

**Scientific and Statistical Committees**  
**Scope of Work**  
**December 5, 2024**  
**Tampa, Florida**

---

**Agenda Item IV:** Southeast Data, Assessment, and Review (SEDAR) 99: Gulf Migratory Group King Mackerel Terms of Reference and Volunteers

**Action:** Discussion and Volunteers

**Committee input and next steps:** Dr. Katie Siegfried (Southeast Fisheries Science Center [SEFSC]) and Council staff will review the draft terms of reference for the SEDAR 99 stock assessment of Gulf king mackerel with the Standing and Special Mackerel SSCs. This assessment is expected to have three topical working groups, examining shrimp bycatch, sex-specific life history model inputs, and selectivity and retention estimation approaches. A single group of participants will provide input across all three topical working groups. The SSCs should review the draft terms of reference and make any necessary modifications. SSC members interested in participating in the topical working groups should volunteer.

---

**Agenda Item V:** SEDAR 98: Gulf Red Snapper Assessment Workshop Volunteers

**Action:** Volunteers

**Committee input and next steps:** Council staff will solicit the SSC for volunteers for the SEDAR 98 stock assessment of Gulf red snapper. The assessment process of SEDAR 98 will take place via a series of webinars to develop the base model and explore how best to incorporate recommended datasets from the Data Workshop. The assessment process is technical in nature, and SSC members with familiarity in quantitative catch-at-age and length models would be encouraged to participate and offer their expertise to the analytical team. Assessment webinars can last between 2-4 hours and typically occur once every 4-6 weeks. SSC members interested in participating should volunteer.

---

**Agenda Item VI:** Review: Southeastern U.S. Black Grouper Management Strategy Evaluation

**Action:** Presentation, discussion, and recommendations

**Committee input and next steps:** Dr. Bill Harford (Nature Analytics) and his team will review progress on work to evaluate the southeastern U.S. black grouper stock using a management strategy evaluation. This work has been contracted by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. The last black grouper stock assessment (SEDAR 48) was terminated during the data workshop due to irreconcilable data issues. Dr. Harford's work

examines available indices of abundance against historical landings data to explore methods which might be used to monitor the stock, including index-based management procedures. The SSC should consider the information presented, ask questions, and provide feedback to Dr. Harford as appropriate.

---

**Agenda Item VII:** Review: SEDAR 88: Gulf Red Grouper Stock Assessment

**Action:** Presentation, discussions, and recommendations

**Committee input and next steps:** Drs. Francesca Forrestal and Siegfried will present the work completed thus far on SEDAR 88, which is a stock assessment of Gulf red grouper. This stock assessment uses the State of Florida’s State Reef Fish Survey (SRFS) in place of the Marine Recreational Information Program’s Fishing Effort Survey (MRIP-FES) data for recreational private vessel landings. SRFS was considered appropriate for inclusion in this assessment since the vast majority (>95%) of Gulf red grouper are landed off Florida, and while estimating a lower level of landings, SRFS demonstrates improved precision compared to MRIP-FES for red grouper. Dr. Forrestal will also review other model changes, including a re-estimation of natural mortality using an updated method. The SSC should provide feedback regarding these new methodologies and other proposed modifications. Explicit age-specific modeling of red tide mortality is still outstanding and will be completed late 2024. The SSC should review the materials presented and make recommendations to the SEFSC as appropriate regarding the base model setup and any reasonable sensitivity runs. The SEFSC will make modifications and bring a base model back for final SSC review at the SSC’s February 2025 meeting in Tampa, along with catch limit projections.

---

**Agenda Item VIII:** Discussion: 2025-2028 Research and Monitoring Priorities

**Action:** Discussion and recommendations

**Committee input and next steps:** Council staff will review the Council’s research and monitoring priorities for the next four years of its grant cycle, 2025 – 2028. These priorities are intended to serve as a guide for individuals seeking to understand where the Council hopes to resolve gaps in knowledge or to expand existing datasets. After the SSC and Council review and approve the updated research and monitoring priorities for 2025-2028, they are posted on the Council website and sent via letter to NMFS and other relevant federal and state grant agencies for consideration as priority items for funding opportunities. These priorities, if addressed, are expected to measurably improve the Council’s abilities to manage federal fisheries per the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. SSC members should review the information presented, ask questions of Council staff, and recommend modifications as appropriate.

Ms. Kelly Donnelly from the Southeast Regional Office will provide a short overview regarding utilization of the regional management councils’ research and monitoring priorities in the various federal funding opportunities.

***Motion/recommendation to Council expected***

---

**Agenda Item IX:** Public Comment

**Action:** Information

**Committee input and next steps:** Members of the public will be able to address the SSC directly with respect to the topics discussed during this meeting, and other matters, as time allows.

---

**Agenda Item X:** Other Business

**Action:** Discussion

**Committee Input and Next Steps:** Council staff will brief the SSC on the February 2025 meeting format. Additional items may be brought up for discussion by SSC members, time permitting. If the SSC wishes to pursue action, then action can be scheduled at a future SSC meeting.