

GULF OF MEXICO FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES/ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Marriott Beachside Key West, Florida

June 25, 2014

**VOTING MEMBERS**

- John Greene.....Alabama
- Leann Bosarge.....Mississippi
- LCDR Jason Brand.....USCG
- Dale Diaz (designee for Jamie Miller).....Mississippi
- Harlon Pearce.....Louisiana
- Patrick Riley.....Texas
- John Sanchez.....Florida
- Roy Williams.....Florida

**NON-VOTING MEMBERS**

- Kevin Anson (designee for Chris Blankenship).....Alabama
- Martha Bademan (designee for Nick Wiley).....Florida
- Doug Boyd.....Texas
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- Roy Crabtree.....NMFS
- Pamela Dana.....Florida
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36 The Sustainable Fisheries/Ecosystem Management Committee of the  
37 Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council convened at the  
38 Marriott Beachside, Key West, Florida, Wednesday afternoon, June  
39 25, 2014, and was called to order at 2:00 p.m. by Chairman  
40 Johnny Greene.

41  
42 **ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

43  
44 **CHAIRMAN JOHNNY GREENE:** I would like to call the Sustainable  
45 Fisheries/Ecosystem Management Committee together. Mr. Robinson  
46 is here and Ms. Bosarge and Jason Brand and Mr. Diaz and Harlon  
47 and Patrick and John Sanchez and Roy Williams are all present.

48

1 Moving adoption of the agenda, are there any changes, additions,  
2 or deletions? It's been moved to adopt and do I hear a second?  
3 All right. Approval of the Minutes, any changes or additions  
4 there? Is there a move to adopt? Do I hear a second? We have  
5 a second. All right.

6  
7 Action Guide and Next Steps is Tab E, Number 3. It's pretty  
8 straightforward and extremely useful to me and so I appreciate  
9 that. With that, we will go into Item Number IV, which is Gulf  
10 of Mexico Ecosystem Assessment Status Report Presentation, which  
11 will be Tab E, Number 4. Mr. Schirripa, if you're ready.

12  
13 **GOM ECOSYSTEM ASSESSMENT STATUS REPORT**  
14 **REPORT PRESENTATION**  
15

16 **DR. MIKE SCHIRRIPA:** Thank you, Chair. What I want to talk to  
17 you about this afternoon is the progress and the vision so far  
18 for the Gulf of Mexico Integrated Ecosystem Assessment Program  
19 and specifically, what I would like to talk with you about is  
20 how the IEA program has made efforts to address and work with  
21 the council agenda in trying to provide some tools and guidance  
22 relative to the council's management objectives.

23  
24 I am going to start with a very brief introduction. NOAA's IEA  
25 program is not specific to the Gulf of Mexico and in fact, every  
26 large marine ecosystem in the United States has an IEA program,  
27 all the way from Hawaii and Alaska and the Pacific Northwest and  
28 the Northeast and so on.

29  
30 The Southeast is concerned mostly with the Gulf of Mexico and we  
31 also would be in charge of the South Atlantic as well as the  
32 Caribbean, but given the funding for the IEA and the lack of  
33 maturity, we are focusing on the Gulf of Mexico for right now  
34 and, in fact, for the next three years, you will see that we're  
35 going to be focusing on the west shelf of Florida.

36  
37 This is a NOAA-wide program and as a NOAA-wide program, one of  
38 the directives was that we work together across NOAA line  
39 offices. This was made very clear right from the beginning and  
40 large, ambitious goals usually require that people work  
41 together.

42  
43 We are working not only across NOAA line offices, but we are  
44 also working with universities, the University of South Florida  
45 University of Miami, University of Florida Northern Gulf  
46 Institute, Sea Grant, and so on. This is a very large effort  
47 drawing upon motivated people from each of these different  
48 groups to try to come together with their various expertise in a

1 multidisciplinary fashion to try to create this IEA program.

2  
3 On March 28, 2013, at the Standing and Ecosystem SSC meeting,  
4 two recommendations were passed. The first recommendation was  
5 passed by a vote of eighteen to zero that the Standing and  
6 Ecosystem SSCs recommend that the Gulf of Mexico IEA program  
7 work with state academic partners and continue to work with the  
8 Gulf Standing and Ecosystem SSCs to expand the integration of  
9 ecosystem components into the assessment and management of the  
10 fishery resources in the Gulf of Mexico. This is exactly what  
11 we've been trying to do for the past year.

12  
13 The second recommendation, also passed by eighteen to zero, was  
14 that the IEA program develop products that integrate ecosystem  
15 analysis into the SEDAR stock assessments and so one of the  
16 things I would like to include in this talk for you today is  
17 some of the products that the Gulf IEA program has developed in  
18 addressing these issues.

19  
20 The Gulf Council is not a stranger to the ecosystem management  
21 issues. I am sure that some of the members that are here right  
22 now remember ten or fifteen years ago when this was taken on  
23 before. The difference this time is I think we have a little  
24 more momentum and I think we have a little more impetus. We  
25 have more cooperation across groups.

26  
27 We also have the potential for changes in the Magnuson Act that  
28 are going on right now that may require that the councils take a  
29 little bit more of a careful look at ecosystem considerations.  
30 They may be asked to develop fishery ecosystem plans that  
31 describe ecosystem conservation goals and objectives for  
32 multiple fisheries, include ecosystem-level optimum yield that  
33 takes into consideration the ecosystem, and identify indicators  
34 to measure the achievement of ecosystem conservation goals.

