

GULF OF MEXICO FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES COMMITTEE

Hyatt Centric New Orleans, Louisiana

January 30, 2024

VOTING MEMBERS

- 10 C.J. Sweetman (designee for Jessica McCawley).....Florida
- 11 Kesley Banks.....Texas
- 12 Susan Boggs.....Alabama
- 13 Billy Broussard.....Louisiana
- 14 Dale Diaz.....Mississippi
- 15 Tom Frazer.....Florida
- 16 Bob Gill.....Florida
- 17 Michael McDermott.....Mississippi
- 18 Anthony Overton.....Alabama
- 19 Chris Schieble (designee for Ryan Montegut).....Louisiana
- 20 Andy Strelcheck.....NMFS
- 21 Troy Williamson.....Texas

NON-VOTING MEMBERS

- 24 Kevin Anson (designee for Scott Bannon).....Alabama
- 25 Dave Donaldson.....GSMFC
- 26 J.D. Dugas.....Louisiana
- 27 Dakus Geeslin (designee for Robin Riechers).....Texas
- 28 Joe Spraggins.....Mississippi
- 29 Ed Walker.....Florida

STAFF

- 32 Max Birdsong.....Social Scientist
- 33 Assane Diagne.....Economist
- 34 Matt Freeman.....Economist
- 35 John Froeschke.....Deputy Director
- 36 Beth Hager.....Administrative Officer
- 37 Lisa Hollensead.....Fishery Biologist
- 38 Mara Levy.....NOAA General Counsel
- 39 Natasha Mendez-Ferrer.....Fishery Biologist
- 40 Emily Muehlstein.....Public Information Officer
- 41 Ryan Rindone.....Lead Fishery Biologist/SEDAR Liaison
- 42 Bernadine Roy.....Office Manager
- 43 Carrie Simmons.....Executive Director
- 44 Camilla Shireman.....Administrative & Communications Assistant
- 45 Carly Somerset.....Fisheries Outreach Specialist

OTHER PARTICIPANTS

- 48 Richard Cody.....NOAA OST
- 49 Alicia Gray.....NOAA

1 Kerry Marhefka.....SAFMC
2 Jessica Stephen.....NOAA
3 John Walter.....SEFSC

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TABLE OF MOTIONS

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1 The Sustainable Fisheries Committee of the Gulf of Mexico
2 Fishery Management Council convened at The Hyatt Centric, French
3 Quarter in New Orleans, Louisiana on Tuesday afternoon, January
4 30, 2024, and was called to order by Chairman C.J. Sweetman.

5
6 **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**
7 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
8 **ACTION GUIDE AND NEXT STEPS**
9

10 **CHAIRMAN C.J. SWEETMAN:** We're going to bring the Sustainable
11 Fisheries Committee to order here. The members on this
12 committee are myself, Mr. Diaz as Vice Chair, Mr. Schieble, Ms.
13 Boggs, Mr. Broussard, Dr. Frazer, Mr. Gill, Mr. McDermott, Dr.
14 Overton, Mr. Strelcheck, and Mr. Williamson.

15
16 The first action that we have on the agenda is to adopt the
17 agenda. Are there any changes to the agenda? I am not seeing
18 any. Are there any objections to moving forward with the
19 adoption of the agenda? Not seeing any, okay, and the agenda
20 has been adopted.

21
22 The next action item is Approval of the August 2023 Meeting
23 Minutes. Are there any modifications to those meeting minutes?
24 Not seeing any, are there any objections for approval of the
25 August 2023 meeting minutes? Not seeing any, okay, and the 2023
26 minutes have been approved. The next step here will be to walk
27 through the action guide and next steps, and I will -- That's
28 Tab E, Number 3, and I will pass it over to Dr. Diagne.

29
30 **DR. ASSANE DIAGNE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The first item to be
31 discussed here is allocations and the allocation review policy.
32 Staff will give a presentation on allocation reviews and
33 allocation amendments, and we will also discuss start dates for
34 initial allocation reviews, as set in the council's allocation
35 review guidelines.

