

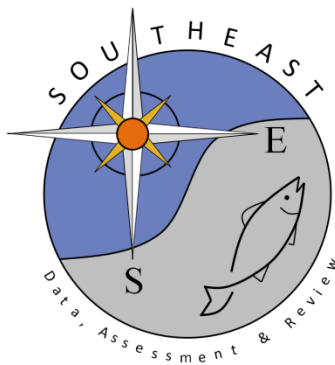
## **SEDAR 50 (Blueline Tilefish) Stock Identification - Management/Science Call Recommendations**

Council (MAFMC, SAFMC, GMFMC), Science Center (SEFSC, NEFSC), and Regional Office (SERO, GARFO)  
Leadership

**SEDAR50-DW17**

Submitted: 14 November 2016

Updated: 15 November 2016



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Please cite this document as:

Council, Science Center, & Regional Office Leadership. 2016. SEDAR 50 (Blueline Tilefish) Stock Identification – Management/Science Call Recommendations. SEDAR50-DW17. SEDAR, North Charleston, SC. 1 pp.

## Blueline Tilefish – management/science call recommendations

Updated: 11/15/2016

A conference call was held on November 14, 2016 with Council and NMFS leadership from the South Atlantic, Mid-Atlantic, and Gulf of Mexico to discuss the suite of Blueline Tilefish stock structure recommendations and provide guidance for resolving biological stock-management unit differences. The group was provided the recommendations of the Stock ID workshop and the joint SSC review of the workshop recommendations. Attendees on the call included Bonnie Ponwith, SEFSC Director; John Hare, NEFS Director; Roy Crabtree, SERO Administrator; Michelle Duvall, SAFMC Chair; Leeann Bosarge, GMFMC chair, Warren Elliott, MAFMC vice-Chair; Gregg Waugh, SAFMC Executive Director; Doug Gregory, GMFMC Executive Director; Chris Moore, MAFMC Executive Director; John Carmichael, SEDAR Program Manager; Julia Byrd, SEDAR Coordinator; Ryan Rindone, GMFMC Staff.

1. The group accepts the findings of the Joint SSC Review held October 28, 2016.
2. The group recognizes that the genetics sample size for the Gulf of Mexico is small, and restricted to a limited area off of the West Florida shelf, because those fish were included as an “outgroup” in the genetics study of the Atlantic population. The study did not include Blueline Tilefish from the full range of their occurrence in the Gulf of Mexico, so no genetics information is available to determine the stock structure in the Gulf of Mexico.
3. There is genetic evidence based on the small sample from the Gulf of Mexico to indicate gene flow from the West Florida shelf to the Atlantic. No genetic data exist on fish from the western Gulf of Mexico. Including West Florida in the Atlantic stock assessment simply shifts the dividing line from the existing Council jurisdictional boundary into the Gulf of Mexico. Given the lack of information available to describe population structure of Blueline Tilefish throughout the Gulf of Mexico, extending the assessment coverage to include the West Florida shelf and thus divide the Gulf of Mexico population will create additional challenges for developing meaningful scientific advice for the entire Gulf of Mexico Blueline Tilefish fishery.
4. The group recommends using the boundary between the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic Council as the Southwestern boundary for the SEDAR 50 stock assessment of Blueline Tilefish.
5. The group also recommends that research be conducted to fully define population structure of Blueline Tilefish in the Gulf of Mexico, and to define the relationship between fish in the Gulf of Mexico with those in the Atlantic.