

1 GULF OF MEXICO FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

2  
3 STANDING & SPECIAL REEF FISH, MACKEREL SPINY LOBSTER, RED DRUM,  
4 ECOSYSTEM & SOCIOECONOMIC SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEES

5  
6 WEBINAR

7  
8 June 29, 2020

9  
10 **STANDING SSC VOTING MEMBERS**

- 11 Joseph Powers.....
- 12 Lee Anderson.....
- 13 Luiz Barbieri.....
- 14 David Chagaris.....
- 15 Benny Gallaway.....
- 16 Bob Gill.....
- 17 Douglas Gregory.....
- 18 Walter Keithly.....
- 19 Robert Leaf.....
- 20 Kai Lorenzen.....
- 21 Camp Matens.....
- 22 James Nance.....
- 23 Sean Powers.....
- 24 Kenneth Roberts.....
- 25 Steven Scyphers.....

26  
27 **SPECIAL REEF FISH SSC VOTING MEMBERS**

- 28 Jason Adriance.....
- 29 Judson Curtis.....
- 30 John Mareska.....

31  
32 **SPECIAL MACKEREL SSC VOTING MEMBERS**

- 33 Jason Adriance.....
- 34 Kari MacLauchlin-Buck.....
- 35 John Mareska.....

36  
37 **SPECIAL SPINY LOBSTER SSC VOTING MEMBERS**

- 38 Thomas Shirley.....

39  
40 **SPECIAL RED DRUM SSC VOTING MEMBERS**

- 41 Michael Allen.....
- 42 Judson Curtis.....

43  
44 **SPECIAL ECOSYSTEM SSC VOTING MEMBERS**

- 45 Cameron Ainsworth.....
- 46 Mandy Karnauskas.....
- 47 Paul Sammarco.....

1 **SPECIAL SOCIOECONOMIC SSC VOTING MEMBERS**

2 Jack Isaacs.....  
3 Kari MacLauchlin-Buck.....  
4 Andrew Ropicki.....

5  
6 **STAFF**

7 John Froeschke.....Deputy Director  
8 Camilla Shireman.....Administrative & Communications Assistant  
9 Carrie Simmons.....Executive Director

10  
11 **OTHER PARTICIPANTS**

12 Tom Frazer.....GMFMC  
13 Regina Spallone.....NMFS  
14 John Walter.....SEFSC

15  
16 - - -

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1 The Standing and Special Reef Fish, Mackerel, Spiny Lobster, Red  
2 Drum, Ecosystem, and Socioeconomic Scientific and Statistical  
3 Committees of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council  
4 convened via webinar on Monday, June 29, 2020, and was called to  
5 order by Chairman Joe Powers.  
6

7 **INTRODUCTIONS AND ADOPTION OF AGENDA**  
8

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 your  
13 input into this meeting.  
14

15 Representing the council is Tom Frazer. Council Staff in  
16 attendance are John Froeschke and Camilla Shireman. Notice of  
17 this meeting was provided to the Federal Register, sent via  
18 email to subscribers of the council's press release email list,  
19 and was posted on the council's website.  
20

21 Today's meeting will include the following topics, and one major  
22 one. First, the Adoption of the Agenda, Approval of the  
23 Minutes, the Scope of Work, and then the Review of the NMFS  
24 Procedural Guidance for Changing Assessed Stock Status from  
25 Known to Unknown, and also the Gulf Council's draft comment  
26 letter. We also have Other Business and any public comment.  
27

28 This webinar is open to the public and is being streamed live  
29 and recorded. A summary of the meeting and verbatim minutes  
30 will be produced and made available to the public via the  
31 council's website.  
32

33 For the purpose of voice identification and to ensure you are  
34 able to mute and unmute your line, please identify yourself by  
35 stating your full name when your name is called for attendance.  
36 Once you have identified yourself, please re-mute your line. To  
37 signal you wish to speak during the meeting, please use the  
38 raise-your-hand function, and staff will display your name.  
39 Please remember to identify yourself before speaking and to also  
40 re-mute your line each time you finish speaking. Thank you. We  
41 will go through the individuals identifying themselves.  
42

43 **MS. CAMILLA SHIREMAN:** Lee Anderson.  
44

45 **DR. LEE ANDERSON:** Lee Anderson.  
46

47 **MS. SHIREMAN:** Luiz Barbieri.  
48

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

1 DR. ROBERTS: Ken Roberts is here.  
2  
3 MS. SHIREMAN: Steven Scyphers.  
4  
5 DR. STEVEN SCYPHERS: Steven Scyphers.  
6  
7 MS. SHIREMAN: Jim Tolan. Jason Adriance.  
8  
9 MR. JASON ADRIANCE: Jason Adriance.  
10  
11 MS. SHIREMAN: Judson Curtis.  
12  
13 DR. JUDSON CURTIS: Judd Curtis.  
14  
15 MS. SHIREMAN: John Mareska.  
16  
17 MR. JOHN MARESKA: John Mareska.  
18  
19 MS. SHIREMAN: Kari Buck.  
20  
21 DR. KARI MACLAUHLIN-BUCK: This is Kari Buck.  
22  
23 MS. SHIREMAN: Ryan Gandy. Tom Matthews. Tom Shirley.  
24  
25 DR. THOMAS SHIRLEY: Tom Shirley.  
26  
27 MS. SHIREMAN: Cameron Ainsworth.  
28  
29 DR. CAMERON AINSWORTH: Cameron Ainsworth.  
30  
31 MS. SHIREMAN: Mandy.  
32  
33 DR. MANDY KARNAUSKAS: Mandy Karnauskas.  
34  
35 MS. SHIREMAN: Paul Sammarco.  
36  
37 DR. PAUL SAMMARCO: Paul Sammarco.  
38  
39 MS. SHIREMAN: Jack Isaacs.  
40  
41 DR. JACK ISAACS: Jack Isaacs.  
42  
43 MS. SHIREMAN: Andrew Ropicki.  
44  
45 DR. ANDREW ROPICKI: Andrew Ropicki.  
46  
47 MS. SHIREMAN: Tom Frazer.  
48

