

**Joint Coral and Habitat Protection and Restoration Committee Report
January 30, 2017
Dale Diaz and John Sanchez, Chairs**

Presentation on the Biology of Corals

Staff gave a short presentation on deep-water corals in the Gulf of Mexico.

Revised Scoping Draft of Coral Amendment 7

Staff presented the revised scoping document for Coral Amendment 7. Revisions included: a brief description on the biology of coral, area descriptions divided into regions, and regulations were updated. Under Option 1, staff will modify one sentence to read as follows:

“Where corals exist in sufficient numbers or diversity ~~would qualify~~ would be considered for establishment as a HAPC as long as it meets one of the HAPC requirements:...”

Additional suggestions were provided, and staff will include these in the options paper.

The Committee recommends and I so move: to bring the Revised Scoping Draft of Coral Amendment 7 out for scoping hearings.

Motion carried unanimously.

Madam Chair this concludes my report.