

**Ecosystem Committee
Action Guide and Next Steps for Tab Q**

Agenda Item IV: Identification of Stakeholder-Driven Fishery Ecosystem Issues

Timeline Status: Presentation and discussion

Committee input and next steps: Drs. Kelsi Furman (University of South Alabama), Nate Brugnone (Two Six Technologies), and Steve Kasperski (Kasperski Consulting) will present preliminary results for work contracted by the Council to identify Fishery Ecosystem Issues of concern to Gulf stakeholders using social science approaches. The Council funded this work to support the first phase of operationalizing the Gulf Fishery Ecosystem Plan, which outlines a structured process for investigating Fishery Ecosystem Issues of concern and identifying potential approaches for addressing these issues. The Fishery Ecosystem Plan was finalized in March 2026 after incorporating input from both the Council and the Ecosystem Technical Committee. The Committee should discuss the work presented and provide feedback to the contractors on the approaches used and the Fishery Ecosystem Issues that have been identified thus far. Staff and the contractors will work with the Ecosystem Technical Committee as the project moves into its next phase to examine the impacts of Fishery Ecosystem Issues and develop tools to support prioritization and scoping of Fishery Ecosystem Issues. Work on this project will continue through May 2027.