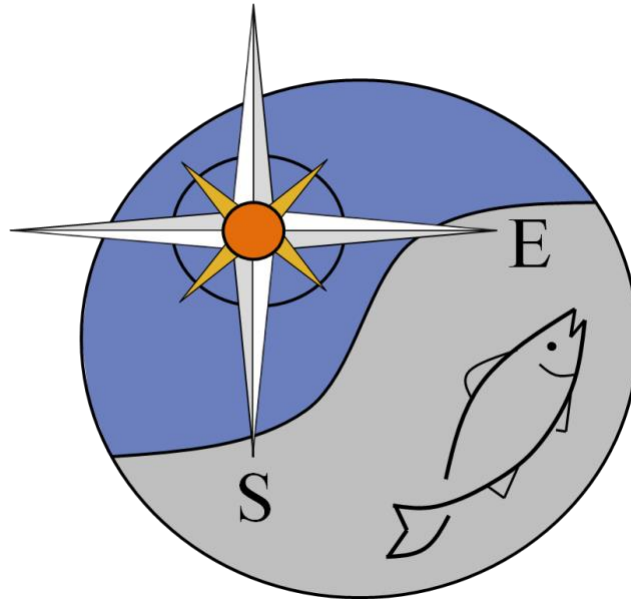


SEDAR



SEDAR Steering Committee

Meeting Summary

October 13, 2021

Meeting via Webinar

Report Content Note:

To provide context for recommendations and maintain the full record, this document combines the briefing summary provided to the Committee for consideration during the meeting as well as summary Committee discussion points and recommendations.

Outcomes from the meeting are found under the section headers “Meeting Outcome”.

Version: FINAL

5/9/2022

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DOCUMENTS

Attachment 1: May 2021 Draft Meeting Summary

Attachment 2: SEDAR Projects Update October 2021

Attachment 3: Research Track/Operational Assessment/Topical Working Group Guidance
Document

Attachment 4: SEDAR Projects List

Attachment 5: Modifications to the Project Planning Grid from the October 2020 Steering
Committee Summary and Follow-Up

Attendance

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Clay Porch, Chair, SEFSC
John Carmichael, SAFMC
Mel Bell, SAFMC
Carrie Simmons, GMFMC
Dale Diaz, GMFMC

Miguel Rolón, CFMC
Marcos Hanke, CFMC
Andy Strelcheck, SERO
Dave Donaldson, GSMFC
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Julie A. Neer

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WEBINAR OBSERVERS

Lisa Ailloud, SEFSC
Luiz Barbieri, FWC/FWRI
Julia Byrd, SAFMC Staff
Shannon Cass-Calay, SEFSC
Chip Collier, SAFMC Staff
Nancie Cummings, SEFSC
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John Froeschke, GMFMC Staff
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Bob Gill, GMFMC
Martha Guyas, GMFMC
Savannah Lewis, ASMFC

Maria Lopez-Mercer, NOAA
Vivian Matter, SEFSC
Matthew Nuttall, SEFSC
Ryan Rindone, GMFMC Staff
Jesus Rivera
Skyler Sagarese, SEFSC
Mike Schmidtke, SAFMC Staff
Virginia Shervette, USC
Katie Seigfried, SEFSC
Sarah Stephenson, NOAA
Steve Vanderkooy, GSMFC
Christina Wiegand, SAFMC Staff

Meeting Outcomes Summary

This Meeting Outcomes Summary highlights the major decisions of the Committee during the meeting. Additional details can be found under the heading “Meeting Outcome” for each relevant section and are italicized throughout the report.

SEDAR Projects Report

SEDAR Staff are moving forward with hotel contracts for the SEDAR 74 Gulf of Mexico Red Snapper Data Workshop, now scheduled for May 2-6, 2022 on the assumption that all participants will be able to travel and attend in person.

It was noted that the SEDAR 74 Stock ID CPUE/Landing Working Group report section is out for review. The updated final Stock ID Report will be available once the Working Group completes its review.

SEDAR Process Review and Discussion

The Committee discussed the expectations of the product to be delivered and approved during the Review Workshop process.

