 advisable, or perhaps preferable, to have some level of  
15 consistency, because we are using -- I mean, our main goal here  
16 is to convert to CHTS currency, given that that's where the  
17 catch advice is.

18  
19 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. It would seem though that you kind  
20 of have to look at it on a case-by-case basis, because, as it  
21 shows there, the actions in Mississippi are -- Well, not for  
22 2015 to 2017, but, after that, the actions in Mississippi are  
23 different than the actions in Florida, which are different than  
24 the actions in Alabama and so on, and so I think it would be  
25 nice if a standard set of years could be chosen, but I guess I'm  
26 not optimistic, but we'll see. John Mareska.

27  
28 **MR. MARESKA:** I basically just have a comment, and I was looking  
29 and listening through the day, and I guess I just want to say  
30 some things that have already been said, but just say them a  
31 different way, and also in support of Paul Mickle's concerns.

32  
33 Looking at Slide 4, we immediately see that the difference  
34 between a state survey and the MRIP CHTS -- That seems to be  
35 where, we'll call it a penalty, comes in, where those states  
36 that have a system, or landings that are significantly different  
37 from the federal survey, get penalized, and so, when I'm looking  
38 at Louisiana and Florida, they have surveys that are very  
39 similar in design to the MRIP survey, whereas Alabama and  
40 Mississippi actually set up a quota monitoring system, or a  
41 census, as some have referred to it, and it's only for the  
42 season, to improve management, and so, fundamentally, there is  
43 big differences there, and I'm not sure that the scalar, as it's  
44 proposed, is appropriate.

45  
46 If we're going to use this scalar, then I have concerns about  
47 that being an accurate and true scalar, and I think Will has  
48 alluded to that it's a scalar, and it's not really a

1 calibration, and I'm in support of further studies that are  
2 really going to look at how to accurately calibrate state  
3 landings back to federal estimates. Thank you.

4  
5 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. I think we are reiterating a theme  
6 of the day, in terms of understanding what the differences are,  
7 and that's clearly one of the things that we're talking about  
8 here. Are there any other questions or comments or  
9 recommendations? Jim Tolan.

10  
11 **DR. TOLAN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just to John's point about  
12 in-season and out-of-season, and we've sort of danced around the  
13 fact that Texas hasn't been a bit part of this conversation, but  
14 the data that we do provide, both in-state and in federal  
15 waters, our creel surveys take place year-round, and so the data  
16 that we're providing for this covers all the seasons, and so  
17 it's not just the federal season, and I just wanted to bring  
18 that to everyone's attention.

19  
20 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. All right. Do we wish to say  
21 anything more at this point on this? Let me get the -- Kai.

22  
23 **DR. LORENZEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is sort of really  
24 just a reflection on this question of precision, and I think the  
25 Mississippi example is interesting, because it's hard to think  
26 of some recreational fisheries survey that gets as close to a  
27 census as that particular survey, and so, when you look at that  
28 and the MRIP estimates for the state, I think one can think that  
29 probably the state survey provides a more precise estimate, but  
30 the issue about the calibration, of course, is that the  
31 management quantity, the quota allocation, is based on the  
32 assumption that the MRIP level of catch has been taken from the  
33 state waters in the past, and so that's what went into the  
34 assessment, and that's what the management advice is based on,  
35 and that's why, again, even though we might believe or think the  
36 state survey estimate is actually a better estimate, the  
37 management advice was based on the assumption of the MRIP  
38 estimate. That's, again, why I think one cannot get the advice  
39 in one and then monitor in the other. Thanks.

40  
41 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. The thing that I would just sort  
42 of suggest is things that we aren't real sure of ourselves, and  
43 one of the things that struck me is, if you have small area  
44 coastlines, like Alabama and Mississippi, has anybody looked at  
45 the MRIP estimates, the proportion of in-state to out-of-state?  
46 Is it possible that MRIP is picking up more people that come  
47 from out-of-state? Those are the sorts of issues that I think  
48 would be the kinds of things you would look at.



1  
2 It's not necessarily that one is wrong, one survey is wrong, or  
3 it's -- Rather, they are trying to estimate two different  
4 things, and that's -- In my experience, that's the first thing  
5 you start looking at, is not necessarily that the methodology is  
6 wrong, but it's what are you really estimating with the  
7 different survey vehicles, but anyway. All right. Richard  
8 Cody.

9  
10 **DR. CODY:** That's a very good point, and the corrections that  
11 the states make, or the adjustments they make, for the off-frame  
12 effort varies, and it differs by survey, and so, obviously, it's  
13 easier to compare the probability-based surveys, like Louisiana  
14 and Florida's survey, to MRIP, for that purpose, but you are  
15 right. That is something that we would like to look into,  
16 because that might be a potential source of bias as well.

17  
18 One other thing is that private access is something that is not  
19 known in any of these surveys, and so we're assuming that it's  
20 similar to what we intercept dockside in public-access fishing,  
21 and so there are questions there, I think, and that's why I  
22 think this transition team sub-group is going to be so  
23 important, because it does require us looking at state to MRIP  
24 comparisons, to get a better sense of the magnitude of those  
25 differences.

26  
27 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Okay. Jason Adriance.

28  
29 **MR. ADRIANCE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to point  
30 out, to some of those folks interested in some of the  
31 differences, at least where we may be different, in the sense of  
32 being a general survey than MRIP, if you look at the  
33 certification documentation that is provided, and I think it's  
34 one of the last items on the agenda, that gets into some of the  
35 nuts-and-bolts of LA Creel, and folks can look through that if  
36 they wish. Thanks.

37  
38 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. John Mareska.

39  
40 **MR. MARESKA:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You sparked a thought  
41 when you talked about differences, and one of the fundamental  
42 differences between the Alabama and Mississippi quota monitoring  
43 systems is they are capturing the landings and the trips from  
44 those private access vessels that never go to a public launch  
45 that are intercepted, and so there's not two parts to those  
46 surveys, I guess, or those quota monitorings, but it's just one  
47 survey, where the other states have two parts. You have your  
48 dockside, and then you have your effort surveys. Thank you.

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**CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Paul Mickle.

**DR. MICKLE:** Thank you, Joe. I think John kind of touched on it, but just a point of clarification to what Dr. Cody said, that we do monitor private landings. They tell us, before they even leave to go fishing, which ramp they are leaving from, and then there's a choice for private residence, and then we verify that on the water.

