

GULF OF MEXICO FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

SEDAR COMMITTEE

Webinar

JUNE 17, 2020

**VOTING MEMBERS**

- 10 Tom Frazer.....Florida
- 11 Martha Guyas (designee for Jessica McCawley).....Florida
- 12 Paul Mickle (designee for Joe Spraggins).....Mississippi
- 13 Lance Robinson (designee for Robin Riechers).....Texas

**NON-VOTING MEMBERS**

- 16 Kevin Anson (designee for Scott Bannon).....Alabama
- 17 Patrick Banks.....Louisiana
- 18 Susan Boggs.....Alabama
- 19 Leann Bosarge.....Mississippi
- 20 Roy Crabtree.....NMFS
- 21 Dale Diaz.....Mississippi
- 22 Dave Donaldson.....GSMFC
- 23 Jonathan Dugas.....Louisiana
- 24 Phil Dyskow.....Florida
- 25 Lt. Nicholas Giancola.....USCG
- 26 John Sanchez.....Florida
- 27 Greg Stunz.....Texas
- 28 Ed Swindell.....Louisiana
- 29 Troy Williamson.....Texas

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9  
10  
11 - - -  
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1 The SEDAR Committee of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management  
2 Council convened via webinar on Wednesday morning, June 17,  
3 2020, and was called to order by Chairman Tom Frazer.

4  
5 **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**  
6 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**  
7 **ACTION GUIDE AND NEXT STEPS**  
8

9 **CHAIRMAN TOM FRAZER:** We're going to get started. We'll start  
10 with the Gulf SEDAR Committee. Members of that committee are  
11 myself, Lance Robinson, Martha Guyas, and Paul Mickle. The  
12 first order of business is the Adoption of the Agenda, and it's  
13 Tab I, Number 1. Take a quick peek at that, and we'll get it on  
14 the board.

15  
16 It's a relatively short agenda, and it looks like we've got five  
17 items up there, and so the first order is the Adoption of the  
18 Agenda, and so, if I could get a motion to adopt the agenda as  
19 written, that would be great.

20  
21 **MS. MARTHA GUYAS:** So moved.

22  
23 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** It's moved by Martha. Do I have a second?

24  
25 **DR. PAUL MICKLE:** All right. Second by Dr. Mickle, and so is  
26 there any opposition to approving the agenda? Okay. Seeing  
27 none, we'll consider the agenda adopted as written. The second  
28 order of business would be the Approval of the October 2019  
29 Minutes. Is there a motion to approve those minutes as written?

30  
31 **MS. GUYAS:** So moved.

32  
33 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** It's moved by Ms. Guyas. Is there a second?

34  
35 **DR. MICKLE:** Second.

36  
37 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** It's seconded by Dr. Mickle. Is there any  
38 further discussion on the motion? Hearing none, we will  
39 consider the October 2019 minutes approved as written, and so  
40 the next item on the agenda would be the Action Guide and Next  
41 Steps, and that would be Tab I, Number 3, and, Mr. Rindone, if  
42 you're willing to guide us through that, I would greatly  
43 appreciate it.

44  
45 **MR. RYAN RINDONE:** Sure thing. The first thing that you guys  
46 are going to hear is a summary of the Steering Committee meeting  
47 that was held on May 20 and 21 via webinar, and Dr. Simmons will  
48 give you an overview presentation of the materials and outcomes

1 discussed during that meeting, and you guys should take a look  
2 at the information and ask any questions and provide feedback to  
3 us and the Science Center, and our next meeting will be held in  
4 the fall.

5

6 Then we'll go over the SEDAR schedule, and I'll take you through  
7 that, and the schedule indicates the type of assessment and the  
8 terminal year for each species recommended, and we finalized the  
9 2022 schedule of assessments during our May 2020 webinar, and so  
10 you guys should be looking at 2023 and 2024 species and provide  
11 any recommendations and feedback, and, as you recall, the  
12 Science Center has requested that the council avoid adjusting  
13 its SEDAR schedule within a couple of years of when the  
14 assessment is scheduled to begin, just because of all the  
15 legwork that happens on the frontend to get ready for an  
16 assessment.

17

18 Just as a bit of background information, the council had  
19 requested an interim analysis for gray triggerfish to be ready  
20 for the September 2020 SSC meeting, and the Science Center has  
21 indicated so far that that's going to be on time, but they can  
22 touch more on that if they like.

23

24 The council may want to discuss an additional interim analysis  
25 request for red snapper, based on the timing of the proposed  
26 research track and subsequent operational assessment, and then,  
27 if you guys have any other Other Business items to bring up, we  
28 can do that.

29

30 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** All right. Thank you, Ryan. We will move  
31 right into Item Number IV on the agenda, and that would be the  
32 Report of the SEDAR Steering Committee, and Dr. Simmons will  
33 lead us through that.

34

#### 35 **SEDAR STEERING COMMITTEE REPORT**

36

37 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CARRIE SIMMONS:** Good morning. Thank you,  
38 Mr. Chair. We don't have the report yet from the SEDAR Steering  
39 Committee meeting, and so this presentation really focuses on  
40 some outcomes pertinent to the Gulf Council and what we thought  
41 we would like to bring to the council's attention. If you want  
42 more information, this follows the outline of our briefing book  
43 materials from that virtual meeting we had, and that is provided  
44 as background to the committee and council, and that's Tab I,  
45 Number 4(c).

46

47 Just to give you an overview, we're going to talk about the  
48 SEDAR projects report, and we received an update on that, and

1 the SEDAR process review and discussions, some proposed changes  
2 of the Science Center regarding operational assessments, and  
3 we'll get into the assessment schedule review in this  
4 presentation, to get you thinking about it, and then Ryan will  
5 go into more detail with the schedule. We had three Other  
6 Business items that came up before the Steering Committee that I  
7 will discuss, and then some next steps.

8  
9 For the SEDAR projects report section, they provided information  
10 on delays to SEDAR 68, which is the scamp research track, and  
11 recall this is a joint research track assessment with the South  
12 Atlantic Council, and they are going to be two separate stocks  
13 after the stock ID workshop, but that is a joint effort on the  
14 schedule.

15  
16 Due to COVID-19, there are several delays in that schedule, and  
17 the March data workshop got cancelled, and I think it's about a  
18 three-month delay now, and they have had a series of virtual  
19 webinars, to try to get this data workshop back on track, but I  
20 still believe they're about three months behind.

21  
22 Several SEDAR projects are beginning in 2020, and, so far,  
23 everything seems to be on target, and so there's really no  
24 action here needed by the council, if you have any questions.