- *The Committee affirmed that a solid base configuration should be provided to the Review Panel (RP) for their consideration and the Review Panel should recommend a base model at the end of its review process.*
- *While it is understood that there may be some issues that cannot be rectified during the RW meeting, many tasks should not remain that need to be incorporated for the Research Track to be considered successful.*
- *The OA should be mostly limited to adding additional years of data to the RP-approved base configurations.*

Scheduling and Expectations of OAs Following Research Tracks

- *The Committee expressed its thoughts on the expectation of receiving OAs immediately following a RT within 6 months*
- *Chair Porch and the Committee confirmed that completing OAs within 6 months of completing the research track is reasonable when the base configurations (model and data streams) accepted during the research track are adopted without further modifications.*
- *OAs following RTs should have priority for scheduling data deadlines given the need to get those quickly to enact management, though this may be difficult to do given all the interacting parts*
- *It should be possible to reach out to all data providers before the RT is finished to provide them notification of upcoming OA.*

Assessment Schedule Review

SEDAR Staff clarified that the Caribbean Fishery Management Council requested assessments for Yellowtail Snapper for Puerto Rico and St. Thomas, along with an assessment for Stoplight Parrotfish for St. Croix to be conducted in 2023.

Assessment Delays:

Chair Porch informed the Committee of two assessment delays: the S78 South Atlantic Spanish Mackerel assessment will be delayed one month (now available by May 8, 2022) and the S80 Caribbean Queen Triggerfish assessment will be delayed 3 months (Now available by July 1, 2022).

The South Atlantic Cooperator expressed frustration with the delay of S78 and noted that this delay will also delay SSC review and management consideration.

The Committee discussed a process for reporting out on data delays in a timely fashion, including the previous Outstanding Tasks Memos that used to be submitted by the SEDAR Coordinators.

- *SEFSC has taken over data management of projects for which they are the lead agency, so SEDAR coordinators are not as involved in communicating directly with data providers as in the past.*

- *SEDAR Coordinators will work with SEFSC Project Managers to discuss how keep the data delivery information flowing to those who may be able to help resolve issues.*
- *Council Staff expressed a willingness to assist in resolving data delays however possible.*

Chair Porch indicated that the Committee may need to consider whether data not submitted on time should be excluded from the assessment.

- *This decision will need to be determined based on the type, amount, and value-content of these data*
- *More discussion will be needed if the Committee wishes to consider this approach in the future*

Chair Porch provided an update on the progress of the Shrimp Working Groups. Several are well underway or completed, while one group, the Shrimp Fishery Effort Estimation group, is on hold awaiting a decision from the Council regarding how data will be collected

Project Schedule Discussions:

A new analyst is being added to Gulf of Mexico Assessment Team.

South Atlantic Cooperators requested that Red Snapper begin in 2024. Chair Porch raised concerns about starting in 2024, noting that it may be too early given the final data from the South Atlantic Red Snapper Count will not be available until mid-2025.

- *It was noted that even though final data from this research will not be available until mid-2025, they are collecting data now, so preliminary data from 2021-23 should be available for consideration within the model framework when the Research Track gets underway in 2024.*
- *The South Atlantic Council intends to schedule regular updates on this project for its SSC to monitor progress and data availability.*

It was requested that a Gulf of Mexico Cobia OA be conducted in 2024, and that a Research Track assessment for Gag, slated to begin in 2025, be added to the proposed schedule.

Chair Porch believes the GAJ Count will provide a variety of new information which will need to be incorporated into the next assessments. Given that, he believes a Research Track will be required.

The Committee had some discussions regarding a NOAA White Paper about integrating Gulf of Mexico state-developed recreational surveys into the Gulf of Mexico stock assessments.

Chair Porch clarified that the process for incorporating new data sets into assessments requires the data sets be fully reviewed and vetted through the SEDAR assessment Topical Working Group process.

The Caribbean Cooperators indicated that the species listed for 2023 (after the correction) and requested for 2024 and onward are correct. It was suggested to start the 2023 assessment in September or later for Yellowtail Snapper, and after June 2023 for Stoplight Parrotfish. This

timing is different than what is currently scheduled, so SEDAR will discuss this with the SEFSC and data providers.

The HMS request for a Bull, Spinner, Tiger, and Finetooth Sharks Research Track was added to the Planning Grid.

The ASFMC Cooperator indicated that the requested Review Process for their Red Drum assessment may be held in late 2023 instead of 2024. SEDAR will work with ASFMC to schedule the review in 2023.

The ASFMC Cooperator also requested an assessment for the Atlantic migratory group of Cobia for 2024 or 2025.

