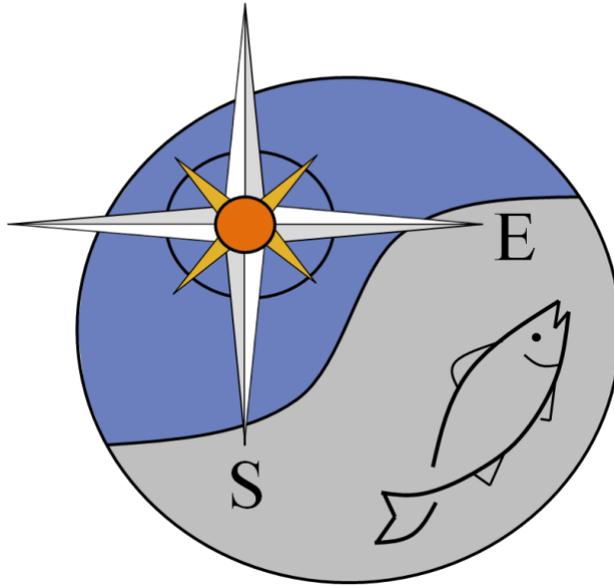


# SEDAR



## SEDAR Steering Committee Meeting Summary May 17, 2023

### **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”.

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**DOCUMENTS**

- Attachment 1: February 2023 Draft Meeting Summary
- Attachment 2: SEDAR Projects Update April 2023
- 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
- 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
- Attachment 11: NRCC Spring 2023 Agenda
- Attachment 12: 2022 Fall NRCC Meeting Summary
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**COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Clay Porch, Chair, SEFSC  
John Carmichael, SAFMC  
Carolyn Belcher, SAFMC  
Carrie Simmons, GMFMC  
Greg Stunz, GMFMC  
Miguel Rolón, GCFMC

Karyl Brewster-Geisz, HMS  
Dave Donaldson, GSMFC  
Pat Campfield, ASMFC  
Andy Strelcheck, SERO  
Luiz Barbieri, FWC/FWRI  
Marcos Hanke, CFMC

**SEDAR STAFF**

Julie A. Neer

Kathleen Howington

**WEBINAR OBSERVERS**

Kelly Adler, SEFSC  
Sarina Atkinson, SEFSC  
Beverly Barnett, SEFSC  
Shannon Cass-Calay, SEFSC  
Matthew Campbell, SEFSC  
Chip Collier, SAFMC Staff  
Dean Courtney, SEFSC  
Judd Curtis, SAFMC Staff  
Tom Frazer, GMFMC  
John Froeschke, GMFMC Staff  
Bob Gill, GMFMC  
Martha Guyas, ASA  
Ron Hill, SEFSC  
Joshua Kilborn, USF  
Rich Malinowski, SERO

Vivian Matter, SEFSC  
Kevin McCarthy, SEFSC  
Matthew Nuttall, SEFSC  
Michaela Pawluk, SEFSC  
Cassidy Petterson, SEFSC  
Ryan Rindone, GMFMC Staff  
Skyler Sagarese, SEFSC  
Mike Schmidtke, SAFMC Staff  
Katie Siegfried, SEFSC  
Wiley Sinkus, SCDNR  
Steve Vanderkooy, GSMFC  
John F. Walter, SEFSC  
Christina Wiegand, SAFMC Staff  
Erik Williams, SEFSC  
Xinsheng Zhang, SEFSC

## **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**

#### **Assessment Portfolio Evaluation and Recommendations**

*The Cooperator and the Center will have the ability to negotiate and decide what will be the best category for each assessment. The specific assessment category that is used will be based on a variety of issues, including the species being assessed and the data and modeling approaches being considered.*

*The Committee agreed that a Benchmark Assessment category would be a valuable addition to the options for the Cooperators to consider when requesting species for assessment.*

*SEDAR Staff will update the Guidance Document (Attachment 4) to include a Benchmark category and provide it to the Committee for Review at its Fall meeting.*

#### **Research Track Process for 2024/2025 assessments**

*The Committee reviewed a presentation that addressed questions regarding the report content for upcoming Research Track assessments. The presentation was prepared prior to the Committee’s decision to include a Benchmark category so some of the points raised in the presentation were no longer as relevant.*

*The Research Track/Developmental Process will still have a role in the SEDAR process but should be very limited in use.*