1 **DR. TOM FRAZER:** Tom Frazer.  
2  
3 **MS. SHIREMAN:** I believe we have Regina Spallone.  
4  
5 **MS. REGINA SPALLONE:** Regina Spallone.  
6  
7 **MS. SHIREMAN:** That's it, and I will turn it over to you.  
8  
9 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. We have the agenda, which I  
10 briefly summarized before, and we now need to adopt that agenda.  
11 Are there any suggestions to change the agenda or amend it or  
12 modify it?  
13  
14 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CARRIE SIMMONS:** Mr. Chairman, could we add  
15 an Other Business item, please?  
16  
17 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Sure.  
18  
19 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** I can't find my hand-raise function  
20 here, but the discussion of the July 13 red snapper MRIP  
21 state/federal calibration workshop, please.  
22  
23 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Okay. Let me write that down. With that  
24 amendment under Other Business, are there any other amendments  
25 or changes suggested? If not, a motion to approve the agenda as  
26 amended.  
27  
28 **DR. NANCE:** So moved.  
29  
30 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you.  
31  
32 **MR. GILL:** Second.  
33  
34 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES: JUNE 1, 2020 WEBINAR MEETING**  
35  
36 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Is there any objection to this?  
37 seeing none, then the next item is Approval of the Minutes  
38 related to the June 1 meeting. Are there any comments or  
39 objections or amendments or changes to the verbatim minutes? I  
40 guess you can't change verbatim minutes. If not, a motion to  
41 accept.  
42  
43 **MR. GILL:** Motion to approve the minutes.  
44  
45 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you, Bob. Do we have a second?  
46  
47 **DR. BARBIERI:** Second.  
48

1 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Without objection, the minutes are  
2 approved. Now Scope of Work, and, basically, John Froeschke is  
3 going to be introducing, or I believe introducing, what it is  
4 that we're talking about under Agenda Item IV, but, John, go  
5 ahead and tell us exactly.

6  
7 **SCOPE OF WORK**  
8

9 **DR. JOHN FROESCHKE:** Okay. Good morning, everyone. There is  
10 really one action item on here. On the scope of work, we've  
11 already approved the minutes, and Agenda Item IV, Selection of  
12 SSC Representative, I talked with Carrie this morning, and what  
13 we're going to do is we're going to push this off to the next  
14 SSC meeting in July, the July 21 to the 23, and with the intent  
15 of selecting a single representative that would represent the  
16 SSC at the council meeting for both SSC meetings, and so we can  
17 do that next time.

18  
19 The meat of today's meeting, as you know, is the review of the  
20 NMFS procedural guidance for changing the assessed stock status  
21 from known to unknown, and council staff first sort of became  
22 aware of this at the recent Council Coordinating Committee  
23 meeting, and NMFS has requested the councils to provide their  
24 comments by July 1, and, hence, the short timeline for this  
25 meeting and, unfortunately, the timeline to integrate any  
26 comments or edits into a draft letter to submit by July 1.

27  
28 We're going to receive a presentation from Regina Spallone from  
29 NMFS on this, summarizing the intent of the changes in the  
30 procedural guidance. From there, council staff has prepared a  
31 draft letter summarizing potential comments from the council and  
32 the SSC, and so we will review the letter and take your  
33 comments, and we also have prepared a spreadsheet with some  
34 supplemental information about the stock assessments in the Gulf  
35 that might help inform the discussion, and so the objective for  
36 this is to -- If you have comments on the draft letter, we would  
37 like to review that and take your comments and integrate them  
38 and leave with a letter that is ready to submit.

39  
40 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Okay. Thank you. All right. Then we're  
41 moving on then to Agenda Item IV, which is basically why we're  
42 here, and there's going to be a presentation given by Regina,  
43 and then our discussion of it, and, John, you're not looking for  
44 motions, per se, but rather comments and suggestions and  
45 recommendations, and is that true?

46  
47 **DR. FROESCHKE:** Yes, that's true. We're really looking for your  
48 comments on the letter, and perhaps a little on the longer

1 scale, just to kind of get everyone thinking about this might  
2 affect stocks in the near future and possibly stock assessments  
3 and things, but, really, the focus is this letter.

4  
5 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Okay. First, we'll have the presentation, and  
6 then let's go through the document itself, and what I will do  
7 is, because it's relatively short, ask for general comments and  
8 then comments or recommendations or thoughts on each one of the  
9 little sections, and I think there's three or four or five of  
10 them, and I can't remember, and so we'll kind of proceed that  
11 way. Then, also, we'll comment on the draft letter itself, and  
12 so let's begin then with the presentation by Regina.

13  
14 **REVIEW OF NMFS PROCEDURAL GUIDANCE FOR CHANGING ASSESSED STOCK**  
15 **STATUS FROM KNOWN TO UNKNOWN**

16  
17 **MS. REGINA SPALLONE:** Thank you. Good morning, folks, and thank  
18 you for having me here today. My name is Regina Spallone, and I  
19 am with the Office of Sustainable Fisheries, in the Domestic  
20 Fisheries Division.

21  
22 I am here today, as you just mentioned, to discuss the  
23 development of a new procedural directive that we are working on  
24 that will guide internal agency decisions when considering a  
25 stock status change from known to unknown status or the  
26 Secretary's required status determination decisions under  
27 Section 304(e) of the Magnuson Act. The agency has a process in  
28 place to review and make those decisions of stock status  
29 changes, and this directive will help to inform that process.

30  
31 As you know, this directive was presented to the CCC, the  
32 Council Coordinating Committee, at the end of May of this year,  
33 and you now all have an opportunity to provide comments. Over  
34 the years, the agency has had several requests to change stock  
35 status from unknown from known using informal guidance that we  
36 have had, but these requests have become more complicated, from  
37 anything from management unit changes to the growing instances  
38 of scientific uncertainty, and so we felt that formalizing our  
39 internal guidance was necessary to increase transparency and  
40 consistency of the agency's decision-making and to ensure that  
41 those decisions are aligned with agency expectations.

42  
43 With that in mind, we began to develop a methodology to address  
44 some of the most common change scenarios. Having this directive  
45 will help us to address what can sometimes be difficult  
46 decisions, quite honestly, removing ambiguity and hopefully  
47 making things go a little bit more smoothly, all of which, of  
48 course, supports the need for timely management decisions.

1  
2 As you noticed, perhaps, from looking over the draft, this  
3 directive is organized into four basic scenarios, which are  
4 summarized on this slide. As I mentioned, these scenarios  
5 represent some of the more common instances when decisions about  
6 changing stock status from a known status to an unknown status  
7 are likely to occur, and I am going to go over each of those  
8 scenarios in turn, just to summarize them all for you.

9  
10 The first scenario, Scenario A, is changes to management unit,  
11 and this scenario is fairly straightforward, and it describes  
12 the situations when managers change the stock management unit,  
13 and it recognizes that the new management unit may in fact be  
14 unknown in some situations. For example, if managers pull a  
15 stock out of a managed unit or complex, but haven't yet  
16 established status determination criteria, or SDC, for the new  
17 management unit, the stock could have an unknown status.

18  
19 However, in some cases, it is reasonable to retain the known  
20 status of the original stock until a new assessment, and this is  
21 especially true for management units that are descended from  
22 stocks that were overfished or subject to overfishing, and, as  
23 is with all of the cases here, any such retention of stock  
24 status should be justified in the record, and so we would really  
25 have to take a look at the record and situation for the  
26 implications of changing the stock management unit.