We also have a program where we go to the people's houses and measure and do the intercept, to get to verify those private landings through the system, and I just want to say that that was interrupted, obviously, with COVID, because of social distancing issues, but that was always built into the program, and we are producing those private landings, because there is a concern that the weights may be different between public landings and private landings, because some of the larger boats leave from private landings that could go out and deeper and potentially acquire or have different type of biometrics on their landings of fish, and so I just wanted to bring that up. I will just speak for Mississippi, that we do account for that, and, again, providing more accuracy toward the landings.

**CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Okay. Thank you. Richard Cody.

**DR. CODY:** Apologies, Paul, and I misspoke when I said there wasn't a private access component to your survey, but I wanted to just address John's point that, with the census, you have one survey, whereas, with the other general surveys, you have two components.

You have a catch and an effort, and you do have two components with the census-based approach as well. Both of them use the capture-recapture methodology that our consultants helped to develop, and there is the reporting phase, which is non-probability, and then you've got the recapture phase, which is the intercept component, and that captures off-frame effort as well, and so they are different, but there are a few similarities there, and there are two components to that capture-recapture design.

**CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Doug Gregory.

**MR. GREGORY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Going back to the FES presentation we had last month, the thing that struck me, and one of the things that always concerned me about the intercept aspect of MRIP and MRFSS, are all the boats, all the houses, on

1 canals, and maybe it's just a Florida issue, that do not go to  
2 public marinas or boat ramps, and so the intercepts are missing  
3 those people, and those are people that I would expect to be  
4 better fishermen, going, like I think Paul said, going further  
5 offshore and catching the bigger fish.

6  
7 If that's the case, then I would also expect the Alabama and  
8 Mississippi estimates to be larger than FES, and maybe I  
9 misremembered the ratios that were presented earlier today, but,  
10 if you're catching everybody that is fishing, and not just  
11 people leaving from public boat ramps, you could have a lot more  
12 fish, a lot more people. Thank you very much.

13  
14 I have come to the conclusion that all these surveys -- None of  
15 them are perfect, and it's hard to believe that Mississippi's is  
16 as perfect as it sounds, but they've got the geography in their  
17 favor, but we just need to try to move forward, but I'm really  
18 curious as to what the effect is of these boats and people who  
19 are fishing from their docks, their private docks, and not going  
20 through public access points. Thank you very much.

21  
22 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. All right. We have beaten this,  
23 and I don't think we've beaten it to death, because it's still  
24 alive, but I think, at this point, we need -- Unless we have  
25 some concrete recommendations at this point, let's move on then  
26 to Agenda Item VI about the transition team, the Gulf transition  
27 team, and I believe there was a presentation for that. Dr.  
28 Cody, were you giving it or whom?

29  
30 **DR. CODY:** I can present it. I don't have a formal  
31 presentation, but I can at least go over some of the things we  
32 hope to accomplish with the Gulf Transition Team Working Group.

33  
34 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Yes, and it has you on the agenda here.  
35 Please go ahead.

#### 36 37 **WORKSHOP SUMMARY OF TASKS FOR THE GULF TRANSITION TEAM**

38  
39 **DR. CODY:** Well, as I mentioned earlier, and I just provided  
40 some context for the Gulf transition team sub-group, was going  
41 back to the transition team that had been instrumental in making  
42 decisions regarding benchmarking for the FES and the approaches  
43 that we used for transitioning to the new FES survey and I think  
44 the value that it brought, in terms of transparency, to the  
45 process.

46  
47 I think that can't be understated, and I think it's safe to say  
48 that it was probably one of the more inclusive undertakings that

1 we've had, in that it had state partnerships, and we had state  
2 partners involved, and council and commission members, as well  
3 as the NOAA Regional Office and Science Center.

4  
5 That said, it seemed like a logical step forward would be to  
6 introduce a sub-group that would deal specifically with Gulf-  
7 related transitioning, and, in particular, the states to the  
8 states surveys.

9  
10 This was discussed a little bit in the afternoon session  
11 yesterday, and thanks for putting it up on the screen, and,  
12 basically, the themes that came up were data management, and I  
13 would say that a common thread between data management and data  
14 access and data standards was this focus on transparency to a  
15 process and a common standard, meaning that data accessibility  
16 would be a primary concern, and having a process in place that  
17 would be translatable into an efficient mechanism for estimating  
18 or calculating landings on an annual basis.

19  
20 That was something that we had in mind for this, and a logical,  
21 I would say, vehicle for this would be the Gulf States  
22 Commission, because of their involvement with commercial and  
23 recreational data, in terms of MRIP and then also the state trip  
24 ticket programs and so on, and so they have a history of working  
25 with the states and housing data from the states.

26  
27 That was one of the components that was talked about a little  
28 bit, and there was some discussion of research directions, and  
29 you heard some of those in discussion. Paul mentioned some of  
30 the things that he would be interested in looking at, and, in  
31 particular, this idea of an integrated estimate, or maybe a  
32 different approach to looking at this issue, or this problem, of  
33 calibration.

34  
35 These are things I think that the transition team would be a  
36 good way to maximize the efficiency with which we do this,  
37 because we have involvement from each of the states, and it  
38 wouldn't be just Science & Technology trying to schedule a  
39 meeting with one state and then maybe reporting out to another  
40 state at some point and just not a very efficient process, the  
41 way it had been done, and so some things have been learned from  
42 the way we've done the certifications and the way we've worked  
43 with the states in the past that may be a more inclusive form,  
44 and certainly, at this point, since we are at a point where we  
45 have the different surveys being implemented, it makes sense to  
46 me to do this.

47  
48 The other thing is that we do need this -- It needs to be a

1 collaborative effort, if we're to get a better understanding of  
2 the differences between the surveys. We have made the case, in  
3 numerous workshops, as to why we believe the FES is more  
4 accurate than the CHTS and why the estimates of the CHTS are  
5 biased low.

6  
7 I think there is a focus on estimates being too high, but maybe  
8 not so much on them being low, and possible reasons for that,  
9 and so, rather than try to embark on something that really  
10 requires a lot of cooperation, I think that these are the things  
11 that can be hashed out in an open setting with a formal team and  
12 process.

13  
14 Then, lastly, I think the other thing that can't be forgotten as  
15 well is that, and you've heard a lot of references today to  
16 calibration versus scaling, and, I mean, really, the issue with  
17 the calibration is that you can imply different components in a  
18 scalar that could be a calibration, but you won't know anything  
19 about what's contributing to those differences.

