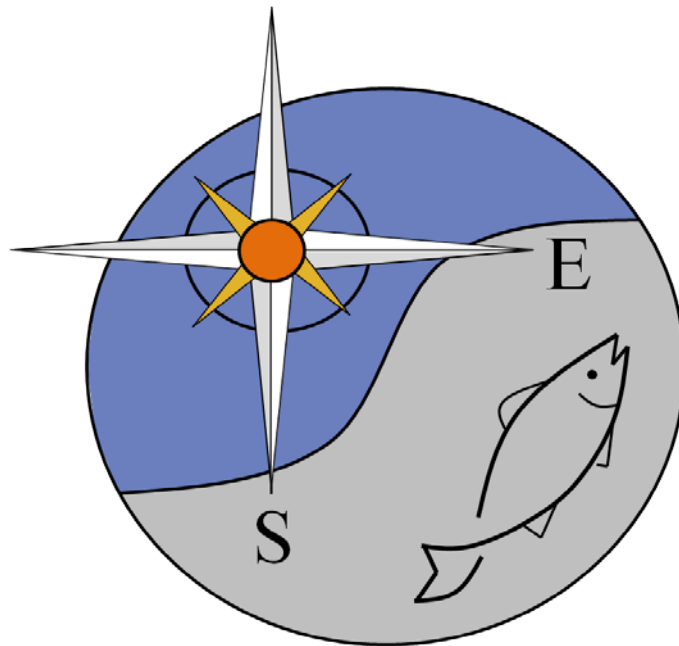


SEDAR



SEDAR Steering Committee

Meeting Summary

May 18, 2012

Meeting Via Webinar

1. Introduction

The Committee convened via Webinar at 9:05 a.m. Attendees are noted in Appendix 1. The agenda was reviewed and approved. Bob Gill requested modifying the summary of the October 2011 meeting to indicate he did not concur with the benchmark assessment of king mackerel in 2013.

2. Activities Update

The Committee was briefed on current and recently completed activities.

- The SEDAR 28 Review Workshop is rescheduled for October 29 - November 2, due to inadequate progress on assessment models.
- The Committee raised no objection to the modified proposal for the Gulf data evaluation workshop
- Concern was noted over declining state budgets and federal support of cooperative activities such as MARMAP and IJFA. This will have consequences for future assessment and data collection activities.

3. SEDAR Assessment Schedule

Committee actions on the SEDAR assessment schedule for 2013-2015 are summarized in Table 1. Final action on stocks to assess in 2014 will be made at the Fall 2012 meeting, and at the Fall 2013 meeting for the 2015 stocks. Initial guidance provided here on long-term priorities is for planning purposes only and is subject to revision based on data and analytical needs, future stock concerns or management needs, personnel availability, or changing Cooperator priorities.

The Committee discussed the planned 2013 king mackerel benchmark in detail. Although it is recognized that there are other stocks of equal or greater importance, particularly given that the primary reason for conducting a benchmark is to implement a preferred model framework, moving new stocks into the list at this point will create problems with data preparation. Because there was no guarantee that dropping king mackerel down to an update would enable another stock to be assessed in 2013, the Committee agreed to leave the 2013 assessment schedule as listed.

The Caribbean Council indicated that they are considering supporting a spiny lobster data evaluation and tabulation effort in 2013. The goal is to determine if an assessment is warranted or feasible. SEFSC agreed to work with the Caribbean Council in this effort as a preliminary step toward a future spiny lobster assessment.

The SAFMC requested an evaluation of data and assessment possibilities for speckled hind and Warsaw grouper, with a report to be provided to the Council at its September 2012 meeting. At that time the Council will consider where these stocks should be placed in the assessment schedule, in preparation for the next Steering Committee meeting where the 2014 schedule will be finalized.

The SAFMC indicated that top 2014 priorities remain a benchmark of red snapper and update of black sea bass.

The GMFMC raised concerns over the feasibility of a yellowedge grouper update in 2014. SEFSC was asked to evaluate this stock and its prior benchmark assessment, to determine if an update will provide stock status information or be adequate to support updated ABC recommendations. If an update is not warranted, the SEFSC is asked to elaborate on the information that is necessary to support an update in the future. A report was requested for the August Council meeting.

The Committee requested that SEFSC report at the next meeting how available assessment and data program resources can be allocated to meet the currently identified assessment workload for 2014. The Center is asked to consider how standard, update, and benchmark assessments should be balanced, and indicate the terminal data years required for each assessment.

SAFMC inquired about assessment possibilities for a wreckfish assessment. The Center will provide a report on this topic to the SSC, either in Fall 2012 or Spring 2013. More precise timing cannot be provided at this time due to dependence on availability of NOAA Fisheries personnel outside the Southeast Region who are expected to contribute to the project.

4. Assessment Productivity

The Committee discussed a number of items related to assessment productivity and improving efficiency in the SEDAR process. These included the topics listed in the meeting overview as well as some additional considerations offered by the SEFSC. General guidance on these topics is noted below. Each will be evaluated over the next few months, and a full report will be made to the Committee at the next meeting.

- Updates as the default assessment type
The Committee supported this in concept. The need for benchmark or standard assessments should be clearly specified and documented. It is recognized that achieving a higher ratio of update to benchmark assessments will take time.
- Strict TORS
The Committee supported this suggestion, and SEFSC continuing to take a lead role in drafting initial TORS.
- Dropping back to 2 assessment categories, of benchmark and update
The Committee recognized that the current categorization may cause some difficulties and confusion. However, for several members, a greater concern over pursuing such a change is that the process has changed often, and considerably, over the last several years. Further modification of the assessment categories at this point may actually cause more confusion.

