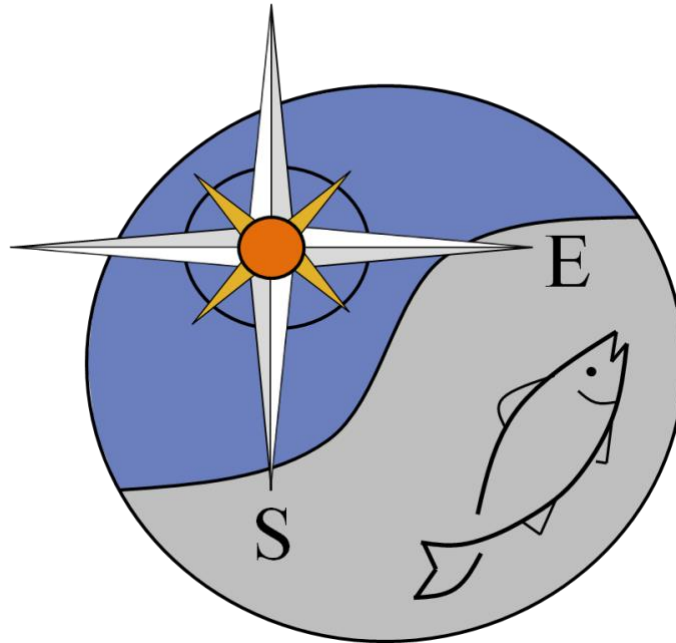


SEDAR



SEDAR Steering Committee

Meeting Brief

May 17, 2023

Meeting via Webinar

Webinar link: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/6535979131083402582>

Version: BB

5/1/2023

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- Attachment 2: SEDAR Projects Update April 2023
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1 Introduction

1.1 Documents

- Agenda
- Attachment 1. February 2023 Draft Meeting Summary

1.2 Action

- Introduction
- Review and Approve Agenda
- Approve Meeting Summary

2 SEDAR Projects Report

2.1 Documents

Attachment 2. SEDAR Projects Update April 2023

2.2 Summary

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

Highlighted project developments:

SEDAR 74 – Gulf Red Snapper: The assessment development stage has required more time than was originally scheduled and the analytic team requested several additional webinars to complete the assessment modeling work. The Review Workshop (originally scheduled for April 2023, then July 31- August 4, 2023), will now be held November 6-10, 2023, with the final report scheduled for release in December 2023.

SEDAR 76 – South Atlantic Black Sea Bass: The final assessment report was released in March 2023. The SAFMC SSC reviewed it in April 2023, and it was deemed consistent with BSIA.

SEDAR 80 – Caribbean Queen Triggerfish: The Final Stock Assessment Report for Queen Triggerfish in St. Thomas/St. John was released October of 2022 and presented at the December 2022 SSC meeting. The SEFSC continues to work with the Caribbean SSC to refine the model. The Final Stock Assessment Report for Queen Triggerfish in St. Croix has not yet been released.

2.3 Action

- Informational; none required

3 SEDAR Process Review and Discussion

3.1 Documents

Attachment 3: SEDAR Assessment Categories Discussion Document

Attachment 4: Research Track/Operational Assessment/Topical Working Group Guidance Document

Attachment 5: SEFSC Discussion Documents

Attachment 6: Hybrid Meeting and Informal Communications Discussion Document

3.2 Summary

- Assessment Portfolio Evaluation and Recommendations (Attachments 3 & 4)

During the Winter 2023 meeting, the Committee discussed the SEFSC's Portfolio approach to assessments. It was acknowledged that the duration of an assessment process lies on a continuum, and better communication about the requirements of each specific assessment is needed to clearly explain the factors (for example the number of TWGs) that affect project schedules.

While the assessment portfolio contains a wide range of options to provide management advice, only the Research Track (RT) and Operational assessments (OA) are governed by the Committee. Several Cooperators indicated that the addition of another assessment category like the previous benchmarks would be useful. The addition of this assessment category follows the Center's recommendation to have project schedules with fixed dates, would allow for the Cooperators to have a better understanding of when final assessment products would be available for their use, and avoids the issue of not knowing what will be required of an OA following a RT, which was a problem identified by the Center as impacting planning and throughput. The committee did not make any final recommendations at the February meeting but requested the following:

SEDAR Staff will work with SEFSC Staff to refine the suggested categories and provide an updated document for discussion at the next meeting. Inclusion of more details/metrics to understand how changing the approach will help with efficiency was requested.

Attachment 3 was produced by SEDAR Staff to capture the discussion during the February meeting and provide a source document for further discussion and recommendations from the Committee. Attachment 4 documents the Committee's current guidance regarding RTs, OAs, and TWGs.

