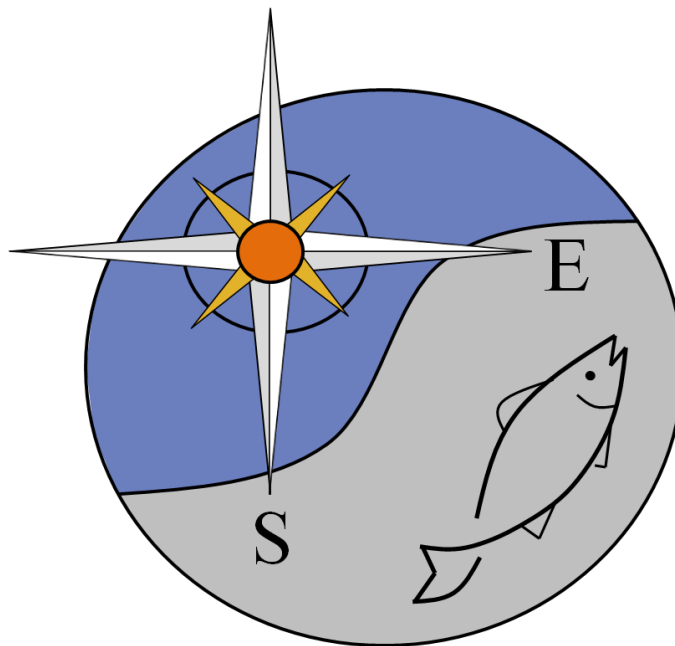


SEDAR



**SEDAR Steering Committee
MEETING SUMMARY
FINAL**

June 5, 2014

Webinar Meeting

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Attendance

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Douglass Boyd, GMFMC
Karyl Brewster-Geisz, NMFS HMS
Patrick Campfield, ASMFC
Roy Crabtree, NMFS SERO
Dave Donaldson, GSMFC
Doug Gregory, GMFMC
Ben Hartig, SAFMC
Bob Mahood, SAFMC
Miguel Rolon, CFMC

SEDAR STAFF

Julia Byrd
John Carmichael
Julie Neer

OBSERVERS

Nate Bacheler, NOAA Fisheries
Peter Barile, SFA
Michael Burton, NOAA Fisheries
Kevin Craig, NOAA Fisheries
Mike Errigo, SAFMC
Graciela Garcia, GMFMC
Russell Hudson, Directed Sustainable Fisheries
Jennifer Potts, NOAA Fisheries
Ryan Rindone, GMFMC
Carrie Simmons, GMFMC
Steve VanderKooy, GSMFC
Erik Williams, NOAA Fisheries

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

Committee discussion is summarized under each agenda topic in this report, indicated in the text by italics. Specific recommendations addressing action items are further listed here.

- Reviewed and approved the modified SOPPS. One additional insertion was made to Section 7.3, addressing desk review criteria.
- Expressed intent to review the SOPPs in their entirety at the next meeting.
- Suggested a two step approach to the assessment summary: (1) Assessment Report Executive Summary drafted by SEDAR staff and included in the final SAR, (2) Assessment summary addressing technical issues and incorporating final recommendations, contents determined by and drafted by each Cooperator.
- Discussed but could not resolve several schedule issues: Gulf of Mexico red snapper and South Atlantic blueline tilefish and 2015 stocks. These topics were remanded to the appropriate Council's for resolution at their next meeting. Councils should report their findings to SEDAR staff so that project schedule changes can be made.
- Clarified that revised MRIP estimates can be incorporated in Update assessments. Benchmarks and Standards are only necessary to include new data sources, and are not required if values within an existing data source are revised, corrected, calibrated, or otherwise modified.
- Received notice that changes in 2015 and 2016 SEFSC assessment capabilities may be required due to staff changes.
- Approved SEDAR to co-host the MRIP Calibration Workshop scheduled for September 2014.
- Changed timing of the next meeting to October 6 - 7, 2014, in Charleston, SC.