36
37 The presentation will also discuss allocation amendments that
38 were already completed or are planned in ongoing amendments with
39 allocation reviews. Allocation-related motions approved by the
40 council will be discussed, and a proposed revised schedule to
41 conduct allocation reviews will be proposed. The committee
42 should review the information presented, ask questions, as
43 needed, and, if warranted, the committee should approve an
44 updated review schedule and discuss whether the council should
45 send a letter to National Marine Fisheries Service indicating
46 changes to the allocation review schedule.

47
48 **CHAIRMAN SWEETMAN:** Okay. Thank you, Dr. Diagne. I think we

1 will move right into the next agenda item, Agenda Item IV, Tab
2 E, Number 4, and back over to you, Dr. Diagne.

3
4 **ALLOCATIONS AND ALLOCATION REVIEW POLICY**
5

6 **DR. DIAGNE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. In this presentation, I will
7 talk about the start dates for the initial allocation reviews
8 that are in the review guidelines and briefly list the
9 amendments including allocation reviews that were already
10 completed, and I will discuss ongoing amendments including
11 allocation reviews and talk about allocation-related council
12 motions, and, finally, discuss a proposed allocation review
13 timeline, a revised one.

14
15 First, in our allocation review guidelines, these are the timing
16 of those that were picked, and, also, on the second column, the
17 first review, or the initial review at least, the expected
18 dates, and so they range from April of 2023 to April of 2026,
19 but, in the interim, the council has completed several
20 allocation/reallocation amendments, and those amendments did
21 include a full allocation review.

22
23 Some examples would be Reef Fish Amendment 53, which considered
24 the allocation of red grouper between the commercial and
25 recreational sectors, and the final rule was effective June 1 of
26 2022. Given the time interval selected, the next review should
27 be June 1, 2029, and that is, of course, at the latest. Given
28 that the stock assessments and other changes may come, the
29 council may elect to initiate another amendment, or review, as
30 necessary.

31
32 Reef Fish Amendment 54 looked at allocation of greater amberjack
33 between the recreational and commercial sectors, and the final
34 rule for that became effective in July of 2023, and, again,
35 given the time interval selected, the next review should happen,
36 at the latest, by July of 2029, at least be initiated by then.

37
38 Other completed amendments with allocation reviews include Reef
39 Fish Amendment 56, and, here, just as a placeholder, we did put
40 February of 2024, given that the amendment has been recently
41 approved, but, obviously, we do not know the exact date when it
42 is going to be effective. Instead of putting "pending", we just
43 used let's say next month, or this month, rather, as a
44 placeholder, and to show the subsequent review, at the latest,
45 would start let's say seven years, you know, after that, and so
46 meaning sometime in 2031.

47
48 For CMP Amendment 33, the council went through the amendment

1 process, including the allocation review, and decided to
2 maintain the existing commercial and recreational allocation for
3 king mackerel. That decision was made in October of 2022.
4 Therefore, fast-forward six years, and the next review, at the
5 latest, should be initiated by 2028, October of that year.

6
7 We have several amendments including allocation reviews under
8 development, and that would include the South Atlantic Amendment
9 44 and Gulf Reef Fish 55, which looks at an allocation of
10 yellowtail snapper between the South Atlantic and Gulf Council,
11 and, here, the council did approve a motion, in October of 2023,
12 October of last year, which is to recommend moving Snapper
13 Grouper 44/Reef Fish 55 to Priority Level C and continue to work
14 on this document after the completion of the updated SEDAR 64,
15 and this motion was approved in October, as I said, and it also
16 requested that the South Atlantic also considers the same, and
17 so, essentially, this is going to be moving, I guess, at a much,
18 much lower speed.

19
20 We also have Reef Fish Amendment 58, which looks at the
21 allocation and allocation review of other shallow water grouper
22 between the commercial and recreational sector, and, I guess,
23 work on this amendment is ongoing.

24
25 Just a special mention regarding red snapper allocation reviews,
26 and we've discussed this during the update provided, and I
27 believe it was in October of last year, and, essentially, the
28 allocation of red snapper follows a three-tiered process by
29 which essentially the stock ACL is first allocated between the
30 recreational and commercial sectors, and, from there, the
31 recreational ACL is first allocated between the federal for-hire
32 component and the private angling component, and, finally, the
33 private angling component is apportioned between the five Gulf
34 states.

