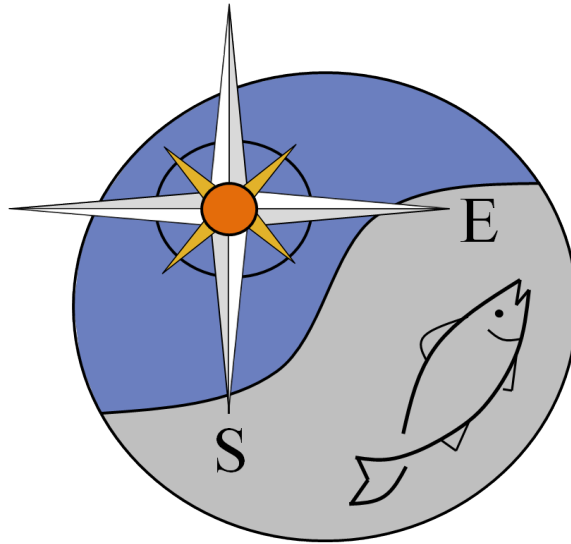


SEDAR



SEDAR Steering Committee

Summary Report

February 4-5, 2025

Charleston, SC

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 of Committee discussion points and recommendations.

Outcomes from the meeting are found under the section headers “Meeting Outcome” for each relevant section and are italicized throughout the report.

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Attachment 2: SEDAR Projects Update January 2025

Attachment 3: SEDAR Participation in the Assessment Stage Discussion Document

Attachment 4: SEFSC Process Update Document – *Not Received*

Attachment 5: SEDAR Projects List

Attachment 6: Proposed Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic Schedules – *Not Received*

Attachment 7: Modifications to the Project Planning Grid from the July 2024 Steering Committee Summary

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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 Process Review and Discussion

Chair Porch informed the Committee on the status of potential cuts to both the budget and personnel and indicated that if budgets and/or staffing is greatly reduced, the process by which assessments are conducted may need to be changed to maintain productivity.

Role of SEDAR in the Assessment Process:

The SEFSC proposes to take responsibility for the assessment component of the SEDAR process for which it is the lead analytic agency. Data and Review components remain unchanged.

For the Council Cooperators, the lead analytic agency would present an assessment development “check-in” to the SSC. This presentation will highlight key decision points, and the SSC will be asked for feedback prior to the completion of the assessment. The lead analytic agency (SEFSC or FWC) will work with Council Cooperators to schedule this check-in several months in advance (Figure 1a).

For HMS assessments, the lead analytic agency will produce a candidate model for consideration at an in-person assessment workshop. The model will be reviewed, and modifications suggested before the completion of the assessment (Figure 1b).

Cooperators could appoint a Technical Team with the relevant scientific expertise and fishing experience who would be available to provide feedback as needed during model development.

Committee members were supportive of this proposed approach and believe that these modifications will be well received by the technical bodies.

Maintaining open communications during the data components of the process are critical and should be maintained as recommended by the SEFSC.

By allowing the lead analytic agency to develop the assessment without the need for assessment webinars, this will shorten the time it takes to complete the assessment. That should help with having the assessment completed more closely to the terminal year of the data.

It was noted that the Commissions will continue to operate as they have been, with SEDAR coordinating review workshops as needed.

SEDAR Staff produced a flowchart summarizing the SEDAR process components (Figure 1), incorporating some of the changes that the Committee has recommended over the last few meetings.

Process Modification Updates & Recommendations from the SEFSC:

SEFSC Staff revisited their process recommendations presentation from the July 2024 meeting, with the focus being on the Key Stocks concept and Cooperator-specific long-term calendars for the Gulf and South Atlantic partners.

Understanding the priority stocks for each Cooperator would aid in the planning of the assessment calendars and be of particular help to the life history staff.

There is a need to determine which species need to be assessed through the SEDAR process, and those which may be better served through an alternative approach outside of SEDAR with more frequent management advice.

The SEFSC thinks there is value in the key stocks concept in that it highlights species that need management advice more frequently, but it is recognized that the species may change over time.

The best way to improve throughput and provide up to date information to manage fisheries will likely come from update approaches and updating projections, when those approaches are appropriate.

The idea of key stocks, as originally proposed, referred to high priority, highly controversial species which require age- or stage-structured assessments.