- **Elimination of the AW**
The inefficiency of the current AW process is acknowledged. Two 2013 benchmarks will adopt the webinar AW process, which may prove to be an improvement over the standard in-person workshop in terms of expense and workload management. Members agreed with the need to have greater flexibility to adapt to unforeseen circumstances and delays that are inevitable in technical work such as stock assessments. Additional flexibility may also be necessary in the meeting and webinar scheduling process to allow any type of AW modification to provide the desired gains in efficiency. The Committee also noted that public involvement and feedback opportunities must be maintained through any AW process changes.
- **Convene a methods workgroup**
The Committee supported convening a methods workgroup to develop best practices guidelines for SEDAR assessments. This is seen as a way of improving consistency in addressing comment data and model issues and adding efficiency to the process. Membership shall include SEFSC analysts and data representatives, outside assessment experts, and SSC representatives.
- **Refine the review process**
Consideration will be given to streamlining and refining the review workshop process. Review workshops will be held in the vicinity of the lead analytical lab to address travel limitations and enable increased participation by analytical staff. Broad programmatic and methods reviews will be considered in lieu of, or as companions to, specific assessment reviews.

5. SEDAR Procedures

The Committee did not recommend that SEDAR establish additional guidelines, or adopt specific TORs, for cooperator review of standard or update assessments. However, SEFSC and SERO staff will discuss possible need for such guidelines and report back to the Committee at the next meeting.

6. Budget Report

Bob Mahood briefed the Committee on the current budget and future outlook. SEDAR is anticipating future budget cuts, and working to reduce travel expenses by increased reliance on webinar and conference call meetings. The dedicated SEDAR administrative position vacated recently by Rachael Silvas will not be filled at this time. This position's duties are currently being shared by an SAFMC Administrative staff person and the existing coordinators.

7. Other Business

The Committee was briefed on personnel changes. Rachael Silvas, SEDAR Administrative Assistant, resigned due to family relocation. Julie O'Dell, SAFMC

Administrative Assistant, will handle meeting, Administrative Record and travel responsibilities of that position. Kari Fenske, SEDAR Coordinator, will resign as of August 2 to pursue a graduate degree.

8. Next Meetings

The next meeting will be held October 2012, in Charleston SC. Members will be contacted regarding availability.

9. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 1:03 p.m.

This report will be reviewed by the Committee and made final at the Fall 2012 meeting.

Table 1. SEDAR Planning Outlook for 2013-2015.

| | SAFMC/Commission (Beaufort) | | GMFMC/CFMC (Miami) | | HMS (PC) | FL |
|---|---|---|---|--|---|----------------------|
| 2013 FINAL | 1.Gray triggerfish B 2. Blueline Tile B 3. Snowy S 4. Gag S 5. Red Grouper S <i>Red Snapper eval to SSC April 2013. BSB projections to SSC Fall 2013</i> | | 1&2 Red Snapper 3. Gag B 4. GAJ B 5. King mackerel B | 6. Parrotfish B (st croix) 7. white grunt B | 1. ATL Sharpnose (S) 2. Bonnethead S | 1. Hogfish B |
| 2014 Finalize Fall 2012 | 1. Red Snapper B 2. BSB U Scamp B 3&4. White Grunt B (Black Grouper U) Speckled Hind Warsaw Grouper | B5. Gulf menhaden | 1. Scamp Bench 2. Red Grouper B 3. Yellowedge G U 4. Red Snapper U 5. Black Grouper U Gray Snapper B | 6. Queen conch 7. Spiny lobster | 1. Smoothhound B 2. Finetooth B | 1. TBD Fall 2012 |
| 2015 PRELIM Finalize Fall 2013 | 1. Gray Snapper B 2. Dolphin B 3. Wahoo B 4. Red porgy U 5. Wreckfish B Greater amberjack U | Atlantic Menhaden, Atlantic Red Drum (review only ASMFC) | 1. Red Porgy B? 2.Vermilion B/U? 3. Gray Trigger B 4/5. Data poor eval, multiple stocks 6.Snowy Grouper | 7. Yellowtail Snapper | 1. 2. | 1. Red Grouper U? |
| 2016 and beyond | little tunny Red snap U blueline, snowy, gag red group U | | Gag U Greater amberjack U red snapper U Speckled hind B Warsaw Grouper B | | | |

Appendix 1. Meeting Attendance

| COMMITTEE MEMBERS | |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Bonnie | Ponwith (Chair) (SEFSC) |
| Steve | Bortone (GMFMC) |
| Karyl | Brewster-Geisz (HMS) |
| Patrick | Campfield (for Vince O'Shea) (ASMFC) |
| Roy | Crabtree (SERO) |
| David | Cupka (SAFMC) |
| Carlos | Farchette (CFMC) |
| Bob | Gill (GMFMC) |
| Miguel | Rolon (CFMC) |
| Larry | Simpson (GSMFC) |
| STAFF | |
| John | Carmichael |
| Julie | Neer |
| Kari | Fenske |
| Ryan | Rindone |
| OBSERVERS | |
| Kate | Andrews |
| Joseph | Ballenger |
| Peter | Barile |
| Douglass | Boyd |
| Julia | Byrd |
| Russell | Hudson |
| David | Nelson |
| Marcel | Reichert |
| Amy | Schueller |
| Erik | Williams |
| David | Wyanski |