35
36 Regarding the last allocation mentioned, the council did approve
37 a motion to direct staff to begin work on a plan amendment to
38 work on updating the state private sector allocations, private
39 recreational sector that is. The indication is that the state
40 directors plan to meet to discuss alternative allocations
41 between the states, but, to my knowledge, I guess that plan is
42 still ongoing, and I'm not sure that there is a firm date for
43 that meeting, and those discussions, to begin.

44
45 Now, in October, the council did approve a motion to delay any
46 changes in allocation between the commercial and recreational
47 sectors of any Gulf fishery resources that are subject to MRIP-
48 FES until such time as the 2024 pilot study has been completed

1 and deemed consistent with BSIA by the Gulf SSC. In large part,
2 I mean, today's discussion -- The impetus for it is this motion
3 that the council passed.

4
5 If we look back at our initial schedule to conduct allocation
6 reviews, but perhaps expand the rows, because some of the
7 allocations have already been completed, then we can see that,
8 for example, for the red snapper ACL allocation between the
9 private angling and the federal for-hire component, although we
10 started preliminary work, we stopped, given the data challenges,
11 because, essentially, to-date, recreational landings are not yet
12 available, if I could say it that way.

13
14 Under the revised schedule, given the ongoing pilot study, let's
15 say, I guess, a hopeful estimate would be that, by the beginning
16 of 2027, everything would be done, and all the conclusions would
17 be, I guess, drawn, and updated datasets would be available, and
18 so we took January of 2027 as our starting date for any new
19 allocation, or allocation review, and, essentially, we staggered
20 the allocation reviews between January and, I believe, October,
21 looking at the schedule.

22
23 For the first one, we went with August, and the allocation
24 between the Gulf States, because it usually follows the
25 apportionment between the private angling and the federal for-
26 hire, we put that next, and that is why we put October for that
27 one. For gray triggerfish, the allocation between the
28 recreational and commercial sector, on the schedule, the date is
29 April of 2025, and, again, given the ongoing pilot study, and
30 the potential implications, we went ahead and pushed the start
31 date to January of 2027.

32
33 For greater amberjack, there is no issue there, because the
34 council has already completed an allocation review, and
35 reallocated resources, and so the next allocation review is
36 going to be scheduled for 2029, I mean to be started in July of
37 that year. For king mackerel, the council went through the
38 exercise, and maintained status quo, and so, for there also,
39 there is no delay needed, and the next review, and potential
40 reallocation, would be in 2028.

41
42 The recreational and commercial allocation of red snapper
43 resources, that is scheduled to begin in 2026, and so, assuming
44 that by January 1 of 2027, we will have all the information we
45 need, but we did put this in April, just in keeping with the
46 starting months, which was April of 2026, and we just moved it
47 by one year, and, if we look at the red snapper allocations,
48 then we will start with the rec and commercial allocation, and

1 that is going to be in April, and then move to the rec versus
2 the for-hire, and then, finally, finish with the states, just as
3 the tier would follow when it comes to allocating the red
4 snapper resources.

5
6 For gag, as I mentioned earlier, we just picked February as a
7 placeholder, given that Amendment 56 has recently been approved,
8 but, whenever we get the implementation date, we will change
9 that here, to reflect that, and so we don't have any delay
10 needed, because then we will just move seven years from the
11 implementation date, and that is presumably sometime in 2031.

12
13 Red grouper, I mean, barring some other changes, I guess,
14 essentially, we'll have an amendment that was completed and
15 approved, and so, seven years from that final date becoming
16 effective, the next review should start.

17
18 Shallow-water grouper, IFQ aggregate, that -- We have an ongoing
19 amendment for that, and, for the deepwater grouper, as well as
20 the tilefish, that was supposed to be initiated in 2026, and,
21 again, we would push that until January of 2028, and the reason
22 for that is that we already have several allocations to be
23 initiated in 2027, and so all the way through October of 2027,
24 and so this one started in January.