*The Committee appreciated the presentation from SEFSC Staff highlighting the pros and cons of various modeling approaches, specifically with respect to applying the appropriate analytical tool to the data available and the terms of reference (e.g. “right sizing”). The Committee supported the portfolio approach to assessment categories as discussed during this and the previous meetings but noted that implementation is lacking.*

*It was acknowledged that SEDAR was never intended to fulfill all the stock assessment needs for all the Cooperators in the region. It was also noted that efficiency is not the main goal of SEDAR. The focus has always been on thoroughness and transparency.*

*Cooperators need the Center to provide information on what level of output can be expected. Without some guidance, the Cooperators have no way to plan for their future requests.*

*The Center stated they could work with the Cooperators to update and refine the prioritized species lists using a data triage approach like what was produced for the Caribbean Council.*

#### **Discussion of SEDAR Policy on Hybrid Meetings and Guidance on Informal Communications**

*The Committee continued its discussion from the February Steering Committee meeting on hybrid meeting options within the SEDAR process. Much of the discussions during the meeting reiterated the comments received during the February 2023 meeting. Please see that meeting*

*summary report for those details. A few additional comments are documented in the body of this report.*

*The Committee was not able to reach a consensus on a hybrid policy for all SEDAR workshops.*

- *The Committee agreed that if an individual Cooperator was interested in holding a hybrid meeting, they could work with SEDAR Staff to allow that option, provided that the Cooperator would be able to provide the logistical and financial support needed for a hybrid meeting, above the regular meeting needs.*
- *The Committee did not discuss or provide any guidance on accepting public comment remotely. This topic needs to be revisited in the future.*

*The NOAA GC guidance regarding Informal Communications during the working groups at a Data Workshop was reviewed by the Committee. The Committee provided the following guidance:*

- *Should a non-appointed attendee be allowed to present and discuss a working paper and answer relevant questions to a working group? – YES.*
- *Should a non-appointed attendee be able to have unlimited access to the working group discussions and provide feedback on all topics being discussed? – YES.*
- *Should there be a limit on the number of non-appointed participants who may participate in these informal communications? - NO..*

### **Assessment Schedule Review**

*The Committee reviewed the draft project schedule presented by the SEFSC. The following 2025 requests were approved:*

*GMFMC – Gray Triggerfish OA, Gag Grouper OA, King Mackerel OA, S87 Shrimp OA*

*SAFMC – Gag Grouper OA, King Mackerel OA*

- *It was suggested that a Red Porgy OA may be considered for 2025 if ASMFC Atlantic Migratory Cobia cannot be accommodated. The SEFSC and ASMFC will discuss options and report back to the Committee in Fall.*

*CFMC – Hogfish (Puerto Rico) and Red Hind (USVI) Benchmark*

*HMS – Bull, Spinner, Tiger, and Finetooth Sharks Research Track*

- *HMS will discuss the species identified for 2025 and will report back at the Fall meeting if any changes are needed.*

*ASMFC –Atlantic Migratory Cobia was supposed to be conducted in 2025 but the SEFSC expressed concerns with moving forward with this assessment as an OA because the data sources are changing, and the distribution of the stock has largely shifted outside of the Southeast region. The SEFSC suggested the assessment slot could be used to conduct a data triage and discuss alternative management approaches in light of the changes in distribution. It was also suggested that SEDAR may not be the proper vehicle for conducting this assessment. The Center and ASMFC will continue this discussion and report back to the Committee in Fall.*

- *An Atlantic Menhaden Review Workshop is scheduled for 2025.*

*FWC – A Black Grouper Benchmark was slated for 2025, but after discussions with FWC, it has been postponed to 2026, it was postponed until 2026. The process for this assessment is still being discussed, with options including a data-limited or an MSE approach. Those discussions are continuing and FWC will inform the Committee of the proposed plan at the Fall meeting.*

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

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 Outcome

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				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				S74OA Red Snapper	S74OA Red Snapper			S91 Spiny Lobster Benchmark (all islands)	S77OA Hammerheads			
2026		Gag Grouper OA	Atl Migratory Cobia?	Red Porgy OA					S87 OA Shrimp	Hogfish (PR) Red Hind (USVI) Benchmark	Bull, Spinner, Tiger, Finetooth Sharks RT		Black Grouper Benchmark /MSE?	Atl Menhaden (RW only)	
2027			Snowy Grouper OA	Dolphin MP? RW Only?	GAJ Benchmark		Gray Triggerfish OA	Cobia OA?			TBD?				
2028	Red Snapper OA	GAJ Benchmark?													
2029	Vermilion OA		White Grunt RT				Gray Snapper OA	Vermilion Snapper 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.

## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Documents

- Agenda
- Attachment 1. February 2023 Draft Meeting Summary

### 1.2 Action

- Introduction
- Review and Approve Agenda
- Approve Meeting Summary

## **MEETING OUTCOME**

*The Committee adopted the agenda and approved the February 2023 Draft 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

## **MEETING OUTCOME**

*The Committee had no recommendations on the Project Updates.*

### **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.

## **MEETING OUTCOME**

*To address the request of the Committee from the February 2023 meeting, SEDAR Staff presented information on the assessment categories which SEDAR manages, along with the potential for inclusion of an additional category like the previous benchmarks.*

*The Committee appreciated that the discussion table focused on the elements of the SEFSC assessment portfolio that the SEDAR program manages and noted that MSEs and Interim Analyses are important tools that may be applied outside of SEDAR.*

*It was noted that “Duration” may not be a meaningful statistic about the effort needed to conduct an assessment.*

- *“Person years” is important when the Center is determining the number and types of assessments that can be conducted.*
- *As you increase the assessment complexity, the person years required to conduct the assessment will also increase.*
- *The Center needs to account for how many person years are required for each type of assessment to determine overall workload.*

*The Cooperator and the Center will have the ability to negotiate and decide what will be the best category for each assessment. The specific assessment category that is used will be based on a variety of issues, including the species being assessed and the data and modeling approaches being considered.*

*It was noted that the same data providers produce the data products for the bulk of the assessments, whether they are called OAs or Benchmarks, or whether the process is conducted within, or extra to, SEDAR.*

*The Committee agreed that a Benchmark Assessment category would be a valuable addition to the options for the Cooperators to consider when requesting species for assessment.*

- *Return to the term Benchmark, as another terminology change may lead to more confusion among stakeholders.*
- *Benchmark assessments will produce management advice at the conclusion of the process, thus removing some of the planning issues that arise with the RT/OA process.*
- *Research Tracks were not designed to replace Benchmark assessments. They are supposed to be used sparingly.*

*SEDAR Staff will update the Guidance Document (Attachment 4) to include a Benchmark category and provide it to the Committee for Review at its Fall meeting.*

- 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.

## **MEETING OUTCOME**

*The Committee reviewed a presentation that addressed questions regarding the report content for upcoming Research Track assessments. The presentation was prepared prior to the Committee's decision to include a Benchmark category so some of the points raised in the presentation were no longer as relevant.*

*The Research Track/Developmental Process will still have a role in the SEDAR process but should be very limited in use.*

- *They should only be undertaken when there is a significant amount of new information challenging previous assumptions.*
- *They may be useful to examine topics that impact a variety of species but may not be appropriate for a Procedural Workshop as they are regionally specific.*

- *They should not be required for every first-time assessment. That determination will need to be made after reviewing the data availability and discussions between the Cooperator and the lead analytic agency.*
- *Research Tracks may not have a pre-determined duration of time and should produce guidance for next steps upon completion. That guidance may not recommend an OA to produce management advice in every situation.*

*The Committee appreciated the presentation from SEFSC Staff highlighting the pros and cons of various modeling approaches, specifically with respect to applying the appropriate analytical tool to the data available and the terms of reference (e.g. “right sizing”). The Committee supported the portfolio approach to assessment categories as discussed during this and the previous meetings but noted that implementation is lacking.*

- *Most Cooperators already have a prioritized list of species available and refer to that when suggesting species to be assessed through SEDAR.*
- *It has proven difficult to move past assessing the top species within that prioritized list given resources, changes in data streams, and National requirements.*
- *It was noted that the current process incorporates SEFSC involvement in the development of the Statements of Work, Terms of Reference, and Project schedules.*
- *The need to allow for changes suggested by the Councils and SSCs in the development of the SoWs and ToRs is also important.*
- *The expectation that the modeling approach used in a RT/Benchmark assessment would be driven by the available data has always been a basic principle of SEDAR.*

*It was acknowledged that SEDAR was never intended to fulfill all the stock assessment needs for all the Cooperators in the region. It was also noted that efficiency is not the main goal of SEDAR. The focus has always been on thoroughness and transparency.*