The Committee modified this approach so that the key stock concept helps the data collection and analytic agencies by identifying the priorities for each Cooperator, but the scheduling of assessment and updates of those stocks will not be automatic or on a set frequency.

The Committee had some discussions regarding using “simpler” models for some species to improve throughput.

To ensure confidence in simpler approaches, it will be helpful to provide comparisons of complex, age-structured assessments to less complex approaches for individual stocks over similar time periods.

A management strategy evaluation (MSE) could be used to validate that a data-limited approach can achieve management objectives.

Stocks to be assessed need to be identified at least two years in advance if there is a desire to include age composition in the assessment.

Assessment Schedule Review

The following scheduling recommendations/requests were discussed. It is the SEFSC's intention to conduct the assessments identified for 2026 and 2027. These recommendations are based on the current staffing levels:

South Atlantic: The final recommendations for 2026 were: red snapper (continued) and gag grouper. Additionally, king mackerel is scheduled to begin in 2026. This assessment will be completed in Stock Synthesis by a Gulf Team analyst.

Gulf: Red Grouper and shrimp will be completed in 2025. King mackerel and gray triggerfish will begin in 2025. The final recommendations for 2026 were: tilefish complex, gag grouper, and greater amberjack (late 2026 start date).

Caribbean: Yellowtail snapper and stoplight parrotfish (SEDAR 84), and spiny lobster (SEDAR 91) will be completed in 2025.

HMS: The operational assessment for SEDAR 77 hammerhead sharks will be completed in spring 2025. Sandbar sharks will begin in 2025 and run through 2026. Bull sharks will begin in 2026.

FWC: Yellowtail snapper was completed in early 2025. Hogfish will begin Spring 2025 and be completed in 2026. No additional SEDAR assessments were recommended for 2026 or beyond at this time.

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC): A SEDAR-led ASMFC menhaden review workshop is slated for 2025. An assessment for cobia will be conducted in 2026.

Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission (GSMFC): Gulf menhaden will be conducted in 2027.

Other Business

Update on the SEFSC IRA Funding Received by the SEFSC

Chair Porch provided the Committee on the IRA funding, indicating that said funding and grants are on hold due to several Executive Orders.

Discussion of the 2026 MRIP/FES pilot results:

It was suggested that a group be assembled to discuss how the results of the pilot study will be incorporated into the assessments, both those which have been assessed through SEDAR but not updated to FES, and those which are not on the SEDAR schedule.

Location for the SEDAR Steering Committee:

The Committee discussed locations other than Charleston for future in-person SEDAR Steering Committee meetings.

- SEDAR Staff will compile estimates to host the meeting in potential alternative locations and report back to the Committee at the Summer meeting. The following locations were suggested: Atlanta, Charlotte, Tampa, and San Juan.

Table 1: SEDAR Project Grid - February 2025 SEDAR Steering Committee Outcome

Table Color Legend:

Steering Committee Approved and SEFSC Scheduled Projects

FUTURE Requests

Steering Committee Approved, PENDING SEFSC SCHEDULING

Updates - No SEDAR Involvement

SEDAR SCHEDULE OVERVIEW- February 2025 SEDAR Steering Committee Discussion






Year	South Atlantic Team				Gulf Team						Caribbean Team		HMS Team		Florida FWCC		Commission/RW only
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	1	2	1	2	
2025	S90 Red Snapper Benchmark	S92 Blueline Tilefish OA	S90 Red Snapper Benchmark		S88 Red Grouper OA		S88 Red Snapper Benchmark	S88 Red Snapper Benchmark	S87 White, Pink, and Brown Shrimp Benchmark		S84 Yellowtail Snapper (PR & STT/STI) and Stoplight Parrotfish (STX) Benchmark	S91 Spiny Lobster (all islands) Benchmark	S770A Hammerhead Sharks		S86 YTS OA		
		BS8 (Update)															S102 ASMFC Menhaden (RW)
2026		Gag Grouper (TWG)	Dolphin MSE RW		S99 King Mackerel	S100 Gray Triggerfish					Application of Alternate Assessment Methods		S101 Sandbar Sharks		S94 Hogfish		
									Tilefish Complex (DW)	Gag Grouper (Red Tide & Repro TWGs)						Black Grouper MSE RW	Cobia
					MRIP and other data updates												
2027	Red Grouper (DW/Stock ID)	Snowy Update /TWG	Vermilion Update		SATL - King Mackerel (Gulf Analyst)	Yellowedge Update	Vermilion (Update)	Greater Amberjack (DW)	Gray Snapper Update								GSMFC Menhaden
2028	Red Porgy (TWG)	GAJ (TWG)	Spanish Mack (TWG)		Cobia, Lane, Spanish Data Limited Workshop (PW/DW)												ASMFC Menhaden
2029		Scamp	Tilefishes														
2030																	
2031																	

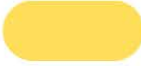
Timing of projects shown in this table is approximate and is intended for SEDAR Steering Committee workload planning purposes only. Please consult individual project schedules for specific start and end dates.