- Research Track Process for 2024/2025 assessments (Attachment 5)

The Committee discussed the recent decrease in assessment output during the February 2023 meeting and the SEFSC provided options for improving throughput. One suggestion was to clarify the expectations for RT assessments currently scheduled through 2025: Those RTs would follow the following structure:

- Develop conceptual models that capture the essential dynamics of the system and provide a basis for stock status determinations and fishing level recommendations.
 - Completed during the data phase of the project

- What are the important elements of the population dynamics of the stock?
- Are there any environmental forcing factors that should be considered?
- Determine what models may be available to capture the essential dynamics given the available data.
- No need for final, QAQC data. Data streams from previous assessments may be sufficient for developing a working model.
- Will not focus on model diagnostics.
- Produce a preliminary model for review.

Upon reviewing the draft Meeting Summary of the February meeting, it became clear that the structure recommended by the Center requires further discussion by the Committee.

There was also a request to examine the simpler assessment approaches to see if efficiencies may be gained there. The following statement was proposed:

Consensus Statement: The Steering Committee requests that the SEFSC develop and add to each type of assessment outlined in Table 1a-1e a list of potential simpler modeling approaches that could be applied including consideration of a list of data inputs and time/staff requirements for each potential model.

- The Committee agreed that there is value in considering simpler approaches and making modeling decisions based on the data availability and time requirements.
- The SEFSC will produce a document to provide additional information on the costs and benefits of alternative approaches.
 - It would be useful to produce a summary of what the data needs, and time requirements are for different classes of models, so that the information may be considered when deciding what model options are appropriate.
 - Information on potential management options or constraints should be included.

The Center will provide additional information for the Committee to consider in their discussions.

- Discussion of SEDAR Policy on Hybrid Meetings and Guidance on Informal Communications (Attachment 6)

The Committee discussed the option of allowing hybrid meetings for future SEDAR projects during its Winter 2023 meeting. The Committee defined a hybrid meeting as follows:

- A hybrid meeting is defined as a meeting where appointed participants would be able to choose whether to participate by attending the meeting in person, or by attending remotely. There would be no restrictions on their interactions within the group whether in-person or remote.

During the discussions, the Committee discussed potential advantages and challenges that might be result in a change to hybrid meetings. Full details may be found in the February Meeting Summary report (Attachment 1), but a few items are highlighted below:

- Hybrid meetings are difficult to convene and conduct compared to in-person or virtual meetings. They create a ‘meeting in a meeting’ approach, are logistically complex and have financial implications for SEDAR and Cooperators that send administrative staff to facilitate these workshops.
- Hybrid meetings may allow for more individuals who do not wish to or cannot travel to participate during the in-person stages.
- Person-to-person communications among stakeholders, data providers, and analytic staff are critical to the development and acceptance of the assessment process and are very difficult to achieve using virtual or hybrid approaches. This is particularly important during the data stage of the process, when interactions are had outside of the meeting, and relationships are established which build trust with stakeholders and allow the process to move forward.
- Review Panel members should plan to participate in-person at the Review meeting but allowing certain individuals (such as DW Working Group leads) who fill a supportive, rather than direct presentation role, to be on call and react remotely to questions from the Review Panel is something to be considered moving forward.

The Committee did agree to broadcast future data and review workshop plenary sessions. This will be a broadcast-only feature and will not be configured for remote participation. This is a change to the current policy and would allow individuals not in attendance to observe the proceedings.

It was noted that there is a difference between a hybrid meeting format and the informal communications that often happen at in-person meetings. Attachment 6 contains guidance provided by NOAA General Counsel regarding informal communications.

3.3 Action

- Consider if any changes to the SEDAR assessment categories are desired.
- Discussion of the Research Track outputs to clarify the expectations of the Committee for Research Track assessments scheduled for 2024/2025.
- Consider if hybrid meetings should be considered for future SEDAR Processes and provide guidance on informal communications at in-person data workshops, if desired.

4 Assessment Schedule Review

4.1 Documents

Attachment 7. SEDAR Projects List

Attachment 8. SEFSC Project Scheduling Parameters and Guidelines

Attachment 9: Final SoWs for 2025 Projects

Attachment 10: Modifications to the Project Planning Grid from the February 2023 Steering Committee Summary

4.2 Summary

Review of 2024 and Draft 2025 Project Scheduling:

- Following the Winter 2023 Steering Committee a Master Scheduling webinar with SEDAR and SESFC was held in April 2023. SEFSC Staff took the lead in producing a draft 2025 overall project schedule that was discussed on the webinar. Some changes to the 2024 schedule were also discussed.
- During the development of the 2024 schedule, Center Staff developed a variety of parameters and guidelines to aid in scheduling. These guidelines can be reviewed in Attachment 8.