- *SEDAR assessments should be reserved for key, high-profile assessments.*
- *It may not be possible to greatly increase the efficiency of SEDAR assessments, as those assessments are typically for the more data-rich species.*
- *It might be possible to increase efficiency and provide more timely management advice by using some of the less data-intensive methods in extra-SEDAR processes.*
- *The key will be freeing up time in the overall schedule to allow extra-SEDAR processes to occur.*

*Some increases in efficiency may come from the Cooperators and what they ask of the Center. The Cooperators should try to balance workloads when having discussions with their SSCs and when producing requests to the Center.*

*Cooperators need the Center to provide information on what level of output can be expected. Without some guidance, the Cooperators have no way to plan for their future requests.*

*The Center stated they could work with the Cooperators to update and refine the prioritized species lists using a data triage approach like what was produced for the Caribbean Council.*

- *The Center has the information used for the initial data prioritization effort which may be reviewed and updated.*

- *For the more data-limited situations, the Center could suggest modeling approaches that might be conducted outside the SEDAR process.*
  - *Those types of assessments may not need the level of review that comes with an assessment conducted through the SEDAR process.*
  - *A process could be identified that would allow for an adequate level of transparency and review but the assessments themselves would be much simpler, and thus gain some efficiency in the process.*
  - *This process may allow the Cooperators to gain more information for stocks that are currently managed using catch-only methods.*
  - *The process used by the NE Center may be useful as a possible approach.*
- 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.

## **MEETING OUTCOME**

*The Committee continued its discussion from the February Steering Committee meeting on hybrid meeting options within the SEDAR process. Much of the discussions during the meeting reiterated the comments received during the February 2023 meeting. Please see that meeting summary report for those details. A few additional comments are documented below:*

- *If a hybrid option is adopted, SEDAR would provide a mechanism for appointed individuals to participate remotely.*
- *An individual Cooperator may set expectations regarding in-person participation for its appointees. This would be a Cooperator decision, not a SEDAR decision.*
- *Hybrid meetings allow for more appointed participants who do not wish to or cannot travel to participate during the in-person stages.*
- *Adding the streaming component to the in-person workshop will increase the ability for individuals to observe the process. It will require additional administrative support compared to previous workshops.*
- *The importance of building relationships at in-person workshops is very valuable and a key component of buy-in.*
- *The logistics of hybrid meetings are challenging.*
- *The Committee recognized that emergencies occur and exceptions to remote participation may be accommodated on a case-by-case basis. This is consistent with how most Cooperators now operate. Streaming the plenary sessions will facilitate this process should the need arise.*
- *The Committee agrees that in-person participation is preferred, especially for key personnel such as the lead analyst, working group leads (at Data Workshops) and members of the Review Panel.*

*The Committee was not able to reach a consensus on a hybrid policy for all SEDAR workshops.*

- *The Committee agreed that if an individual Cooperator was interested in holding a hybrid meeting, they could work with SEDAR Staff to allow that option, provided that the Cooperator would be able to provide the logistical and financial support needed for a hybrid meeting, above the regular meeting needs.*
- *The Committee did not discuss or provide any guidance on accepting public comment remotely. This topic needs to be revisited in the future.*

*The NOAA GC guidance regarding Informal Communications during the working groups at a Data Workshop was reviewed by the Committee. The Committee provided the following guidance:*

- *Should a non-appointed attendee be allowed to present and discuss a working paper and answer relevant questions to a working group? – YES. The Committee agreed this is a good approach.*

- *Should a non-appointed attendee be able to have unlimited access to the working group discussions and provide feedback on all topics being discussed? – YES. It has not been an issue and it was unclear how to limit this during a workshop.*
- *Should there be a limit on the number of non-appointed participants who may participate in these informal communications? - NO. The Committee did not suggest any limits.*
- *At some point, do you limit non-Panelist participation because the informal communications are becoming like Panelist discussions? - The Committee did not suggest any limits.*
- *SEDAR staff will monitor these interactions and report back to the Committee if any issues arise.*

### 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 SEFSC 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)

## **MEETING OUTCOME**

*The Committee reviewed the draft project schedule presented by the SEFSC and made the following recommendations:*

*GMFMC – The following 2025 requests were approved:*

- *Gray Triggerfish OA, Gag Grouper OA, King Mackerel OA, S87 Shrimp OA*
- *Future Requests for 2026: Greater Amberjack Benchmark, Cobia OA(?)*
- *Other future requests: Tilefish Complex, Scamp OA, Gray Snapper, Vermilion Snapper*