1. Introduction

1.1. Documents

Agenda

Attachment 1. January 30, 2014, Meeting Summary

1.2. Action

Introductions

Review and Approve Agenda

Approve February 2013 Meeting Summary

2. SEDAR SOPPS Revisions

2.1. Documents

Attachment 2. SOPPS with revisions

2.2. Summary

Revisions to the SEDAR SOPPs (Guidelines) were recommended to address desk peer reviews and National Standard 2 updates addressing public comment during workshops. Suggested language and revisions were discussed at the October 2013 and January 2014 meetings. Those revisions are incorporated into the SOPPs document and offered here for final approval.

In reviewing these revisions, the HMS group identified a number of additional revisions, ranging from editorial changes to inconsistencies with current practices. As the last major revision was conducted in 2009 and approved in 2011, an overall review may be in order to bring the document in line with both current practices and changes in program needs related to the MSA revision. One caveat to consider, however, is that the agency is in the process of reviewing all review programs for compliance with NS guidelines, so care must be taken not to make changes that could lead to compliance concerns. Moreover, it may prove more efficient to conduct an overall review after recommendations on NS compliance are available.

2.3. ACTION ITEMS

- Review and Approve the SOPPs revisions
- Provide guidance on further updates

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION:

The Committee reviewed and approved the proposed SOPPS revisions. Additional language was suggested regarding desk reviews, Section 7.3, to clarify that Desk Reviews may be used to provide assessment peer reviews if the Cooperator, lead assessment

agency, and SEDAR Steering Committee Chair consider the desk review approach appropriate given the nature of the work to be reviewed. Desk reviews in such circumstances may be part of the initial project plan or requested during the project if warranted based on the analytical methods applied and scope of analysis conducted.

The following language is added to the second bullet of section 7.3 to further clarify when desk reviews will be considered:

"There may be other circumstances where the nature and scope of the assessment are conducive to a desk review approach. As these guidelines cannot address all circumstances, the Cooperator, analytical agency representative and SEDAR Steering Committee Chair may decide if a desk review is appropriate. Desk reviews may be requested through the initial TORs for a project or during a project if the analysis progresses such that a desk review is considered appropriate by the Cooperator, assessment lead, and Steering Committee Chair."

The Committee will conduct a review of the SOPPs in their entirety during the next meeting. Each Member is asked to review the document as modified here in preparation for that discussion, and identify general topic areas for discussion by the full committee.

3. SEDAR Assessment Summary Report

3.1. Documents

Attachment 3. Existing Summary Report Contents
Attachment 4. Gulf Council Summary Report Outline
Attachment 5. Example SAFMC Gag Grouper Summary

3.2. Overview

The Steering Committee agreed to reconsider the use and contents of the Assessment Summary Report, with the Gulf Council agreeing to provide examples and an overview of possible document changes. The revised outline is provided for consideration, along with the current version for comparison. The current version was developed by a subcommittee including representatives from all Cooperators.

SEDAR Staff also reviewed usage and logistics related to the current report and agrees that the current report should be revised. As detailed below, the current report is outdated, presenting an impression of final findings that is no longer valid; it is time consuming and contributes to delays in final report dissemination; and it does not meet current needs for a summary of technical issues and uncertainties.

- Most importantly, the current report format was developed prior to the MSA revisions and changes in SEDAR RW TORs. At that time SEDAR reports were expected to provide the final assessment results, whereas now SEDAR review panels are encouraged to address uncertainties and are far less obligated to provide a single answer. More responsibility is now given to the SSC to interpret assessment findings. There is less of a desire on behalf of SSCs and Cooperators to have SEDAR reports provide final answers on criteria such as stock status, with more emphasis on providing ranges, multiple models, and

multiple states of nature. The result is that the summary report, as an indicator of final findings, is largely outdated. Statements such as stock status are really no longer the purview of the review panel, and thus making such declarations in a summary report is misleading.

- The expectation to include various final summary tables for status, stock trends, and projections leads to delays in completing the overall assessment report. This is exacerbated when any updates are required after the RW, as the analysts need to provide the info for both the RW report needs and later for the summary. Staff has received push-back from analysts regarding the need to provide the additional information and figures.
- The summary report has always been a compromise and seldom meets the needs of addressing assessment issues and questions that may arise within the Council or constituents. This has led to requests for Council staff to develop additional summaries or FAQs of particularly controversial assessments, with South Atlantic red snapper a notable example. The Summary is prepared by SEDAR Coordinators, not stock assessments scientists, and they cannot be expected to communicate the technical issues that may underlie many concerns, further contributing to Council and SERO efforts to solicit more technical summaries from staff scientists. As an example of one such effort, the recent South Atlantic gag summary is provided.