25  
26 I already said that the stock ID was held by webinar, and so  
27 there was technical chair issues brought up during the May 2019  
28 Steering Committee meeting, and this was also still a concern  
29 again during our 2020 meeting, and, apparently, there's some  
30 reluctance for the various SSC members or analysts to serve as  
31 the chair, this technical chair, because there are so many  
32 multiple stages and the length of time involved in the research  
33 track, and so, after a lot of discussion, we offered, the Gulf  
34 offered, to maybe survey its SSC again and see if we could have  
35 an additional member serve as the technical chair.

36  
37 The analysts have taken over and served as the chair in the  
38 past, I believe, but they just felt like it was really difficult  
39 to follow the discussion and keep track of everything that was  
40 going on and be fully engaged while running the meeting, and so  
41 we're going to try that and report back to the Science Center,  
42 and see if we can get another volunteer to serve as the  
43 technical chair for scamp.

44  
45 If you want to look at the background information, there were  
46 several things that were put forward regarding clarification  
47 from the Science Center for operational assessments, and these  
48 are some of the things that we wanted to pull out and point out

1 to the council, and then we'll be bringing this to the SSC as  
2 well, for their information and comments.

3  
4 One of the things that they wanted to clarify was that new data  
5 and changes in model structure must be requested by the council  
6 and approved by the Science Center, and this is only for  
7 operational assessments that we're talking about right now.  
8 Public webinars or in-person meetings are anticipated to be  
9 rare, but they must be requested in the statement of work and  
10 then approved by the Science Center.

11  
12 There is some terminology change here, and they are no longer  
13 assessment panels, but they're going to be renamed and  
14 classified as topical working groups, and so TWG throughout the  
15 rest of the presentation, and the Science Center will provide a  
16 project manager for the topical working group.

17  
18 The aim of this working group is they will be appointed by the  
19 cooperators, the council, to address specific items as needed,  
20 and we think they're going to consist of SSC members, council  
21 staff, and stakeholders, and they will give guidance to the  
22 operational assessment lead analysts.

23  
24 The intent for these operational assessments is the process  
25 change is still under development, and we're just starting to  
26 talk about this, and we're going to bring it to our SSC to take  
27 a look at and ask questions. We haven't updated the SEDAR  
28 Steering Committee SOPPs, and so we need to work through that as  
29 we work through this process, and the SSC is still the review  
30 body for the operational assessments. If you have any  
31 questions, it would be a good time to ask those, and, again,  
32 we'll brief the SSC on these changes.

33  
34 Now we get to the 2022 and 2023 projects, and just to remind  
35 everybody that the 2022 schedule is finalized, and the scamp  
36 operational assessment will hopefully be finished up, and the  
37 red snapper research track will get started, the yellowedge  
38 grouper operational assessment will be finalized, the Spanish  
39 mackerel operational assessment, and then FWC is going to work  
40 on a mutton snapper benchmark assessment.

41  
42 For 2023, this is the proposed and accepted list, and this we  
43 would typically bring to the council in March or April and then  
44 talk about it during the May Steering Committee meeting.  
45 However, that meeting was cancelled, and so this is a little  
46 later than normal, but we are asking that you take a close look  
47 at this and see if you have any concerns or questions, so that  
48 we can make any changes immediately, because that needs to occur

1 after this meeting.

2  
3 We did switch the red drum research track out for the gray  
4 triggerfish research track, and we made that request during the  
5 meeting, and we will finish up the yellowedge grouper  
6 operational assessment, and Florida will start the west Florida  
7 hogfish benchmark assessment.

8  
9 Then, in 2024, this is proposed, and we will finish up year-two  
10 of the gray triggerfish research track, and we asked for a lane  
11 snapper operational assessment, a vermilion snapper operational  
12 assessment, and to look at a tilefish stock complex evaluation,  
13 an operational assessment, and that means that, in the past, we  
14 tried a golden tilefish assessment, and that also looked at  
15 blueline tilefish, and that was considered BSIA, although they  
16 did have some difficulties with the data, and we're asking the  
17 Science Center to take a look at it again and include all three  
18 species for consideration. Then, also, FWC will be working on  
19 the black grouper benchmark assessment. Again, we're looking  
20 for feedback on the 2023 immediately, if there's any questions  
21 of concern, and then, long-term, on the 2024 proposed species.

22  
23 We had three Other Business items. The first one was a  
24 procedural workshop, a pre-proposal came to the Steering  
25 Committee, and that was best practices for combining indices of  
26 abundance surveys, and the main objective was to streamline this  
27 process, and you can read the main objective there, but the  
28 Steering Committee requested more information about this, and  
29 members requested it to be more inclusive of highly migratory  
30 species and the South Atlantic Council, and so we'll be looking  
31 at this again in September and talking about it further, but the  
32 Gulf Council was supportive of this approach during the meeting,  
33 and we would like to see more information.

34  
35 I think most people know that we're looking at more detail for  
36 some shrimp stock assessments, and this research assessment plan  
37 was proposed during the Steering Committee meeting, and so the  
38 process that was proposed is that, during Phase 1, if you look  
39 at that first year that we have there, the SEAMAP, effort,  
40 catch, and observer process, that would involve the Gulf  
41 Council, SSC members, and the Science Center, and we're  
42 anticipating receiving terms of reference from the Science  
43 Center shortly to put in front of the SSC during their July 21  
44 through 23 meeting. Then Phases 2 and 3 would follow the SEDAR  
45 process, both for the assessment workshop and review, for the  
46 other two years.

47  
48 Based on this schedule, the Science Center anticipates that we

1 may be getting new management advice as early as 2021 to look at  
2 potentially modifying the Shrimp FMPs for those status  
3 determination criteria, such as maximum sustainable yield, OY,  
4 and maximum fishing mortality, all those good things, in 2021.  
5 We do have some action here, and we'll be working with the  
6 Science Center staff and the SSC.

7  
8 The third Other Business item was we've been requesting kind of  
9 a feedback loop or the closing of that loop after we provide an  
10 operational assessment statement of work. We are being asked to  
11 provide these two years out, and the SSC is reviewing those, and  
12 then it's not really clear, until we were to get to the SEDAR  
13 Steering Committee meeting, whether those statements of work  
14 were reasonable or there were concerns or things needed to be  
15 tweaked.

16  
17 We are asking to receive a memo, feedback, from the Science  
18 Center telling us whether those statements of work can be  
19 accomplished or if we need to make changes, and so this just  
20 provides an example of how that might work, and so, for the 2023  
21 species that were just approved in our SEDAR Steering Committee,  
22 we would use this, and we're going to be developing a statement  
23 of work for those, unless there's changes at this meeting, and  
24 we would submit those to the Science Center by October of this  
25 year, and they would tell us in a memo by February 1 of 2021 if  
26 that's possible or if we need to make changes, and then we would  
27 develop the terms of reference and get the schedule and all  
28 those other things together to finalize everything before the  
29 assessment begins.

30  
31 These are really for us, just to let you know that we need to  
32 brief the SSC on these changes to the operational assessment  
33 process and the statement of work outline and process, and I  
34 have talked to Julie Neer, and she's willing to come to the SSC,  
35 or at least remotely talk to them, about these changes as the  
36 process evolves. We also need to poll the SSC for a technical  
37 committee chair for the scamp research track.

38  
39 We are looking forward to receiving those terms of reference for  
40 the shrimp assessment for review in July, and, again, as you get  
41 into the schedule, just a reminder to review those 2023 and 2024  
42 assessment schedules and provide feedback, and that concludes my  
43 presentation. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

44  
45 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** All right. Thank you, Dr. Simmons. We'll  
46 take a few minutes here for folks that might want to ask some  
47 questions, as they relate to the presentation. I see Dr.  
48 Mickle.

1  
2 **DR. MICKLE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Great presentation, Carrie,  
3 and I really appreciate the information, and it's a lot of hard  
4 work done by Clay and the Science Center and council staff and  
5 everybody. A lot of effort is put into the detail, and it's a  
6 complicated process, and I do believe it's becoming more  
7 efficient, and that's because everybody is working together on  
8 it, and that's great. I love to see these open exchanges, and I  
9 know it's been a long work in progress, and so I think it's  
10 starting to really take the shape of what we want to see as part  
11 of the efficiencies being increased.

12  
13 We know the data is a bottleneck, and some of these actions,  
14 with the research track and others, are helping with that, and I  
15 think it's great to actually identify the largest bottlenecks  
16 and take them on, head-on, in the overall process.

17  
18 Before we get into the scheduling specifically, I had a  
19 question, I guess for Carrie. On Slide 6 and your second-to-  
20 last slide, you were talking about the review process coming in  
21 front of the SSC, and then going back to the SEDAR Committee,  
22 and so, those discussion points and the review process that goes  
23 in front of the SSC, will that be presented -- I'm assuming that  
24 those discussions and opinions will be presented to us at the  
25 council meeting in October, as our meeting is at the end of  
26 October, but would that material and discussion points and  
27 feedback be presented in the SSC summary report, or would it be  
28 in an actual SEDAR Committee meeting?

29  
30 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** I think, if I'm understanding your  
31 question correctly, Dr. Mickle, you're referring to many of the  
32 clarifications that the Science Center is proposing for the  
33 operational assessments.

34  
35 **DR. MICKLE:** Yes, and so the opinions of the SSC on how well  
36 those work or how big of an impact those recommendations or  
37 changes will have, and will it be presented by the delegate  
38 that's chosen from the SSC in giving their summary report to us,  
39 or will it actually be in a formal SEDAR Committee meeting  
40 report presented to us at the meeting, because, if we could  
41 choose, I would prefer that the SSC scientists presenting those  
42 discussion points present that information, so we could discuss  
43 it with them.

44  
45 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Certainly, and so you're suggesting  
46 that we have another Gulf SEDAR Committee in August, so that we  
47 can talk about any recommendations or information that the SSC  
48 provided from their July meeting to this committee?

1  
2 **DR. MICKLE:** Yes, that works.  
3  
4 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Sure, we can do that, and I think  
5 the plan is for Dr. Neer to brief the SSC in July on some of  
6 these changes, and is that correct, Ryan?  
7  
8 **MR. RINDONE:** Yes, and that July agenda has been under quite a  
9 bit of flux in the last twenty-four hours, but we will  
10 accommodate that.  
11  
12 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** Thank you, Dr. Mickle. We will now go to Mr.  
13 Diaz.  
14  
15 **MR. DALE DIAZ:** Thank you, and I'm not on your committee, but I  
16 do have two questions and a comment, and so I'm going to do the  
17 questions first. I am seeing king mackerel, and I know you said  
18 that everything is on time, but when the council likely see king  
19 mackerel, Dr. Simmons, or Mr. Rindone, or whoever can answer  
20 that? What meeting?  
21  
22 **MR. RINDONE:** August.  
23  
24 **MR. DIAZ:** The August meeting? Okay. Thank you.  
25  
26 **MR. RINDONE:** The SSC should review it in July, and then you  
27 guys would be able to see it as soon as August.  
28  
29 **MR. DIAZ:** Okay. That sounds great, and so thank you for that.  
30 Under 2023, I know research tracks take up two spots, and we've  
31 got red snapper for two spots on operational assessment, and  
32 then triggerfish is only taking one spot, when it's a research  
33 track, and I was just going to see -- The two spots for red  
34 snapper in 2023 for the operational assessment, is that correct?  
35  
36 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** Yes, it is correct, and I think it's a  
37 manpower issue, and I know that Clay is on the line here, and he  
38 can address that.  
39  
40 **DR. CLAY PORCH:** Sure. We actually assess red snapper as two  
41 stocks, and we manage it as one, but we have essentially two  
42 assessments, one east and one west of the Mississippi River,  
43 because it's not a huge connection between the two, and you can  
44 see different stock trends often on one side of the Mississippi  
45 compared to the other.  
46  
47 Arguably, there could be even finer spatial structure, but we  
48 just don't have the data for that, but, in any case, that's why

1 it takes two slots, plus red snapper is arguably the most  
2 complicated assessment in the nation, with more pieces of data  
3 than probably any two or three assessments combined, and so it  
4 is an awful lot of work.

5  
6 **MR. DIAZ:** Thank you, Dr. Porch. I appreciate that, and I know  
7 it is, but thank god we have the data. We probably have got  
8 more data on red snapper than just about any other species in  
9 the nation also, I would argue, or I would guess, or let me put  
10 it that way.

11  
12 The comment I was going to make is I do know that we had to  
13 replace -- We took red drum out in order to make room for  
14 triggerfish, and I just want to make sure the council is aware  
15 of that, but I do remember you saying that it was doubtful that  
16 we would have had the information that we needed to actually  
17 accomplish a stock assessment on red drum anyway, and so I don't  
18 think we're losing anything. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I  
19 appreciate it.

20  
21 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** Thank you, Mr. Diaz, and thank you, Clay, for  
22 weighing-in there. I see next on the list here is Ms. Guyas.  
23 Martha, go ahead.

24  
25 **MS. GUYAS:** Thanks. I had a question about the operational  
26 assessments, and so the slide that says that new data and  
27 changes in model structure must be requested by the council and  
28 approved by the Science Center, and so --

29  
30 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** Let's go ahead and get that slide up, real  
31 quick, so people can see it.

32  
33 **MS. GUYAS:** Okay. I guess my question would be, given that the  
34 people around the council table may not be aware of data that  
35 should be incorporated, what's the process for that? Are we  
36 thinking that maybe the SSC would review the terms of reference  
37 first, and then maybe suggest changes, or make recommendations,  
38 for the council to consider, and then the council would make a  
39 decision on that and send it to the Science Center, and I'm just  
40 trying to understand the process for that. Thanks.

