

FINAL
SUMMARY MINUTES

SEDAR STEERING COMMITTEE
NOAA FISHERIES REGIONAL OFFICE
ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA
1 - 5 P.M.
AUGUST 13, 2003

1. INTRODUCTIONS

Roy Crabtree welcomed the group to the regional office. Bob Mahood, serving as chair of the steering committee conducted the meeting. The following SEDAR Steering Committee members were present:

Alex Chester, via videoconference, representing Dr. Nancy Thompson, NMFS SEFSC
Dr. Roy Crabtree, NMFS SERO
Bob Mahood, SAFMC
Wayne Swingle, GMFMC
Graciela Garcia-Moliner representing Miguel Rolon, CFMC
Vince O'Shea, ASMFC
Larry Simpson, GSMFC

The following Guests and/or Designees were present: NOTE: PLEASE DOUBLE CHECK

Gregg Waugh, SAFMC
Rick Leard, GMFMC
Rod Dalton, NMFS
Monica Smit-Brunello, NOAA GC
Mike McLemore, NOAA GC
Jack McGovern, NMFS (Jack - did you get a list of others attending???)

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA - The agenda was approved with two additions under other business (included below).

3. ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED - Bob Mahood and Gregg Waugh presented an overview of material and issues.

A. What should our group be called? (Currently using SEDAR Steering Committee.)

The Committee decided to continue using "SEDAR Steering Committee".

B. SEDAR Steering Committee action on each item using the following documents:
(a) SEDAR Steering Committee Document - dated August 13, 2003
(b) Table with Schedule and Species

The first item discussed under 3B. was FACA concerns. Mike McLemore discussed the issue of FACA when there is a meeting of federal and non-federal participants. He suggested that the Councils bring the SEDAR process under the Magnuson-Stevens Act exemption whereby the Council must appoint a Scientific and Statistical Committee and establish Advisory Panels. Mr. McLemore recommended that the Councils appoint a pool of individuals to serve as their SEDAR Advisory Panel. In addition, all meetings should be noticed in the federal register and allow public input.

The Committee discussed this issue and determined that:

- (i) SEDAR meetings would be noticed and recorded just like other AP meetings. The reports developed after each of the 3 workshops would be used to document conclusions reached instead of minutes;
- (ii) Each Council would appoint a SEDAR Advisory Panel that would serve as a pool from which to select participants for each of the 3 workshops (data, assessment, and review);
- (iii) The SEDAR process would be described and documented. After review and approval by the Steering Committee, the write-up of the process would be distributed to each Council for review and approval.
- (iv) Each of the Steering Committee members will designate who will be their staff person (if not themselves) responsible for ensuring appointments to panels are made and their participants meet deadlines.
- (v) Each State Director will also be asked to designate a person to ensure appointments are made and State participants meet deadlines.
- (vi) Policy decisions, priorities and overall timing will be set by the SEDAR Steering Committee.
- (vii) The committee should meet at least twice per year to set the schedule and review progress: January via video & phone conference call and August face-to-face in conjunction with the MARFIN meeting.

ACTION: SEDAR staff was requested to prepare the document for review and approval by the Steering Committee. Then the revised document would be circulated to the Councils for their review and approval. This would also include each Council establishing a SEDAR AP.

The Committee then discussed each of the issues to be resolved as indicated in the August 13th draft. The discussion jumped from item to item but the are presented in the order shown in the draft document:

ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED

I. PROCESS

- A. Data Workshop - meeting locations are to be specified by the Steering Committee.
- B. Assessment Workshop - will be held at the location of the lead assessment agency. When multiple agencies are involved, the agency with lead responsibility will be designated by the agencies involved working with the Chair of the SEDAR Steering Committee.

C. Review Workshop - held at various locations depending on species. If involve Gulf and South Atlantic species, hold in Florida. Meetings will be held in the Caribbean if species justify?