27  
28 The second scenario, Scenario B, recognizes that when a stock  
29 assessment ages, managers may lack confidence in that resultant  
30 stock status determination, and stock status determinations  
31 based on old assessments may be problematic when they no longer  
32 reflect the current status. However, with no clear standard to  
33 determine when an aging assessment is no longer suitable to  
34 support stock status, several agency documents related to stock  
35 assessment prioritization and performance tracking help provide  
36 us with some guideposts that are in this scenario.

37  
38 Here, depending on considerations appropriate for that stock,  
39 such as the stock's life history, a stock may be changed to an  
40 unknown status, and it's important to note that that is a maybe,  
41 and there's no requirement to change, and, of course, every  
42 stock, based on life history, that when exactly an older  
43 assessment is too old to reflect the current status, is going to  
44 be different for every stock, of course.

45  
46 Scenario C is a pretty broad umbrella. This scenario describes  
47 broad situations when a stock assessment failed to provide a  
48 status recommendation, and this scenario and these problems, or

1 these issues, of scientific uncertainty really is what prompted  
2 us to produce this guidance, and this scenario covers a couple  
3 of different scenarios reflective of the nature of stock  
4 assessment review and scientific uncertainty, and so, for that  
5 reason, it kind of broke up into three sub-scenarios, as you  
6 will.

7  
8 C1 is fairly straightforward, and, in this situation, a new  
9 stock assessment model fails to provide stock status. However,  
10 the old model, perhaps from the previous assessment, is re-run  
11 with new data, in a fallback method that may be referred to as a  
12 continuity run, and we would use the results of that continuity  
13 run for determining stock status, and so it would retain a known  
14 status using the continuity data.

15  
16 C2 is a little bit more complicated. Here, reviewers reject  
17 both the proposed assessment model and the continuity run.  
18 Thus, this scenario is similar to the case described in C1, but  
19 without the updated data, and so there is no new information on  
20 stock status available. Under this scenario, and really in all  
21 cases, a primary intent would be to retain the last known stock  
22 status, when possible, to help guide management decisions.

23  
24 In this situation, if models cannot provide numerical reference  
25 points to evaluate against the SDC, but there is evidence to  
26 support a continued known status, we would maintain the current  
27 status. For example, how this might look operationally is, if a  
28 stock were overfished, and the assessment says that a stock  
29 biomass remains at or near historic low levels, there is  
30 evidence to support a continued overfished status, and so there  
31 would be no change there.

32  
33 However, if the model cannot provide numerical reference points,  
34 and there is no evidence to support the current stock status, we  
35 could move this stock to an unknown status, and so how that  
36 would look, for example, is, if the stock were listed as subject  
37 to overfishing, but the status is based on an old assessment,  
38 and catch has been reduced to zero in the meantime, or near  
39 zero, there might be so much uncertainty regarding that  
40 overfishing determination that we would change the status to  
41 unknown.

42  
43 Based on our discussions with the Science Centers and the  
44 Regions and our past experience with this particular scenario,  
45 we believe that we are more likely to have evidence to support a  
46 continued overfished status, and overfishing tends to be a bit  
47 more variable, and so we would be more likely to move to an  
48 unknown for overfishing.

1  
2 Scenario C3 is fairly uncommon. However, we did hear from our  
3 scientists that, on occasion, peer review can completely  
4 invalidate an assessment, and they may find a major flaw in the  
5 methodology that invalidates the stock status determination,  
6 and, in this case, we would either maintain the previous known  
7 status, as we did in C2, or, depending on the evidence of the  
8 case, move the status to unknown, and so those are kind of the  
9 three.

10  
11 They probably don't reflect all of the permutations, and there  
12 are probably so many permutations regarding stock assessments,  
13 but we feel that these are some of the more common scenarios,  
14 and we would like to provide some guideposts for us to follow.

15  
16 Finally, Scenario D describes situations where the scientific  
17 information becomes available and the latest stock assessment  
18 recommends a stock status based on SDC that are different from  
19 those in the FMP. Sometimes, for a benchmark assessment terms  
20 of reference, it might reevaluate the SDC used to determine  
21 stock status.

22  
23 In the past, the agency would report stock status coming out of  
24 the assessments if it were determined -- In the past, if the  
25 stock status coming out of the assessment were determined to be  
26 BSIA, or best scientific information available, we would inform  
27 the council to adopt the new SDC to align with the science, and  
28 we would post a determination based on BSIA.

29  
30 However, based on feedback that we've gotten during the  
31 development of this directive, we have taken a slightly  
32 different approach, and, in this situation, the agency would  
33 maintain the previous stock status until the relevant council  
34 adopts the new SDC into their FMP, and so the reason for this is  
35 that, under the Magnuson Act, we are required to make stock  
36 status decisions based on the SDC that are specified within the  
37 fishery management plan, and so this is a more sound approach.

38  
39 However, I do know that this would lead, or could lead, to the  
40 awkward situation where management measures might move forward  
41 based on the new science, but the status would remain static,  
42 based on the old science, and so a stock, for instance, could be  
43 listed as subject to overfishing, yet the management might  
44 support an increase in annual catch limits, or ACLs, because the  
45 new assessment finds that the stock is no longer subject to  
46 overfishing.

47  
48 Note that this situation could be avoided where the FMPs have

1 more flexible SDCs in place. For example, the FMP could specify  
2 that SDC automatically be adopted into the FMP upon the best  
3 scientific information, or BSIA, determination, and some  
4 councils, such as the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council,  
5 already have such an approach to their SDC.

6  
7 That is pretty much the summary of the procedural directive and  
8 its scenarios, as it currently exists, in a nutshell. As I  
9 indicated, this will help to guide our agency's internal  
10 deliberations and allow them to go more smoothly as we address  
11 some of these increasingly complicated and often contentious  
12 determinations that come out of stock assessments.

13  
14 As a procedural directive, this guidance will go through formal  
15 clearance within the agency, before it does become final, and we  
16 expect that formal review to begin as soon as we receive and  
17 address comments from the councils out of that CCC meeting, and  
18 so, with that, I am happy to address any questions or within the  
19 scope of the letter, the draft letter, I'm happy to address any  
20 comments or questions you might have, and so thank you.

21  
22 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Any general questions, or specific  
23 question for that matter, at this point? Remember that we're  
24 going to walk through the document anyway, and, by the way, on  
25 my list of attendees, I can't see everybody. All I can see is  
26 the council staff, and so, if somebody raises their hand, I need  
27 some help here.

28  
29 **MS. SHIREMAN:** Joe, I've put up a sticky note on the screen.

30  
31 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** All right. Thank you. That's helpful. Lee  
32 Anderson.

