

Data Collection Committee Report
April 7, 2026
Ed Walker, Chair

The Committee adopted the agenda (**Tab F, No. 1**) and approved the amended minutes (**Tab F, No. 2**) of the January 2026 meeting.

Exploring Alternative Methods for Estimating Recreational Landings for Rarely Encountered Species (Tab F, No.4)

Dr. Michael Allen (Council member) presented a method for collecting recreational data from the deep-drop fishery. A Committee member asked about the feasibility of having each Gulf state provide an endorsement for anglers targeting deep-water grouper. Another Committee member replied that state commissions are usually hesitant to implement new requirements on anglers, especially in the case of the deep-drop fishery which has very few participants.

The Committee discussed other mandatory recreational reporting programs in the Gulf. Several Committee members mentioned the program run by the Atlantic Highly Migratory Species¹ could be used for deep-water grouper. Specific to the state of Alabama, Mr. Anson provided recent reporting rate information for red snapper, greater amberjack, and gray triggerfish. He added that reporting rates have declined over time. The South Atlantic liaison mentioned that there is mandatory recreational reporting for tilefish in the Mid-Atlantic. The Committee directed staff to investigate the recreational reporting program for tilefish in the Mid-Atlantic. The Committee requested that Council staff speak with those knowledgeable with the tilefish data collection program and determine if a presentation would be beneficial for continued Committee discussion.

Mr. Chair, this concludes my report.

¹ <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/permit/atlantic-highly-migratory-species-angling-permit-open-access>