20  
21 You will account for the differences, possibly, but you won't be  
22 able to identify the drivers for those differences, and so,  
23 going forward, we're going to be faced with additional data  
24 being available to us and the ability to reconsider, or to look  
25 at, the calibration process again, and I think there will be  
26 pressure from a lot of different sources to revisit  
27 calibrations, and maybe not on a frequent basis, but at least on  
28 a regular basis, to see if things match up with what we had  
29 originally proposed, and I suspect too that, with MRIP, that's  
30 not a static undertaking either.

31  
32 We have a number of different pilot studies, either in progress  
33 or about to start, that could affect the estimates and what is  
34 produced from that survey, and I think it would be important,  
35 going forward, to coordinate any changes to any of these surveys  
36 in a coordinated manner, so that we minimize the disruption to  
37 the stock assessment and management process, because the  
38 likelihood is that we're going to see additional changes to all  
39 of these surveys over time and that, unfortunately, calibration  
40 is a necessary evil, when you have differences between surveys,  
41 and so coordinating on minimizing that disruption I think is  
42 important going forward.

43  
44 Those are the three, I think, basic tasks that I would expect  
45 this working group to be involved in. The other part that can't  
46 be understated too is the connection to the council of this  
47 working group, and then the connection to the commission and the  
48 states, and so we expect a little bit better and more efficient

1 transfer of information.

2  
3 One of the things that has happened in the past is that, when  
4 Science & Technology works with a state, the other states may  
5 not be aware of what's going on, or fully aware, and so I think  
6 this will aid in the transparency and adding transparency to the  
7 process.

8  
9 I think that's basically where I am, and those are just the  
10 minimum things that I think this group could address. I think  
11 there will be questions as to other forms of research that may  
12 be needed as well that we maybe haven't considered here.

13  
14 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Are there any comments? If not,  
15 let's have a little discussion about scheduling here. I think  
16 this would be a good time for a short break, but, also, the next  
17 agenda item is basically background material about the  
18 certification and the white paper and so on, and I'm not sure  
19 what further discussion we might have on that, but I will  
20 certainly leave it open, and then, other than that, we just have  
21 public comment.

22  
23 Now, the issue of public comment is that it was originally  
24 defined for tomorrow morning, and I think, if somebody had  
25 planned to make a public comment tomorrow morning, I would hate  
26 to adjourn the meeting today and not give them the opportunity.  
27 Conversely, if the only thing we had was public comment tomorrow  
28 morning, what I wouldn't want is a number of our participants,  
29 the SSC, not to sign on tomorrow morning, because public comment  
30 is only useful if it's heard by the people here.

31  
32 Let me get some ideas about what we might do for the rest of  
33 today and tomorrow morning, because I am not seeing a lot of  
34 discussion going on, particularly in relation to Agenda Item  
35 VIII, the background materials, and so is there any comment  
36 about the scheduling? Ryan.

37  
38 **MR. RINDONE:** Thank you, sir. The section on background  
39 materials is just that, and it's not an individual discussion  
40 topic. Those materials are just provided to you guys so that  
41 you can have everything available to you to provide the  
42 appropriate recommendations to the council.

43  
44 Insofar as public comment is concerned, it's as time allows, and  
45 we certainly appear to have time at this point, if there's no  
46 other SSC discussion or recommendations that you guys would like  
47 to make to the council, and so we could receive public comment  
48 today, and, if there's no further discussion or whatnot by the

1 SSC, this meeting could also conclude today.

2  
3 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Okay. Thank you. What I suggest then is take  
4 a ten-minute break right now, and, if you are motivated to  
5 provide recommendations, use that ten minutes to document them,  
6 so that we have those discussions, and then, beyond that, then  
7 we will -- If somebody has any comments on Agenda Item VIII, the  
8 certification and so on, feel free. If nothing is else is going  
9 to be, then we will have public comment and then adjourn the  
10 meeting, and so let's take a ten-minute break right now and  
11 proceed accordingly. Thank you.

12  
13 (Whereupon, a brief recess was taken.)

14  
15 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Are there any further discussion points on  
16 Agenda Item VI about the transition team? Kevin Anson.

17  
18 **MR. ANSON:** Just a general comment to the Gulf transition team  
19 and some of the things that it could undertake. I'm certainly  
20 supportive of all those things, as far as revisiting and  
21 updating calibrations and transparency and data delivery and  
22 management and accessibility and future research. Those are all  
23 good things, and just, at least from Alabama's perspective, I'm  
24 just concerned about the process in general for all of those  
25 things, relative to where we stand with our data collection  
26 program and its use, or potential use, in management relative to  
27 the current federal surveys, the survey that's being used and  
28 then transitioning to FES.

29  
30 It's just that we feel like we are in a pinch, so to speak, with  
31 the calibrations and the amount of harvest that is being shown  
32 to occur off of Alabama in the federal surveys, and the  
33 calibration exercise we're going through and have been  
34 discussing today is going to result in a shortened season for  
35 Alabama, starting next year, and we'll go from about a twenty-  
36 five-day season, like we had this year, down to a seven-day  
37 season, immediately, with the cuts, if they're carried through.

38  
39 Then I personally don't have much hope, when we transition to  
40 FES, as far as that having a positive impact on the overall ACL  
41 that's available for all sectors, which would trickle down to  
42 Alabama, based on its share of the private recreational, and I  
43 just see us potentially going to a four-day season for private  
44 recreational anglers off of Alabama, and that will be difficult  
45 to communicate to the angling public, as to how that happened  
46 and trying to explain that, in light of what we see off of  
47 Alabama, what the anglers see off of Alabama, and part of the  
48 difficulty will be in explaining the differences, or the

1 similarities, for the charter boats for which we estimate using  
2 Snapper Check.

3  
4 The pounds that were identified in Dr. Pulver's presentation  
5 this afternoon for Alabama, based on the calibration, they would  
6 be less than what we would be indicating, or showing, for the  
7 federal charter boats off of Alabama by about 130,000 pounds.  
8 We utilize the Snapper Check for federal charter boats, and  
9 those estimates are very similar to the federal survey, and Dr.  
10 Barbieri mentioned there are several different surveys that NOAA  
11 uses to kind of piecemeal, or put together, the recreational  
12 catch.

13  
14 They use the for-hire survey, which is a telephone survey,  
15 basically, based on vessel effort, and that's what Snapper Check  
16 is, is a mandatory reporting survey on vessel effort, and our  
17 Snapper Check numbers and the for-hire survey numbers, the  
18 federal numbers, are within about 20 percent of one another, and  
19 so there are some differences there, major differences.

