

Revised SEDAR Committee Summary
October 22, 2018
Dr. Thomas Frazer, Chair

SEDAR Steering Committee Summary

Staff summarized the September 2018 webinar meeting of the SEDAR Steering Committee. The SEDAR Steering Committee discussed the ongoing MRIP calibration efforts, and the issues inherent with comparing the new MRIP effort estimation methods against both the old method and those methods being employed by the individual Gulf states. Generally, the new Fishing Effort Survey (FES) is estimating an approximate two-fold increase in recreational fishing effort in recent years. However, the adjustment of the FES against the old MRIP effort survey is attenuated with time, meaning that the old and new methods have more similar values at the beginning of the time series in 1981. The ability to convert between the old and new MRIP effort estimates has been demonstrated; however, methods for converting the FES and the Gulf state surveys have not yet been developed and/or finalized.

SEDAR Schedule

Staff reviewed modifications to the SEDAR stock assessment schedule. The terminal year for the 2020 operational assessment for greater amberjack was changed to 2017 to exclude the recent change in the recreational fishing year. Committee members thought the inclusion of 2018 data should be attempted and the SEFSC concurred. Staff will notify the SEFSC and SEDAR staff of this request.

The Committee discussed whether to proceed with the MRIP-Lite update assessments. Some Council members suggested waiting to make a decision until after receiving the presentation on the MRIP calibration efforts in the Data Collection Committee. Foregoing the MRIP calibration update assessments will alleviate some of the burden on the remainder of the 2018 and 2019 assessment schedule. Foregoing these assessments is the recommendation of the Gulf SSC. New MRIP data would then be considered during the next scheduled assessment for each species. Unfortunately, the decision to remove the MRIP calibration update assessments does not allow for another assessment to be moved up into 2019.

Scope of Work for 2020 Gag and Greater Amberjack Operational Assessments

The SSC representative reviewed the scope of work for the 2020 operational assessments for gag and greater amberjack, which is the precursor to the final terms of reference. Reference points for gag will include spawning stock biomass estimates determined for females-only and sexes-combined, as was done in the previous SEDAR assessment (SEDAR 33). Dr. Porch reminded the Committee that adding too many items to the terms of reference of an Operational Assessment may slow down the assessment process. Staff requested a feedback mechanism from the SEFSC to determine if the terms of reference are too exhaustive.

Right-sizing Stock Assessments

The SSC representative discussed the SEFSC effort to “right-size” stock assessment models with the data available for a given species. This effort recognizes that the quantity and quality of data available for a stock assessment can vary widely among managed species, and this effort may help realize increases in assessment quality and throughput. “Right-sizing” will be achieved through stock assessment prioritization, stock assessment classification, and assessment gap analysis. The SEFSC has invested in new technology and automation to realize efficiency gains despite level funding, with the ultimate goal of doubling the current assessment capacity in the future.

This concludes my report.