II. SPINY LOBSTER & HOGFISH

A. The State of Florida has lead responsibility for spiny lobster. Does this assessment need to go through the SEDAR process? If yes, then we would suggest only the review workshop.

The Committee concluded spiny lobster would enter at the review workshop stage and requested SEDAR staff work to ensure the required SFA parameters are provided.

B. Hogfish are included in the Snapper Grouper FMU. Options included in Snapper Grouper Amendment 13B would delegate management to the State of Florida or remove hog snapper from the management unit. We may not need to review this assessment.

During the discussion it became clear that hogfish would remain in the Snapper Grouper and Gulf Reef Fish FMUs. Further, the stock assessment review and implementation of any modification to management should be coordinated between the South Atlantic and Gulf Councils and the State of Florida.

The Committee concluded hogfish would enter at the review workshop stage and requested SEDAR staff coordinate closely with Florida representatives during the review stage.

III. RED SNAPPER

A. The timing for this assessment needs to be finalized.

B. Will Gulf and South Atlantic red snapper assessments be done at the same time and place?

C. Lead responsibility?

Due to the extremely controversial nature of red snapper, the Committee concluded that the assessments would be done separately for Gulf and South Atlantic red snapper. The Atlantic red snapper would be addressed within the “shallow water group” whereas the Gulf red snapper assessment would be conducted as a single species assessment with the NMFS Miami Lab as lead agency. Dates agreed to during the meeting were as follows:

(i) Data Workshop (New Orleans/Miami) - April 19-23, 2004.

(ii) Assessment Workshop (Miami) - July 19-23, 2004.

(iii) Review Workshop (Miami) - September 27 - October 1, 2004.

[Note: these dates were subsequently changes; see the revised schedule for final dates.]

IV. LEAD ASSESSMENT RESPONSIBILITY

A. Resolve lead responsibility for Atlantic, Gulf and Caribbean deepwater species.

B. Resolve for other assessments where species from more than one area are being addressed (e.g., red grouper, scamp & greater amberjack).

Wayne Swingle indicated the Gulf Council does not need any deepwater species assessed at this time given the recently completed yellowedge grouper assessment. The Committee determined that the NMFS Beaufort Lab would have lead responsibility for species being assessed for the SAFMC and the NMFS Miami Lab would have lead for CFMC species.

V. NUMBER OF SPECIES

A. Is it feasible to conduct data, assessment, and/or review workshops for multiple species?

The Committee recognized the demands this places on participants, however, given the limited funding and large assessment demands we have no choice but to conduct assessments for multiple species. This has worked in the SAW/SARC process in the northeast. The Committee did express caution so as not to include an unreasonable number of species.

VI. APPOINTMENTS TO VARIOUS PANELS

A. CIE Reviewers - need to have them appointed much earlier. Note: Questions have been raised about the CIE Reviewer's reports back to CIE; can they be made available?

The Committee discussed this issue and requested that all CIE reports be made available. John Merriner and Alex Chester were to look into this issue and report back to the Committee.

B. All agencies must appoint members by the dates indicated.

The Committee agreed to make appointments in a timely manner.

C. The Councils should no longer participate as review panel members. Since we use the results this creates a potential conflict that we want to avoid.

Vince O'Shea stated some concerns on behalf of ASMFC where they continue to successfully participate as review panel members. Wayne Swingle indicated the Gulf Council staff have not participated as review panel members and they would not in the future. Bob Mahood and Gregg Waugh described how their staff have in the past served on the Mackerel Stock Assessment Panel and on earlier SEDAR Review Panels; however, it was their feeling that this should not be a role of Council staff in the future.

The Committee agreed that Council members and staff should not participate as review panel members.

D. Ensure we have a MRFSS representative at both the data workshop and assessment workshop.

The Committee discussed this issue and agreed that this should be evaluated prior to each round of meetings. If sufficient MRFSS expertise is not present and/or specific MRFSS expertise is needed, then a representative should be requested to attend.

