

# SEDAR

## *SouthEast Data, Assessment, and Review*

South Atlantic Fishery Management Council  
Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council  
Caribbean Fishery Management Council  
NOAA Fisheries  
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission  
Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission

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### SEDAR Steering Committee

May 18, 2009

Boston, MA

#### Overview

#### Documents:

1. STC May08 Summary Final.pdf
2. SEDAR Procedural Changes Proposal.pdf
3. SEDAR Plan Schedule Feb09.pdf
4. SEDAR Guidelines 18.pdf
5. SEDAR Summary Report Development.pdf
6. Example SEDAR Summary Report.pdf

1. Introduction and Opening Remarks
2. Agenda Review
3. Approval of Minutes: May 2008 Meeting

Document: *STC May08 Summary Final.pdf*

4. Activities Update
  - a. Recently Completed Activities
    - SEDAR 16: King Mackerel
    - SEDAR 17: SA Spanish Mackerel, Vermilion Snapper
    - SEDAR Procedural Workshop 1: Indices
    - SEDAR Procedural Workshop 2: Catchability
    - SEDAR Data Evaluation Workshop 1: Caribbean Data Review
  - b. Current Assessment Activities
    - SEDAR 18: Red Drum
    - SEDAR 19: SA & GOM black grouper, SA red grouper
    - SEDAR 20: ASMFC Menhaden and Croaker, Review only
    - SEDAR 21: HMS Shark Assessment (Species TBD)

## 5. Proposed SEDAR Procedural Changes

SEDAR faces the challenge of increasing assessment output to help the Councils meet the mandates under the MSRA without a significant increase in resources. The process has also matured to an extent that more resources and attention need to be directed in future years toward conducting updates of previously completed resources.

Procedural revisions to address these needs are offered for discussion at this meeting. These revisions are the result of efforts between SEDAR staff and the SEFSC assessment teams to develop modifications that will increase output by improving efficiency and coordination of the overall process. Key features include reducing the overall workshop load by combining all benchmark assessments in a year into single data and review workshops, and switching to a two year planning block to reduce overlap between benchmark and update assessments. Under the two year block approach, one year will be devoted to benchmark assessments and the second to updates with the primary SEFSC teams operating 'out of phase' over the planning period, i.e., when one team is conducting benchmarks the other is conducting updates.

The Steering Committee may need to consider some scheduling changes to accommodate a change in the planning window and effective combining of data and review workshops.

Full details are provided in the document: *SEDAR Procedural Changes Proposal*.

## 6. SEDAR Schedule Review

The Steering Committee is asked to conduct its regular review of scheduled assessments. This item will be influenced by decisions made above regarding procedural changes.

Several items raised by the Councils since the last meeting are offered for consideration:

- a. Unassessed Stocks Evaluation for OFL/ABC recommendations
- b. Gulf and South Atlantic Cobia,
- c. South Atlantic Black Sea Bass, Wreckfish, and Golden Crab
- d. Caribbean stocks identified through the Caribbean data workshop

The current planning schedule is provided for review: *SEDAR Plan Schedule Feb09*

### a. Unassessed Stocks Evaluation for OFL/ABC recommendations

The SAFMC SSC passed the following motion suggesting an approach for evaluating those stocks which have not been assessed through SEDAR:

*As an emergency interim action, the SSC recommends that the SEDAR schedule be adjusted to accommodate development of basic assessment analyses (e.g., surplus production models, etc.) that will generate estimates of MSY for South Atlantic data poor, unassessed stocks. The SSC has developed a process for determining ABC values as required under MSRA and these basic analyses are*

*essential for applying this process and developing more reliable and scientifically defensible ABC values for data poor stocks. The SSC requests these analyses be completed by December 2010.*

*The SSC recognizes that this request will necessitate that currently scheduled SEDARs (black seabass, and cobia benchmarks, and updates for spiny lobster, golden tilefish, snowy grouper and gag) be delayed until after 2011. To facilitate completing this work within the available time we recommend a modified SEDAR process as follows: 1) two Data Workshops addressing multiple stocks, 2) two Assessment Workshops, one to develop methods and a second for refining preliminary models, and 3) review provided by the SSC.*

Although the SSC requested completion of this work by December 2010, an earlier completion date is likely necessary to accommodate Council amendment schedules. Staff suggests that, if the Steering Committee decides to support this recommendation, the scheduled completion be moved to April 2010. Furthermore, it is suggested that a similar approach be pursued for stocks managed by the GMFMC.