- Chair Porch indicated that the assessment would need to fall under the South Atlantic assessment team, so discussions between SAFMC and ASMFC will need to be held to determine timing.*
- Given the current assessment schedule for the South Atlantic assessment team, the first slot open for a cobia OA would be in 2027.*

Table 1: SEDAR Project Planning Grid – October 2021 SEDAR Steering Committee Meeting Outcome

Table Color Legend:

Steering Committee Approved and SEFSC Scheduled Projects										FUTURE Requests					
Steering Committee Approved, PENDING SEFSC SCHEDULING										2024 Preliminary Projects – To Be Finalized at the Spring 2022 Meeting					
SEDAR SCHEDULE OVERVIEW – October 2021 SEDAR Steering Committee Discussion															
YEAR	SA Team				Gulf Team					Caribbean Team	HMS Team		FL FWCC	ASMFC GSMFC	CMP/ Shrimp
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5		1	2			
2021	Scamp RT	Red Snapper OA	Gag Grouper OA	Tilefish OA	Scamp RT	Gag Grouper OA	Red Snapper RT	Red Snapper RT		Queen Trigger PR-STX-STT OA				Gulf Menhaden OA	
			Spanish Mackerel OA												
2022	Scamp OA	Gray Triggerfish RT	Black Sea Bass OA		Scamp OA	Gray Snapper OA	Red Snapper RT	Red Snapper RT			Hammerheads RT	Mutton Snapper Bench		ASFMC Menhaden OA	
2023	Vermilion OA								Gulf Spanish Mackerel OA	Yellowtail (PR & STT); Stoplight Parrotfish (STX)					
				Red Grouper OA	Yellowedge OA		Red Snapper OA	Red Snapper OA			HH OA	HH OA		ASFMC Red Drum (RW)	
2024	Red Snapper RT	Gray Triggerfish OA	Tilefish OA	Blueline Tilefish OA	Red Grouper OA	Gray Triggerfish RT	Cobia OA	Vermilion OA	Gulf Shrimp RT	Spiny Lobster OA (all islands)	Bull, Spinner, Tiger, Finetooth Sharks RT	Hogfish Bench	Gulf Menhaden OA		
2025		Gag Grouper OA	Snowy Grouper OA	Red Porgy OA	GAJ RT		Lane Snapper OA	Gag RT	Shrimp OA	Caribbean Hogfish		Black Grouper Bench?			King Mackerel OA (SA & Gulf)
2026	Red Snapper OA	GAJ RT	White Grunt RT			Gray Triggerfish OA	Tilefish or Blueline OA				Bull, Spinner, Tiger, Finetooth Sharks OA				
2027	Atlantic migratory Cobia OA							Gag OA							

Timing of projects shown in this table is approximate and is intended for SEDAR Steering Committee workload planning purposes only. Please consult individual project schedules for specific start and end dates.

1 Introduction

1.1 Documents

- Agenda
- Attachment 1. May 2021 Draft Meeting Summary

1.2 Action

- Introduction
- Review and Approve Agenda
- Approve Meeting Summary

MEETING OUTCOME

The Committee made no modifications to the agenda and approved the May 2021 Draft Meeting Summary v.4 (7/13/2021).

2 SEDAR Projects Report

2.1 Documents

Attachment 2. SEDAR Projects Update September 2021

2.2 Summary

The projects report (Attachment 2) provides a summary of current and recently completed SEDAR assessment projects.

Highlighted project developments:

- SEDAR 68 – Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic Scamp: The SEDAR 68 Review Workshop was held virtually August 30-Sept 3, 2021. Overall, the assessments were well received, though the RW Panel did request modifications that resulted in new base model configurations for both assessments. The final Stock Assessment Reports are on track to be released by the October 1, 2021, deadline.
- SEDAR 72 - Gulf of Mexico Gag Grouper: The final Stock Assessment Report for Gulf of Mexico Gag Grouper was released on 27 August 2021. The report was reviewed by the GMFMC SSC at its September 2021 meeting.
- SEDAR 74 -Gulf of Mexico Red Snapper: The Stock ID Process held a Scoping webinar in November 2020, and three Stock ID discussion webinars were held between May and July 2021. The final Stock ID Report was released on August 20th. After the release of the report, the SEFSC requested that additional discussions be held to clarify the consensus recommendation of the CPUE/Landings workshop that was stated in the report. An additional webinar will be held on October 6th to discuss this issue.