20  
21 I'm glad that we are having this discussion, and I'm glad to  
22 hear the discussion amongst the SSC members, and that their  
23 interest and curiosity has been piqued, and that there's an  
24 opportunity, I think, to kind of go forward, with an eye towards  
25 -- Again, I think the assessment, and the data that goes into  
26 the assessment this next go-round, will be crucial, since we  
27 have these other state surveys that kind of show this various  
28 information and the divergence from the federal estimate.  
29 Again, I just appreciate that you all have had this meeting, and  
30 I appreciate the time given to me and the states to explain the  
31 state surveys. Thank you.

32  
33 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. In my own case, I am kind of like  
34 what Will Patterson said earlier, and I haven't been following  
35 this as well as some other people that are more directly  
36 involved, and so I think it's been very good for us to kind of  
37 get a better handle of what's been going on and the approaches  
38 and some of the issues.

39  
40 I also think that some of the things that we brought up today  
41 are things that these working groups have been trying to deal  
42 with for literally years, and so I suppose it's good in that  
43 sense, as we're reiterating some of the concerns, but,  
44 nevertheless, I still think this has been useful, for us as the  
45 SSC in general, to kind of be aware of the approaches and how we  
46 might proceed in the future. Jim Nance.

47  
48 **DR. NANCE:** Thanks. I appreciate having this meeting. I



1 learned a great deal about the different things that have been  
2 happening within the states and the surveys, and so I appreciate  
3 being able to hear those, and I appreciate the states coming and  
4 being able to present those.

5  
6 I'm real hesitant to do anything with what we're doing, and I  
7 enjoyed Sean's motion. You know, that one part in the middle,  
8 where we need to, I think, in my opinion, stick with what we're  
9 doing, until we really figure out why there are these big  
10 differences between some of the surveys and the MRFSS numbers,  
11 and so that's kind of where my mind has been, but I do  
12 appreciate all the presentations, and I've learned a lot.

13  
14 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Will Patterson.

15  
16 **DR. PATTERSON:** I agree with the sentiments that Joe and Jim  
17 just offered about learning a lot, and I'm especially thankful  
18 for Paul and Harry and Kevin presenting components of their  
19 surveys, and I think they all did a nice job of giving us  
20 important details for this consideration and pointing us in  
21 directions where other details are available.

22  
23 I can only imagine, if I was a state biologist and dealing with  
24 this particular question -- Sorry, but I left out Bev Sauls, and  
25 I didn't mean to, but it would be quite frustrating to deal with  
26 this. I mean, it's frustrating just being on this side of it  
27 and trying to figure out what's actually going on here, and so I  
28 commend all the folks who presented information today, because I  
29 thought they did a really nice job in what could possibly be a  
30 frustrating thing to kind of deal with.

31  
32 I think, moving forward, this idea of the transition team of  
33 revisiting and updating calibrations, I would just hope that, in  
34 our report, we provide some information about separating this  
35 idea of common currency and scaling up to FES levels, given  
36 that's how the assessment will be done and that's how management  
37 will be done likely into the future, Sean Powers' motion  
38 notwithstanding, from this idea of verification.

39  
40 I know we have these certified methods, but, you know, Luiz  
41 mentioned it earlier, and I did too, and what does certification  
42 actually mean? I know Clay and Richard spoke to this a bit when  
43 they said that certification was for a method, and then you have  
44 an application phase that can still have some questions, but I  
45 think that idea of what does certification mean and how have you  
46 verified the accuracy of those landings estimates, and I think  
47 Mississippi's data offers a real existing model system to  
48 examine some of that, given, from what Paul presented today, it

1 appears to be a near census of their effort and landings.

2  
3 I'm sure the discards -- You know, that's still an issue that  
4 has to be wrestled with, but, at least the landed catch, they  
5 should have a real good estimate, a near census, of what's been  
6 landed, and so that particular state seems to offer some  
7 potential to really dive into some of these discrepancies, and  
8 then you have the scaling thing, and that's something beyond  
9 that altogether, but, anyway, I think there's some opportunity  
10 there that hopefully can be examined.

11  
12 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Is there any other comment on  
13 anything we've talked about thus far or on the agenda, anything  
14 on the agenda? Luiz.

15  
16 **DR. BARBIERI:** Well, Mr. Chairman, if you're thinking about  
17 adjourning, if we have this -- I think we were expected to  
18 actually make some recommendations about the appropriateness of  
19 the calibration methods and whether we accept those or not,  
20 given all the discussion that we've had and the reviews provided  
21 by the MRIP consultants, and then moving on to some of the  
22 choices that we're asked to make, considering Jeff Pulver's  
23 presentation, on which sets of years we'll be using for the  
24 ratios for conversion, because the council is expecting from us  
25 some recommendation, for the council meeting at the end of this  
26 month, that they have us vet some of these methodologies and the  
27 ratios proposed that, at least for the time being, will provide  
28 the council some level of a practical way to handle monitoring  
29 of the quotas going forward.

30  
31 **I didn't have the time to finish this, and I was looking at the**  
32 **numbers and the ratios here, but I'm trying, on the go here, to**  
33 **build a motion like the SSC considers the methods proposed to**  
34 **generate conversion ratios between Gulf states surveys and MRIP**  
35 **as appropriate for quota monitoring of the red snapper state-**  
36 **specific ACLs.**

37  
38 Then, specifically, these methods consist of, or the ratios, and  
39 then I guess we have to -- Because there's such a variety of  
40 methodologies being applied, and some have a conversion directly  
41 from the state survey to CHTS, state survey to FES, but then  
42 back to CHTS, and different states use different -- Might be  
43 using different sets of years of data, either FES or CHTS, that  
44 we would have to kind of walk ourselves through what those  
45 actual ratios, the numbers, actually are there.

