

Gulf Council
Standing and Special Shrimp
Scientific and Statistical Committee
Scope of Work
February 24 – 26, 2026
Tampa, Florida

Agenda Item 4: Review: SEDAR 87 Gulf Penaeid Shrimp Stock Assessment Reviews

Action: Presentations, discussion, and recommendations

Committee input and next steps: Drs. Molly Stevens and Lisa Ailloud (Southeast Fisheries Science Center [SEFSC]) will present new stock assessments for Gulf brown, white, and pink shrimp. These assessments are, combined, part of the SEDAR 87 stock assessment process, which evaluated new ways of assessing these species. Drs. Stevens and Ailloud will describe the methods attempted for all three species, and ultimately recommended for brown and white shrimp, and will recommend an alternative path forward for management of pink shrimp. Reviews of these methods by the Center for Independent Experts are provided as background information. The SSC should consider the information presented, ask questions of SEFSC staff, and make a recommendation regarding the maximum sustainable yield (MSY) in pounds of tails for each shrimp species to the Council as appropriate.

Motion/recommendation to Council expected

Agenda Item 5: Update: Shrimp Bycatch Methodology Working Group for Finfish Species

Action: Discussion

Committee input and next steps: Council staff will provide the SSC with a brief update about the status of the Shrimp Bycatch Methodology Working Group for Finfish Species.

Agenda Item 7: Review: MSE Evaluations of MRIP-FES Recalibrations

Action: Presentation, discussions, and recommendations

Committee input and next steps: Dr. Katie Siegfried (SEFSC) will present management strategy evaluations of the effects of recalibrated recreational landings data from the federal Marine Recreational Information Program's (MRIP) Fishing Effort Survey. The purpose of this work was to explore the effects of various degrees of change in MRIP-FES landings estimates and to quantify the potential effects for fisheries managers. The SSC should consider the information presented, ask questions of SEFSC staff, and make any recommendations to the Council as appropriate.

Agenda Item 8: Review: Greater Amberjack Interim Analysis

Action: Presentation, discussions, and recommendations

Committee input and next steps: Dr. Siegfried will present an interim analysis for Gulf greater amberjack, using the Gulf Fishery Independent Survey of Habitat and Ecosystem Resources (GFISHER) composite video index as the representative index of relative abundance. The GFISHER index was used in the form of its component video surveys in the last stock assessment of greater amberjack (SEDAR 70 2018). This interim analysis does not provide a recommendation for revising catch advice. Notably, greater amberjack has been assessed five times since 2004 and has been found to be overfished and undergoing overfishing each time, and the current rebuilding plan is expected to conclude in 2027. Another stock assessment is planned to begin in 2027 and will consider the results of the regional *Greater Amberjack Count* collaborative research project. The SSC should consider the information presented, ask questions of SEFSC staff, and make any recommendations to the Council as appropriate.

Agenda Item 9: Review: SEFSC Stakeholder Participatory Workshops

Action: Presentation, discussions, and recommendations

Committee input and next steps: Dr. Mandy Karnauskas (SEFSC) will present applications of participatory modeling to fishery management. The presentation will provide an overview of participatory research methods and walk through case studies on ecosystem-based fisheries management, stock assessment, management strategy evaluation and scenario planning. Dr. Karnauskas would like to engage the SSC in a discussion on the utility of participatory modeling and participatory research for informing the fishery management process and identification of other decision-making pathways where the information could be used. The SSC should consider the information presented, ask questions of SEFSC staff, and make any recommendations as appropriate.

Agenda Item 10: Presentation: Application of a discrete-time survival model to estimate discard mortality, a case study with Gulf of America gray triggerfish (*Balistes caprisucus*)

Action: Presentation, discussions, and recommendations

Committee input and next steps: Dr. Challen Hyman (University of South Florida Center for Environmental Analysis, Synthesis, and Application) will present the results of research to model discard mortality of Gulf gray triggerfish. Dr. Hyman's work examined the effects of environmental variables in long-term conventional tagging datasets on gray triggerfish recapture rates, estimated post-release mortality considerate of variable fishing effort, and then built a discrete-time model to infer post-release mortality in gray triggerfish. The SSC should consider

the information presented, ask questions of Dr. Hyman, and make any recommendations as appropriate.

Agenda Item 11: Presentation: Leveraging statistical models to improve pre-season forecasting and in-season management of a recreational fishery

Action: Presentation, discussions, and recommendations

Committee input and next steps: Dr. Hyman will present a novel approach for projecting fishing season duration for recreational fisheries, using Gulf gag grouper as a case study. A core issue to be resolved by this work is improving the method of projecting the fishing season beyond reliance on just the prior year's catch and effort. Dr. Hyman will describe how this effort better accounts for present-day fishery dynamics, but also improves in-season monitoring and management. The SSC should consider the information presented, ask questions of Dr. Hyman, and make any recommendations as appropriate.

Agenda Item 13: Discussion on Economic Effects of Mid-year IFQ Quota Modifications

Action: Presentation, discussion, and recommendations

Committee input and next steps: Council staff will provide an overview of the individual fishing quota (IFQ) programs in the Gulf and give a presentation on the economic effects expected to result from mid-year modifications to quotas available to IFQ participants. During the May 2025 SSC meeting, SSC members discussed possible social and economic effects as they may relate to the anticipated changes to red grouper catch limits approved by the SSC in response to the SEDAR 88 stock assessment. That assessment found red grouper to be healthy and resulted in substantial increases in catch limits. The SSC should discuss the information presented, ask questions, and make recommendations to the Council as appropriate.

Agenda Item 14: Check-in: SEDAR 100: Gulf Gray Triggerfish Stock Assessment

Action: Presentation, discussion, and recommendations

Committee input and next steps: Dr. Skyler Sagarese will present a check-in for the SSC for the ongoing stock assessment for Gulf gray triggerfish (SEDAR 100). Dr. Sagarese will review modeling progress made to date and unresolved decisions carried forward from the Data Workshop. All available Data Workshop working group reports are provided as background information. The purpose of this check-in is for Dr. Sagarese to receive feedback and recommendations from the SSC on how to proceed on key aspects of the stock assessment, in preparation for the Review Workshop in August 2026. The SSC should consider the information presented, ask questions of Dr. Sagarese, and make any recommendations to her as motions.

Agenda Item 15: Discussion: Progress on MRIP Pilot Studies

Action: Presentation, discussion, and recommendations

Committee input and next steps: The NOAA Office of Science and Technology will update the SSC on the progress made to date on the MRIP-FES pilot study and review the forecasted timeline for the peer-review of the study and the availability of results. The SSC should consider the information presented, ask questions, and make recommendations as appropriate.

Agenda Item 6, 12, 16: 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 17: Other Business

Action: Discussion

Committee Input and Next Steps: 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.