Figure 1: Schematic of the proposed SEDAR process changes as recommended by the SEDAR Steering Committee at their February 2025 meeting.

1a: Process for Fishery Management Councils and Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission

1b: Process for Highly Migratory Species and the Fishery Commissions

The color of the boxes indicates who is responsible for leading that component of the process.	
SEDAR	
Lead Analytic Agency	
Cooperator Appointed Technical Team*	
Cooperator	
Commissions	

 *While the lead analytic agency is responsible for developing the candidate assessment model, they may reach out to the Cooperator Appointed Technical Team during this phase. The Technical Team would have relevant scientific expertise and fishing experience to answer questions and provide feedback as needed.

SEDAR Process for Fishery Management Councils & FL FWC

last updated 4/4/2025

Data Scoping → Agency Conducts Assessment Stage → SSC Check In → SSC Review

Data Scoping → Topical Working Group (TWG) or Data Webinar(s) or Data Workshop → Agency Conducts Assessment Stage → SSC Check In → Review Workshop → SSC Review

SSC Check In → SSC Review

SEDAR

Lead Analytic Agency

Cooperator Appointed Technical Team

Cooperator



SEDAR

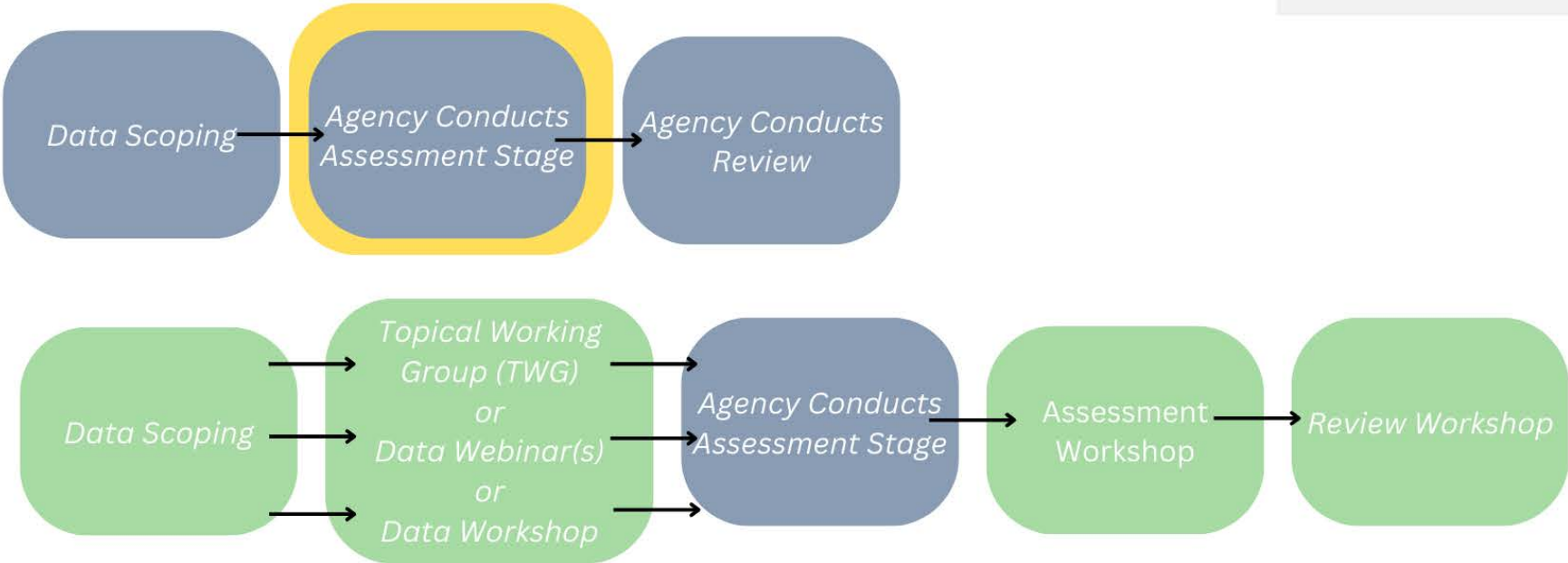
Southeast Data Assessment and Review



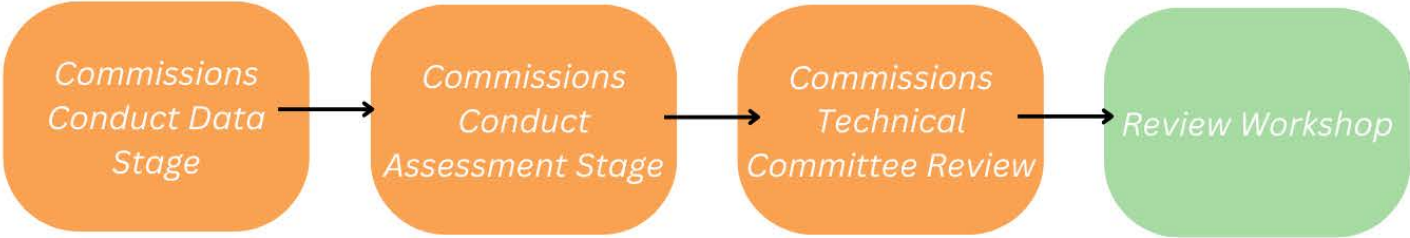
SEDAR Process for Highly Migratory Species and the Commissions

Highly Migratory Species

last updated 4/4/2025



Gulf and Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commissions



 SEDAR  Lead Analytic Agency  Cooperator Appointed Technical Team  Commissions



SEDAR
Southeast Data Assessment and Review



1 Introduction

1.1 Documents

- Agenda
- Attachment 1. July 2024 Draft Meeting Summary

1.2 Action

- Introduction
- Review and Approve Agenda
- Approve Meeting Summary

MEETING OUTCOME

The Committee adopted the agenda with the addition of two Other Business items: location for the SouthEast Data, Assessment, and Review (SEDAR) Steering Committee and discussion of the 2026 Marine Recreational Information Program Fishing Effort Survey (MRIP/FES) pilot results. The Committee approved the July 2024 Draft Meeting Summary.

2 SEDAR Projects Report

2.1 Documents

Attachment 2. SEDAR Projects Update January 2025