#### b. Gulf and South Atlantic Cobia

Both the Gulf and South Atlantic Councils have requested assessments of Cobia. An assessment was attempted pre-SEDAR. Data were available at that time to develop models for Gulf Cobia which were presented to the Mackerel Stock Assessment Panel for review.

#### c. South Atlantic Black Sea Bass, Wreckfish, and Golden Crab

South Atlantic black sea bass is scheduled for a second update in SEDAR 24 in 2011. The SAFMC SSC suggested that black sea bass could be adequately addressed through an update, thereby freeing up a benchmark slot that can be used to assess new stocks.

Wreckfish and golden crab were assessed pre-SEDAR, but are not currently on the SEDAR benchmark schedule.

#### d. Caribbean stocks identified through the Caribbean data workshop

The next scheduled Caribbean benchmark slot is SEDAR 23 in 2010. A SEDAR procedural workshop held in January 2009 reviewed available data for all Caribbean stocks and several alternative assessment approaches which may be applicable to these data limited stocks. Workshop participants recommended pursuing assessments for the following stocks:

##### Puerto Rico:

Silk snapper	Parrotfish
Queen snapper	Grunts (6 spp)

##### St. Thomas/St. John

Parrotfish  
Triggerfish and filefish (6 spp)

##### St. Croix

Parrotfish  
Grunts (6 spp)

Surgeonfish (3 spp)  
Triggerfish and Filefish (6 spp)

## 7. SEDAR Guidelines Review

An updated version of the SEDAR guidelines is provided for review and approval. This version documents policy changes implemented over the last several years and addresses issues discussed at the last meeting in May 2008.

Document: *SEDAR Guidelines 18*

Noted Guidelines Revisions:

### a. Incorporating HMS

NOAA Fisheries HMS Management Division was invited to participate in SEDAR and given representation at the Steering Committee. SEDAR staff worked with HMS staff following the May 2008 meeting to develop the changes necessary to incorporate HMS into SEDAR. These issues primary relate to how HMS will fulfill many of the obligations of the Councils, such as appointing participants and receiving completed assessment reports, and revising the guidelines to recognize HMS as a ‘cooperator’ in the SEDAR program.

Further updates on the following key issues are expected at the meeting:

- Funding source
- participant appointments
- acceptance of final assessments (SSC analog)

### b. Summary Report Contents

A sub-group convened over the last year to review summary report contents and develop a standardized format and list of contents.

Details of the changes are provided in the document: *SEDAR Summary Report Development* and an example document is provided to illustrate the proposed changes (*Example SEDAR Summary Report*). Basic instructions and report contents are included in the guidelines as appendix X.

The sub-group revised the order of some topics and suggested additional topic areas for inclusion in the summary report. The group also developed a list required tables and figures.

### c. Report finalization and dissemination

Although a SEDAR project is considered essentially complete once the final assessment report is issued to the cooperators following the review workshop, in some instances further revisions have been required following SSC review. A recent example is South Atlantic red snapper, where several revisions to projections were requested through the SSC and a minor input mistake was identified during the initial projection update. This led to subsequent modification of the SAR through several addenda in an effort to keep the report up to date. Such multiple post-SEDAR revisions were criticized as an effort to mislead the public despite the fact that the revisions were intended to achieve the opposite.

SEDAR recognizes that SSCs may request sensitivity runs and additional projections. The issues therefore are to identify a point at which SEDAR's role ends in tracking and documenting these subsequent analyses, and to develop a method of ensuring such changes are part of the official record.