33  
34 **DR. ANDERSON:** I have a question. Thank you for that  
35 presentation, and I'm -- I guess I forget all of the conditions  
36 that make for status unknown, but I would like you to review for  
37 me the strategic and operational effects of changing the  
38 condition from either overfished or whatever to unknown. How  
39 does that affect what the council can do, or must do? Thank  
40 you.

41  
42 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Regina.

43  
44 **MS. SPALLONE:** Well, in terms of the effects on what a council  
45 does, it's probably going to -- It may complicate the directive,  
46 the actions, that a council does. The council will still be  
47 bound by the Magnuson Act to sustainably manage the stock, and  
48 so there is no real difference in what the council does.

1  
2 If the stock is overfished and under a rebuilding plan, the  
3 stock will certainly still have to maintain its management  
4 strategy to rebuild, and so there really isn't going to be a  
5 significant change, I think operationally, other than it might  
6 make council decisions a little bit more -- Not complicated, but  
7 they're going to have to consider some of the factors, those  
8 underlying scientific factors, that led to an unknown status  
9 when making their management decisions.

10  
11 **DR. ANDERSON:** Thank you.

12  
13 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Next up is Kai.

14  
15 **DR. LORENZEN:** Thank you for that very clear presentation. I  
16 have also looked through the detail of the procedure document  
17 and found it overall a clear and well-reasoned document, and I  
18 have some questions about Scenario D, and I know it is also in  
19 the draft letter that figures somewhat prominently, in terms of  
20 the relative role of NMFS and the council in sort of adapting to  
21 changes in stock status determination criteria.

22  
23 I am having difficulty really visualizing what this would look  
24 like, and so I was wondering if you could have an example for  
25 us, as to a case where, based on best scientific information,  
26 different criteria have been recommended and how that change and  
27 adaptation process to those criteria would then work and what  
28 the role of NMFS and the council would be in that case. Thank  
29 you.

30  
31 **MS. SPALLONE:** I don't have a specific example that comes to my  
32 head right now, and I can get back to you with a specific, but,  
33 operationally, Scenario D is -- As I mentioned during the  
34 presentation, where we have -- Where, for instance, a benchmark  
35 assessment provides new numerical estimates relative to a status  
36 determination criteria that are different, if those criteria are  
37 hardwired into the FMP, if like say the numerical estimates are  
38 hardwired into the FMP.

39  
40 Then you would have a difference between what is coming out of  
41 the assessment and what is hardwired into the FMP, and then  
42 that's where you have a disconnect, and this scenario would  
43 retain the determinations based on what is hardwired and falling  
44 back on the previous determinations, or maintaining the previous  
45 determination, if possible, until those criteria are adopted  
46 into the FMP or more flexible, adaptive SDC are adopted into the  
47 FMP.

1 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Kai, do you have a follow-up?  
2

3 **DR. LORENZEN:** Well, I'm still a little unclear about what is  
4 meant there. Of course, the numerical estimates might change  
5 and so on, and they do all the time, and I think the question is  
6 what constitute different stock determination criterion under  
7 this scenario?  
8

9 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Let me -- I think I understand what's going on  
10 here, and one example might be the FMP says that the standard  
11 will be F 26 percent SPR, whereas the recommendation that came  
12 from an assessment process would be F 40 percent SPR, and what  
13 this is basically saying is that you have to live with the  
14 previous one until it's changed in the FMP.  
15

16 The other situation I think that was just brought up too by  
17 Regina is, if you said that the definition of an overfished  
18 stock was a spawning stock biomass of 1.782 million pounds, if  
19 you re-estimated and said it's 1.783 million pounds, you can't  
20 change it, which is another reason that I learned long ago to  
21 don't hardwire these FMPs in terms of the units that you're  
22 dealing with, but those are the situations I think that you're  
23 talking about.  
24

25 **MS. SPALLONE:** Yes.  
26

27 **DR. LORENZEN:** That makes sense, but those don't see to really  
28 change the scope of the council's influence over the stock  
29 determination criteria.  
30

31 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** No, and it's basically what they have to do.  
32

33 **DR. LORENZEN:** Okay.  
34

35 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Next up is Paul.  
36

37 **DR. SAMMARCO:** A sort of general quick question, if you don't  
38 mind, and thank you for the excellent presentation, and it's  
39 really interesting. The question is if you have a species, and  
40 it has a known status, and you want to move it to unknown, or  
41 that's the way the model points, is socioeconomic data taken  
42 into consideration in the model, and sort of at what point  
43 during the modeling process, or after, and where does it fit in,  
44 or does it fit in at all?  
45

46 **MS. SPALLONE:** I am not sure, in terms of the BSIA determination  
47 for that determination coming out of an assessment and how that  
48 incorporates in, but, in terms of the specific recommendation

1 for a stock status change, it looks at sort of all of the  
2 scientific factors that lead into the status determination, and  
3 so, if those considerations are a part of that status  
4 recommendation, then they would, and so it's not a specific  
5 component of it at this point, but it might have led up to that  
6 status recommendation.

7  
8 **DR. SAMMARCO:** So what you're saying really is that this is a  
9 biological or ecological assessment, based on the data you have,  
10 and it's sort of a very big piece of the decision-making  
11 process, but it doesn't necessarily include other bits, which  
12 may come in in other areas, and is that right, other  
13 considerations?

14  
15 **MS. SPALLONE:** This will be the recommendation coming out of the  
16 assessment, and so yes.

17  
18 **DR. SAMMARCO:** Okay. Thank you.

19  
20 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Ken Roberts.

21  
22 **DR. ROBERTS:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the  
23 presentation, and I want to go to Scenario B, an aging stock  
24 assessment, and aging I guess begins at the end of the last  
25 stock assessment, for the period going into the future, and so  
26 is it ten years as an absolute, or is it some criteria like it  
27 no longer reflects the status of the stock, and how would we  
28 know that it no longer reflects the status of the stock if there  
29 isn't any real information, or where do you get the new  
30 information from?

31  
32 **MS. SPALLONE:** The ten years is a guide, and that is the based  
33 on some internal documents that we have regarding assessment  
34 prioritization and performance tracking, but they are not the  
35 end-all and be-all for when an assessment no longer provides a  
36 recommendation or a status, and so there is no real hard number.  
37 There is no number that says that, if an assessment is eight  
38 years old that it's okay, and, if it then is nine years old,  
39 it's no longer okay.

40  
41 Each decision based on the age of an assessment will have to  
42 consider a host of information appropriate to that stock, the  
43 life history of the stock, the management measures that have  
44 been put in place for that stock, and so this is really setting  
45 up some guides that say, if an assessment is sufficiently old,  
46 as to be problematic for management, and that we're not -- We  
47 don't feel that it adequately reflects the status of that stock  
48 any longer, than it could be changed, or it may be changed, to

1 unknown, and so it just provides some guideposts, and we wanted  
2 to kind of stay away from a hard number, because a stock -- It  
3 may be a two-year old assessment no longer provides adequate  
4 information for one stock, yet, for some really long-lived  
5 species, a fifteen-year-old assessment might be still  
6 sufficient.

7  
8 **DR. ROBERTS:** Okay. I appreciate that. The thing that troubles  
9 me is what are you using to reflect that the status has changed  
10 enough? What are we looking at to find out that something is  
11 too old to be useful anymore? Is there a list of criteria that  
12 defines whether something other than actual age of the  
13 assessment makes it no longer useful for the status of the  
14 stock?

15  
16 **MS. SPALLONE:** We don't have anything specific to provide as a  
17 checklist. Again, this is just sort of setting up the  
18 possibility that, upon review of that assessment, or upon review  
19 of that stock and that determination, that it just no longer  
20 provides management with the current status of that stock, and  
21 so it really -- This one is kind of -- It needs to consider some  
22 of the management implications, or the management history of a  
23 stock, as well as the life history of that stock in making a --  
24 It's really going to be a case-by-case basis for that review.

25  
26 **DR. ROBERTS:** I appreciate that, and I'm not trying to be a  
27 stickler for something, but I know some of the stock assessments  
28 let's say might be ten years old, from the time the last one was  
29 done, but, when the last one was done, they were three years  
30 behind any information that was included in the assessment, and  
31 so you've really got something that is thirteen years old, or  
32 twelve, or whatever it happens to be. Thank you so much. I  
33 appreciate it.

34  
35 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. All right. Then let's -- Can you  
36 bring up the document itself on the screen? Regina, are you  
37 looking for editorial as well as substantive sorts of comments?

38  
39 **MS. SPALLONE:** We would be looking more for substantive  
40 comments, please.

41  
42 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Well, I'm going to give you a couple editorial  
43 anyway, because it sticks with me.

44  
45 **MS. SPALLONE:** Okay.

46  
47 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** If we go to the introduction, there is a  
48 reference in there that -- In the third paragraph of the

1 objectives.

2

3 **MS. SPALLONE:** You mean of the guidance?

4

5 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** I beg your forgiveness. Actually, the copy  
6 that I have been looking at apparently was a draft, and so  
7 there's been some changes, and so let me back away from that.  
8 Then, in terms of the four scenarios, let's just go through each  
9 one of them and provide some comments or feedback that we might  
10 want to give, and so the first one is Changes to Management  
11 Units. Are there any comments or questions about this, about  
12 the way it's worded or understanding about it? If not, then  
13 let's go to the next one, B.

14

15 This is the Aging Stock Assessment. I sort of preface all these  
16 items as, from an SSC and a SEDAR standpoint, really nothing has  
17 changed, and you always have the opportunity to make  
18 determinations about unknown, known, overfished, not overfished,  
19 overfishing, not overfishing, and you always have the  
20 opportunity to determine whether this is best available data or  
21 what the most appropriate recommendation relative to those  
22 criteria are and what the SDC criteria ought to be, and so, from  
23 an operational standpoint, for us, the SSC, you always have that  
24 situation, and so an aging stock assessment I think would come  
25 into play where nobody has bothered to look at it for X number  
26 of years, but, once somebody wants both the Center and the SSC  
27 to look at it, then you judge things on what available  
28 information they have.

29

30 Of course, any assessment that's old, where you really haven't  
31 made any attempt to alter the criteria or to judge relative to  
32 that criteria, then, essentially, you make the judgment based on  
33 the information you have at hand at the time, and so, from that  
34 standpoint, I don't really see it as really affecting how the  
35 SSC would operate. Any comments about those?

36

37 Then let's move on to C, or actually C1. This is one where I  
38 object a little bit to the wording. It says, when a proposed  
39 model is being considered during an assessment, scientists often  
40 re-run the previous assessment model with new data as a fall  
41 back. It isn't run as a fall back. It's run as a diagnostic,  
42 and, basically, what you want to say there is that what a  
43 continuity run is and that, in fact, if the review process  
44 suggests that the continuity run is the most appropriate, then  
45 so be it, but I guess I object to word "fall back". It implies  
46 that it's a Plan B kind of thing, from the scientists'  
47 standpoint, but, anyway, that's my idiosyncrasy. Any other  
48 comments on this?

1  
2 **DR. FROESCHKE:** Joe, can I just offer one quick comment on this  
3 one?  
4  
5 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Yes.  
6  
7 **DR. FROESCHKE:** Just sort of operationally, in the recent past,  
8 and likely the near-term future, the changes in the recreational  
9 data and things have made these continuity models difficult to  
10 interpret, from a diagnostic perspective, and I suspect that  
11 will continue, because the units are so different.  
12  
13 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Yes, but I would still argue that the reason  
14 you do the continuity model is not because you plan it for a  
15 fall back. It's rather as a diagnostic, and whether that  
16 diagnostic ends up being completely useful or not, then that's  
17 another story, but, yes, you make a good point there, that that  
18 is an issue.  
19  
20 **DR. FROESCHKE:** Yes, and, just on that point, you're correct, in  
21 that, in the terms of reference for these assessments and  
22 things, we don't typically specify an A or B model kind of  
23 approach, which would seem appropriate if in fact the continuity  
24 model was a fall back.  
25  
26 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** All right. Thank you. Any other comments?  
27  
28 **DR. SAMMARCO:** Just a quick note is I wanted to tell you that I  
29 support you on your concept regarding old data, older data, and  
30 then the lack of data after that and being faced with a  
31 situation where you have to run a model, and what do you run it  
32 on.  
33  
34 If you're real lucky, real lucky, your old data apply to the  
35 present, but it's a matter of do you want to rely on luck, and  
36 it's not a very good place to be, and I guess the best thing to  
37 do is get new data, if you can, but I've seen a couple of  
38 situations where you can -- You get into the swamp if you use  
39 data which are a little too old and not terribly pertinent to  
40 the questions that you're asking. Anyway, I just wanted to say  
41 that I agree with you, and that's all.  
42  
43 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Going on to C2, are there any  
44 comments? Again, I will keep repeating this, but the SSC and  
45 the SEDAR review process has the opportunity to make whatever  
46 recommendations based on the existing data they wish to, known  
47 or unknown or whatever. Any comments on C2? John Mareska.  
48

1 **MR. MARESKA:** When I saw this, I was trying to recall a  
2 situation where the SSC would actually implement something like  
3 this. typically, if we had to fall back to an old assessment,  
4 and, for the projections out of an old assessment, we usually  
5 don't like to go more than three years into the future, and so I  
6 guess it just falls back to the original question of is there a  
7 scenario where this would be used by the SSC? If not, maybe it  
8 doesn't need to apply.

9  
10 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Regina, do you have any comment? I am not  
11 sure what the issue is there. Regina, do you have any comment  
12 on that?