VII. ASMFC & GSMFC

A. Determine how the assessment needs of these two agencies are met.

B. Incorporate involvement of NOAA Fisheries personnel into overall SEDAR planning.

Larry Simpson requested John Carmichael attend their mid October meeting to explain the SEDAR process. It was agreed that John would cover this meeting.

[Note: please check your notes and memories on this discussion.]

The Committee discussed how state only fisheries would be included. Given the limited resources and great need for assessments on species under federal management, it

was agreed that at least initially, SEDAR would focus on species with significant federal management responsibility. Assessments conducted by state scientists or under contract for a state could make use of the Review Workshop process.

The Committee also discussed the involvement of NMFS staff to conduct assessments for ASMFC such as menhaden and croaker. The Committee recommended these requirements be shown in the overall SEDAR process.

VIII. HIGHLY MIGRATORY PELAGICS

- A. Determine how the assessment needs of NOAA Fisheries in the southeast are met.
- B. Incorporate involvement of NOAA Fisheries personnel into overall SEDAR planning.

Alex Chester indicated these species are ICATT related and not included in SEDAR for 2003 or 2004 (2005 and beyond??). The HMS assessment schedule is as follows:

2004

Bluefin Tuna (east & west)
Blue Shark
Mako
Porbeagle
Bigeye Tuna (work in progress)
Stock separation analysis for Swordfish
Shipjack Tuna

2005

Sailfish
Blue & White Marlin
Large Coastal Sharks
Large Tuna species

IX. PLANNING FOR SECOND HALF OF 2004 AND FOR 2005

- A. Which species?
- B. Timing

Roy Crabtree discussed assessment needs in general and recognizing the limited funds and time available, suggested focusing on overfished species and those approaching overfished status as the highest priority. The SAFMC suggested the following species for additional assessments for the 2nd half of 2004 and 2005:

1. 2004

- A. Red Porgy - Amendment 12 specifies that stock status will be updated every 2 years. Last assessment in 2002 with data through 2001.

B. Gag

C. Black Grouper - State of Florida may do this assessment

D. Goliath Grouper - the data workshop has already been done

2. 2005

A. Gray Triggerfish - indicator species

B. White Grunt - indicator species

C. Shrimp (brown, white, pink & rock)

D. Golden Crab

E. Dolphin/Wahoo

The Committee then went through the draft schedule and established the following:

1. Deepwater Species for the SAFMC (snowy grouper, golden tilefish, speckled hind, warsaw grouper, blueline tilefish, queen snapper, misty grouper & yellowedge grouper) and CFMC (queen & silk snapper and sand & blackline tilefish):
 - A. Data Workshop (Charleston, SC) - November 3-7, 2003.
 - B. Assessment Workshop (Beaufort, NC) - May 31-June 4, 2004.
 - C. Review Workshop (Charleston/Miami) - July 26-30, 2004.
2. King & Spanish Mackerel (Atlantic & Gulf). The Committee determined that Spanish mackerel should not be included during 2003 because they are not overfished, assessment methods would not change and recent assessments were completed. Atlantic and Gulf king mackerel will be assessed on the following schedule:
 - A. Data Workshop (Miami, FL) - December 1-5, 2003. SEDAR staff was asked to check with Ellie Roche about potential conflict with a MARFIN meeting.
 - B. Assessment Workshop (Miami, FL) - February 16-20, 2004.
 - C. Review Workshop (Miami, FL) - April 5-9, 2004.
3. Shallow Water Species -
 - SAFMC - Gag, Red Grouper and Red Snapper
 - SAFMC & GMFMC - Scamp and Greater Amberjack
 - A. Data Workshop (Charleston, SC) - October/November 2004.
 - B. Assessment Workshop (Beaufort, NC) - mid-late February 2005.
 - C. Review Workshop (TBD) - April 2005.
4. Queen Conch & Spiny Lobsters in CFMC - Alex Chester will coordinate with CFMC and report back to Steering Committee.
5. Gulf Shrimp - this was requested by the GSMFC for 2003.
6. Red Drum - no assessment is planned for the Gulf. ASMFC would like to have a full SEDAR process for Atlantic red drum in 2008.
7. Menhaden & Croaker - NMFS and ASMFC are completing a SEDAR Review Workshop in Raleigh, NC from October 6-9, 2003.

