

SEDAR Steering Committee

Projects Report

February 2024

Completed Projects, September 2023 – February 2024

4 Project addressing 7 Stock, 3 Management Units

SEDAR 86 South Atlantic Red Grouper, Operational Assessment

SEDAR Contact: Kathleen Howington/Meisha Key

Summary: This assessment was originally assigned to be conducted as an Operational Assessment. The SEFSC determined Red Grouper needed to be modeled as two stocks. The SAFMC SSC felt that amount of modification from the previous assessment was outside the scoping of an OA and the Council agreed with their recommendation to put Red Grouper back on the SEDAR schedule as a benchmark. Given this, SEDAR 86 will not be completed.

SEDAR 74 Gulf of Mexico Red Snapper, Research Track

SEDAR Contact: Julie A. Neer

Summary: The Review Workshop was held December 12-15, 2023, in Tampa, Florida and the report was released in January 2024.

SEDAR 77 HMS Hammerhead Sharks, Research Track (4 Stocks)

SEDAR Contact: Julie A. Neer

Summary: The SEDAR 77 Review Workshop was to be conducted as an in-person meeting in Panama City Florida from August 28 – September 1, 2023. The Workshop was forced to end after the first day due to an approaching hurricane. One follow-up webinar was held in November 2023, then the review process shifted to a desk review.

SEDAR 80 Caribbean Queen Triggerfish, Operational Assessment (3 management units)

SEDAR Contact: Julie A. Neer

Summary: The SEFSC sent SEDAR a memo in September 2023 stating “the Southeast Fisheries Science Center has elected to continue the development of the SEDAR 80 stock assessments outside of the SEDAR process. Therefore, the Center recommends the SEDAR 80 assessment process be considered complete but notes that no accepted models were developed for St. Thomas/St. John and St. Croix Queen Triggerfish.”

Projects in Progress

11 projects addressing 14 stocks and two management units

SEDAR 79 Southeastern US Mutton Snapper, Benchmark

SEDAR Contact: Julie A. Neer

Summary: The Data Workshop for the SE US Mutton Snapper assessment was held August 21-25, 2023. Assessment webinars will be held from November 2023 to July 2024. The terminal year of data was originally 2022, but as the completion of the assessment has been delayed until September 2024 to allow time to consider the use of the SRFS in place of MRIP, the analytical team requested data be provided through 2023. It is unclear if all data sets will be able to provide the 2023 data.

SEDAR 82 South Atlantic Gray Triggerfish, Research Track

SEDAR Contact: Julie A Neer

Summary: The Assessment process is complete, after a series of 9 webinars from March 2023 to January 2024. The Review Workshop is being held in Atlantic Beach, NC (DoubleTree) March 12-14, 2024. The completed assessment report will be available in May 2024.

SEDAR 84 Caribbean Yellowtail Snapper (Puerto Rico & St. Thomas/St. John) and Stoplight Parrotfish (St. Croix) Benchmark

SEDAR contact: Julie A. Neer

Summary: A Data Workshop was held in January 2024, and the Data Workshop reports should be available soon. Assessment webinars will be held April – August 2024. The Review Workshop is scheduled for December 2024 and the assessment should be completed in March 2025.

SEDAR 85 Gulf of Mexico Yellowedge Grouper, Operational Assessment

SEDAR Contact: Julie A. Neer

Summary: Terms of Reference for the Gulf of Mexico yellowedge grouper Operational Assessment were approved in March 2022. No Topical Working Groups were originally scheduled for this assessment, however, the analysts discovered issues that they would like to receive feedback on from the SSC before completing the

assessment, so a Topical Working Group was appointed in July 2023. The assessment was released in November 2023.

SEDAR 87 Gulf of Mexico Brown, Pink, and White Shrimp, Research Track

SEDAR contact: Julie A. Neer

Summary: A Data Scoping webinar was held July 2023, and a Data Workshop is scheduled for September 18-22, 2023. A variety of issues with the commercial landing streams which have caused significant delays in completing the data preparation. Assessment webinars are currently scheduled for April – October 2024 but may need to be delayed. The Review Workshop is scheduled for March 2025 and the assessment should be completed in May 2025.