13  
14 **MS. SPALLONE:** I am not sure exactly what the comment is. I  
15 mean, these scenarios may reflect a range of what the scientists  
16 may see, and it would then be -- We would have to determine,  
17 based on your processes, what might guide our agency decisions  
18 and how this is coming out, but I don't think it's really a  
19 matter of which situation to fit the assessment in.

20  
21 I don't want to have anyone try to paint any assessment into a  
22 box and say that you must fit within these scenarios, and so I  
23 don't -- Again, I don't have a -- We've had some recommendations  
24 coming out of other regions based on some of these scenarios,  
25 and I don't have the specific stocks off the top of my head, and  
26 I can get back to you with that, but, again, I don't want to  
27 say, well, your processes should fit within these scenarios.  
28 The assessments are what the assessments are, and this is only,  
29 again, to help guide our decision-making process.

30  
31 **MR. MARESKA:** Maybe I can clear it up. We have rejected the new  
32 assessment, and we have an old assessment that's probably five  
33 or six years old, and now the scenario, as I understand it, is  
34 we're going to use that old assessment to project into the  
35 future and making recommendations to the council, but yet we're  
36 not going to add any new data, and I assume that includes no  
37 catch data, no indices data, and so, to me, that's just a  
38 scenario that I don't think the SSC has applied as we have  
39 reviewed assessments in the past, and so I just find it almost  
40 an implausible scenario, and I will just leave that comment like  
41 that.

42  
43 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** I tend to agree that it's unlikely that an SSC  
44 process would be initiated -- That an SSC review process would  
45 be initiated when there was no new data and so on, and I  
46 suppose, if something is five years old, and we wanted to review  
47 -- More like ten years old, and we wanted to review -- Well, no,  
48 we're dealing with C2 here, but I suppose, if the new assessment

1 is rejected, that, for whatever reason, I think the SSC should  
2 take it upon themselves to make recommendations about what to  
3 do, given that it has been rejected, either informally or  
4 formally, and so it's -- Like I said, and I agree with John,  
5 it's probably not something that we will have to face in a worry  
6 to the SSC itself. Are there other comments?

7  
8 Then let's go on to C3. I am not going to quibble about this,  
9 but I always objected to "flawed previous model". The model  
10 isn't flawed, and the use of it is flawed, but, anyway, forget  
11 about that. Doug Gregory.

12  
13 **MR. GREGORY:** As the draft letter points out, black grouper  
14 first comes to mind and that we might classify it this way, and,  
15 in the past, we haven't bothered to classify anything, and maybe  
16 spiny lobster would be in this category, if not the previous  
17 one, but that would -- I guess all this does is have the SSC  
18 decide which of these categories a difficult assessment would  
19 fall into.

20  
21 Up until this guidance gets implemented, the word that I heard,  
22 a couple of years ago from General Counsel, was, with regard to  
23 black grouper, was that, regardless of what the new assessment  
24 found or didn't find, or failed, the old assessment, and the old  
25 status criteria, stood until it was changed. This guidance  
26 would automatically change that, because it looks like NMFS has  
27 the authority to classify something as unknown, and they may or  
28 may not seek the SSC or the council's advice. Thank you.

29  
30 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Any other comments relative to  
31 that or anything else under C3? All right. Then, moving on to  
32 the last thing, which we already talked about a little bit  
33 before, where the status determination criteria have changed in  
34 an assessment, but have not changed in the FMP, and we discussed  
35 that before, and are there any other comments on that? If not,  
36 then we need to look at the letter, the council letter, and so  
37 if you can bring that up.

38  
39 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Mr. Chairman, can I make a comment?

40  
41 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Yes.

42  
43 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** I just wanted to note that there's  
44 been some scenarios under this particular section where the  
45 council has asked the SSC and the Science Center to look at  
46 various proxies, say for MSY, that would translate to the  
47 maximum fishing mortality threshold, and gray snapper comes to  
48 mind.

1  
2 Those are not coming right out of the assessment, but I know  
3 they are run through there after the SSC makes a recommendation,  
4 and so I just think maybe the guidance should keep that in mind,  
5 that there's often times that the council is asking the SSCs and  
6 the Science Centers to rerun this with various proxies, or look  
7 at different things after the fact.

8  
9 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Okay. Thank you. Yes, that happens more  
10 often than not, and, indirectly, all the -- Not all, but a lot  
11 of sensitivity analyses are effectively doing that. All right.  
12 John, maybe some guidance here about how you want to proceed  
13 with this document.

14  
15 **GULF COUNCIL'S DRAFT COMMENT LETTER**

16  
17 **DR. FROESCHKE:** Sure. Let me just kind of give you an overview  
18 of the structure of the letter and then, if the SSC wants, we  
19 did prepare a spreadsheet summarizing some of the attributes of  
20 the assessed stocks in the Gulf that it might help for,  
21 particularly in Scenario B, but, in general, the letter is  
22 structured with some opening comments, and then it proceeds  
23 through the various scenarios, in which case we included A, B,  
24 the three Cs, and D.

25  
26 I guess, internally, most of our discussion was on Scenario D,  
27 and it just seems more difficult to understand the operational  
28 effects of that. With each of the scenarios, we did try to  
29 highlight either specific stocks or the magnitude of stocks that  
30 could be what we perceive as potentially affected by the various  
31 scenarios, and so A seems, I guess in general, a low probability  
32 to effect any particular stock, but it could affect any stock  
33 through the assessments, and, for the other ones, we tried to  
34 highlight the specific stocks that we thought might be  
35 applicable under the guidance.

36  
37 I guess what I'm looking for is if you have factual or  
38 additional things that you want to add to the letter or modify  
39 or something, and I would like to just try to do that live, if  
40 we could.

41  
42 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Okay. I think it's -- Given that, it's a  
43 little hard to structure the discussion here on a paragraph-by-  
44 paragraph basis, but let's try it that way anyway. What's on  
45 the screen now, that paragraph of "It is the council's  
46 understanding", is there any comments that people want to make  
47 relative to this paragraph? No? How about the Scenario B  
48 paragraph? How about the Scenario C paragraph? Bob.