ASMFC would like menhaden and croaker to go through the full SEDAR process during 2008.
8. GSMFC requests the following:
 - A. Menhaden - October 2004 review process
 - B. Red drum - some interest in this species for 2004
 - C. Shrimp - interested in Gulf shrimp
9. Goliath grouper - Alex Chester indicated that the SEFSC was completing some assessment work and would distribute materials in a couple of weeks. Once this material is available, the Committee would need to determine what action is necessary.
10. SAFMC Species:
 - A. Red porgy - The SAFMC requested this species be addressed during 2004 given that Amendment 12 specifies that stock status will be updated every 2 years and the

last assessment was conducted in 2002 with data through 2001. The Committee discussed this and, given the limited resources available and needs for other assessments, they concluded that the landings would be updated but not conduct a full SEDAR assessment during 2004.

- B. Gag are being included in the Shallow Water Species grouping.
- C. Goliath grouper are being worked on by the SEFSC.
- D. Black grouper discussions will be held with representatives from Florida to see when this species would be assessed under their schedule. SEDAR staff was requested to report back at the next Steering Committee meeting.
- E. During 2005 plans are underway to assess gray triggerfish and white grunt.

X. SOCIOECONOMIC PANEL

- A. Involvement? There should be some participation during the data workshop to provide input on what may have affected catch trends, etc.
- B. Output from the stock assessment should be specified prior to the assessments and incorporated into the Terms of Reference.

The Committee discussed this and would like to see representation from the social and economic fields beginning with the Data Workshop to help explain catch trends, etc. SAFMC staff will participate to the extent possible and NMFS social and economic staffs were also asked to participate. There is an existing Panel in the Gulf and SEDAR staff was requested to evaluate a similar approach for the SAFMC area.

XI. Have the Councils, Commissions and NOAA Fisheries HMS resolved how to incorporate SEDAR into their management processes?

The Committee discussed this and reiterated their earlier decision that each Council would appoint a SEDAR AP from which appointments would be made for each of the three SEDAR workshops. In addition, the Councils need to amend their framework procedures to incorporate this new SEDAR process.

The ASMFC has a Peer Review Process and they plan to include SEDAR into that process.

The Committee also recommended that species be assessed every 5 years unless there is a major change in the model being used or in the management of a species that would suggest an earlier assessment.

4. OTHER BUSINESS

- A. Review minutes from January 24, 2003 conference call
 - B. Review minutes from April 21, 2003 conference call
- The Committee approved the minutes from the two previous meetings.

C. Schedule next conference call/meeting - Bob Mahood as Chair of the Steering Committee will schedule meetings/conference calls on an as needed bases. Members wishing to raise issues should contact Bob. The Committee will meet at least twice per year.

D. FR Notice and Need to Record - Monica Smit-Brunello
The Committee requested SEDAR Staff notice and record all SEDAR workshops. The reports from each workshop will serve as the minutes of what transpired; however, the tapes will be maintained as part of the administrative record.

E. Operations Plan - The Committee indicated that the SEDAR assessment schedule will drive data collection. The Operations Plan process should track and feed data into the SEDAR process. The Committee recommended retaining the Operations Plan process to address other data needs but noted the document could be streamlined and should reference the SEDAR timing. The Operations Plan would also outline the social, economic, habitat, and protected resources needs. In addition, it serves as a compendium of FMP-related research needs for MARFIN, S/K, Cooperative research, NMFS in-house research, etc.

5. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned.