

**Migratory Species Committee
Action Guide and Next Steps for Tab M**

Agenda Item IV: Discussion of Shark Depredation

Timeline Status: Information and input

Council input and next steps: During Gulf Council public testimony over the past several years, shark depredation has been identified as an issue throughout the Gulf. While the Gulf Council does not manage shark species, sharks do interact with important recreational and commercial species that the Gulf Council is responsible for managing. Several academic and NMFS initiatives are currently being conducted to identify shark species contributing to depredation and explore any potential factors that may influence rates of depredation.

Dr. March Drymon (Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant) has conducted research to clarify high-level drivers of historic trends in shark depredation and identify the species and management entities affected and will present that research to the Committee (**Tab M, No. 4a**). Additionally, Dr. John Carlson (Southeast Fisheries Science Center) is a member of NMFS's Shark Depredation Strategy Committee tasked with understanding and mitigating shark depredation. He will also provide a presentation updating the Committee on work completed to date (**Tab M, No. 4b**). The Committee should ask questions of the presenters and provide input to the researchers on shark depredation in their region.

Agenda Item V: Update on Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Policy Documents

Timeline Status: Information only

Council input and next steps: The Office of Atlantic HMS has several ongoing regulatory actions, two of which have been previously presented to the Committee. The first, a document to modify electronic reporting is scheduled for final rule in early 2027 and become effective by July 2027. During the proposed rule making process for this document the Council submitted a comment letter in December of 2024. The second policy document presented to the Committee considered modifying management measures for a number of small and large coastal sharks, and the Council provided comment on that in April 2026. These management measure changes are expected to be implement some time in 2027. Ms. Karyl Brewster-Geisz (HMS staff) will present the update and timelines of these and other current regulatory actions and the Committee should read the agenda materials (including the two previous Council comment letters provided as background) and ask questions of HMS staff.