41  
42 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** I think what we mean there is the  
43 SSC, staff, council members in general, requested by the Gulf  
44 Council as a cooperator, everyone together, because staff  
45 receives the draft -- Well, we don't receive them anymore. The  
46 scopes of work we come up with on our own, and I'm thinking of  
47 terms of reference, and Ryan is probably going to be better at  
48 explaining this than me, but we draft those, and we weigh-in on

1 them, and we put them in front of the SSC, and the SSC weighs-in  
2 on them, and then, after that, we write a memo, and the Chair  
3 reviews those memos, and then we send them to the Science  
4 Center.  
5

6 Then we're asking for a memo back of are those scopes of work  
7 reasonable, and that's a new process, before we get to the  
8 Steering Committee meeting. Once we decide on that, then we  
9 will develop terms of reference and scheduling, and Ryan correct  
10 me, or Dr. Porch, if I'm not getting this correct.  
11

12 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** I will give Ryan an opportunity to weigh-in  
13 here for a minute.  
14

15 **MR. RINDONE:** Sure. Dr. Simmons has it pretty well spot-on.  
16 When an assessment is upcoming, staff considers some of the  
17 research that is coming through the pipelines, and we might put  
18 some of that in front of the SSC to consider, and we also look  
19 at things from the previous assessment that were not done, for  
20 whatever reason, and communicate with the Science Center to try  
21 to figure out if any of this can be accomplished this time  
22 around, and so there's initial communication between us and the  
23 Science Center before the SSC reviews that scope of work.  
24

25 Then, after that point, we send that scope of work to the  
26 Science Center and SEDAR, and we'll get terms of reference back  
27 at that point, and there really shouldn't be any surprises,  
28 because we've been communicating with the Center, and we know  
29 generally what they're going to be able to pull off, and so the  
30 terms of reference should be more of a formality at that point,  
31 because we do most of the legwork now on the frontend.  
32

33 Our SEDAR approval process for that rests mostly with the  
34 Executive Director and the Chair, for ultimately saying, all  
35 right, we're going to send this scope of work and these terms of  
36 reference off, but, at any point, we can certainly share those  
37 with anyone who is interested, and they are reviewed in public  
38 at the SSC meetings.  
39

40 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** Thank you, Ryan. Dr. Porch, did you want to  
41 add anything from the Science Center perspective?  
42

43 **DR. PORCH:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just wanted to clarify some  
44 things about the operational assessment, and the idea behind  
45 them ultimately was that we already had a peer-reviewed  
46 assessment approach from the previous benchmark or research  
47 track assessment, and so the only things that actually need  
48 further review are the proposed changes to the assessment that

1 are listed in the statement of work.

2  
3 The original proposal actually for operational assessments did  
4 not include assessment panels that would review the entire  
5 assessment, and, as this started to get implemented or whatever,  
6 we started to see that the SEDAR coordinator was appointing  
7 assessment panels, and it was converting all the operational  
8 assessments essentially into either standard assessments, or  
9 even the equivalent of benchmark assessments, and that was  
10 slowing the process down considerably, and so all the  
11 assessments were late, basically, because we're just turning  
12 over every stone again, and that wasn't the original intent.

13  
14 The idea of operational assessments was to make the whole  
15 process more efficient, and so you have the research track or  
16 the previous benchmark, where we did that work of overturning  
17 all the stones, and now we have a peer-reviewed assessment, and  
18 then you have some changes that might be proposed that the SSC  
19 agrees they feel comfortable reviewing, and so then we might add  
20 those to the statement of work to an operational assessment, but  
21 there's really no need to review all the aspects of the  
22 assessment all over again. We just need to review the new  
23 things, and then, ultimately, it's going to go to the SSC for a  
24 final level of review.

25  
26 Again, the original proposal didn't include assessment panels,  
27 and they were just supposed to focus on the new things, and  
28 we're just kind of correcting that. Formerly, there were no  
29 standard operating procedures put in place yet for the  
30 operational assessment and the research track, even though we  
31 were kind of moving forward and sort of testing the waters, and  
32 I think there was general support for the approach, and so I  
33 guess what I'm saying is we're not really changing the  
34 procedure, and we're kind of correcting it. Again, the idea is  
35 to be transparent, but also efficient, so we can get more  
36 assessments out. Thanks.

37  
38 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** Thanks, Clay. Again, I appreciate the input  
39 there from Carrie and Ryan and Clay, and, Martha, are we good?  
40 Do you think you got your question covered?

41  
42 **MS. GUYAS:** Yes. Thank you.

43  
44 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** Okay. Clay, it looks like you might have had  
45 your hand up for a separate issue. Do you want to tackle that,  
46 or are you good?

47  
48 **DR. PORCH:** No, and that was it.

1  
2 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** Okay. Next on the list would be Ms. Bosarge.  
3 Leann.

4  
5 **MS. LEANN BOSARGE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to  
6 say thanks to staff for giving us that slide on the shrimp  
7 research assessment plan. I understand it a lot better now, and  
8 I think that's going to work pretty well, and I did have one  
9 question.

10  
11 I like the idea of presenting it to the SSC, to help with that  
12 statement of work, or to review a statement of work, and will we  
13 allow some of the SSC members to volunteer for this assessment  
14 team, the way we do for all the other assessments, and I ask  
15 that because I know we have one SSC member that used to work in  
16 the Galveston Lab on those particular models, and it seems like  
17 his input and assistance would be valuable in this process, all  
18 the way through the process and not just during the one SSC  
19 meeting.

20  
21 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** Ryan, do you have your hand up?  
22

23 **MR. RINDONE:** Under the way that the Science Center intends for  
24 the operational assessments to work, the SSC members could be  
25 nominated to these topical working groups in the future, which  
26 are going to take the place of any formal assessment panel, and  
27 so it will scale back SSC involvement in the assessment process,  
28 as opposed to the way that it is at present, and then the SSC  
29 will ultimately be responsible for the review of the operational  
30 assessments, like they are now, and so they will -- For some of  
31 them anyway, it will be the first time that they will see  
32 certain aspects of the assessment, as opposed to have them walk  
33 through it throughout the assessment process, the way that they  
34 are now.

35  
36 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** Ryan, thank you for that, but I just want to  
37 make sure that we're on the same page here, Leann, and I think  
38 you're actually talking about participation in the topical  
39 working group on the shrimp research assessment, and is that  
40 correct?

41  
42 **MS. BOSARGE:** Yes, I'm sorry, and I used the wrong vocabulary.  
43

44 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** Okay, and, again, I think there will certainly  
45 be that opportunity to participate, get the appropriate  
46 representation on the topical working groups, and Clay was one  
47 of the folks that put this particular slide together, and,  
48 again, I'm going to invite him to talk about participation in

1 those groups.