2.2 Summary

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

Highlighted project developments:

SEDAR 77OA HMS Hammerhead Sharks

SEDAR Contact: Julie A. Neer

Summary: The Operational Assessment to SEDAR 77 was slated to be completed in December 2024. It has not been completed as of this writing but should be finalized and released by April 2025.

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

SEDAR contact: Julie A Neer/Emily Ott

Summary: A Data Workshop was held in January 2024, and the Data Workshop reports should be available soon. Assessment webinars were held April – October 2024. The Review Workshop was scheduled for February 2025 and has been postponed until summer 2025 to allow the analytic team time to expand on the report and potentially add to the review Terms of Reference to maximize the feedback from the review. The assessment should be completed in fall 2025.

2.3 Action

- Informational; none required

MEETING OUTCOME

The Committee inquired about the Atlantic cobia assessment delay. It was noted that the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Southeast Fisheries Science Center (SEFSC) was unable to hire a replacement for the analyst that left due to a hiring freeze, and they do not know when they may be able to replace that individual. The cobia assessment is tentatively scheduled for 2026.

3 SEDAR Process Review and Discussion

3.1 Documents

Attachment 3: SEDAR Participation in the Assessment Stage Discussion Document

Attachment 4: SEFSC Process Update Document – *Not Received*

3.2 Summary

Role of SEDAR in the Assessment Process:

SEFSC Staff had several meetings with SEDAR Staff to discuss potential modifications to the assessment stage of the process. Potential options may include no SEDAR-run webinars, a Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) “check-in” component before the model is finalized, and a Cooperator appointed “assessment group” to be on call to provide feedback should questions arise in the development of the model.

Process Modification Updates & Recommendations from the SEFSC:

The SEFSC will provide an update on their discussions regarding proposed modifications to the SEDAR process.

3.3 Action

- Provide feedback on the possible changes to the SEDAR process.