4.3 Action

- Consider any needed modifications to the 2024 Projects
- Finalize Projects for 2025
- Discuss Future Project Requests (2026-2028)

5 Other Business

5.1 Documents

Attachment 11. NRCC Spring 2023 Agenda

Attachment 12: 2022 Fall NRCC Meeting Summary

Attachment 13: 2022 Fall NRC Action Items

Attachment 14: NRCC Charter

5.2 Summary

- Potential Expansion of the Role of the SEDAR Steering Committee to discuss Regional Issues:

The analogue of the SEDAR Steering Committee (STC) in the Greater Atlantic Region is the Northeast Region Coordinating Council (NRCC). In addition to oversight and planning for their SAW/SARC assessment process (SEDAR equivalent), the NRCC provides an opportunity for regional coordination of other topics of shared interest and concern. For example, topics addressed at recent NRCC meetings include wind power, aquaculture, SBRM, COVID data impacts, regional monitoring capabilities, observer programs, protected resources, BSIA policies, and climate scenario planning.

The STC briefly explored expanding its role in 2005 to provide coordination of regional management workload issues. The intent was to improve coordination of the management workload placed on the Region, SERO and SEFSC, by the three Councils. This was not particularly successful and was soon abandoned. A major challenge of the approach at the time was dealing with the pace and scale of management requests and needs within the

confines of a biannual STC meeting and the inability of cooperators to engage in the management needs of their peers.

The intent of this topic is not to restart an effort that proved unworkable, but rather to consider if there is a need and opportunity to use the STC to improve regional coordination on shared topics, such as those listed above as considered by the NRCC. The recent effort to develop a regional BSIA policy is a good example. All three councils were requested to comment on the draft, and the agency reps discussed the topic at multiple Council meetings. Numerous concerns were raised, and significant edits required. However, the discussion at the last STC meeting, including both agency representatives and Cooperators together, appeared to help build a regional consensus on how to proceed. Such a model could prove efficient and helpful to developing robust regional consensus on shared issues.

- Update on the BSIA Framework for the Southeast Region

NMFS will provide an update on this topic.

- Update on the Procedural Workshop 8: Fishery Independent Index Development Under Changing Survey Design

SEDAR Staff will provide an update on the Procedural Workshop 8 process and report status.

5.3 Action

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

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 in Fall 2023.

Table 1: SEDAR Project Planning Grid – May 2023 SEDAR Steering Committee Discussion Draft

Table Color Legend:

Steering Committee Approved and SEFSC Scheduled Projects	FUTURE Requests
Steering Committee Approved, PENDING SEFSC SCHEDULING	2025 Preliminary Projects – To Be Finalized at the Spring 2023 Meeting

SEDAR SCHEDULE OVERVIEW – May 2023 SEDAR Steering Committee Discussion

YEAR	SA Team				Gulf Team					Caribbean Team	HMS Team		FL FWCC	Menhaden/ RW only	CMP
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	5	1	1	2			
2023		S82 Gray Triggerfish RT	S86 Red Grouper OA			S85 Yellowedge Grouper OA	S74 Red Snapper RT	S74 Red Snapper RT	S81 Spanish Mackerel OA	S80 Queen Trigger PR-STX-STT OA	S77 Hammerheads RT		S79 Mutton Snapper Benchmark		
2024				S89 Tilefish OA	S88 Red Grouper OA	Gray Triggerfish RT	S74OA Red Snapper	S74OA Red Snapper	S87 Shrimp RT	S84 Yellowtail Snapper (PR & STT) Stoplight Parrotfish (STX) Benchmark				S94 Hogfish Benchmark	S93 ASFMC Red Drum (RW) Gulf Menhaden OA
2025	S90 Red snapper RT	S82OA Grey Triggerfish	S92 Blueline Tilefish OA					Cobia OA		Gag Grouper OA		S91 Spiny Lobster OA (all islands)	S77OA Hammerheads		
2026		Gag Grouper OA	Atl Migratory Cobia OA	Red Porgy OA	GAJ RT				S87 OA Shrimp	Hogfish (PR) Lane Snapper?	Queen Snapper	Bull, Spinner, Tiger, Finetooth Sharks RT	Black Grouper Benchmark /MP	Atl Menhaden (RW only)	
2027			Snowy Grouper OA	Dolphin MP?		Grey Triggerfish OA	Tilefish Complex (MP?)	Scamp OA							
2028	Red Snapper OA	GAJ RT	White Grunt RT												
2029	Vermilion 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.