- COVID-19 Impacts to ongoing projects:
 - SEDAR 74 -Gulf of Mexico Red Snapper: The Data Workshop for S74 was scheduled to be held in-person November 1-5, 2021. Given the inability of NMFS staff to travel, and the high proportion of other virtual attendees, it was the Gulf Council's request that this workshop be moved to the earliest convenient date in 2022 to better facilitate a greater proportion of in-person attendance. With red snapper being one of the most socially and economically important species in the Gulf of Mexico, the Gulf Council felt it only best to try to bolster the in-person attendance by both scientists and fishermen.

The SEFSC reviewed the current activities schedule and determined that the Data Workshop will be rescheduled for May 2-6, 2022. The assessment is now slated to be completed in May 2023.

- SEDAR 77 – HMS Hammerhead Sharks: The Data Workshop for S77 was scheduled to be held as an in-person meeting in Charleston, SC December 13-17, 2021. Given the rise in COVID cases and the inability of NMFS staff to travel to attend, the DW has been moved to a virtual format to be held the original week. This should not impact the overall Project Schedule.

2.3 Action

- Informational; none required

MEETING OUTCOME

The Committee discussed the plans for the SEDAR 74 Gulf of Mexico Red Snapper Data Workshop, now scheduled for May 2-6, 2022. SEDAR Staff are moving forward with hotel contracts on the assumption that all participants will be able to travel and attend in person. Chair Porch noted that he hoped his staff would be able to attend in May though that may be difficult. It was noted that the delay to May 2022 was understandable in the hopes of holding an in-person meeting that all could attend, but if that will not be possible, discussions need to be held to determine a path forward. Another delay is not preferred.

It was noted that the SEDAR 74 Stock ID CPUE/Landing Working Group report section is out for review. The updated final Stock ID Report will be available once the Working Group completes its review.

3 SEDAR Process Review and Discussion

3.1 Documents

Attachment 3. Research Track/Operational Assessment/Topical Working Group Guidance Document

3.2 Summary

- The SEDAR 68 Scamp Review Workshop was held via webinar August 30-September 3, 2021. Overall, the assessments were well received, though the RW Panel did request

modifications that resulted in new base model configurations for both assessments. The reports are on track to be released by the 1 October 2021 deadline. Once released, this will be the completion of the Pilot Research Track.

- During discussions between the Review Panel and the Analytic Team, there appeared to be a lack of clarity regarding what was expected during the Review Process, what product should result, and what analyses and modifications could be explored during the Operational Assessment component to follow.

According to the Guidance document:

- The goal of a Research Track assessment is to produce a robust assessment tool that is thoroughly documented and independently peer-reviewed. The Review Panel is tasked with recommending a base configuration for review by the Cooperator's technical body. The base configuration serves as the foundation for subsequent Operational Assessments.
- The purpose of an OA is to provide analyses to support management advice with up-to-date data. The previously peer-reviewed assessment model is applied to the most recent data. Requests to incorporate compelling new information must be included in specific ToRs. A brief report should be provided that provides management quantities and addresses the TORs.
- In the case of OAs that immediately follow an RT, any departures from the approved RT should be rare and include only the most compelling recommendations made during the CIE or SSC reviews.
 - There is no Statement of Work (SoW) for this process. The corresponding ToRs should be negotiated between the Cooperators and lead analytic agency immediately following the SSC review.
 - This OA should be completed within 6 months, though it may take slightly longer for first time assessments.

The Committee is asked to discuss if changes to this approach need to be considered.

3.3 Action

- Discussion of the Research Track and Operational Assessment Process

MEETING OUTCOME

The Committee discussed the expectations of the product to be delivered and approved during the Review Workshop process.

- *The Committee affirmed that a solid base configuration should be provided to the Review Panel (RP) for their consideration.*
- *That base model should represent the culmination of the Research Track Process and the best understanding of the dynamics of the species being assessed.*

The Review Panel should recommend a base model at the end of its review process.

- *The RP-approved base configuration is what should be used as the foundation for the following Operational Assessment.*
- *The completion of the Review Process represents the end of the Research Track Process.*

While it is understood that there may be some issues that cannot be rectified during the RW meeting, many tasks should not remain that need to be incorporated for the Research Track to be considered successful.