25
26 For the allocation between the South Atlantic and the Gulf
27 Council, we have an ongoing amendment, an ongoing action, and,
28 finally, for black grouper and mutton snapper, between the two
29 councils, the review was scheduled to start in 2026, but we are
30 going to -- We propose to revise it and push it to April,
31 because we already have a review scheduled to start in January
32 of 2028, and so this is a tentative revised schedule that
33 attempts to account for the ongoing pilot study, which
34 presumably is going to affect all of these allocation reviews,
35 and subsequent reallocation amendments, if the council elects to
36 go that far.

37
38 All of these, I guess, revised proposed dates are subject to the
39 council's approval and could be modified as the council sees
40 fit, and I believe this is the last slide that I have, and I
41 will try to answer questions, if you have any. Thank you.

42
43 **CHAIRMAN SWEETMAN:** Okay. Thank you, Dr. Diagne. Any questions
44 for Dr. Diagne, or comments, about the presentation? Mr. Diaz.

45
46 **MR. DALE DIAZ:** Yes, I have a comment that might spark some
47 discussion, and so the motion that the council passed in October
48 was the council would delay any changes in allocations between

1 commercial and recreational sectors of any Gulf fishery
2 resources that are subject to MRIP-FES, until such time as the
3 2024 pilot study has been completed and deemed consistent with
4 BSIA, and so the motion specifically addresses commercial and
5 recreational allocations.

6
7 Some of these are not between commercial and recreational, and
8 they're just between recreational and recreational, and I don't
9 know if the intention of that motion was to put everything off,
10 or to just put off commercial and recreational, and so I think
11 some discussion might be good to have at the table, and see
12 where people stand on that. Thank you.

13
14 **CHAIRMAN SWEETMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Diaz. Good point. Dr.
15 Diagne.

16
17 **DR. DIAGNE:** Yes, Mr. Diaz. Absolutely, and the motion referred
18 to commercial and recreational, but, to the extent that let's
19 say recreational data will have some bearing, let's say
20 downstream, when it comes to other allocations, that is why we
21 are making the proposed revision, and all of those are included,
22 because, if we don't know how let's say the recreational data
23 will be revised, or adjusted, as the case may be, then we don't
24 have really, I guess, that clarity, when it comes to -- For
25 example, if I take red snapper, the commercial versus rec
26 allocation, and, to the extent that you have an issue there,
27 when you move to the next tier, which is within the recreational
28 sector, but it is the private anglers and the for-hire, then
29 whatever issue you had up top is going to affect that second
30 tier allocation.

31
32 From there, to the extent that that is not clear, it is going
33 to, I guess, add challenges to the discussion, when it comes to
34 the allocation of the private angling proportion between the
35 five states, and so that was the thinking. We essentially took
36 this, but looked at everywhere where recreational data, subject
37 to potential adjustment, may have an effect downstream, if that
38 makes sense.

39
40 **CHAIRMAN SWEETMAN:** Yes, and so it certainly seems like some
41 potential downstream effects that was incorporated into this
42 that could impact, or directly related to the motion that was
43 passed at the last meeting. Yes, Ms. Boggs.

44
45 **MS. SUSAN BOGGS:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. So, we have a one-year
46 pilot study for FES, and there's been a lot of talk, and so,
47 once 2024 is over, how long does it then take the agency, the
48 Office of Science and Technology, to verify this information and