46  
47 If it's okay with you, Mr. Chairman, I'm going to start -- I  
48 will re-read this, and I'm sorry, and I apologize to Jessica or

1 Bernie, but I did not email this, because I'm still in the  
2 process of writing it, but if you can hear what I'm saying here,  
3 and I can read it to you. Is that okay?  
4

5 **MS. MATOS:** That's fine.  
6

7 **DR. BARBIERI:** The SSC considers the methods proposed to  
8 generate conversion ratios between Gulf state surveys and MRIP  
9 data as appropriate for quota monitoring of the red snapper  
10 state-specific ACLs. Specifically, these methods consist of:  
11 Florida GRFS to CHTS ratio of 1.1362 (years 2015-2019); Alabama  
12 Snapper Check to CHTS ratio of 0.5259 (CHTS data for 2018-2019);  
13 Mississippi Tails 'n Scales to CHTS ratio of 0.3464 (years 2015-  
14 2019); Louisiana LA Creel to CHTS ratio of -- I don't know what  
15 that ratio is. I haven't had the time to look at it, but it  
16 would be data for 2015. Jason, I'm sure --  
17

18 **MR. ADRIANCE:** 1.06.  
19

20 **DR. BARBIERI:** 1.06. There were go. Perfect. Jason, thank  
21 you. That will be our recommendation to the council, basically  
22 accepting the methods that were discussed last week and vetted  
23 further today, and we had the benefit of having the  
24 presentations and discussions today, but, also, the input from  
25 the NMFS statistical consultants, providing their own judgment  
26 there on whether the methods were appropriate and under what  
27 conditions, and so that would be my motion, Mr. Chairman, and  
28 that would incorporate then a recommendation to the council of  
29 accepting these methods as acceptable, for the time being, for  
30 quota monitoring purposes, as well as integrated there would be  
31 the specific ratios and the sets of years that are used for  
32 those ratios to be estimated.  
33

34 To the SSC members, I am not married to the ratios of these  
35 numbers in any way, in terms of the sets of years, and I'm open  
36 to discussion, if you have recommendations to adjust some of  
37 these years or some of these ratios according to other numbers  
38 that you feel would be more appropriate. Thank you.  
39

40 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Is there a second?  
41

42 **MR. GILL:** I second, Mr. Chairman. I have a question.  
43

44 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Go ahead, Bob.  
45

46 **MR. GILL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Luiz, the presentation by  
47 Jeff this morning, based on the updated data, had a ratio for  
48 Alabama of 0.49, and I'm assuming that the 0.5259 came from the

1 information provided at the workshop last week that had the  
2 incomplete data associated with it, and is that the case?

3  
4 **DR. BARBIERI:** Yes and no, Bob. You may remember that, yes,  
5 there is a recommendation that originally had come in last  
6 week's presentation, in Jeff's presentation, recommending a  
7 ratio for Alabama, but, as of today, having seen, I think,  
8 Alabama's presentation last week and their proposal for using a  
9 specific set of numbers, years, that they are using, the 2018  
10 and 2019, and the fact that Jeff explicitly, during his  
11 presentation today, did not mention the need to have a  
12 recommendation for Alabama, I'm assuming then that -- And  
13 considering that the statistical consultants -- Their comments  
14 on the Alabama methodology was that they accepted them and had  
15 no further recommendations, and I am going with the ratio and  
16 the number of years that were presented by Mr. Anson earlier  
17 during his presentation.

18  
19 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. We will start with Harry. I am  
20 going to skip Michael Drexler until we get some of the  
21 discussion about this motion off the table, and so Harry and  
22 then Jim Tolan.

23  
24 **MR. BLANCHET:** My hand was originally up for a different  
25 purpose, but, since I've got it up, it looks like Slide 9 of  
26 Jeff Pulver's presentation has that 0.5259 number for Alabama,  
27 but it has a very different number for Mississippi than what  
28 Luiz's motion has, and I'm just trying to follow what's up with  
29 that.

30  
31 **DR. BARBIERI:** Harry, just to try to clarify that --

32  
33 **MR. BLANCHET:** It's the 04a MRIP Review Workshop, the meeting  
34 objective, review the ratios. It's Slide 9.

35  
36 **MR. RINDONE:** That's the methodology that was originally  
37 proposed by Mississippi that the consultants had taken issue  
38 with.

39  
40 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Harry, do you want to continue?

41  
42 **MR. BLANCHET:** No, and my original comment was on a very  
43 different topic, and I would rather stay where we're at.

44  
45 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** All right. Thank you. Jim Tolan.

46  
47 **DR. TOLAN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. **Just for completeness, on**  
48 **the particular motion that's on the table right now, if Dr.**

1 Barbieri would allow a friendly amendment, I would like to add  
2 in that Texas maintain a ratio value of one. That way, I won't  
3 abstain from this vote.

4

5 **DR. BARBIERI:** Absolutely, Jim. The friendly amendment has been  
6 accepted.

7

8 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Sean.

9

10 **DR. POWERS:** Luiz, just to clarify, this is only for quota  
11 monitoring?

12

13 **DR. BARBIERI:** Yes. Right now, Sean, I'm thinking along those  
14 terms, and, I mean, this workshop -- I am looking at the June  
15 council meeting and that discussion there, and the report that  
16 was produced by the Reef Fish Committee asking the meeting that  
17 we had last week, the August 5 meeting, for state calibrations  
18 to take place, with the idea that we would have some revolution  
19 for them, at least some direction that we could present to them,  
20 and so quota monitoring for the red snapper fishery, and I think  
21 this could be proposed for next year, since this year's seasons  
22 are pretty much over, that they would need that for their August  
23 meeting.

24

25 This is why this SSC meeting was scheduled to be immediately  
26 following last week's meeting, calibration meeting, and then  
27 preceding the council meeting at the end of the month, and so  
28 the idea here is for the quota monitoring, and so I'm trying to  
29 stay specific with that, because of some of the issues that we  
30 discussed today, yourself included, and there are some other  
31 issues that I think still need to be resolved that hopefully  
32 we're going to continue discussing through some other processes,  
33 regarding the MRIP survey and the state surveys, but, for now,  
34 this is what this is about.

35

36 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Sean, did you have anything else?

37

38 **DR. POWERS:** No, not right now.

39

40 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Jeff Pulver.