MEETING OUTCOME

Chair Porch informed the Committee on the status of potential cuts to both the budget and personnel and indicated that if budgets and/or staffing is greatly reduced, the process by which assessments are conducted may need to be changed to maintain productivity.

Role of SEDAR in the Assessment Process:

The Center provided two documents for this topic:

- *Attachment 3a: Memo regarding proposed changes to the SEDAR assessment process*
- *Attachment 3b: Presentation on the proposed changes to the SEDAR assessment process*

SEFSC staff (Shannon Cass-Calay and Katie Siegfried) provided the Committee a presentation (Attachment 3b) on the rationale and a suggested path forward for modifications to the assessment development portion of SEDAR.

The SEFSC proposes to take responsibility for the assessment component of the SEDAR process for which it is the lead analytic agency. Data and Review components remain unchanged.

The presentation discussed ways to maintain transparency in the overall process:

- *Data Workshops or Webinars allow an opportunity for the public to discuss the data being considered*
- *Discussion of the models and potential decision points at SSC meetings would be an additional opportunity for transparency and public input.*
- *Review workshops are currently open to the public.*
- *Additional opportunities for public input may be needed for NMFS' Highly Migratory Species Management Division (HMS) as they do not have an SSC.*

For the Council Cooperators, the lead analytic agency would present an assessment development "check-in" to the SSC. This presentation will highlight key decision points, and the SSC will be asked for feedback prior to the completion of the assessment. The lead analytic agency (SEFSC or FWC) will work with Council Cooperators to schedule this check-in several months in advance (Figure 1a).

For HMS assessments, the agency will produce a candidate model for consideration at an in-person assessment workshop. The model will be reviewed, and modifications suggested before the completion of the assessment (Figure 1b).

Cooperators could appoint a Technical Team with the relevant scientific expertise and fishing experience who would be available to provide feedback as needed during model development.

- *This team may be a standing group that covers multiple assessments or may be developed for a specific stock or group of stocks (e.g., tilefishes or mackerel).*
- *The lead analytic agency may reach out to members of the team as needed, either as individuals or as the whole.*
- *Appointed individuals will need to be in the respective Cooperator's SEDAR Advisory Panel.*
- *Technical Teams may not be needed for all assessments.*
- *Technical feedback from SSC members may be needed before the check-in for certain assessments but not needed for others.*
- *Fisherman input may be helpful for model development and cooperators may pursue their own approaches to provide such input.*

The options to have an assessment panel or Topical Working Group (TWG), and assessment webinars, would still exist within the SEDAR process, but that approach would be the exception for a special case. Such an exception would have to be agreed to during the negotiations between the analytic agency and the Cooperator and would likely come at the cost of the number or complexity of other projects during that timeframe.

Committee Discussion

Committee members were supportive of this proposed approach and believe that these modifications will be well received by the technical bodies.

It was noted that this proposed process has not yet been discussed with NOAA General Counsel, but it is believed that it would be appropriate following the same logic which allows for IPT-style conversations of Topical or Data Workshop Working Groups.

- *Key points for this were that the recommendations from these discussions are vetted in a public forum, and that those individuals involved (Technical Team) in those discussions were appointed to participate in that role by the Cooperators.*

The Committee discussed the potential increase in the SSC workload. It was noted that the technical body "check-in" would not be entire assessment presentations, but rather highlight key decisions. Additionally, it is expected that by engaging the SSC earlier in the process, the SSC review and subsequent management advice will be completed more efficiently. Close coordination with the Cooperator staffs will be needed to ensure appropriate timing of the check-ins.

The Committee did not express any concerns with the proposed changes and independent peer review.

Maintaining open communications during the data components of the process are critical and should be maintained as recommended by the SEFSC.

Dr. Barbieri indicated that the Florida analytic teams would likely follow the proposed approach for the assessments that they produce.

By allowing the lead analytic agency to develop the assessment without the need for assessment webinars, this will shorten the time it takes to complete the assessment. That should help with having the assessment completed more closely to the terminal year of the data.

The Committee had some discussions regard what constitutes “substantial” changes to the data or assessment methods, and it was noted that some flexibility will be needed.

It was noted that the Commissions will continue to operate as they have been, with SEDAR coordinating review workshops as needed.

It was recommended that the SSCs receive a presentation on this proposed change, and they be allowed to provide feedback before implementing this process.