2  
3 **DR. PORCH:** Thank you, Chair. To Ms. Bosarge's question, we'll  
4 have these four different topical working groups, and we're  
5 actually in the process now of putting together statements of  
6 work, which we'll submit to the July SSC, and we certainly would  
7 like the SSC member that you mentioned to participate in  
8 multiple of these working groups, and I think that would be  
9 really important.

10  
11 Also, some of the working groups, such as effort and catch  
12 estimation, ideally, we would have some industry representatives  
13 participate, and probably Benny Gallaway and folks like that as  
14 well, since they've been working with this data for a long time,  
15 and so that's the idea.

16  
17 We're putting together working groups now, and some things, like  
18 the SEAMAP index working group, that probably would be primarily  
19 internal, since we run the survey, and the idea there is  
20 basically what's the best way to use the SEAMAP data for an  
21 index of abundance, since that's what it's intended to do, and,  
22 if we have that, there may not actually be a need to use fishery  
23 catch per unit effort information, at least for the most recent  
24 period, but there's also the best way to estimate effort, which  
25 is in contention right now, and how do we get catch, just from  
26 the state trip ticket systems, and is there anything else that  
27 we need to do.

28  
29 Then there's a lot of issues with how we develop estimates from  
30 the observer data, and this will spill over into bycatch  
31 estimates, since we use that data for the other stock  
32 assessments, and so I think it's really important to have SSC  
33 involvement in at least three of the four groups, and maybe even  
34 also in the SEAMAP group, and, also, like I said, industry, and,  
35 of course, that particular member who was involved in these  
36 assessments.

37  
38 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** Thank you, Clay. I appreciate that. Okay.  
39 Are there any other questions? I don't see any hands at the  
40 moment, and I will give everybody a second.

41  
42 **MS. BOSARGE:** Mr. Chairman, I thought I put my hand back up, and  
43 I tried to lower it and put it back up, and maybe I messed that  
44 up, and may I ask another question?

45  
46 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** You sure can. You're just quicker than I am.

47  
48 **MS. BOSARGE:** Thank you, sir. Clay, that sounds wonderful, and

1 you touched on the other thing that I was going to mention  
2 relative to shrimp, and that was the industry participation. It  
3 was a little worrisome to me, just because the Shrimp AP, as you  
4 know, we ended up having to make some changes to that meeting,  
5 that was going to happen, where we would have reviewed the last  
6 shrimp stock assessment and given some input on these things on  
7 this slide right here, but, with COVID-19, we weren't able to do  
8 that, and we have some pretty savvy AP members.

9  
10 I would say they're all savvy, but we have some that are former  
11 council members and have seen the transition of the shrimp stock  
12 assessment models over the years and are very familiar with that  
13 history, and so I definitely think making sure that we present  
14 it to the AP and get that feedback to you and involve the actual  
15 fishermen, just like we do in some of our other assessments, as  
16 it progresses, and please pull them in where you can, to get  
17 input, even if it's just to listen in on a webinar as you're  
18 discussing certain data topics, and maybe they will have  
19 relevant feedback for you that could be helpful, and so I  
20 appreciate that. Then, on a different topic, if I may, Mr.  
21 Chairman, and I had one question.

22  
23 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** Go ahead.

24  
25 **MS. BOSARGE:** On the new SEDAR process, the only thing that I  
26 had a little reservation about, that made me hesitant, and I  
27 understand that we need to be more efficient, especially on  
28 something that would have ended up being just an update, where  
29 we're going to plug-and-chug, and, therefore, there would not be  
30 very many public webinars, and I'm okay with no in-person  
31 meetings and it being a webinar, but it seems something always  
32 comes up, and it's never quite as easy as what we thought, and  
33 it's a little bothersome to me that the webinars wouldn't be at  
34 least open to the public to listen in to, so that we can follow  
35 the process and understand where maybe a stumbling block is.

36  
37 I feel like that's always a good thing to happen, because  
38 somebody comes up with a good idea, or realizes that there is  
39 research that needs to take place there, and communications  
40 happen, and you never know where it leads, and so could we speak  
41 to the public webinars?

42  
43 **DR. PORCH:** Mr. Chair, can I speak to that?

44  
45 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** Go ahead, Clay.

46  
47 **DR. PORCH:** To the last point, the webinars actually would be  
48 public. We just are saying we don't need to have ten of them

1 for an operational assessment, but they certainly would be  
2 public, and, potentially, there can also be in-person workshops,  
3 but it's just that the in-person workshops should focus on the  
4 new things that are being added to the assessment and not rehash  
5 every single point of the assessment, because that just  
6 basically makes it a benchmark and slows things down  
7 unnecessarily.

8  
9 The workshops would be public, and I would anticipate, if there  
10 are substantial changes to the assessment, that we might  
11 actually have a couple, and one example is what's going on now  
12 with the South Atlantic red snapper, in that they're going to  
13 have a topical workshop that's actually run by the State of  
14 Florida, but will have a lot of experts on selectivity  
15 participating, and then that information, whatever comes out of  
16 that workshop, will be worked into the assessment, and then  
17 there will be a couple of webinars, and maybe a very brief in-  
18 person workshop, although I doubt it will happen, because of  
19 COVID-19, and, at that workshop, they will review how the  
20 information from the topical workshop was actually incorporated  
21 into the assessment, and so we're not saying there is no public  
22 webinars.

23  
24 Then, to the first point about participation from the industry,  
25 of course, we welcome it, and, in particular, Ms. Bosarge, we  
26 hope that you will participate in those working groups.

27  
28 **MS. BOSARGE:** Thank you, Clay. I would be honored.

29  
30 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** All right. Thank you, Leann, for asking the  
31 question, and thank you, Dr. Porch, for continuing to emphasize  
32 that we value the public participation in all aspects of the  
33 process, and so I think everybody would agree with that.

34  
35 The next item, and I don't see any other hands up at this point,  
36 and so we are going to take a quick look at the SEDAR schedule,  
37 particularly the 2023 and 2024 years, and so if I can get Mr.  
38 Rindone back on the line.

39  
40 **REVIEW OF GULF OF MEXICO SEDAR SCHEDULE**

41  
42 **MR. RINDONE:** You have your schedule in front of you, and you  
43 can see the things that are being finished up for 2020, and so,  
44 at the July SSC meeting, the SSC is going to review the  
45 assessments for cobia, Gulf kingfish, and yellowtail snapper,  
46 and we will have the gag operational assessment, which is  
47 getting geared up here, and that will have an in-person  
48 workshop, hopefully, in February of 2021.