*SAFMC – The following 2025 requests were approved:*

- *Gag Grouper OA, King Mackerel OA*
- *It was suggested that a Red Porgy OA may be considered for 2025 if ASMFC Atlantic Migratory Cobia cannot be accommodated. The SEFSC and ASMFC will discuss options and report back to the Committee in Fall.*
- *Future Requests for 2026: Greater Amberjack Benchmark, Snowy Grouper OA, Dolphin (MP? RW only?), Atlantic Migratory Cobia?*
- *Other future requests: Red Snapper OA, White Grunt RT, Vermilion Snapper*

*CFMC – The following 2025 requests were approved:*

- *Hogfish (Puerto Rico) and Red Hind (USVI) Benchmark*
- *Future Requests for 2026: TBD*

*HMS – The following 2025 requests were approved:*

- *Bull, Spinner, Tiger, and Finetooth Sharks Research Track*
- *HMS will discuss the species identified for 2025 and will report back at the Fall meeting if any changes are needed.*

*ASMFC – Atlantic Migratory Cobia was supposed to be conducted in 2025 but the SEFSC expressed concerns with moving forward with this assessment as an OA because the data sources are changing, and the distribution of the stock has largely shifted outside of the Southeast region. The SEFSC suggested the assessment slot could be used to conduct a data triage and discuss alternative management approaches in light of the changes in distribution. It was also suggested that SEDAR may not be the proper vehicle for conducting this assessment. The Center and ASMFC will continue this discussion and report back to the Committee in Fall.*

- *An Atlantic Menhaden Review Workshop is scheduled for 2025.*

*FWC – A Black Grouper Benchmark was slated for 2025, but after discussions with FWC, it has been postponed to 2026, it was postponed until 2026. The process for this assessment is still*

*being discussed, with options including a data-limited or an MSE approach. Those discussions are continuing and FWC will inform the Committee of the proposed plan at the Fall meeting.*

*GSMFC – The Gulf Commission did not request anything for 2025 or 2026 during this meeting.*

## 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.

## **MEETING OUTCOME**

*The Committee was interested in this as a potential option in the future to discuss regional issues. The Committee did not make any recommendations.*

*Chair Porch informed the Committee that a recent draft of the BSIA Framework for the Southeast Region is out for review with NOAA GC, and Chair Porch is still working with SERO and Center Staff on reviewing and addressing Cooperator comments. An updated version may come back to the Cooperators for their review.*

*The final report for Procedural Workshop 8 is not complete. One of the lead coordinators from FWC has left his position and it has been difficult to determine exactly what is outstanding. The SEDAR Coordinators are working with the FWC leads to identify outstanding issues and determine the best path to complete the report.*

## **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.

## **MEETING OUTCOME**

*The Committee agreed that the Fall 2023 meeting should be held in-person. The week of September 25<sup>th</sup> or the week of October 2<sup>nd</sup> 2023 were identified as possible weeks. SEDAR Staff will send out a poll to determine availability for the next meeting.*

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					
2024				S89 Tilefish OA	S88 Red Grouper OA					S84 Yellowtail Snapper (PR & STT) Stoplight Parrotfish (STX) Benchmark			S79 Mutton Snapper Benchmark			
		S82OA Grey Triggerfish	S92 Blueline Tilefish OA			Gray Triggerfish RT	S74OA Red Snapper	S74OA Red Snapper	S87 Shrimp RT		S91 Spiny Lobster OA (all islands)	S77OA Hammerheads		S94 Hogfish Benchmark	S93 ASFMC Red Drum (RW) Gulf Menhaden OA	
2025	S90 Red snapper RT	Gag Grouper OA	Atl Migratory Cobia OA	Red Porgy OA	GAJ RT		Cobia OA	Gag Grouper OA		Hogfish (PR) Lane Snapper?		Bull, Spinner, Tiger, Finetooth Sharks RT			Atl Menhaden (RW only)	King Mackerel OA (SA & Gulf)
2026			Snowy Grouper OA	Dolphin MP?		Grey Triggerfish OA	Tilefish Complex (MP?)	Scamp OA	S87 OA Shrimp	Queen Snapper			Black Grouper Benchmark /MP			
2027	Red Snapper OA	GAJ RT	White Grunt RT									Bull, Spinner, Tiger, Finetooth Sharks OA				
2028	Vermilion OA															
2029																

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.