41

42 **DR. PULVER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If you could pull up my  
43 presentation, Slide 4, in regard to the Snapper Check to CHTS  
44 ratio, and it is correct that, last week, Kevin Anson, Mr.  
45 Anson, presented a ratio of 0.5259. However, they were using an  
46 estimate for the 2019 CHTS landings. This table here contains  
47 the correct landings for CHTS, which I was able to provide after  
48 that meeting. This does result in a slightly lower ratio than

1 Dr. Barbieri's motion, and so I just thought I would mention  
2 that. Thank you.  
3  
4 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** So what is the lower value?  
5  
6 **DR. PULVER:** It is the 0.49 that's in the bottom right of this  
7 table.  
8  
9 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** That's fewer significant digits.  
10  
11 **DR. PULVER:** If you give me one second here, I can work out the  
12 math.  
13  
14 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Actually, I think we ought to change the other  
15 ones, but, anyway, whatever people want.  
16  
17 **DR. BARBIERI:** Thank you for that, Jeff. I might, Mr. Chairman,  
18 thank you for that clarification, Jeff. **I mean, I think this**  
19 **helps, and I'm quite okay with us changing to the correct ratio**  
20 **there after the data adjustments were made.** Thank you.  
21  
22 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** So, instead of 0.5259, it will be 0.49. Thank  
23 you.  
24  
25 **DR. PULVER:** 0.4875, if you prefer.  
26  
27 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** To be consistent, I guess you should be  
28 **0.4875.** Thank you. All right. Will and then Paul Mickle.  
29  
30 **DR. PATTERSON:** That last little bit that Jim asked to be added  
31 in here, that Texas maintain a ratio value of one, I would not  
32 support this motion for that statement, because we didn't talk  
33 about Texas at all, and, obviously, it's a special situation,  
34 because there is no ability to calibrate anything, or scale  
35 anything, in Texas, because there is no history of MRFSS or MRIP  
36 or anything besides the Texas landings estimates.  
37  
38 We saw, at a recent meeting, based on population alone, the  
39 Texas landings estimates seem to be quite low. I mean, if you  
40 compare them to the other states, given the population on the  
41 coast, et cetera, just from a qualitative standpoint, the  
42 estimates in Texas appear to be quite low, but then I think Mike  
43 Drexler, who might talk about this later -- You know, they've  
44 done some analysis to try to scale to the coastal population,  
45 and the values are quite a bit higher than what the current  
46 estimates are, but, specifically, to this motion and to our  
47 meeting here, we didn't talk about Texas, and so we didn't talk  
48 about how there could be a recalibration or not with Texas data.

1  
2 The four states that we did hear presentations from and we  
3 considered and discussed quite a bit are the first four listed  
4 here, but we didn't really talk about Texas, and so this would  
5 be an endorsement of something that we actually didn't see any  
6 data for and didn't discuss.

7  
8 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Paul Mickle.

9  
10 **DR. MICKLE:** Thank you, Joe. I'm not going to comment on the  
11 motion, and I don't think it's appropriate, but I do want to  
12 point out that, on the presentation provided by Pulver, on Slide  
13 17, there were two options presented for Mississippi, using a  
14 three-year FES-CHTS ratio and a five-year FES-CHTS ratio, and  
15 those two different, and I guess they're options, you would call  
16 them, but they are consistent with what was approved by the  
17 consultants, and I just want to point out that the three-year  
18 FES-CHTS ratio is more consistent fishing days for what the  
19 seasons were during those years, and, for the five-year, the  
20 number of fishing days were quite different, and I would think  
21 that that would have more validity, as far as creating these  
22 numbers for calibration, using those years there and those  
23 options that seem to be approved through the consultants and  
24 NOAA.

25  
26 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Let's go back to the motion. All  
27 right. Two things have been brought up. One is that we didn't  
28 really discuss the -- Not really, but we didn't discuss the  
29 Texas situation at all, other than to say that it's an  
30 independent survey, and, secondly, Paul Mickle has brought up  
31 the Mississippi number and some questions about that, and I'm  
32 not clear exactly which one we should do. We're basically  
33 talking about two different things, and let's start with Jim  
34 Tolan, who I'm sure is going to talk about Texas.

35  
36 **DR. TOLAN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think Will brings up a  
37 very valid point, in the fact that we haven't really discussed  
38 how we do things in Texas, as it relates to the conversation of  
39 today, and I thank you for that. **I only made that friendly**  
40 **amendment to sort of round out the entire Gulf, in terms of how**  
41 **this motion is going forward for the Gulf Council, and I will**  
42 **certainly retract that friendly amendment, and that's a very**  
43 **valid point, Will.** Thank you.

44  
45 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Luiz.

46  
47 **DR. BARBIERI:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To Paul's point, I  
48 mean, I think that's spot-on, and this is what I was trying to

1 say in the beginning, that I put the five years there as the  
2 initial proposal, just because that was the full set of years,  
3 expecting that committee members would jump in and provide some  
4 level of comment and that adjustments would be made accordingly.  
5

6 **I am not uncomfortable with that change, Paul, of changing the**  
7 **ratio to 0.3840 and using the years 2015 to 2017.** I am not  
8 opposed to that, but I just put something there as an initial  
9 thought, expecting the committee to jump in and provide some  
10 comments.

11  
12 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** All right. Thank you. The seconder, Bob  
13 Gill, you're happy with that? All right. Harry Blanchet.

14  
15 **MR. BLANCHET:** At the risk of making this more complicated,  
16 talking again about the Mississippi values, I am curious why  
17 Mississippi is using 2015 as part of its set of years, given the  
18 very poor precision that the MRIP values had for 2015, the PSE  
19 of 51.5, and that very short season, which, as was discussed  
20 last week, hampers the ability of a general survey, like the  
21 MRIP, to be able to capture that.

22  
23 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Paul Mickle, you were next on the  
24 list, and you might want to comment on that as well.

25  
26 **DR. MICKLE:** Sure. Yes, that's a good observation, Harry. The  
27 thing was that the overall goal about the years that we  
28 suggested to be used was for a completely different methodology  
29 of calibration, and that strategy was accounting for as much --  
30 It was having as many years back as you can look at to look at  
31 the PSEs, and larger datasets give more power in an analysis,  
32 and so that was the justification for that.

33  
34 This is very different, and the approved recommendations for  
35 calibration is a completely different method that is in this  
36 motion here, and it looks at how calibration is done very  
37 differently, not accounting for a potential weighting one way or  
38 the other, and then the reason I raised my hand was I'm not sure  
39 what years this slide that was produced was the recommendation,  
40 and it says -- This is Pulver's presentation, and it's three  
41 years FES to CHTS ratio of 2.25, yielding that 0.384, and that  
42 is actually -- I am guessing that is years 2017, 2018, and 2019,  
43 which would need to be clarified in the motion, if I'm correct.  
44 I may be wrong, but I think that those three years mentioned on  
45 that slide, I think that's 2017, 2018, and 2019, which is not  
46 what the motion reflects.

47  
48 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Jeff.



1  
2 **DR. PULVER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Those three years are the  
3 2015 through 2017, and so it does include 2015. The reason  
4 those three years were chosen was because those are the three  
5 years where both surveys were being run side-by-side, and so  
6 those are directly from each survey. If you recall, the 2017  
7 CHTS estimates are deemed CHTS-like estimates by S&T, because  
8 they are the result of the FES calibration model.