1  
2 We'll still be working on the scamp operational assessment in  
3 2021, and the timing of that may adjust a little bit as we  
4 figure out exactly where we're at with that process, and we'll  
5 be starting the red snapper research track assessment, and the  
6 planning team for that assessment, that helps develop the terms  
7 of reference and figure out the schedule and whatnot, we've  
8 already had our first meeting, and we have another one  
9 scheduled, and we're working through that process now. Then FWC  
10 will be running a benchmark assessment for mutton snapper, which  
11 we haven't done in a little while.

12  
13 In 2022, we'll finish up that scamp operational assessment and  
14 continue work on the red snapper research track, and then we'll  
15 also start operational assessments for yellowedge grouper and  
16 Spanish mackerel, which should hopefully be pretty  
17 straightforward, and we'll finish up that mutton snapper  
18 assessment with FWC.

19  
20 In 2023, at least what we have listed in 2023 was accepted by  
21 the Science Center for moving forward, but these assessments  
22 haven't been formally scheduled yet, and we're finishing up the  
23 research track for red snapper and doing the operational  
24 assessment, and we're starting the research track for gray  
25 triggerfish, and then we're tying off the yellowedge grouper  
26 operational assessment. Then FWC will take up west Florida  
27 hogfish, as well as the other populations of hogfish, but that  
28 doesn't pertain to the Gulf, and so I just listed west Florida.

29  
30 Just as an aside, FWC still operates under the  
31 benchmark/standard/update framework, because it works better for  
32 their processes.

33  
34 Then, in 2024, we have proposed finishing up the gray  
35 triggerfish research track, which would, in 2025, be followed by  
36 an operational assessment, and we would also do an operational  
37 assessment for lane snapper and vermilion snapper and do an  
38 evaluation of the tilefish complex, to see what's possible to be  
39 done with those species.

40  
41 The last time we tried to assess tilefish was data through 2009,  
42 and the review workshop for that was in February of 2011, and so  
43 that assessment has got a nice thick layer of dust on it, and so  
44 it's time to figure out what we can do with the tilefish  
45 species. Then FWC will make another attempt at black grouper,  
46 depending on the progress that they and the Science Center,  
47 perhaps, are able to make in figuring out some of the  
48 misidentification issues that plagued the assessment the last

1 time around and caused it be prematurely terminated. Any  
2 questions?

3  
4 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** We will give people just a few seconds to  
5 assess that schedule.

6  
7 **MR. RINDONE:** Just to clarify, for 2023 and 2024 especially,  
8 what I have listed as far as when things will start and when  
9 they will end, those are purely estimates, and we don't know  
10 precisely at this point when things will start and end, and that  
11 may result in some adjustment of the terminal years that you see  
12 in that center column there.

13  
14 Typically, if an assessment starts in say around September or  
15 later, we can include data from the previous year, but, if it  
16 starts earlier in the year, it's more difficult to do that, just  
17 based on when data are finalized and available.

18  
19 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** Thank you, Mr. Rindone. It looks like we have  
20 a question from Mr. Swindell.

21  
22 **MR. ED SWINDELL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Ryan, I keep looking  
23 at this whole chart, and we keep -- There is no red drum  
24 anywhere in this whole thing, and, yet, we're still also working  
25 on vermilion snapper, and the SSC says the vermilion snapper is  
26 not overfished, and overfishing is not occurring, and so I don't  
27 understand truly, and I will have to get somewhere into this  
28 vermilion snapper thing, as to why we're doing anything with the  
29 vermilion snapper and we're not doing anything with the red  
30 drum, and here we've got a fishery resource that's out there  
31 that we're not paying attention to it, and we're not able to  
32 utilize it, and I thought, as a fishery management council, we  
33 were supposed to at least make use of the resources that are  
34 available, and we're not doing anything.

35  
36 I really believe we are doing a disservice to the Magnuson Act  
37 by not giving some attention, some way or another, to red drum,  
38 and I understand that it's difficult to do an assessment, but  
39 don't tell me that it can't be done in some fashion, and I  
40 believe there are ways to get it done, and that's just my  
41 opinion. Thank you.

42  
43 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** Thank you, Mr. Swindell. I think one of the  
44 comments that was made earlier, as we were going through the  
45 SEDAR report, was that there was -- The red drum was originally  
46 on the schedule, and it was replaced with gray triggerfish,  
47 given the urgency, again, with that particular fish, and so your  
48 point is well taken, and there is no harvest, as you know, of

1 red drum in federal waters at this time, but your comments are  
2 noted, and we'll see if anybody else has anything to say about  
3 that. In the short-term, we're going to go ahead and go to  
4 Martha.

5  
6 **MS. GUYAS:** Thanks. I was going to say that I think putting  
7 triggerfish on the schedule in 2023 and 2024 was the right move.  
8 I think that assessment self-imploded recently, and we need to  
9 figure out what's going on there, and clearly we need a research  
10 track, given all the issues.

11  
12 I was going to circle back to the question that Ryan brought up  
13 in the action guide regarding red snapper, and so we have the  
14 operational and research track assessments starting -- Well, I  
15 guess going on -- Starting in 2021 and continuing through 2023,  
16 and I wanted to have some discussion about whether we need an  
17 interim analysis or would like to see an interim analysis for  
18 red snapper.

19  
20 I think the last assessment maybe came out in 2017, and I'm not  
21 sure how old the data was from that, and, Ryan, do you know off  
22 the top of your head?

23  
24 **MR. RINDONE:** 2015.

25  
26 **MS. GUYAS:** 2015, and so it's been five years, and I would just  
27 put that out there, and I know we have Great Red Snapper Count  
28 stuff coming out soon, and so I don't know if there's a way -- I  
29 mean, there's a lot happening, and I'm trying to figure out  
30 what's the best course of action here.

31  
32 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** Thanks, Martha. I think that's a good  
33 question, and particularly in light of some of the discussion  
34 we've had over the last couple of days. I know that Clay has  
35 his hand up.

36  
37 **DR. PORCH:** We are planning to conduct interim analyses for the  
38 2021 and the 2022 seasons, anticipating that the research track  
39 assessment for red snapper will be completed sometime between  
40 early 2022 or the 2023 end date.

41  
42 Just keep in mind that research tracks are intentionally  
43 flexible, and so that 2023 date reflects sort of the longest  
44 possible time we think it would take, and it's possible that,  
45 given the information that comes in, that we'll complete the  
46 research track sooner, but, again, it's intended to be a  
47 flexible process, and so we schedule a long amount of time for  
48 it, but, in the interim, we plan to do those kind of interim

1 analyses, and, as I discussed yesterday, there is two possible  
2 approaches.

3  
4 We can use the approaches that we've shown you in the past, that  
5 hinges on our most reliable survey information, or, depending on  
6 what Greg Stunz's group delivers with the Great Red Snapper  
7 Count, we could potentially use those abundance estimates  
8 directly to derive an ABC.