1  
2 **MR. GILL:** Thank you. A question for John, and this relates to  
3 the sentence regarding SEDAR 62, about two-thirds of the way  
4 through. Also, the same comment was made in the stock status  
5 sheet footnote, and so the question I would like to ask you,  
6 John, is at the end of it, where it talks about irreconcilable  
7 data errors for 62. My understanding is that it was not so much  
8 errors as it was irreconcilable data conflicts. Could you  
9 clarify that for me?  
10  
11 **DR. FROESCHKE:** Unfortunately, I really can't. The information  
12 that I have is that there were problems with the assessment, in  
13 I guess the indices, is my understanding, and I was not privy to  
14 the specific errors or problems that weren't able to be  
15 reconciled, and so, if you have different language, and you  
16 might have more information, and I don't have that. I wasn't  
17 part of that assessment, and so that's why the language  
18 reflects, but we can change it, if you feel that something more  
19 accurately represents what happened.  
20  
21 **MR. GILL:** That's my understanding, and perhaps Katie or someone  
22 from the Center can confirm, but "errors" has one connotation,  
23 and, in my understanding, it's not errors, but it's conflicts.  
24  
25 **DR. FROESCHKE:** Bob, I guess I'm trying to understand, and what  
26 do you mean by "conflicts"? My understanding is that it was  
27 that one index was going one way and another one was going  
28 another, and it was difficult to interpret, but maybe I'm wrong.  
29  
30 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Well, what Bob is saying is "errors" implies  
31 that somebody made a mistake, and my understanding is that  
32 wasn't the situation either, but it's rather that the data  
33 themselves were so conflicting with each other that you couldn't  
34 get a reasonable assessment of what was going on, and, at that  
35 point, people stopped the process. Maybe a better way to do it  
36 would be irreconcilable -- What's a better word?  
37  
38 **DR. NANCE:** Just put "issues", Joe.  
39  
40 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Issues, yes.  
41  
42 **DR. FROESCHKE:** Okay. We can change that.  
43  
44 **MR. GILL:** John, you have the same comment in the footnotes in  
45 the stock status sheet as well.  
46  
47 **DR. FROESCHKE:** Okay, and we can circle back with the Science  
48 Center, maybe after this call, and I guess my perception is that

1 it was more toward the error leanings, but, again, I am not the  
2 one commenting.

3  
4 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Well, John Walter, maybe you have you have a  
5 comment on it?

6  
7 **DR. WALTER:** Good morning, everyone. I am just chiming in from  
8 the Center, and it's the first time that I have talked to the  
9 SSC since taking the Deputy Director position for Science and  
10 Council Services, and so one of my jobs is paying a little bit  
11 of attention to all of the council activities, including the  
12 SSC, and so that's why I'm on here.

13  
14 Normally, Shannon would be paying attention to this, but she's  
15 on a budget meeting, and so I will address everyone, and there  
16 was a number of issues with SEDAR 62, primarily running into  
17 data conflicts, and I think "issues" probably better encompasses  
18 the overall problems that we had in completing the assessment  
19 under the current timeframe, and so I'm fine with changing it to  
20 "issues".

21  
22 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Doug Gregory.

23  
24 **MR. GREGORY:** Tangentially, did the SSC ever review I guess the  
25 summary of SEDAR 62? I remember it was scheduled to be on our  
26 March agenda, but things have gotten so confused, and, if an  
27 assessment is dropped midstream, or near the end, because of  
28 issues, shouldn't that come to the SSC as well as a final  
29 document, as a completed assessment that we review, and  
30 shouldn't we review incomplete assessments and have an  
31 opportunity to comment?

32  
33 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Well, to the extreme, they're all incomplete  
34 at one time or another, but, in this case, it's a little  
35 different, because there was a process that was established and  
36 an expectation, but that's largely a council/NMFS operational  
37 sort of -- How that gets through the system. It was basically  
38 just dropped. John or Carrie, do you have any comment on that?

39  
40 **DR. WALTER:** One of the main problems was the conflict between  
41 what appears to be going on in the east and the west area that  
42 was going to --

43  
44 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Excuse me. I'm not asking for what the issues  
45 were, but rather Doug's question was shouldn't the SSC be asked  
46 to review why the assessment process was stopped, and not  
47 necessarily what the issues were that caused it to be stopped,  
48 but rather the process, and, when I said John, I meant John

1 Froeschke.

2  
3 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** I don't think this has happened a  
4 lot. I guess, from our perspective, what would have been nice  
5 is just a little bit more information about why it was stopped,  
6 so that we had a better understanding, and I think we had three  
7 SSC members involved on the panel, and it was a standard  
8 assessment, I believe, under the current, but just getting a  
9 better understanding of what actually happened and why it was  
10 aborted, so that we could explain that to you all and to the  
11 public, would have been helpful from the Science Center.

12  
13 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. John Mareska.

14  
15 **MR. MARESKA:** I would like to scroll back up to Scenario A, and  
16 I was looking at -- Let's see. All right. I just missed a  
17 sentence, and so scamp and yellowmouth have a probability of  
18 being in there, and I just missed that. Thank you.

19  
20 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** All right. Thank you. Doug Gregory.

21  
22 **MR. GREGORY:** My follow-up question is where does that put gray  
23 snapper in this current document that we're reviewing? Does  
24 this imply that the previous assessments were all flawed? That  
25 might help me wrap my mind around this a little bit, if we can  
26 do that today. Where would this assessment fall, Scenario C1,  
27 C2, C3? Thank you.

28  
29 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. I don't have the answer to that.

30  
31 **DR. FROESCHKE:** I will try. In the letter, in the draft letter,  
32 we have this in Scenario C2, in which the assessment and the  
33 continuity model are rejected and with management relying on the  
34 previous accepted model. It's potentially -- I guess you could  
35 argue that C3 is also in play, and we didn't extend it to that  
36 far in the draft letter, but, again, I don't know that there's a  
37 decider in chief on this, and so it's kind of hard to know what  
38 to say.

39  
40 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Any other comments on Scenario C?  
41 There are none, and so the Scenario D paragraph. Are there any  
42 comments? There are none, and so I take it then that this is  
43 guidance that we wish to provide John Froeschke about the draft  
44 letter.

45  
46 **DR. FROESCHKE:** Joe, as the council staff, we've had, I guess, a  
47 lot of discussion on Scenario D, and I'm not sure that the way  
48 that we're understanding this is consistent with the way that

1 the agency is understanding this in their policy, and I was  
2 hoping that Regina maybe could comment a little bit about this,  
3 with respect to the proxies and what kinds of scenarios from an  
4 assessment would impact this or not, because I don't know that  
5 we have it quite correct.

6  
7 I mean, is it any change? We talked about how gray snapper had  
8 kind of worked through the process recently, or is it only if we  
9 have a proxy on the book, but the assessment comes through and  
10 recommends an actual MSY based on estimated parameters in the  
11 model?

12  
13 **MS. SPALLONE:** I mean, I don't want to get into the specifics of  
14 specific stocks, but just this is, as was mentioned earlier,  
15 where the terms of reference for an assessment recommend  
16 significantly different criteria for determining stock status  
17 that is not contained within the fishery management plan itself,  
18 what is codified within the FMP, and that's what Scenario D is  
19 getting at, where you --

20  
21 The definitions are just completely different, and whether it's  
22 a proxy or a true estimate, and I would have to leave that to  
23 the assessment scientists, as to how different it is, but, where  
24 -- They are different enough that you just are not talking  
25 basically the same definition, and that's what Scenario D is  
26 getting at, and that's where this one would come into play.