Based on the examples above, the current report is outdated, presenting an impression of final findings that is no longer valid; it is time consuming and contributes to delays in final report dissemination; and it does not meet current needs for a summary of technical issues and uncertainties. Therefore, SEDAR Staff recommends that the Committee consider dropping the summary report altogether. The summary should be replaced with a true executive summary that summarizes the overall process documented through the report sections and helps the reader navigate the report. A technical summary addressing uncertainties and concerns of the Council and constituents should be prepared by Cooperator Staff, as this will allow each Cooperator to tailor the contents and presentation to meet their needs. Such summaries would be part of the Cooperator documentation and not the SEDAR report, thus reducing one point of delay in report dissemination.

3.3. ACTION

- Consider modifications to the Summary Report

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION:

The Committee discussed summary report contents and purpose in detail. It was agreed that any summary should be concise, approachable, and accessible to constituents. Assessment reports should contain a true executive summary that address the process and indicates the steps following assessment dissemination that lead to final recommendations and status determinations. An opportunity for confusion now exists because status determinations can differ between those indicated

in the current summary report approach and those provided by the through technical advisor (SSC) deliberations that occur after a SEDAR project is concluded. Cooperators should be allowed latitude to develop summary reports that meet the needs of their process and provide final status recommendations. Guidance on effective communication of results may be provided through the SEFSC assessment program review to be held in July 2014.

The Committee proposed a two part approach to assessment summarization. First, an Executive Summary will be developed by SEDAR Coordinators and included in each Assessment Report. It will address the assessment process and provide a "readers guide" to the extensive Assessment Report, highlight key discussion topics of the workshops and indicate the steps that follow the SEDAR project. This Executive Summary will not address specific findings or technical issues.

Secondly, each Cooperator may develop other summary documents as needed to address the communication needs of their process for developing fishing level recommendations from the stock assessment, and to document the final status recommendations of their technical advisors. These materials will be posted to the SEDAR website to document the final recommendations stemming from the SEDAR assessment.

4. 2015 SEDAR Project Schedules

4.1. Documents

Attachment 6. 2015 Project Schedule

4.2. Summary

The 2015 project schedule was developed following the January meeting with input from SEFSC data and assessment program leadership and offered for review by the SEDAR Technical Committee.

No conflicts were identified by the Technical Committee. Specific suggestions are summarized here:

- Conduct the SA Blueline update as a Standard assessment
A similar recommendation was made by the SAFMC SSC and will be considered at the June Council meeting.
- Consider completing the SEDAR 43 Gulf gray triggerfish standard assessment sooner, to be available for the June Council meeting.

Changes such as these will not affect multiple cooperators and therefore can be resolved by the Center and Council, under the scheduling flexibility allowances approved by the Committee at the prior meeting. If the changes are approved, the Cooperator shall notify the SEDAR program manager in writing.

4.3. Actions

- Consider the suggested 2015 changes and approval for the SEFSC and appropriate Cooperators to address them.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION:

South Atlantic Blueline Tilefish. There was no objection to replacing the 2015 vermilion snapper update with a standard assessment of blueline tilefish. However, Center Director Ponwith reported that staff turnover in the Beaufort Team would affect South Atlantic productivity for 2015. Full details on those impacts could not be provided at the time of this meeting, although it could be necessary to drop several of the 2015 updates now scheduled. Further information will be provided by the Center Director at the next South Atlantic Council meetings, and the Steering Committee will address further schedule changes at its next meeting in October 2014.

The Committee did not recommend changing the timing of Gulf of Mexico gray triggerfish.