9  
10 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Bob Gill.

11  
12 **MR. GILL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm a little uncomfortable  
13 with the change made and the differentiation between Florida and  
14 Mississippi, in terms of years used, and I am much more  
15 comfortable with having the same years, because I am not sure I  
16 see the distinct difference on why one should be different for  
17 one state than another. Secondly, the longer timeframe, it  
18 seems, to me, to be a better measure, and so my preference would  
19 be that the 2015 to 2019 is what is used.

20  
21 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** First off, I guess my reaction is I want to  
22 make sure that the numbers, the ratios, correspond to the right  
23 span of years, and so I want to make that right, and then the  
24 next question is what span of years should be used for each one  
25 of these, and so I guess I want to be assured, in terms of the  
26 first question, that the ratios in the span of years correspond  
27 to each other, in terms of the methodology. Luiz.

28  
29 **DR. BARBIERI:** Joe, that was exactly my question, and I was just  
30 trying to focus the scope there, and I guess I didn't completely  
31 catch all the comments, in terms of the numbers of years that  
32 they were recommending or correcting there for the ratios. Then  
33 if we can get that clarified, the sets of years that we have  
34 there and the ratios are correct, I think that would be very  
35 helpful.

36  
37 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Let's go down the list then. Florida, Luiz,  
38 this is essentially what you -- You were the original motion,  
39 and this is what you wanted for the State of Florida, correct?

40  
41 **DR. BARBIERI:** That is correct, but just to add that Bob Gill is  
42 trying to consistency, and he made the point of consistency in  
43 the numbers of years used to estimate the ratios, and I'm not  
44 against that point at all. I am comfortable switching the  
45 number of years to be the shorter time series as well, if that's  
46 what the committee feels is the best way to go.

47  
48 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** At this point, let me go to the next one,

1 Alabama. Is the 0.4875 -- Is that what comes out of using the  
2 2018 to 2019 years?  
3  
4 **MR. MARESKA:** Yes, that is correct.  
5  
6 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** All right. Mississippi, is the 0.3840 -- For  
7 what years is that?  
8  
9 **DR. MICKLE:** I am not sure, and I thought Jeff tried to clear  
10 that up, that that was 2017 through 2019, and is that correct,  
11 Jeff? Does that number correspond to the years 2017 through  
12 2019?  
13  
14 **DR. PULVER:** No, and it's actually the 2015 through 2017, and so  
15 what is up there is correct.  
16  
17 **DR. MICKLE:** Then that's correct on the board. Sorry.  
18  
19 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** All right. Then Louisiana was 2015. All  
20 right, and so this is what is on the board, and the numbers are  
21 consistent with each other, and the question is does -- Well, if  
22 we want to modify the years and issues like that, then I'm not  
23 sure how we proceed from there, but, Luiz, you are first there.  
24 Go ahead, Luiz.  
25  
26 **DR. BARBIERI:** Mr. Chairman, I had already my question answered.  
27  
28 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** All right. Jason.  
29  
30 **MR. ADRIANCE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mine kind of goes to  
31 consistency, like Mr. Gill commented, but a little bit of the  
32 opposite. If I understood Dr. Pulver's explanation correctly,  
33 and since we're comparing CHTS ratios in this motion, wouldn't  
34 the Florida one be better to do 2015 through 2017, given that,  
35 after that it was CHTS-like? I am not advocating one way or the  
36 other, but just looking at it for consistency's sake. Thank  
37 you.  
38  
39 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Okay. That's one comment. Sean.  
40  
41 **DR. POWERS:** (Dr. Powers' comment is not audible on the  
42 recording.)  
43  
44 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** I can't hear you.  
45  
46 **DR. POWERS:** (Dr. Powers' comment is not audible on the  
47 recording.)  
48

1 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Let's move on, and we'll try to come back to  
2 Sean. Jeff.  
3  
4 **DR. PULVER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was just going to go  
5 into the ratio for Florida for the 2015 through 2017 data, and I  
6 can provide that.  
7  
8 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** All right. Sean, do you want to give it  
9 another try?  
10  
11 **DR. POWERS:** (Dr. Powers' comment is not audible on the  
12 recording.)  
13  
14 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** All right. This isn't a good way to proceed  
15 with this, because we're sitting here debating several different  
16 things all at once, in terms of which years to use and whether  
17 to be consistent and that sort of thing. At this point, what we  
18 have here is a motion on the floor, and it's been seconded, and  
19 we've discussed it and that sort of thing, and I don't know --  
20 Unless somebody wants to come and say I think, for this state,  
21 it should be X years, then we're going to have to proceed as it  
22 is.  
23  
24 Let me just go down the list then. For Florida, 2015 to 2019,  
25 is there somebody that wishes it were different? All right.  
26 Alabama, 2018 and 2019, is there somebody that wishes it was  
27 different? Then, for Mississippi, 2015 to 2017.  
28  
29 **MR. GILL:** Mr. Chairman, I think it needs to match Florida,  
30 either way.  
31  
32 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Excuse me. What? I didn't hear you.  
33  
34 **MR. GILL:** I believe that the time series should be consistent  
35 with Florida's, and so, whatever the rationale for one is, it's  
36 the same as the rationale for the other, and so, if we're going  
37 to leave the long one for Florida, then the long one for  
38 Mississippi should also be there.  
39  
40 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** All right, and so we've isolated the issue,  
41 and then, of course, Louisiana is only one year anyway. All  
42 right. What we're really debating then is, if you do have the  
43 longer time series, 2015 to 2019, is it best to include a longer  
44 one, to be consistent between Mississippi and Florida, or is it  
45 appropriate to use a shorter one, and what's the justification  
46 for each? Let me start with Florida, the 2015 to 2019, what is  
47 the justification for those years? I am assuming Luiz.  
48

1 **DR. BARBIERI:** Well, I just wanted to start with the longest  
2 time series of data, from that point, and generate the type of  
3 discussion from the committee that we're generating now, where,  
4 when folks disagree with using the longest time series there,  
5 for one reason or another, and so there's pluses and minuses as  
6 we go through Jeff's presentation, and then the additional data  
7 that he provided, and there is some years where the PSE is high,  
8 but there is other years when you don't have a side-by-side  
9 between some of the surveys, and so there is pluses and minuses.