SEDAR Staff produced a flowchart summarizing the SEDAR process components (Figure 1), incorporating some of the changes that the Committee has recommended over the last few meetings.

- *The graphics indicated which Cooperator will be responsible for different components of the process.*

SEDAR will continue to work with the SEFSC to produce and refine documentation for this new approach and bring a document to the Steering Committee for its review at its Summer 2025 meeting.

Process Modification Updates & Recommendations from the SEFSC:

SEFSC Staff revisited their process recommendations presentation from the July 2024 meeting, with the focus being on the Key Stocks concept and Cooperator-specific long-term calendars for the Gulf and South Atlantic partners.

Understanding the priority stocks for each Cooperator would aid in the planning of the assessment calendars and be of particular help to the life history staff.

It was noted that the structure of an individual assessment (e.g., which components are included) impacts the duration of the process and the number of assessments that can be completed.

There is a need to determine which species need to be assessed through the SEDAR process, and those which may be better served through an alternative approach outside of SEDAR with more frequent management advice.

It was noted that while a species may be identified as priority for an assessment through the SEDAR process, it is possible that little new information may be available, and thus it may be more efficient to update the management advice using an alternative approach.

The SEFSC thinks there is value in the key stocks concept in that it highlights species that need management advice more frequently, but it is recognized that the species may change over time.

The best way to improve throughput and provide up to date information to manage fisheries will likely come from update approaches and updating projections, when those approaches are appropriate.

Committee Discussion

The idea of key stocks, as originally proposed, referred to high priority, highly controversial species which require age- or stage-structured assessments.

- Those stocks would be scheduled for regular assessments through the SEDAR process based on some desired frequency.*
- Between those scheduled assessments, there would be some form of a process (update assessment, interim analysis, etc.) to provide updated management advice.*
- The non-key stocks would be assessed when slots are available, and some may be assessed internally.*

The Committee modified this approach so that the key stock concept helps the data collection and analytic agencies by identifying the priorities for each Cooperator, but the scheduling of assessment and updates of those stocks will not be automatic or on a set frequency.

The Committee had some discussions regarding using “simpler” models for some species to improve throughput.

- “Simpler” in this context means more efficient approaches. This could include reducing the complexity of an age structured model by determining which data strata are most informative and excluding those that are not.*
- Simulation testing may demonstrate whether a less-complex model can provide adequate information for management advice.*
- Applying simpler methods which require less data would still depend on potential costs to the budget or staffing.*

To ensure confidence in simpler approaches, it will be helpful to provide comparisons of complex, age-structured assessments to less complex approaches for individual stocks over similar time periods.

- *The different approaches can then be compared by the SSCs and management bodies to help build trust in these less-complex, more efficient options.*
- *This may allow these approaches to be implemented with more confidence for species which will not be scheduled for regular assessments, or those which have never been assessed through the SEDAR process.*

It is important to include the SSCs in proposed changes to the process, including the development of the project calendars.

- *Switching the primary source of assessment advice from age-structured model-based approaches to alternative methods will require a period of adjustment.*
- *More frequent updated information to provide management advice will be possible only if the approaches are less time consuming.*

Getting age composition data in a timely fashion continues to be an issue.

- *The SEFSC is currently focusing time and resources into identifying ways to improve this.*

A management strategy evaluation (MSE) could be used to validate that a data-limited approach can achieve management objectives. A Cooperator suggested that it might be appropriate for the Center to identify data limited species where other approaches could be applicable for discussion at the SSC and potential simulation modeling.

The SEFSC clarified that just because something is not identified as a key stock does not mean that it could not be assessed using an age-structured approach if that is what is warranted.

Stocks to be assessed need to be identified at least two years in advance if there is a desire to include age composition in the assessment.

Information regarding capacity to complete SEDAR assessments with all the major components (full data workshop, agency-lead assessment process, review workshop) is needed to understand how many species can be assessed using the current methods, and how many species will need to be handled using alternative approaches.

It was incredibly difficult to meet everyone's objectives of a calendar for a 10-year period.

- *The focus shifted to a 2-to-3-year time horizon to begin incorporating some of the process changes.*
- *By integrating some of the changes, it will allow the calendars to develop in a way that may be more agreeable to all involved.*

4 Assessment Schedule Review

4.1 Documents

Attachment 5: SEDAR Projects List

Attachment 6: Proposed Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic Schedules

Attachment 7: Modifications to the Project Planning Grid from the July 2024 Steering Committee Summary

4.2 Summary

The SEFSC will provide draft long-term schedules for the Gulf and South Atlantic Cooperators for discussion. Modifications to those schedules, along with the development of schedule for the remaining Cooperators, may be influenced by the discussions the Committee during the meeting.