Gulf of Mexico Red Snapper: The Committee received 3 letters from Gulf of Mexico Council representatives requesting changing the red snapper update scheduled for 2014 to a benchmark or standard assessment to allow incorporation of revised MRIP estimates. During discussion it was indicated that confusion exists regarding the types of information that can be incorporated in each SEDAR assessment type, leading Chair Ponwith to state that MRIP revisions can be incorporated through an update assessment. A summary table of issues and paths to resolution was developed to aid the discussion (below)

A key issue for the upcoming update assessment is the timing of MRIP estimate revisions in response to changes in the intercept survey, as incorporating revised MRIP values is a primary justification for the 2014 update. A workshop planned for September 2014 will be tasked with developing recommendations for addressing the latest MRIP methods changes and calibrating current values to prior values. A similar approach was taken during the last major revisions to the estimation process, and it took several months to apply the recommendations and develop calibration values. Timing of availability of calibration values addressing the current MRIP changes is unknown.

The other major issue discussed was the separation of the TAC into regional components. The details of TAC changes may influence the assessment type necessary, but as these are unknown the Committee could not provide final recommendations on the next assessments.

Due to the lack of details on the key issues affecting assessment timing, the Committee agreed that this topic should be discussed further by the Council and Chair Ponwith at the next Gulf Council meeting.

Summary of Gulf Red Snapper assessment issues and the type of SEDAR Assessment required to address each .

Assessment Issue	Assessment category required to accommodate the issue
MRIP Calibration (intercept) - September workshop outcome	Update Note: Current 2014 schedule may not allow including the revised estimates, availability of which is unknown.
Regional TACS	Update (SSC may disagree)
Regional TACS, change boundary	Standard (SSC may disagree)

Several options for the next assessments of Gulf of Mexico red snapper were identified during the meeting:

- 1. Status quo: Update red snapper in 2014 as planned (December 2014 Council delivery) and a Standard in 2015 (Council delivery December 2015). Current update scheduling is unlikely to accommodate calibrated MRIP. Update values should be available for the 2015 Standard assessment.*
- 2. Update assessment in late 2014, with timing modified as necessary to accommodate recalibrated MRIP data. Timing modification will likely include delayed delivery of final product; specifics cannot be determined until the September 2014 calibration workshop. The next assessment and its timing will be determined after the 2014 Update is resolved.*
- 3. Standard assessment in late 2014 replaces the current 2014 Update and 2015 Standard assessments. The data deadline will be developed after MRIP calibration info is available to allow including revised or calibrated estimates in the assessment. Standard assessment timing will reduce the time between data availability and report availability to the Council. Results may be available in mid 2015.*
- 4. Benchmark assessment in late 2014, after MRIP calibration info available. Replaces the 2014 Update and 2015 Standard. Timing of a benchmark will be longer than a standard or update, and would likely preclude Council availability during 2015.*

Councils were advised to discuss these scheduling issues at their next meetings, per the allowances for schedule modifications approved by the Steering Committee. Council schedule and priority recommendations should be forwarded to SEDAR Staff so the appropriate project changes can be made and the Steering Committee can be informed of the outcomes. Due to the need to modify existing SEDAR project schedules, responses are desired by the end of June 2014. Summary of items by Council:

Gulf Council:

- Type and Timing of the next red snapper assessment.*
- Further discussion between SSC and SEFSC analysts: develop consensus on the changes necessary to accommodate regional TACs.*

South Atlantic Council:

- Type and Timing of the next blueline tilefish assessment*
- 2015 Update priorities.*

5. 2016 Capabilities and Priorities

5.1. Documents

Attachment 7. SEDAR Project Listing

5.2. Summary

During this meeting the Committee considers the overall workload capability by Cooperator and identifies assessment priorities. A summary table of recent projects is provided, reflecting the January 2014 actions and the schedule development and coordination process described above.

A workload table is also provided, similar to what has been used in prior years to assist the committee.

5.3. Actions

- Identify the number of project slots available in 2016
- Develop assessment priorities for 2016 and beyond.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION:

The Committee ran short on time and therefore did not discuss scheduling for 2016 and beyond in great detail. However, Chair Ponwith indicated that, due to staffing changes in the SEFSC, some adjustment to 2016 capabilities is expected. The 2016 schedule will be discussed at the next meeting.

HMS identified Atlantic blacktip shark as a priority in 2016 and an additional assessment slot to better meet their analytical needs.