Staff proposes that the SEDAR report should be considered final and disseminated once the final SAR is distributed and that this final report should include any necessary revisions or addenda required to document and address recommendations of the review workshop panel. This will provide a definite 'dissemination date', which will allow a SEDAR project to reach a logical end point and is a required parameter of the NOAA fisheries program for tracking peer review projects. Further, it is proposed that any subsequent sensitivities or projection scenarios should be documented through the appropriate cooperator's administrative record process. This approach will require that any revisions or further analyses will need to be documented and formatted to serve as stand-alone reports rather than as SEDAR report addenda. Such reports should be provided to SEDAR staff for posting on the SEDAR website. Language will be added to SEDAR reports to inform readers that additional evaluations may be conducted through the management process.

#### d. CIE appointee at AW

The guidelines are revised to include a CIE appointee at the AW. This is in response to AW participant suggestions that additional expertise is needed to adequately evaluate alternatives at the AW level and has been implemented for upcoming assessments.

#### e. Generic TORs

Minor modifications were made to the generic TORs listed in the guidelines to keep them up-to-date with a series of minor wording changes in the TORs over the last several years.

#### f. SAFMC FTP Site

The SAFMC is working to develop an FTP site to improve document distribution abilities. Staff will be able to post documents to this site and use it for distribution during SEDAR workshops. This approach was used with notable success, based on the ASFMC FTP site, during the recent red drum data workshop. The guidelines are modified to indicate that documents may be distributed via FTP during workshops. It should be noted that internet access will be required for all participants during the workshop to accommodate this approach.

### 8. Other Issues

#### a. Webcasting SEDAR workshops

Recent Gulf and South Atlantic Council meetings were broadcasted over the internet by public attendees. The recent update workshop of Gulf red and gag grouper was similarly

broadcasted. Some participants at the update commented that they did not know the workshop would be broadcasted and questioned whether the Steering Committee had any policies addressing this issue.

SEDAR is a public process and meetings are open to the public, but the issues of further broadcasting the workshops has not been addressed. One concern is that comments and discussions could be easily taken out of context, and for this reason draft reports are not distributed beyond the officially appointed participants. SEDAR is also obligated to inform the CIE as to the nature of the review and whether review activities and products are open to the public. The Steering Committee is also asked to consider whether private broadcasters should be allowed access to the SEDAR recording equipment for broadcasting of sound.

Issues to resolve:

- Allow private broadcasting of data and assessment workshops
- Allow private broadcasting of review workshops
- Allow access to SEDAR recording equipment outputs

#### b. Gulf SSC recommendation regarding RW appointees

The Gulf SSC recommended additional SSC representation at review workshops:

*The SSC recommends that at least two Gulf Council SSC members be appointed as members of the GOM Review Panel Workshops for all fish stocks being assessed through the SEDAR process.*

#### c. SSC role in benchmark vs update scheduling

The Gulf SSC provided the following recommendation regarding the decision to conduct benchmark or update assessments:

*The SSC moves that the SEDAR Steering Committee consider recommendations from the SSC on whether specific stock assessments would be conducted as benchmark or update assessments. SSC recommendations would be based on the level of uncertainty of current assessments, new data, new studies available since the last assessment, pending management actions, as well as the relative importance of the fisheries in question.*

SAFMC SSC discussions on the scheduled benchmark of black sea bass suggest that they would support this motion and would like greater input to the nature of future assessments.

#### c. SEDAR 19 AW representation request

The SAFMC requests that SEFSC appoint to the SEDAR 19 AW an analyst familiar with the previous SEDAR assessment of red grouper. The intent is to provide context and continuity between the two assessments and develop justification for decisions which may vary between the two assessments of a common species.

## 9. Future Procedural Workshops

Additional procedural workshops could be considered in late 2009 if resources are available. Potential topics include development of historical data series, methods of characterizing uncertainty, and methods of estimating and characterizing discard removals.

## 10. Regional Management Coordination

- a. Update from Latest Regional Operations Meeting
- b. Council & Commission Activities Updates
  - GMFMC
  - SAFMC
  - CFMC
  - ASMFC
  - GSMFC
- c. SERO Outlook
- d. SEFSC Outlook

## 11. Budget Update

## 12. Other Business

## 13. Next Meeting

## 14. Adjourn