4.3 Action

- Consider any needed modifications to the 2025 Projects
- Finalize the 2026 Projects Schedule
- Discuss Future Project Requests (2027-2029)

MEETING OUTCOME

The briefing book draft of the project grid was set up as follows:

- *Four analyst slots focusing on reef fish in the South Atlantic*
- *Six slots for the Gulf*
- *Two analysts in the Caribbean branch*
- *Two analysts working on HMS sharks*
- *Two analysts from Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC)*
- *One analyst who focuses on menhaden*

It was noted that the slots represent the overall availability of analysts. They do not represent an individual analyst assigned to specific assessments. In some cases, analysts from one 'slot' can and do support assessments for more than one cooperator.

The following scheduling recommendations/requests were discussed. It is the SEFSC's intention to conduct the assessments identified for 2026 and 2027. These recommendations are based on the current staffing levels:

South Atlantic: The final recommendations for 2026 were: red snapper (continued) and gag grouper.

Notes:

- *Due to a hiring freeze, the SEFSC was unable to fill a vacancy, and they do not know when they may be able to fill the position.*
- *Snowy grouper in 2027 may require a TWG, depending on whether the South Atlantic Deepwater Longline Survey contains enough information for this species.*
- *Red grouper was moved to 2027. It will require a stock identification (ID) process to explore the SEFSC recommendation to develop a two-stock model. A one-stock continuity model will be required as the current rebuilding plan is for the one-stock model. If the two-stock model is recommended from the stock ID process, then an independent peer review will likely be needed.*
- *King mackerel is scheduled to begin in 2026. This assessment will be completed in Stock Synthesis by a Gulf Team analyst.*
- *It was noted that the expectation is to have the updated MRIP/FES numbers included in the final assessments for red snapper and gag.*

Gulf: *Red Grouper and shrimp will be completed in 2025. King mackerel and gray triggerfish will begin in 2025. The final recommendations for 2026 were: tilefish complex, gag grouper, and greater amberjack (late 2026 start date).*

Notes:

- *The original SEDAR 100 gray triggerfish project schedule will likely be shortened now that assessment process will be handled internally by the Center.*
- *Gag grouper will be run through SEDAR as several potential TWGs (red tide, reproduction) were identified.*
- *The tilefish complex assessment for 2026 should be run through SEDAR. More discussions are needed to refine the assessment process.*
- *The greater amberjack absolute abundance study needs to be completed for consideration in the assessment, which will in part determine the ultimate start date for that assessment.*
- *The Gulf Council recommended updates for yellowedge grouper, vermilion snapper, and gray snapper in 2027.*

Caribbean: *Yellowtail snapper and stoplight parrotfish (SEDAR 84), and spiny lobster (SEDAR 91) will be completed in 2025.*

Notes:

- *The SEFSC is recommending using the 2025 assessment slot to investigate alternative approaches to provide management advice. There is currently a workshop slated for the first week of November, but progress regarding content will need to be made quickly to ensure a productive meeting this calendar year.*
- *No species were recommended beyond 2026.*

HMS: The operational assessment for SEDAR 77 hammerhead sharks will be completed in spring 2025. Sandbar sharks will begin in 2025 and run through 2026. Bull sharks will begin in 2026.

- *The Center needs to produce a data triage for the shark data to see what species may be assessable and provide recommendations for potential methods.*

FWC: Yellowtail snapper was completed in early 2025. Hogfish will begin Spring 2025 and be completed in 2026. No additional SEDAR assessments were recommended for 2026 or beyond at this time.

A black grouper management strategy evaluation, organized by FWC, began in 2024. Due to funding constraints, the project is on hold. The hope is to have it completed in 2026 and SEDAR may provide a peer review of the product once it is complete.

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC): A SEDAR-led ASMFC menhaden review workshop is slated for 2025. An assessment for cobia will be conducted in 2026. The structure and scope of the assessment needs to be discussed as the analyst who will lead the assessment only has availability for one year.

Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission (GSMFC): Gulf menhaden will be conducted in 2027.