The OA should be mainly limited to adding additional years of data to the RP-approved base configurations.

- *The OA should be quick and efficient to provide timely management advice.*
- *Minor modifications from the RP and SSC may be addressed in the follow-up OA; however caution is warranted with respect to what these may entail and with respect to costs associated to providing timely management advice.*

Scheduling and Expectations of OAs Following Research Tracks

The Committee expressed their thoughts on the expectation of receiving OAs immediately following a RT within 6 months, given that the OAs for scamp are scheduled to take 8 (Gulf of Mexico) or 11 (Atlantic) months.

- *Chair Porch and the Committee confirmed that completing OAs within 6 months of completing the research track is reasonable when the base configurations (model and data streams) accepted during the research track are adopted without further modifications.*
- *He stated that the increasing number of data partners involved has slowed the SEDAR process.*
- *He stated that data are sometimes delivered late, include new data sources, or be sent in the incorrect format*
- *The Center is working to improve communication with the outside data providers to help with this issue.*
- *Council Staff offered their assistance in resolving data delays however possible.*

OAs following RTs should have priority for scheduling data deadlines given the need to get those quickly to enact management

- *This may be difficult to do given all the interacting parts*
- *The goal is to meet the 6-month expectation*

It should be possible to reach out to all data providers before the RT is finished to provide them notification of upcoming OA.

- *Universe of data providers for a specific OA should be known from the RT.*
- *Communication of the data needs for the OA can happen towards the end of the RT assessment process once the Review Workshop dates are determined.*

4 Assessment Schedule Review

4.1 Documents

Attachment 4. SEDAR Projects List

Attachment 5. Modifications to the Project Planning Grid from the May 2021 Steering Committee report

Attachment 6: SOWs

4.2 Summary

- The Master Scheduling meeting with SEDAR and SESFC for 2023 planning was held in July 2021.
 - All assessments identified by the Steering Committee to be held in 2023 were successfully added to the schedule.
 - The OAs for S68 Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic Scamp needed to be fit into the 2022 schedule. That was challenging as most of the available time was already allocated to the 2022 assessments. The Gulf of Mexico Scamp OA will take place between January and August 2022. The Atlantic Scamp OA is scheduled to occur between January and November 2022. Both OA schedules are outside the guidance for timing of OAs following a Research Track that was provided to the Committee at the May 2021 meeting:

Discussion regarding the timing of an OA which immediately follows a RT clarified that the OA should be completed within 4-6 months of the Cooperator's technical body review. It was acknowledged that it may take longer for a first-time assessment, as there may be more topics to address once the feedback from the Review Panel and Cooperator technical body is received. It was also noted that it may not be possible to address every issue raised by the review bodies in that time frame.
- CFMC: The SEFSC and the CFMC determined that a Benchmark assessment for Puerto Rico Yellowtail Snapper and USVI Stoplight Parrotfish can be conducted in 2023, and that was added to the schedule during the Master Scheduling call.
- GMFMC Schedule Update: The GMFMC requested that the Southeast Fisheries Science Center complete a data triage on the three species of tilefish currently included in the Council's tilefishes complex: golden tilefish, blueline tilefish, and goldface tilefish. This data triage should determine whether the three species should be assessed together, or whether the data available can support assessments on the three species individually. Given the need to complete this data triage prior to moving forward with the next tilefish assessment, the GMFMC will request moving the assessment to 2025 in order to accommodate the timeliness of this request and benefit all parties involved.
- SAFMC Schedule Update: The SAFMC requests that a Red Snapper Research Track assessment be prioritized to begin in 2025. This will likely require the White Grunt RT be postponed.

- HMS Schedule Update: The HMS Division requests a Research Track assessment for Spinner, Bull, Tiger, and Finetooth sharks, to begin in 2024.
- Chair Porch will provide the Committee an update on the ongoing Gulf of Mexico Shrimp Working Groups.
- The Committee is asked to review the project schedule for 2024 and provide priorities for 2025 and beyond.

4.3 Action

- Consider any needed modifications to the 2023 Projects
- Review 2024 Priorities
- Consider long-term priorities (2025/2026)

MEETING OUTCOME

Corrections to Overview:

The Overview erroneously indicated there was an Attachment 6: SoWs. SEDAR staff clarified that that attachment was not included for this meeting. The SoWs will be provided at the Spring meeting when the final recommendations for 2024 will be made.