9  
10 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** Thank you, Clay. I guess it all sounds good,  
11 and there are, as you pointed out, a number of options moving  
12 forward, and so, if it's the intent of the council, I guess we  
13 would just emphasize the desire to have those interim analyses  
14 and realize that they could incorporate any number of data, and  
15 is that correct?

16  
17 **DR. PORCH:** Yes, that's correct.

18  
19 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** Dr. Simmons.

20  
21 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess I  
22 would just try to get an idea of when we thought that interim  
23 analysis might be ready, if the Great Red Snapper Count could be  
24 included, and I think it was discussed a little bit yesterday,  
25 and is that something that may be available you said in early  
26 2021 for the SSC to review?

27  
28 **DR. PORCH:** Yes, I think so, and a lot depends on when we  
29 actually get the estimates from the Great Red Snapper Count, and  
30 so the last I heard from Greg was potentially by the end of  
31 June, and he may want to comment, but I have also heard that,  
32 because they lost their lead analyst, it could actually not be  
33 completed until fall, and so maybe he can further enlighten us  
34 there. If the estimates do come in June or July, we should have  
35 plenty of time to incorporate them in a potential interim  
36 analysis in time for the SSC to review and then the council to  
37 implement it for the 2021 season.

38  
39 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** Dr. Stunz, do you want to provide some  
40 comments?

41  
42 **DR. GREG STUNZ:** Clay is right, and we're looking probably more  
43 like the July timeframe, and so thanks, Clay, for swiping our  
44 lead analyst, or, actually, it wasn't Clay, but he went out to a  
45 NOAA lab in Hawaii.

46  
47 **DR. PORCH:** If it was me, I would have let him work on it.

48

1 **DR. STUNZ:** Exactly, but, as I mentioned yesterday, we're  
2 working just as fast as we can, and we do have some procedural  
3 things to go through, as far as the source of that money was  
4 from Congress, and briefing their staff and others, and so  
5 there's some things -- I don't really know what that's going to  
6 look like, but, as far as the actual real work of getting the  
7 numbers in, it looks like it's going to be a July timeframe, and  
8 so hopefully that will help you out, Clay, to do that, but just  
9 rest assured that we're not sitting here. We're working as fast  
10 as possible, and especially this COVID stuff didn't help us out  
11 any, but we're working through it right now.

12  
13 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** Thanks, Greg. It looks like you had your hand  
14 up for something else, and I will circle back to you here at the  
15 end.

16  
17 **DR. STUNZ:** That was it.

18  
19 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** Okay. Great. Ryan, you had your hand up?

20  
21 **MR. RINDONE:** I was going to speak to Mr. Swindell's comments  
22 about red drum, but it may be better to yield my time to Clay,  
23 if Clay wants to comment on that instead.

24  
25 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** Okay. I will give Clay an opportunity if he  
26 wants to address the red drum issue.

27  
28 **DR. PORCH:** Okay. Do you want me to take it up now?

29  
30 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** Yes.

31  
32 **DR. PORCH:** All right. Thanks. The big issue with red drum is  
33 that, ideally, we would do a Gulf-wide assessment that  
34 incorporates all the state data, since really the juveniles grow  
35 up predominantly inshore, and most of the states have  
36 assessments for them already.

37  
38 Then, when they go offshore, there is some degree of mixing  
39 throughout the Gulf, and basically populations in Texas can  
40 conceivably go all the way to -- Members can go all the way to  
41 Florida, but, for the most part, the movements are somewhat  
42 limited, so that the genetic research we have shows that  
43 populations in Texas are more similar to the ones in Louisiana  
44 than they are in Florida, and vice versa.

45  
46 What we really need is to get a comprehensive sampling program  
47 that uses essentially purse seines, which is a non-selective  
48 gear, to get the age composition of the population throughout

1 the entire Gulf, especially the northern Gulf, since that's  
2 where the bulk of the fish are, and then we can compare that to  
3 the similar work that was done in the 1980s and 1990s, and then  
4 we have a basis for the assessment.

5  
6 If we get something like that, I would actually advocate for  
7 doing a Gulf-wide assessment, and then we would probably have  
8 some spatial structure that incorporates the state data more  
9 directly, just simply because they don't move that much when  
10 they are younger animals and they're in the estuaries, and so I  
11 think it would be a great idea, and we would love to do it, but  
12 we do need the data to populate it.

13  
14 Otherwise, we would have to use some data-limited approach, and  
15 that didn't work so well the last time. I mean, we could review  
16 it again and see if we can find some other data-limited approach  
17 to apply that would be informative, but, ideally, we would just  
18 collect the data that we need to, but it's just expensive, and I  
19 don't think that anybody has quite pulled it off yet.

20  
21 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** Thanks, Clay. We've got a little bit of time  
22 here left, and I've got three people still on the board, and I'm  
23 going to try to walk through them in order. Crabtree, Anson,  
24 and then Simmons, and then Ed Swindell will get an opportunity  
25 as well. Dr. Crabtree.

26  
27 **DR. CRABTREE:** Just to follow-up on red drum, I mean, we talk  
28 about the fishery being closed, but, really, it's one of the  
29 largest recreational fisheries in the Gulf of Mexico, and I  
30 think we harvest eight or nine million pounds a year, and so,  
31 more than anything, we've made a management decision to use a  
32 large closed area, which is the EEZ, as part of the way to  
33 manage red drum, and we have decided to keep it a state-water  
34 fishery on the juveniles.

35  
36 I know that not everyone is in agreement with that, and we also  
37 decided to have it be a recreational fishery. People have  
38 different opinions on that, but I think you could change that if  
39 you wanted to, and, I mean, you shouldn't assume that, because  
40 you don't have a stock assessment, the fishery has to be closed.  
41 I would point out that the largest recreational fishery in the  
42 South Atlantic is dolphin, and there's no assessment for  
43 dolphin, and we manage it, and the EEZ is open, and so I think  
44 it's just more of a choice as to how we're managing red drum,  
45 and I've been on this council an awful long time, and I think,  
46 generally, the majority of members are satisfied with it and  
47 haven't wanted to change it.

48

1 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** Thank you, Dr. Crabtree. Kevin Anson.

2  
3 **MR. ANSON:** In regard to red drum, and Roy's comments  
4 specifically, I guess one could argue that it's a choice, but,  
5 if the council wanted to move in the direction of opening up  
6 harvest in the EEZ, we have to do that with science, or, as Clay  
7 pointed out, we need information on the core area of its range,  
8 and that's in the northern Gulf, and that was my question, is I  
9 thought that Dr. Sean Powers had some MARFIN money to do some  
10 research, and I can follow-up with him, but I'm just curious if  
11 either Ryan or Dr. Porch has any information about the status of  
12 that research and how it plays into providing that information  
13 that would be needed to conduct an assessment.