10  
11 Then a third dimension of all of this is the season lengths that  
12 are short in the beginning and that are longer towards the end,  
13 but then there is some inconsistency, and so it's really hard to  
14 pick which one would be the best one, and different people may  
15 find different reasons there, and I am not uncomfortable going  
16 with Florida with 2015 to 2017, because that's when we had the  
17 side-by-side -- We have the CHTS data going through 2017, and we  
18 don't have to use estimates converted from FES back to CHTS, and  
19 Bob made that recommendation, and I'm okay with that, and I  
20 would like to hear from other committee members.

21  
22 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Well, that would use the consistent argument  
23 that Mississippi uses for the 2015 to 2017. If it was 2015  
24 through 2017, what's that ratio? What would that be?

25  
26 **DR. BARBIERI:** That would 1.0602.

27  
28 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Okay. Can we take this and the justifications  
29 -- Well, you've given the justifications for 2015 through 2017,  
30 and avoiding the CHTS to new FES conversions. This is the  
31 motion. Sean, I will give you one more chance.

32  
33 **DR. POWERS:** I had to switch to the phone, and I'm on island Wi-  
34 Fi. Sorry. My point was just that I believe the states are in  
35 a better position to tell us what years are most representative,  
36 and that's it.

37  
38 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Well, we've kind of gone through, and I  
39 believe the states have spoken, and I'm not sure. All right.  
40 We have Michael Drexler. Did you want to comment as part of  
41 public comment or on this particular issue?

42  
43 **MR. MICHAEL DREXLER:** Hi, Mr. Chair. It sounded like you were  
44 adjourning the meeting, and so I raised my hand, but I can hold  
45 my comment.

46  
47 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** All right, and so that's -- We have a motion,  
48 and let me start the simple way. **Is there any objection to this**

1 motion? If not, then the motion carries unanimously, without  
2 objection.

3

4 **DR. TOLAN:** Mr. Chairman, please note one abstention.

5

6 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** All right.

7

8 **DR. TOLAN:** Thank you.

9

10 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** All right. We do have a recommendation, and I  
11 think it will be important, and this whole discussion all day  
12 has been fairly nuanced about what we can and can't say and what  
13 the likelihood of things happening in the future are and upsides  
14 and downsides and pros and cons to everything we're doing here,  
15 and so it's going to be incumbent on me, I guess, in terms of  
16 presenting this to the council, to kind of elucidate some of the  
17 background that went into that particular motion.

18

19 I would still emphasize to the council some basic  
20 recommendations that we talked about, that we need to elucidate  
21 what causes these differences, and we need to have a consistent  
22 time series for assessments, and we recognize that all these  
23 issues affect allocations, particularly the way the allocations  
24 are currently formulated, based on past history of catches. All  
25 right. With that, are we finished with the agenda items, other  
26 than Public Comment? If not, then -- Harry Blanchet.

27

28 **MR. BLANCHET:** Sorry, Mr. Chairman. This goes to some of the  
29 background materials, and the NOAA white paper specifically, and  
30 we received that white paper about a year ago, and I was just  
31 curious. When we first got that paper, it was -- We recognized  
32 that there was some -- It was essentially a -- We were told,  
33 essentially, that it was going to be a living document and that  
34 there would be updates, and so I was curious if there was any  
35 sort of plan for when those updates might actually occur.

36

37 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** I am not sure how is best to answer that. Dr.  
38 Cody, do you have any input on that?

39

40 **DR. CODY:** Harry, that's a good question. We made some updates  
41 to the original document, and, unfortunately, that's not the one  
42 that you have in front of you, and so I just need to get that  
43 formatted into this format, so that we can update it and make it  
44 available. I could have that ready for the council meeting, if  
45 that's okay.

46

47 **MR. BLANCHET:** You have no idea how unusual it is for that to be  
48 that quick.

1  
2 **DR. CODY:** Well, it's not that it's quick, and it's been -- We  
3 got it to this stage, and the formatting for the actual finished  
4 document has been a little bit of an issue, and so apologies  
5 there.

6  
7 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Carrie Simmons.

8  
9 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Richard,  
10 were you talking about this white paper, the Recommended Use of  
11 Current Gulf of Mexico Surveys, the one from NOAA that came out  
12 last year in August, or are you referring to the workshop, the  
13 red snapper workshop, report?

14  
15 **DR. CODY:** No, I'm referring to the recommended uses, the white  
16 paper, the so-called white paper, the joint paper between OST  
17 and the Science Center and Regional Office, and so it's up on  
18 the screen right now.

19  
20 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Okay. Can you tell us what changes  
21 might have been made when you provide the revised copy?

22  
23 **DR. CODY:** There were some minor recommendations, or minor  
24 changes made, to the methodologies presented, and there were  
25 some errors pointed out, by Louisiana in particular, and also  
26 Florida, with respect to some of the details of the survey  
27 operations that were presented.

28  
29 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. All right. If there is no other  
30 comments, then we will move to public comment, and, thus far, we  
31 have one person for public comment, Michael Drexler, and so go  
32 ahead, Mike.

33  
34 **PUBLIC COMMENT**

35  
36 **MR. DREXLER:** I will actually withdraw my comment. All of my  
37 points have been made, and I appreciate the discussion. Thank  
38 you.

39  
40 **OTHER BUSINESS**

41  
42 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** We beat you down. Is there any other comment?  
43 If not, is there any other business? If not, then I will  
44 entertain a motion to adjourn. Before we adjourn, remember we  
45 have this joint meeting with the South Atlantic, and I guess  
46 it's in late September, about yellowtail snapper, I guess, and  
47 remember where we left it before when we had the joint meeting,  
48 and there was lots of concern, lack of understanding, whatever

1 you want to call it, about how to proceed, in terms of the  
2 control rule, from a Gulf perspective, and so, basically, we're  
3 going to have a joint meeting.

4  
5 I didn't bring this up, but I am assuming that it's going to be  
6 chaired by the South Atlantic side of the SSC, because, from a  
7 management perspective, they have the lead, and also their  
8 control rule is somewhat different, in terms of their approach,  
9 and I think it would most effective if that was the case, and  
10 then the Gulf people can comment accordingly.

11  
12 Other than that, we'll have another meeting probably in another  
13 week, and I'm being facetious, and so let me entertain a motion  
14 to adjourn.

15  
16 **MR. GILL:** So moved, Mr. Chairman.

17  
18 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Do I have a second?

19  
20 **DR. NANCE:** Second, Mr. Chairman.

21  
22 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** All right. Jim Nance. Any objection to  
23 adjourning? If not, then we are adjourned. Thank you very  
24 much.

25  
26 (Whereupon, the meeting adjourned on August 11, 2020.)

27  
28 - - -  
29