SEDAR Staff clarified that the Caribbean Fishery Management Council requested assessments for Yellowtail Snapper for Puerto Rico and St. Thomas, along with an assessment for Stoplight Parrotfish for St. Croix to be conducted in 2023.

Assessment Delays:

Chair Porch informed the Committee of two assessment delays: the S78 South Atlantic Spanish Mackerel assessment will be delayed one month (now available by May 8, 2022) and the S80 Caribbean Queen Triggerfish assessment will be delayed 3 months (Now available by July 1, 2022).

- S78: several age data sets were delivered after the deadline or in the wrong format
- S80: have not received key life history information

The South Atlantic Cooperator expressed frustration in the delay of S78 and the lack of any advance notification of data delivery issues. Several states are waiting on this assessment and the Council has been waiting to act on this stock because of closures in the Atlantic Northern Zone. It was noted that a one-month delay, while it may seem minor, causes problems with the next steps in the process: SSC review process, timing of assessment delivery to the Council, how that impacts the development of management advice, etc.

The Committee discussed a process for reporting out on data delays in a timely fashion:

Outstanding Task Memos (First memo in 2007 for S14):

- SEDAR Coordinators communicated with analysts to receive updates on the status of data delivery

- *If data were late, a memo was sent from the Coordinator to the appropriate Cooperator (Council or State rep, Science Center Director, etc.) indicating which data were late, who was responsible for it, and when it was expected to be received.*
- *This process was initially used for Benchmarks, as there was a definite deadline for data products to complete the Data Workshop Report.*

SEFSC has taken over data management of projects for which they are the lead agency thus the Project Managers are communicating directly with data providers.

- *SEDAR Coordinators are not as involved as in the past.*

SEDAR Coordinators will work with SEFSC Project Managers to discuss a process to keep the data delivery information flowing to those who may be able to help resolve issues.

- *Develop procedures to identify issues earlier in the process so the appropriate people may be contacted in hopes of avoiding a delay in delivery of the completed assessment.*
- *If data are not delivered by a certain point, should the Cooperator be informed?*
 - *When do we notify the Cooperator? Two weeks after the deadline?*
 - *Once notified, what does the Cooperator do?*
 - *State and Commission partners can also help with data flow*
- *The possible use of Project Tracking software was mentioned. The software could provide an automated way to track all data products. It is possible it could report out, or be accessible to, SEDAR Coordinators and Council Staff so they may be keep informed of any disruptions to data flow.*
- *SEDAR Staff will present proposals at a future Steering Committee meeting*

It was noted that people are reluctant to report on people who are late or may be late with data

- *The importance of data flow and deadlines are more important than potentially upsetting individuals identified as having difficulty making data deadlines.*

There was a suggestion that this topic be included at the Data Committee and Annual Commission meetings to help with communicating the importance of these deadlines and may be helpful to identifying data roadblocks to resolve issues.

Chair Porch mentioned the possible need to make data deadlines earlier to allow for late data, or the need to reformat data.

- *The Committee had concerns that making data deadlines even earlier may impact the terminal year of assessment.*

Chair Porch indicated that the Committee may need to consider whether data not submitted on time be excluded from the assessment.

- *SEDAR has always strived to put the best assessment on the table, which has involved waiting on data sets for various assessments.*
- *This decision will need to be determined based on the type, amount, and value-content of these data.*
- *It was noted that all data are not equal and a discussion regarding the importance of an individual data source, or a specific data type is needed.*

- *It was suggested that the SSCs be involved in these discussions in relation to the importance of various data sets.*
- *More discussion will be needed if the Committee wishes to consider this approach in the future.*
- *SEDAR Staff will hold discussions with SEFSC Staff to produce information for the Committee's review at the Spring 2022 meeting.*

Chair Porch provided an update on the process of the Shrimp Working Groups. Several are well underway or nearing completion of their tasks.

- *The SEAMAP Trawl Survey group has completed its work and determined that the survey is representative for brown and white shrimp. They also recommended different approaches to recommending management advice.*
- *All data has been received and work is ongoing for the Shrimp Life History and Environmental Data Working Group.*
- *The Shrimp Bycatch Estimation Working Group is still underway. Many technical issues were uncovered. The Center has contracted a statistician to review all the data and methods, and aid in improving the process.*
- *The Shrimp Fishery Effort Estimation group is on hold awaiting a decision on the Council regarding how data will be collected (maintain current 3G system or move to something new).*

It was noted that it will not be possible to receive information equivalent to the previous stock assessments for several years, but the Center believes it can still provide information to determine stock status.