1 determine if it's best scientific information available? That's
2 my question.
3
4 **CHAIRMAN SWEETMAN:** I think I might look towards the agency over
5 there. Mr. Strelcheck.
6
7 **MR. ANDY STRELCHECK:** I would have to go back and talk to Evan
8 Howell, but my recollection is that there would be pilot study
9 findings that would be made available sometime in the first half
10 of 2025, but I want to confirm that timing.
11
12 **CHAIRMAN SWEETMAN:** Okay. I've got Mr. Gill and then Mr. Anson.
13
14 **MR. BOB GILL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and so, relative to
15 yellowtail, and I would ask if Kerry would update us on what the
16 South Atlantic Council did to our recommendation.
17
18 **MS. KERRY MARHEFKA:** I'm sorry that I had to step out of the
19 room to take a phone call for a second, but I assume you mean
20 with regard to the allocation and the FES with yellowtail?
21
22 **MR. GILL:** Well, the question of moving it to Level C, for
23 example.
24
25 **MS. MARHEFKA:** Level C? If I hadn't stepped out, I would
26 probably be more with it. C.J. can answer it.
27
28 **CHAIRMAN SWEETMAN:** So they don't have that same tier structure
29 that we have on the Gulf here in the South Atlantic, but, yes,
30 they have moved forward along the same lines that we have, to
31 update the assessment, and then, after that assessment is
32 updated, we will look at this all again.
33
34 Okay, and so I think -- Any more questions here? I know Dr.
35 Diagne is potentially looking for approval of this allocation
36 review schedule, and potentially to pass a letter to NMFS along
37 those lines, and so I'm wondering if the committee is interested
38 in something along those lines. Mr. Gill.
39
40 **MR. GILL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. **I'm not going to include**
41 **the letter, and I'm not sure that needs to be part of this**
42 **particular motion, but I would like to move that we recommend**
43 **council approval of the updated allocation review schedule.**
44
45 **CHAIRMAN SWEETMAN:** Okay. We've got a motion on the board.
46 We'll wait for Bernie to get that up there. Okay. Do we have a
47 second to the motion? Mr. Broussard. Any further discussion?
48 Ms. Boggs.

1
2 **MS. BOGGS:** So some of these that we are, and I'm pretty sure I
3 know the answer to this, that we are putting on hold, because of
4 FES, and, if we get the findings from FES, and the world is back
5 perfect in June of 2025, does that not mean that some of these
6 could be moved up sooner? Where did Assane go?

7
8 **CHAIRMAN SWEETMAN:** Dr. Simmons.

9
10 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CARRIE SIMMONS:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I
11 think the pilot wasn't going to be complete until 2026, but,
12 like Mr. Strelcheck said, we could go back and look at the
13 information that was provided from S&T.

14
15 **CHAIRMAN SWEETMAN:** To that point, Dr. Porch?

16
17 **DR. CLAY PORCH:** Dr. Cody indicated that he had his hand up to
18 answer that.

19
20 **CHAIRMAN SWEETMAN:** Dr. Cody.

21
22 **DR. RICHARD CODY:** The 2024 study, that will be available on
23 basically the same schedule as the current FES, and so the
24 estimates will be available around April of 2025, and we will be
25 working on the calibration around the same time. The plan is to
26 put it through a peer review once we get that done, and so the
27 peer review probably would occur in the second-half of 2025, and
28 the hope would be to complete that peer review and address
29 recommendations by the end of 2025.

30
31 What that means though is that we don't have -- We won't have --
32 The earliest we could have the new survey instituted, or
33 implemented, would be 2026, and there would be a gap year for
34 2025 for the new methodology. I mean, that could be covered
35 with the calibration, but that's the schedule, or the planned
36 schedule.

37
38 **CHAIRMAN SWEETMAN:** Okay. Thank you, Dr. Cody. Anything else?
39 Mr. Strelcheck.

40
41 **MR. STRELCHECK:** So one other thing that I guess I wanted to
42 talk about, is we received a letter from a number of
43 recreational organizations, and they were sharing concerns about
44 us tabling allocation for a period of time, but the presumption
45 there was that we would be moving forward with advice to change
46 catch limits based on FES, you know, data, but my understanding,
47 and correct me if I'm wrong, is there is nothing before the
48 council that would alter the catch limits, in FES units, before