5 Other Business

5.1 Documents

None

5.2 Summary

- Update on the SEFSC Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) Funding Received by the SEFSC:
Chairman Porch will provide an update on the IRA funding that the SEFSC received and how it is being applied to help the science enterprise and data collection in the Southeast.

5.3 Action

- The Committee should discuss any issues and provide recommendations if needed.

MEETING OUTCOME

Update on the SEFSC IRA Funding Received by the SEFSC

Chair Porch provided the Committee on the IRA funding, indicating that said funding and grants are on hold due to several Executive Orders.

- *It appears that some IRA funding may be released soon.*
- *It is unclear when other grant funds may be released.*

The Committee received further details regarding how the variety of funding sources are being spent.

Discussion of the 2026 MRIP/FES pilot results:

It was suggested that a group be assembled to discuss how the results of the pilot study will be incorporated into the assessments, both those which have been assessed through SEDAR but not updated to FES, and those which are not on the SEDAR schedule.

It was noted that a comprehensive plan will need to be developed, with participants from the Councils, the SEFSC, and NMFS' Southeast Regional Office.

Location for the SEDAR Steering Committee:

The Committee discussed locations other than Charleston for future in-person SEDAR Steering Committee meetings.

- *As the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council is the administration lead for the SEDAR program and all the program's staff are based in Charleston, the in-person meetings have been held in Charleston to reduce overall costs to SEDAR.*
- *Rotating the responsibility of hosting among the Cooperators was suggested as an option, including having the host Cooperator arrange the meeting and cover all meeting and travel expenses for the Committee to reduce costs to SEDAR.*
- *SEDAR Staff will compile estimates to host the meeting in potential alternative locations and report back to the Committee at the Summer meeting. The following locations were suggested: Atlanta, Charlotte, Tampa, and San Juan.*
 - *Cost comparisons should consider travel and lodging for all Committee members as applicable, meeting room and catering costs, equipment rentals, and administrative costs.*

6 Next Meeting

The Committee is asked to make scheduling recommendations and suggest topics for the next meeting. SEDAR Staff would suggest that the next meeting be held via webinar in July or August 2025.

MEETING OUTCOME

The Committee agreed that the next meeting would be via webinar, to be held on August 4th, 2025. Briefing Book materials will be due on July 18th.

Proposed Topics:

- *Review the SSC feedback on the proposed modifications to the assessment process.*
- *Revisit assessment schedule if needed.*
- *Review initial changes to Standard Operating Policies and Procedures.*
- *SEDAR Steering Committee meeting location cost review.*

Table 1: SEDAR Project Grid - February 2025 SEDAR Steering Committee Discussion Draft

Table Color Legend:

Steering Committee Approved and SEFSC Scheduled Projects	FUTURE Requests
Steering Committee Approved, PENDING SEFSC SCHEDULING	Preliminary Projects - To Be Scheduled at the Ucoming Meeting

SEDAR SCHEDULE OVERVIEW- February 2025 SEDAR Steering Committee Discussion

	South Atlantic Team				Gulf Team						Caribbean Team		HMS Team		Florida FWCC		Menhaden/ RW only						
Year	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	1	2	1	2							
2025	S90 Red Snapper Benchmark		S92 Blueline Tilefish OA	S90 Red Snapper Benchmark	S88 Red Grouper OA		S98 Red Snapper Benchmark	S98 Red Snapper Benchmark	S87 White, Pink, and Brown Shrimp Benchmark		S84 Yellowtail Snapper (PR & STT/STJ) and Stoplight Parrotfish (STX) Benchmark	S91 Spiny Lobster (all islands) Benchmark	S77OA Hammerhead Sharks		S96 YTS OA								
		S95 Atlantic Migratory Cobia Benchmark	Red Grouper		S99 King Mackerel	S100 Gray Triggerfish					Hogfish? (PR) and Red Hind (USVI)?		S101 Sandbar Sharks		S94 Hogfish	Black Grouper MSE RW?	S102 ASMFC Menhaden (RW)						
2026	Gag Grouper																Gag Grouper						
2027		Vermilion	BSB	SA King Mackerel			Tilefish Complex?	Greater Amberjack									GSMFC Menhaden						
	Snowy Grouper								Gray Snapper														
2028	Red Porgy	Greater Amberjack	Spanish Mackerel				Vermillion	Cobia, Lane, Spanish									ASMFC Menhaden						
2029										Scamp													
2030																							
2031																							

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.