

**Shrimp Committee Report
April 4, 2022
Leann Bosarge, Chair**

The Committee adopted the agenda (**Tab D, No. 1**) with Agenda Item VIII moved to follow Agenda Item V and the addition of Southern Shrimp Alliance Scholarship Information under Other Business. The Committee then approved the minutes (**Tab D, No. 2**) of the January 2022 meeting as written.

Biological Review of the Texas Closure (Tab D, No. 4)

Southeast Fisheries Science Center (SEFSC) staff presented on the biological review of the Texas closure, as seen in Tab D, No. 4. Staff conveyed to the Council that the Shrimp Advisory Panel (AP) made a motion in support of continuing the Texas Federal Closure in 2022.

The Committee recommends, and I so move, to request NMFS to continue with the Texas Federal Closure in the coming year in conjunction with the state of Texas Closure in 2022.

Motion carried unanimously.

Update on Current Vessel Position Data Collection (Tab D, No. 5)

SEFSC staff presented an update on the collection of current electronic logbook (ELB) data for the federally permitted Gulf shrimp industry, as seen in Tab D, No. 5. A Committee member asked about reporting requirements and the impacts on permit renewal if Secure Digital (SD) cards aren't returned. Southeast Regional Office (SERO) staff stated that permit holders have to comply with electronic reporting as required by the Science and Research Director, and the Council could refer to those regulations. SERO staff noted that permits are renewed annually, so a fair amount of time could pass before late SD cards are returned. SEFSC staff responded that SD cards are a short-term solution, but any efforts to increase the return rates would be welcome. A Committee member noted that outreach efforts are needed to increase the return rates of SD cards and that the Council's Outreach and Educational Technical Committee may be a good starting point as this group includes membership from both Sea Grant and state agency staff. The suggestion was also made to include the NOAA Gear Monitoring team, which works with the shrimp industry on turtle excluder devices and has familiarity with members of the industry. SERO staff recommended consideration of tailored outreach with the Vietnamese shrimping community in the Gulf. A Committee member asked for, and received, clarification on the process for returning the SD cards. It was stated that more urgency is needed in the communication on the return of the SD cards beyond the original and reminder letters mailed to Gulf shrimp moratorium permit holders selected to participate in the cellular ELB program.

The Committee recommends, and I so move, to recommend that the Council request staff work with the Outreach and Education Technical Committee to identify the best process for conveying the importance of recovery of Secure Digital (SD) cards to Gulf of Mexico federal shrimp permit holders that have been selected by the Science and Research Director to report vessel position data. Once a notification process for shrimp permit holders is identified, letters to NMFS Fisheries Statistics Division should be sent emphasizing the importance of recovery of SD cards on Gulf of Mexico shrimp vessels and the efforts that have been identified to improve this outreach effort.

Motion carried unanimously.

SSC Recommendations on Development and Process of Using Empirical Dynamic Models on Brown and White Shrimp (Tab B, No. 7)

The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) Chair presented on SSC discussions on the development and process of using empirical dynamic models (EDMs) on brown and white shrimp. He noted the SSC recommended running simple biomass models for comparison with EDM results. Staff explained that the Shrimp AP had questions about the EDMs, including the pooling of data across certain statistical zones, and had made a motion for the SEFSC to formally include appropriate SSC members, Council staff, and shrimp industry representatives in development of the EDMs. The Shrimp AP Chair shared that he also had questions and concerns about the EDMs being used for brown and white shrimp and fully supported the AP's motion. A Committee member commented that this would be an opportunity to combine applied knowledge of the fishery with scientific knowledge related to these shrimp models. SEFSC staff noted that the process of using EDMs for management advice has not been outlined yet, but he is supportive of the AP's motion. A Committee member emphasized that this would be a good opportunity for collaborative work.

The Committee recommends, and I so move, to convey to the SEFSC the support of the formal inclusion of the appropriate SSC members, Council staff, and shrimp industry representatives in the development of the shrimp EDMs outside of formal SSC review and prior to the SEDAR research track.

Motion carried unanimously.

The three remaining agenda items [Summary of the March 2022 Shrimp Advisory Panel Meeting (Tab D, No. 6); Update on Council Request for Proposals to Address Expanded Sampling of the Fleet for Effort Monitoring in the Gulf Shrimp Industry; Other Business – Southern Shrimp Alliance Scholarship Information] will be covered in Full Council.

Mr. Chair, this concludes my report.