SEDAR 88 Gulf of Mexico Red Grouper, Operational Assessment

SEDAR contact: Julie A. Neer

Summary: Two Topical Working Groups will be convened: 1) Red Tide and 2) SRFs Age and Length Composition. Scoping webinars for each TWG were held in October 2023. Additional webinars will be held in March and June. The assessment is slated to be completed in August 2024.

SEDAR 89 South Atlantic Tilefish, Operational Assessment

SEDAR Contact: TBD

Summary: A Life History Topical Working Group was developed for this assessment to address specific items in the terms of reference. This group held a series of webinars from November 2023–February 2024 to discuss and address these items. Findings from these webinars will be included in the final assessment report, which will be available in July 2024.

SEDAR 92 Atlantic Blueline Tilefish, Operational Assessment

SEDAR Contact: TBD

Summary: A Landings Stream Topical Working Group was developed for this assessment. There will be a series of webinars from April–July 2024 and the assessment should be completed in November 2024.

SEDAR 93 Atlantic Red Drum, Benchmark (Review Workshop only)

SEDAR Contact: TBD

Summary: The ASMFC is the lead for this assessment, with SEDRA only providing logistical support for the Review Workshop. The schedule and terms of reference for the review workshop have been approved. The review will be held August 12-16, 2024. The assessment should be completed in October 2024.

SEDAR 95 Atlantic Cobia, Benchmark

SEDAR Contact: TBD

Summary: The terms of reference and schedule have been approved. Data scoping is scheduled for March 2024. There will be a series of Data Webinars from June–August 2024 and Assessment Webinars from April–September 2025. The review workshop is scheduled for October 2025 and the assessment will be completed in November 2025.

SEDAR 96 Florida Yellowtail Snapper, Operational Assessment

SEDAR Contact: Julie A. Neer

Summary: The Gulf and South Atlantic Councils requested that an operational assessment for yellowtail snapper be conducted as soon as possible once the information regarding the possible bias in the MRIP landings was reported. The Florida State Reef Fish Survey (SRFS) may provide more useful recreational landings estimates and the Councils wanted to explore the option through an updated assessment. Requests to approve the Terms of Reference and appoint participants were sent to both Councils in February 2024. The assessment is scheduled to have one Topical Working Group to review recreational catch information. Webinars will be held May – September 2024. The assessment is scheduled to be completed in late 2024.

Upcoming Projects – Planning Underway

3 projects addressing 3 species and 3 management units

SEDAR 90 South Atlantic Red Snapper, Research Track Assessment

SEDAR Contact: TBD

Summary: The schedule, terms of reference and list of participants were reviewed during the SSC webinar in February 2024 and have been sent to the Council for approval at their March 2024 meeting. The SSC supported this assessment be changed

to a Benchmark assessment to allow the opportunity to provide management advice, which will also be discussed at the Councils March meeting.

The assessment is currently scheduled to begin in November 2024 and to be completed in November 2026. The process includes a data workshop to be held in April 2025, a series of assessment webinars from September 2025–April 2026, and a review workshop to be held in September 2026. Additionally, there is an integration plan to evaluate and consider using SARSRP data in this assessment.

SEDAR 91 Caribbean Spiny Lobster, Benchmark Assessment (3 management units)

SEDAR Contact: Julie A. Neer

Summary: Terms of Reference were approved by the Caribbean Fishery Management Council at their August meeting. The project schedule has also been finalized. Appointments are currently underway. A data scoping call is slated for June 2024, with an in-person Data Workshop schedule for November 13-15, 2024.

SEDAR 94 Southeastern Hogfish Snapper, Benchmark

SEDAR Contact: Julie A. Neer

Summary: The Benchmark assessment for SE hogfish was slated to begin in 2024 but has been postponed until 2025 to allow for a yellowtail snapper operational assessment to be conducted in 2024. The Terms of Reference have been approved by the Gulf and South Atlantic Councils, and some participants have been appointed. SEDAR will work with the Florida assessment team to revise the Project Schedule to accommodate this shift in timing. Once an updated schedule is developed, SEDAR will work with the appropriate Councils to update and finalize participants.