27  
28 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** I am not -- The wording doesn't bother me that  
29 much. I mean, basically, you go through the assessment process,  
30 and the mandate is to estimate status relative to BMSY and FMSY  
31 and so on, and so it is MSY related, and the reason for using a  
32 proxy -- To me, a proxy is an alternative way of estimating BMSY  
33 and FMSY, and so it is an estimate, and, admittedly, it's a  
34 lesser estimate, in the sense that you're not doing that  
35 directly, but it is just another estimate.

36  
37 This is another reason why not to codify a lot of these things,  
38 is that the mandate is essentially MSY related, and how you get  
39 there is science related, but the wording I can live with. Any  
40 other comments on the letter? Tom Frazer.

41  
42 **DR. FRAZER:** Joe, I've got a couple of questions, just for  
43 clarification, as we kind of go back and revise this, and I will  
44 start with Scenario B, and I just want to make sure that I get  
45 the intent of the SSC. The ten-year-old example is simply that,  
46 right, and it's just an example, and it's not a hard timestamp,  
47 and so we want to make sure that that's indicated in the  
48 language, correct?

1  
2 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Yes.

3  
4 **DR. FRAZER:** All right. Then, on Scenario C, Bob Gill brought  
5 up this issue with irreconcilable data errors, and I think that  
6 the wording that we were circling back on is data conflicts and  
7 irreconcilable model output, and would that be acceptable?

8  
9 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** No, I think it was much more vague than that,  
10 and it was just due to irreconcilable issues.

11  
12 **DR. FRAZER:** Okay. I just wanted to make sure that we're there.

13  
14 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** It was appropriately vague.

15  
16 **DR. FRAZER:** Okay. That's cool. Then, on Scenario D, I guess  
17 one of the issues too was that Regina had indicated that the  
18 Mid-Atlantic had a process already for dealing with this, and  
19 could -- Regina, would you be able to kind of go back and say  
20 how they deal with this issue?

21  
22 **MS. SPALLONE:** It's not so much an issue, but it's more how  
23 their SDC are crafted within their FMPs, and I would have to  
24 look that up on their website, and I'm sure they're available,  
25 but they do have SDC crafted in such a way that the  
26 determination criteria are -- Whatever is adopted is BSIA from  
27 the most recent assessment.

28  
29 **DR. FRAZER:** Okay, and so it's an --

30  
31 **MS. SPALLONE:** It's sufficiently vague like that.

32  
33 **DR. FRAZER:** Gotcha, and so it's an immediate application  
34 though, and so they don't have this weird, awkward no-man's  
35 land. Okay. Thank you.

36  
37 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. Any other comments or questions?  
38 Any comments on this agenda item, Agenda Item IV? If not, thank  
39 you, and thank you very much, Regina, for the presentation, and  
40 I hope our comments will be helpful to you for this process.  
41 Thank you.

42  
43 **MS. SPALLONE:** Yes. Thank you very much for having me.

44  
45 **OTHER BUSINESS**

46  
47 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** All right. Agenda Item V is Other Business,  
48 and, Carrie, you wanted to bring up about the July 13 meeting.

1  
2 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Yes, Mr. Chairman. There's been a  
3 July 13 workshop scheduled by NOAA's Science and Technology and  
4 the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission, and there is a  
5 draft agenda floating around for this, but the main purpose is  
6 to look at the calibration efforts and years of information for  
7 the state/federal red snapper programs for the MRIP FES, I  
8 believe, or Coastal Household Telephone Survey to the state  
9 supplemental survey programs.

10  
11 This was discussed at the council meeting, but the council and  
12 state directors felt like a lot more information and discussion  
13 needed to be brought forward, and so they're planning this  
14 workshop, and what we would like to do is have two or three SSC  
15 members, and I know this is short notice, if possible, listen in  
16 and ask questions during this workshop, as council  
17 representatives, so that, when it comes to you all during your  
18 July 21, 22, and 23 meeting, we have some representation, almost  
19 like a review panel, that's able to help answer questions and  
20 provide information on the proceedings from that workshop.

21  
22 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Thank you. This meeting is a webinar, but is  
23 it a public meeting, and anybody can listen in?

24  
25 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** I believe anyone can listen in, but  
26 I'm going to ask that these particular SSC members be given the  
27 opportunity to speak on the webinar and ask questions, is my  
28 goal.

29  
30 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Okay. Thank you. That implies to me that, as  
31 Carrie said, we will have several council representatives, but,  
32 for a number of us, we may wish to listen in anyway, just for  
33 the background. There were several people already that  
34 mentioned that they would be interested in participating as a  
35 council representative, and I believe, Kai, you were one of  
36 them.

37  
38 **DR. LORENZEN:** Correct.

39  
40 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Anybody else? Luiz, you also, I believe, were  
41 interested. Sean Powers. That is three. I probably will  
42 listen in to portions of it anyway, but I don't necessarily have  
43 to speak. In terms of several people with their hands up, I was  
44 interpreting that as volunteering. Luiz, were you just  
45 volunteering? Sean?

46  
47 **DR. POWERS:** Thanks. I was just volunteering.

1 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Okay. Also, Paul Sammarco has his hand up.  
2  
3 **DR. SAMMARCO:** Yes, that's correct.  
4  
5 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Carrie, is there some limitation?  
6  
7 **DR. BARBIERI:** Mr. Chairman, just to confirm that, yes, I was  
8 just volunteering to participate in the webinar.  
9  
10 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Just for the mechanism, or the functioning in  
11 webinar meetings, it's probably better not to have too many  
12 people that are required to speak, and, again, we have four  
13 here, and I think, if that's acceptable to Carrie, then that's  
14 fine, but I would also encourage people, because this issue is  
15 important to the Gulf of Mexico, that, if you have the time to  
16 listen in on all or portions of the meeting. Thank you.  
17  
18 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Thank you.  
19  
20 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Under Other Business, we have public comment.  
21 Is there any public comment that we need to hear? What that  
22 implies is, if somebody wants to make public comment, they click  
23 the "raise your hand". If not, then that closes that agenda  
24 item. Thank you all for participating, and, in a little over a  
25 week, we are going to come back again for the July 8 and 9  
26 meeting on some of the contentious issues relative to  
27 recreational catches, and so, with that, I will entertain a  
28 motion to adjourn.  
29  
30 **MR. GILL:** So moved, Mr. Chairman.  
31  
32 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Bob Gill moves, and Jim Nance seconds.  
33  
34 **DR. NANCE:** Yes, I do.  
35  
36 **CHAIRMAN POWERS:** Without objection, the meeting is adjourned.  
37 Thank you very much.  
38  
39 (Whereupon, the meeting adjourned on June 29, 2020.)  
40

41 - - -  
42