The Research Track assessment for shrimp is scheduled to begin September 2023.

Project Schedule Discussions:

A new analyst is being added to Gulf of Mexico Assessment Team.

- *Number of analysts is only one constraint to the number of assessments that can be accomplished.*
- *Currently the biggest constraint is the data providers.*
- *SEFSC continues to work on improving the data automation and development of the data warehouse*

South Atlantic Cooperators requested that Red Snapper begin in 2024. Chair Porch raised concerns that starting in 2024 may be too early given that the final data from the South Atlantic Red Snapper Count will not be available until mid-2025.

- *It was noted that even though final data from the research project will not be available until mid-2025, they are collecting data now, so preliminary data from 2021-23 should be available for consideration within the model framework when the Research Track gets underway in 2024.*
- *The need for a Stock ID process for the 2024 South Atlantic Red Snapper assessment is not currently anticipated.*
- *If the new information from the Count indicates a Stock ID process is needed, it can be added to the RT process.*

- *The South Atlantic Council intends to closely monitor project progress and request regular updates for its SSC.*

Moving the South Atlantic Red Snapper to 2024 required moving the SA White Grunt Research Track to 2026.

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council received a letter from the SEFSC indicating that the requested data triage for Tilefish species could not be accommodated outside of the SEDAR process, and that one or more Research Track slots would be needed if stock identification workshops would be necessary for each species. The Gulf of Mexico Cooperators indicated they did not wish to conduct a RT, or stock ID workshops, on those Tilefish species and requested to move the Tilefish OA for 2024 back to 2025 so Council Staff would have time to work on the data triage themselves. Chair Porch indicated that he was uncertain that he fully understood the request and indicated it may be possible for some work to be done, based on the scope of the request. The GMFMC and SEFSC will continue to have discussions on this work.

It was requested that a Gulf of Mexico Cobia OA be conducted in 2024, and that a Research Track assessment for Gag, slated to begin in 2025, be added to the proposed schedule.

There was discussion about whether the Greater Amberjack (GAJ) assessments scheduled for 2025 in the Gulf of Mexico, and 2026 for the South Atlantic, should be Operational or Research Track assessments. Chair Porch believes the GAJ Count will provide a variety of new information which will need to be considered for use in the next assessments. Given that, he does not believe the assessments will fall under the scope of an Operational Assessment and that a Research Track will be required for each region. The Planning Grid was modified to change GAJ to a Research Track.

The Committee had some discussions regarding a NOAA White Paper about integrating Gulf of Mexico state-developed recreational surveys into the Gulf of Mexico stock assessments.

- *Process of integrating all the state surveys into a single estimate for red snapper is still under way. It may not be possible in a statistically appropriate way.*
- *The FES estimates can be converted to state currency (such as SERFS) if the state wished to monitor in that form.*
- *In SEDAR 72, the SEFSC is executing a sensitivity run that uses a time series of catch developed by the State of Florida for Gag Grouper in place of the FES statistics.*
- *Discussions regarding how conversions would affect allocations also occurred.*

Chair Porch clarified that the process for incorporating new data sets into assessments requires the data sets be fully reviewed and vetted through the SEDAR assessment process. If there is a new data set since the last assessment, then a Topical Working Group should be convened to review the data and make recommendations on its inclusion in the current assessment.

The Caribbean Cooperators indicated that the species listed for 2023 (after the correction) and requested for 2024 and onward are correct. It was suggested that the start of the 2023 Yellowtail Snapper assessment begin September or later, and that the beginning of Stoplight Parrotfish assessment begin after June 2023. This timing is different for what is currently scheduled, so SEDAR will discuss this with the SEFSC and data providers.

The HMS request for a Bull, Spinner, Tiger, and Finetooth Sharks Research Track was added to the Planning Grid.

The ASFMC Cooperator indicated that the requested Review Process for their Red Drum assessment may be held in late 2023 instead of 2024. SEDAR will work with ASFMC to schedule the review in 2023.

ASFMC Cooperator also requested an assessment for the Atlantic migratory group of Cobia for 2024 or 2025.