1 we also then consider reallocating post-pilot.
2
3 Shallow-water grouper may be the only question-mark, but I just
4 wanted to confirm that, because other species will be moved to
5 SRFS units, like yellowtail and red grouper, but is there
6 anything before the council where we would be considering catch
7 limit advice in FES, but not considering reallocation in the
8 near-term?
9
10 **CHAIRMAN SWEETMAN:** That's a good question, and I don't think
11 so. Dr. Simmons.
12
13 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIMMONS:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and so we
14 have a deepwater grouper, and we have a yellowedge grouper
15 assessment that is going to be discussed at the February SSC
16 meeting, and we're also going to discuss the other species in
17 that complex that I believe have been calibrated to the FES
18 numbers, and so, I mean, that is another potential management
19 change the council may have to consider as we work through the
20 deepwater and shallow-water grouper complexes.
21
22 **CHAIRMAN SWEETMAN:** Okay. Any other comments? I am not seeing
23 any. Okay, and so I think we'll vote on this motion here. **Are**
24 **there any opposed to the motion?**
25
26 **MS. BOGGS:** I would like to abstain.
27
28 **CHAIRMAN SWEETMAN:** Okay. **The motion passes with one**
29 **abstention.** Dr. Diagne, did you need anything else here?
30
31 **DR. DIAGNE:** Perhaps if the committee would make a
32 recommendation regarding a potential letter that we would write
33 to the agency, given that, when we approved the initial start
34 dates, we did send a letter, and so, if the committee feels that
35 we should send a letter updating -- With the updated schedule to
36 the agency, just let us know.
37
38 **CHAIRMAN SWEETMAN:** That seems like a general housekeeping item
39 along those lines there too, and so I would look to the
40 committee, to see if there's any recommendation to move that
41 forward, to send a letter to NMFS. Yes, Mr. Gill.
42
43 **MR. GILL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and so, in that regard,
44 there is no requirement, in this whole process, to send them
45 one, and so it's a complementary here's what we're doing, and
46 we're updating, and I don't see a problem one way or the other,
47 but I also don't see the need for a motion from the council.
48

1 **CHAIRMAN SWEETMAN:** Dr. Diagne.
2
3 **DR. DIAGNE:** I was not suggesting that it's a motion or
4 anything, and it's just like to let us know, and I don't know
5 whether this is a requirement. What I know is that, initially,
6 when we did it, that was a requirement. We did it, and we did
7 send a letter including the original schedule, or the initial
8 one, and so, to the extent that, I mean, we have the latitude of
9 sending the letter, then, yes, no motion is needed, but we just
10 don't want to send letters without essentially the committee,
11 and the council, letting us know.
12
13 **CHAIRMAN SWEETMAN:** Mr. Gill.
14
15 **MR. GILL:** So I view it as it's just an additional workload for
16 staff, and it's not really appropriate. The agency knows what
17 we're doing, and so we don't need to send a letter.
18
19 **CHAIRMAN SWEETMAN:** I see Mara. Go ahead.
20
21 **MS. MARA LEVY:** I mean, I guess I'm just going to disagree a
22 little bit. I mean, originally, it was a -- The council was
23 required to go through this process to develop this review, and
24 this timeline, and provide the agency with what they were doing,
25 and now you're updating it, and so I would just provide the
26 agency with what you're doing, and that you're changing it, and
27 why you're changing it, right, so that we have closed that loop.
28
29 **CHAIRMAN SWEETMAN:** Dr. Frazer.
30
31 **DR. TOM FRAZER:** I don't want to create more work for anybody
32 either, but we've spent a lot of time talking about effective
33 communication and making sure that we do things well, and, Dr.
34 Diagne, I would say it's in the best interest of all parties
35 involved if you let people know what's going on.
36
37 **CHAIRMAN SWEETMAN:** Okay. Any more discussion on that? I kind
38 of agree with Dr. Frazer that moving forward with that -- Okay,
39 and so you've got enough direction there, Dr. Diagne?
40
41 **DR. DIAGNE:** Absolutely. Yes. Thank you.
42
43 **CHAIRMAN SWEETMAN:** Okay. I appreciate that. Thank you for
44 walking us through that, Dr. Diagne. I think that concludes
45 that agenda item, and so we can move into Agenda Item VI, and,
46 Dr. Diagne, maybe you can go through the action guide for this
47 one, and then we'll pass it over to Mr. Rindone.
48

1 **SUMMARY OF SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE (SSC) DISCUSSION**
2 **ON INCORPORATING SOCIAL SCIENCE THEORY AND METHODS IN ECOSYSTEM**
3 **ASSESSMENTS**
4

5 **DR. DIAGNE:** For the last item before Other Business on the
6 Sustainable Fisheries agenda, this is a summary of SSC
7 discussions on incorporating social science theory and methods
8 into ecosystem assessments.
9