14  
15 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** Either Ryan or Clay, to that point, real  
16 quick.

17  
18 **MR. RINDONE:** Clay can correct me if I'm wrong, but Dr. Sean  
19 Powers has been working in the northern Gulf, and Dr. Sue  
20 Barbieri in the eastern Gulf, with generally similar techniques,  
21 to try to survey the red drum population, and I don't know if  
22 Sue's research is still continuing or if she's wrapped up field  
23 sampling, and I think she has wrapped up the field sampling  
24 portion of her work, and we haven't seen the results of any of  
25 those data yet, to know how they could be used to better explain  
26 things that we currently don't know about the stock, but it  
27 isn't just those areas that need to be examined, and it's really  
28 a Gulf-wide issue, like Dr. Porch mentioned.

29  
30 **DR. PORCH:** I am not fully up-to-speed on the breadth of Dr.  
31 Powers' survey. I was under the impression that it didn't  
32 really include that much of Louisiana and Texas, and, of course,  
33 Louisiana is the teeth of the fishery, but I could be wrong on  
34 that, and it's certainly a point worth following-up on.

35  
36 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** Okay. Thank you. We'll get some information  
37 and get back to folks on that one. Dr. Simmons.

38  
39 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. It sounds  
40 like we could just go ahead and work on a letter to the Science  
41 Center just requesting that interim analysis for red snapper,  
42 and it sounds like they're already working on it, but just so  
43 everyone is aware, and the staff can do that, but, taking a step  
44 back and thinking about the interim analysis, the bigger  
45 picture, and I know that Dr. Porch provided a presentation to  
46 the council a while back on this process and what species were  
47 good candidates.

1 We had originally planned, in March and April, the March/April  
2 council meeting, that we would work with the Science Center  
3 staff and come up with that list, and not only talk about the  
4 timing of when the analysis could be presented to the SSC, but  
5 what species the council may want to request every year, or  
6 every other year, and the intent of that request.

7  
8 Is it just a health check, or is the council's intent, perhaps,  
9 to make actual management changes and then putting that out to  
10 the management process and seeing how long it takes us to  
11 implement those changes and when, again, we may want to request  
12 another interim analysis, and so we'll plan to do that for the  
13 August council meeting with you, Dr. Porch, and try to work  
14 through that process a little bit further and put that out to  
15 management, if that's possible.

16  
17 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** Thanks, Carrie. We have two more, and then  
18 we're going to take a break, if we don't have any other  
19 business, and so first will be Ed Swindell and then Leann  
20 Bosarge.

21  
22 **MR. SWINDELL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If you need purse seine  
23 data, have you talked to the purse seine operation that used to  
24 operate for bait out of Apalachicola? I believe he was on the  
25 council at one time, and, also, the bait operation in Louisiana  
26 might could help you with purse seines, although the one in  
27 Apalachicola is a single vessel purse seine operation, instead  
28 of a twin purse seine operation for the menhaden industry, which  
29 is the way that the one in Louisiana works.

30  
31 I just know there are large, large schools, and the fish  
32 spotters in the menhaden industry see enormous schools of big  
33 redfish swimming the Gulf of Mexico off of Louisiana and  
34 Mississippi and Texas, and I would recommend that, some way or  
35 another, and I think it would behoove us all to at look at this  
36 resource with some more detail.

37  
38 Yes, I agree with Roy that it probably is helping some with the  
39 abundance of the resource in the Gulf states, in the inshore  
40 waters, where most of the redfish are being caught by the  
41 recreational people, but, to not have any knowledge, and we just  
42 cannot assume that that is the right way to manage this  
43 resource.

44  
45 I think we need to do a stock assessment and see how big the  
46 stock is, and we know all that we can harvest of the resource,  
47 but I just think that we're hiding our faces here a little bit,  
48 just because this was placed on the no-fishing list years and

1 years and years ago, and I don't know how long it was, but I  
2 think it was the wrong way to do it. The resource is there, and  
3 it should be utilized to the best of the ability for the people  
4 of the nation. Thank you.

5  
6 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** Thank you, Mr. Swindell. I think we'll go  
7 ahead now to Ms. Bosarge.

8  
9 **MS. BOSARGE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Ed said a little bit of  
10 what I was going to say, and I will mention one more port, port  
11 of call, and Pascagoula also some vessels that are purse seine  
12 vessels, and Pascagoula also has a National Marine Fisheries  
13 Science lab located in it, and so that may be logistically a  
14 viable spot for that research to take place, but I will say  
15 that, if that research is going to take place with that gear  
16 type, which I understand what Dr. Porch is saying, that you need  
17 to compare apples-to-apples, as far as the year classes and what  
18 age structure looks like in that offshore population.

19  
20 The last real hard data that we had on that was when those fish  
21 were being collected in that purse seine fishery, and so, to  
22 compare to that, you need to collect them in that same fashion  
23 again, to really be able to understand what changes may have  
24 transpired, based on the way that that fishery is prosecuted  
25 now, the inshore fishery that is.

26  
27 I will say this, that I believe the scientists that want to  
28 conduct that research will have to reach out to the industry.  
29 It probably will not happen vice versa, just because it is a  
30 very politically-charged topic, and so I hope that will happen,  
31 if for no other reason than we need a stock assessment on that  
32 offshore population for the states, so they can understand the  
33 health of that overall stock.

34  
35 I know they do some things on the statewide level, state-by-  
36 state, but we need to see what the whole stock is, and it's one  
37 big stock, and we need to understand what it looks like and if  
38 it's healthy, regardless of whether we open any federal fishing,  
39 which that's probably a long shot, but we need to know what it  
40 looks like from a science perspective, to make sure that even  
41 the inshore fishing is sustainable.

42  
43 **CHAIRMAN FRAZER:** Thank you, Ms. Bosarge. Some really good  
44 discussion surrounding red drum, and so I think, certainly  
45 before the next council meeting, and there's a number of folks  
46 on this call, staff, that can round up some information that  
47 would allow us to kind of get an update on the latest data, the  
48 science, as it relates to red drum.

1  
2 I do know that, in Florida, there's a number of folks that are  
3 interested in doing that research, and they have reached out to  
4 the fishermen in Apalachicola Bay, Ed, and so there are other  
5 opportunities, and so we'll try to get an update, again, on the  
6 status of the research as it relates to that species for the  
7 next meeting.

8  
9 In the short-term, I'm going to try to adhere as close as I can  
10 to the schedule, and so, if there's not any other questions with  
11 regard to the schedule itself, is there any other business to  
12 come before the committee? Seeing none, we will adjourn the  
13 SEDAR Committee.

14  
15 (Whereupon, the meeting adjourned on June 17, 2020.)

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17 - - -  
18