



# SEDAR

## *SouthEast Data, Assessment, and Review*

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### SEDAR Steering Committee

October 5- 7, 2010  
Charleston, SC

### FINAL Meeting Summary

1. Agenda Review

The Committee approved the agenda with minor revisions.

2. Approval of Minutes

The Committee approved the meeting summaries from May 2009, February 2010, and June 2010.

3. Activities Update

The Committee was provided an update on ongoing and recently completed SEDAR activities.

4. Budget Report

Bob Mahood provided the Committee an overview of the 2010 budget including expenditures through September 2010.

Supplemental funding related to the Deepwater Horizon event was discussed. The Committee agreed that the funds would be transferred to the Gulf Council to support Gulf SEDAR activities for the next several years, including hiring of a dedicated SEDAR coordinator. This position will be housed at the GMFMC offices. Administrative support for Gulf Council SEDAR projects will be handled by the GMFMC.

Compensation for Council members and stipends for SSC representatives were discussed. The Committee recommended continuing with the current practice of providing member compensation through the SEDAR budget and SSC stipends through each appointing Council directly. Council member compensation may be reconsidered in the future if required to maintain a balanced budget. The Committee agreed that priority should be given to ensuring the appropriate individuals are able to attend SEDAR workshops.

5. Council reports on assessment needs

Each Council discussed their assessment needs for future years. The Committee recommended that other Councils consider applying the approach put forth by the SAFMC to evaluate long-term assessment expectations. It is anticipated that SEFSC and SERO will



use such evaluations to support requests for increased assessment capability and data collection.

#### 6. SEDAR Process

The Committee discussed the SEDAR process at length. Particular focus was given to the recent procedural changes and whether they achieved the desired improvements. It was acknowledged that the process was becoming slow and unmanageable and apparently unable to meet needed assessment production.

A revised process as described in the attached document was developed through these deliberations. The committee directed SEDAR staff to convene a task force to review the changes and further develop a guidance document. The Committee will consider the changes during a planned February 2011 conference call.

The Committee supported revising the types of SEDAR assessments and reducing the number of decisions to be made in follow-up assessments. Holding a workshop to develop frameworks and decisions trees for common issues was suggested as a way of further increasing efficiency.

The Committee supported organizing standing committees, similar to prior assessment panels, to provide participants for SEDAR workshops.

#### 7. Coordination and Communication between SEDAR Staff, Councils, SERO and SEFSC

The committee recommended that communication between SEDAR staff and Councils should be handled through memoranda to improve documentation of requests and administrative actions. Councils were advised to review the written SEDAR approvals process approved by SAFMC and consider adopting a similar policy.

#### 8. SEDAR Guidelines and Policy Documentation

The Committee recommended that the SEDAR guidelines be revised using the bulleted summary format as provided by SEDAR Staff. The guidelines will be revised to reflect procedural changes proposed at this meeting (as discussed in 6 above) and submitted for approval in May 2011.

#### 9. SEDAR Schedule 2011-2015

Planned assessment projects for 2011-2015 are listed in attachment 2. Projects for 2012 and beyond are subject to revision based on workload or developing management issues.

#### 10. Openness and Transparency in SEDAR Workshops and Documentation

The Committee discussed the SEDAR process and the opportunity for public involvement and comment. It was recognized that the process is open and transparent, as all meetings are open to the public and all reports and findings are made available in publicly accessible documents.

The Committee discussed the role of public comment in SEDAR workshops, review workshops in particular. The current policies were reviewed and considered adequate at this time. Staff was directed to provide guidance to Review Workshop chairs that observers are there to observe the proceedings and may be called upon by the panel to answer questions from reviewers. Observers should not make formal statements attempting to sway the

opinions of the reviewers and no formal public comment period will be held during review workshops. Observers will be directed to Council policies on submission of written comments and Council comment opportunities.

The Committee discussed recent comments that workshops and reports are complex, technical, and difficult for the general public to understand. Despite this criticism, the role of SEDAR remains to provide the best available assessments. Assessment science is increasingly complex, especially as scientists attempt to increase realism and expand treatment of known uncertainties. Staff was directed to develop brief overview guides, similar to executive summaries, for each assessment to make them more understandable to the general public.

#### 11. SEDAR Products and Outputs

The Committee recommended that consideration be given to modifying the TORs for assessment and review panels to encourage discussion of overall uncertainty and reduce the focus on a particular assessment configuration. Groups should be encouraged to adopt the principles proposed by the Uncertainty procedures workshop.

#### 12. SEDAR Communication and Dissemination

The Committee supported revising the SEDAR website. Staff will consult with SEFSC website managers and may also consider professional consultants if necessary.

The committee recommended that post-review assessment critiques, comments, and questions be directed to the analytical teams for consideration.

The committee discussed the need to ensure the final assessment findings are clearly listed in the assessment reports, especially when changes are made.

- All draft reports will be clearly labeled as such, using watermarks or headers on each page
- Date stamps will be used in the header or footer to help identify report versions
- A listing of revisions and modifications, especially those that change assessment findings and lead to significant revisions, corrections, or addenda, will be provided at the front of each report and report section.
- Any changes in results, such as correction of errors identified during post-RW reviews by Council or agency staff or SSCs, should be documented in memoranda and provided to SEDR staff for inclusion with the assessment documentation.

The Committee recommended that SEDAR steering committee information be posted to the SEDAR website.

#### 13. Other Business

The Committee discussed assessments submitted from sources outside SEDAR and the associated agencies. There is concern that the need to document, validate, and review such assessments could consume considerable resources at both SEDAR and SEFSC. Therefore, the Committee agreed that a policy should be developed for handling such assessments. Initial guidance for such a policy was provided, that the SSC should provide the first level of review. Non-SEDAR assessments should be presented to the SSC, and the SSC will evaluate their merits and recommend for in-depth review if appropriate.

14. Next Meeting

February 2011 conference call

Meeting: May 2, 2011. 9 am to 5 pm at the Charleston Marriott.

15. Adjourn

This report was approved by the SEDAR Steering Committee, May 2011.