10 Back in September of 2023, Dr. Griffith, who is a member of the
11 SSC, gave a presentation to the SSC, and this item here is just
12 for information, for your information, and, when the SSC
13 discussed this, their discussion included examples related to
14 social data and methods, such as conventional methods that
15 include interviews, focus groups and surveys, and other
16 approaches, which included cultural consensus analysis and the
17 conversion of qualitative data into qualitative metrics, using
18 some type of scale, for example, and to create indices, such as
19 vulnerability indices, as an example. The committee should
20 discuss the information presented and ask questions, as needed,
21 but no further action is needed on this particular item.
22

23 **CHAIRMAN SWEETMAN:** Okay. Thank you, Dr. Diagne, and so I think
24 we can move into Agenda Item V, which is Tab -- Or V, sorry, and
25 it's Tab B, Number 6, which is the summary of the SSC discussion
26 of incorporating social science theory and methods into
27 ecosystem assessments. Mr. Rindone.
28

29 **MR. RYAN RINDONE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Like Assane said, Dr.
30 Griffith gave this presentation on incorporating social science
31 and methods into ecosystem assessments at the September 2023
32 meeting. This was something that Dr. Griffith and his team have
33 been working on to prepare for presenting to the SSC for a
34 little while, and it's in response to a lot of requests from the
35 social and economic components of the SSC talking about
36 different ways to try to incorporate facets of their disciplines
37 into the stock assessment process and into management.
38

39 Dr. Griffith had stated that the increased relevance of these
40 integrated approaches to fisheries management is heightening the
41 importance of incorporating theory, and methods, from
42 disciplines like anthropology, economics, and sociology. He
43 noted that systems are rarely as closed as they are represented
44 to be in most theory models, and he discussed, and provided,
45 some examples related to social science data and methods, noting
46 that the most helpful social science theories are those that
47 place human behaviors in wider social and cultural contexts,
48 just like ecologists will place fish and trophic exchanges into

1 wider ecosystem analyses.

2
3 Dr. Griffith said that timely and systematic data collection
4 programs and syntheses of the data collected would be very
5 informative, and he gave some examples like interviews with
6 fishermen and their inputs relative to fishing effort and area
7 fished, and the constraints relative to their ability to fish
8 could be utilized to inform stock assessments, and so we could
9 use that for like spatial effort prioritization and things like
10 that.

11
12 SSC members noted that social science data, and analyses, could
13 be more prominently included in the council process, but that
14 social information is not routinely collected in some regions,
15 and that more funding and support for this kind of work was
16 needed to expand on it. The SSC also emphasized the need to
17 consider inputs from economics, and other social disciplines,
18 with historic analyses able to inform future behaviors.

19
20 The SSC noted that long-term funding opportunities are usually
21 limited though, because research funding is usually reactive
22 instead of proactive, and so it's based upon what the present
23 need is, and so the SSC noted that challenges were associated
24 with relating some social indices to measurable impacts, like
25 assigning weights to different indices and allocation decision-
26 making, and an SSC member indicated that there are quantitative
27 approaches to developing these indices based on surveys, but
28 noted similar challenges exist when attempting the inclusion of
29 environmental considerations in stock assessments. That was the
30 summary of the summary.

31
32 **CHAIRMAN SWEETMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Rindone. The summary was
33 helpful. Any questions, or comments, along those lines, about
34 this agenda topic here? I mean, we were previously talking,
35 earlier, about how to incorporate some of these metrics into the
36 way that we manage things here, and this is talking about it,
37 and it's not necessarily getting us to where we need to be, I
38 think, but this is a step in that direction, where we could
39 potentially incorporate some new socioeconomic metrics to help
40 us with the management perspective. Any comments from the
41 group, or the committee? We've got a rowdy bunch today. Okay.
42 I am not seeing any.

43
44 All right. Thank you, Mr. Rindone. That will take us into
45 Other Business, of which there was none, but, since we've got
46 some time here, I'll just do another check around the room.
47 Seeing none, okay. Mr. Chair, that will close our Sustainable
48 Fisheries Committee, and I will yield thirty-five minutes back

1 to you.

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3 (Whereupon, the meeting adjourned on January 30, 2024.)

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