The Caribbean data poor assessment process will take 2 years and address multiple species, beginning with a data workshop in 2015 and assessment workshop and review in 2016.

The Gulf States Commission requested review of a Gulf Menhaden Benchmark in 2017.

Table 1. Assessment Project Schedule and Details 2013 - 2016, based on Steering Committee recommendations of January 2014 and 2014 schedule coordination.

Start Year	SEDAR #	Stocks	Type	Terminal Data	SEDAR Concluded (dissemination)
2013	38	King mackerel	Benchmark	2012	August 2014
2014					
	39	HMS Smoothhound complexes	Benchmark	2012	March 2015
	40	Atl. menhaden	Review	2012	January 2015
	41	SA Red snapper and gray triggerfish	Benchmark	2013	August 2015
	42	Gulf red grouper	Benchmark	2013	August 2015
	U	Gulf red snapper	Update	2013	December 2014
	43	Gulf gray triggerfish	Standard	2013	July 2015
2015					
2016	U	SA Red grouper	Update	2013	April 2015
	44	Gulf Red Snapper	Standard	2014	December 2015
	45	Atlantic red drum	Review	2013	October 2015
	U	FL Black grouper	Update	2014	October 2015
	46	Caribbean data limited	Benchmark	2013	May 2016
	U	SA Golden Tilefish	Update	2014	April 2016
	U	SA Vermilion snapper (or blueline)	Update (Std)	2014	April 2016
	U	FL Yellowtail Snapper (FWCC)	Update	2014	May 2016
	47	SA Scamp & Gray Snapper	Benchmark	2014	October 2016
ITEMS BELOW THIS POINT ARE TENTATIVE - TO BE FINALIZED BY STEERING COMMITTEE, October 2014					
		Caribbean queen conch, spiny lobster	Benchmark	2014	
		SA red porgy	Benchmark	2014	October 1, 2016
		Atlantic Croaker	Review	2014	
		Gulf Menhaden	Std or Update	2015	
		Gulf red drum	Benchmark	2015	
		Gulf yellowedge grouper	Standard	2015	
		Gulf gray snapper	Benchmark	2015	
		Caribbean Grunts	Benchmark	2015	
		Gulf greater amberjack			
		Gulf gag			
		FL Yellowtail snapper	Update	2015	April 2016
		HMS Blacktip SA	Benchmark		

YEAR	SAFMC/Commission (Beaufort)		GMFMC/CFMC (Miami)		HMS (SEFSC/PC)	FL FWC	Procedures
	SAFMC	Commissions	GMFMC	CFMC			
2015	1,-3: RS/GT (cont) 4. Red grouper U 5.	ATL Red Drum (Review) By Oct '15	1. Red grouper B 2. Red snapper S 3. Gray Trigger S 4, 5. King mackerel B	6, 7. Data Poor	1, 2. Smoothhound (through March)	Yellowtail Snapper U	1. Best Practices - Data
2016	1, 2: scamp/gray snapper B 3. Blueline U (to April) 4.Tilefish U (to April) 5. Red Porgy B	ATL Croaker	1. Gag U 2. GAJ U 3. Red drum B 4. Yellowedge Gr. S 5. Gray Snapper B	6.	1. 2		1. Best practices - Assessment
2017		Gulf Men B					

6. SEFSC Program Review: Assessments

6.1. Documents

None.

6.2. Summary

As part of the ongoing annual review of national science programs, the SEFSC is conducting a review of the assessment program, July 7 - 11, 2014.

6.3. Actions

FYI, none required

The Program Review will be held July 8 - 10 at the Mayfair Hotel in Coconut Grove, Miami FL. It is open to the public. Council Chairs and ED's were invited to attend. SSC representative invitations are expected.

7. Next Meetings

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for September 23 - 25 in Charleston. Specific dates should be decided at this meeting.

The next meeting is scheduled for October 6 - 7, 2014, in Charleston, SC

OTHER BUSINESS

MRIP CALIRATION WORKSHOP:

The Committee supported SEDAR serving as a co-host of the MRIP calibration workshop, scheduled for the week of September 8 in Charlotte NC. Expenses associated with the workshop will be provided by additional funding from the NMFS and not by the current SEDAR budget.

8. Adjourn