- Chair Porch indicated that the assessment would need to fall under the South Atlantic assessment team, so discussions between SAFMC and ASFMC will need to be held to determine timing.*
- Given the current assessment schedule for the South Atlantic, the first slot open for a Cobia OA would be in 2027.*

5 Other Business

- Potential Rise in Travel Expenses and its Impact on the SEDAR Budget Outlook

During the May 2021 Steering Committee meeting, the Committee requested that SEDAR Staff, working with SAFMC Staff, provide information on the potential increase in travel expenses. It was assumed that several meetings would be well in the planning stages for Fall 2021, and Staff would have data to inform this discussion. As the global pandemic continues to hamper our ability to meet in person, those Fall meetings have been postponed or moved to virtual.

With that information in mind SA Council Staff pulled together the following table for your consideration:

Budget Year		Travel Est.		% of Budget
2021		149,449		25%
2022		162,233		27%

This is assuming that the SEDAR budget remains level at \$600,00

Overall, it appears that the estimated travel expenses are in line with the budgeted amounts for 2022.

- Update on Fishery- Independent Indices Procedural Workshop In-Person workshop options

SEDAR Staff convened the Steering Committee for PW08 to discuss options for the January meeting given the current concerns that NOAA has regarding SEFSC staff's ability to travel. The Committee suggested we explore options to postpone the in-person workshop to April 2022 as a final attempt to hold an in-person workshop with as many

in-person attendees as possible. The meeting has been rescheduled to April 19-21, 2022. If the meeting is not able to be held in-person at that time, the meeting will be held virtually.

5.1 Action

- None

MEETING OUTCOME

The Committee was appreciative of the updates and had no concerns.

6 Next Meeting

The Committee is asked to make scheduling recommendations and suggest topics for the next meeting. Based on past practices, the next meeting would be a webinar-based meeting in May 2022.

MEETING OUTCOME

The Committee discussed the timing of the Spring 2022 meeting. The idea of holding the meeting in April or early May was approved, to allow for more balance between the Spring/Fall and Fall/Spring meetings. The value of in-person meetings was discussed, but the costs in time and travel expenses for a 4–6-hour meeting was also acknowledged. The plan is to hold the Spring 2022 meeting via webinar. Staff suggested the meeting be held the weeks of April 25th or May 9th for that meeting. A doodle poll will be sent out to the Committee to determine a date.

Table 1: SEDAR Project Planning Grid – October 2021 SEDAR Steering Committee Discussion Draft

Table Color Legend:

Steering Committee Approved and SEFSC Scheduled Projects								FUTURE Requests								
Steering Committee Approved, PENDING SEFSC SCHEDULING								2024 Preliminary Projects – To Be Finalized at the May 2022 Meeting								
SEDAR SCHEDULE OVERVIEW – October 2021 SEDAR Steering Committee Discussion																
YEAR	SA Team				Gulf Team				Caribbean Team	HMS Team		FL FWCC	ASMFC GSMFC	CMP/ Shrimp		
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4		1	2					
2021	Scamp RT	Red Snapper OA	Gag Grouper OA	Tilefish OA	Scamp RT	Gag Grouper OA	Red Snapper RT	Red Snapper RT	Queen Trigger PR-STX-STT OA				Gulf Menhaden OA			
2022	Scamp OA		Spanish Mackerel OA		Scamp OA	Gray Snapper OA						Hammerheads RT	Mutton Snapper Bench	ASFMC Menhaden OA		
	Vermilion OA	Gray Triggerfish RT	Black Sea Bass OA												Gulf Spanish Mackerel OA	
2023					Red Grouper OA	Yellowedge OA		Red Snapper OA	Red Snapper OA	Yellowtail (PR); Stoplight Parrotfish (USVI)	HH OA			HH OA		
2024	White Grunt RT		Tilefish OA	Blueline Tilefish OA	Red Grouper OA	Gray Triggerfish RT	Tilefish or Blueline OA	Vermilion OA	Spiny Lobster OA (all islands)			Hogfish Bench	ASFMC Red Drum (RW)/ Gulf Menhaden OA	Gulf Shrimp		
2025																
2026	Gag Grouper OA	GAJ OA/RT	Red snapper RT						Caribbean Hogfish			Black Grouper Bench?				
2027																

Timing of projects shown in this table is approximate and is intended for SEDAR Steering Committee workload planning purposes only. Please consult individual project schedules for specific start and end dates.