35  
36 These are really what's going to be the focus of this talk. You  
37 are going to hear me say over and over again management goals  
38 and objectives. Before the IEA can do anything for the council,  
39 the council has to help us identify what the management goals  
40 would be of a fisheries ecosystem plan in the Gulf of Mexico and  
41 we are willing to help the council do that and work with you on  
42 that.

43  
44 Now, many regions already have defined ecosystem objectives,  
45 many in the United States and some internationally. The Pacific  
46 Coast Fishery Ecosystem Plan from the Pacific Northwest is one  
47 example and the North Atlantic, the North Sea in the Atlantic,  
48 also is an example and the Hawaiian Islands, Antarctica, and,

1 finally, the Aleutian Islands. This is not a new idea and this  
2 is not necessarily groundbreaking from a nationwide view, nor is  
3 it groundbreaking from an international point of view.

4  
5 This is a movement, if you will, that is gaining momentum and  
6 the utilities and the benefits of this type of approach are  
7 being appreciated around the world.

8  
9 The first example I want to -- What I want to do is I want to  
10 introduce to you some possible management objectives that the  
11 council may want to consider as some ideas. It's difficult. We  
12 know it's difficult to come up with ecosystem management  
13 objectives.

14  
15 We have them for single species assessments and it's really  
16 pretty easy. It's not to be overfishing and not to be  
17 overfished and we have benchmarks for those and we have  
18 indicators that tell us where we are relative to those  
19 benchmarks. What we need is some guiding principles, from an  
20 ecosystem point of view, to give us something along those same  
21 lines.

22  
23 What I would like to show you here is an example from a couple  
24 of these that might be a good first step to defining management  
25 goals and objectives. For instance, the Western Pacific  
26 Regional Fishery Management Council, their FEP is for the  
27 Hawaiian Archipelago and one of their objectives is very simple.  
28 It's to provide flexible and adaptive management systems that  
29 can rapidly address new scientific information and changes in  
30 environmental conditions.

31  
32 Now, how might we in the Gulf of Mexico use that or how might  
33 the IEA program be able to help formulate a Gulf of Mexico  
34 version of this?

35  
36 Just a few weeks ago at the Standing and Ecosystem SSC meeting  
37 in Miami, the SSC recommended that the Gulf of Mexico IEA  
38 program work with the Gulf Standing and Ecosystem SSCs to  
39 evaluate the current red grouper harvest control rule to  
40 determine if it is robust to possible future changes in  
41 intensity and frequency of episodic events and non-fishing  
42 mortality.

43  
44 To the best of my knowledge, the P\* harvest control rule has  
45 never been simulation tested yet and so, consequently, it has  
46 never been simulation tested to ask will it bring us the  
47 management goals and objectives that we seek in the event of  
48 things like more frequent red tides and possible spillage of

1 petroleum products and things of that nature? Is it robust  
2 enough to those?

3  
4 That was one of the things we recommended and also recommended  
5 was that the Gulf of Mexico IEA work with the Standing and  
6 Ecosystem SSCs to investigate the human dimension of long-term  
7 ecological implications to the current shallow-water grouper  
8 harvest control rule and various catch limits.

9  
10 What we're trying to do here is we're trying to couple our  
11 direction in the Gulf with an example of an objective, as shown  
12 before, and so what we're proposing to do and what we are  
13 actually underway of doing is doing a management strategy  
14 evaluation for red grouper and asking should red tides occur  
15 more frequently and more intensely than they have or should  
16 spikes in natural mortality, for whatever reason, is the P\*  
17 harvest control rule doing its job in that regard?

18  
19 One of our number one goals in our three-year plan is to test  
20 the P\* harvest control rule with a single species model of red  
21 grouper and test for the efficacy of this rule to make sure that  
22 it is robust to these changes.

23  
24 The second management objective example that I would like to  
25 discuss then is that of the North Sea and their fisheries  
26 ecosystem plan. Their objective is to sustain robust marine  
27 food webs to ensure long-term abundance of all species.

28  
29 I refer you to the ecosystem status report that we recently  
30 published, which has a collection of ecosystem indicators. With  
31 the objective of to sustain robust and marine food webs, the  
32 ecosystem status report gives us examples of what we might use  
33 for indicators.

34  
35 In this case, it is the trophic level of the catch. Trophic  
36 level is an indicator of how robust the marine food webs are and  
37 so we have these indicators and you can think of these  
38 indicators much like you might a graph of spawning potential  
39 ratio, of SPR. You are concerned about the direction and you  
40 are concerned about the magnitude of it.

41  
42 If we did adopt this objective of sustained robust marine food  
43 webs, we could use things like the ecosystem status report to  
44 give us a position of where we are now relative to where we  
45 might want to be or simply the direction of these indicators.  
46 If we don't know exactly where we want to be, simply knowing  
47 that an indicator is declining might be objective enough to stop  
48 the decline in certain indicators or stop the increase in the

1 indicator, depending on what it's indicating.

2  
3 The third example is from the North Pacific Fishery Management  
4 Council, from the Aleutian Islands FEP. Their objective is to  
5 account for uncertainty in ecosystem factors when setting  
6 harvest levels.

7  
8 We actually have already conducted things of this nature with  
9 the gag grouper assessment and we intend on doing the same thing  
10 with the red. The objective then would be to account for  
11 ecosystem in setting harvest levels and we did this by -- Rather  
12 than maintaining a constant natural mortality like we always  
13 have in most of our assessments, for the gag we actually changed  
14 the natural mortality for gag. We let it change year-by-year  
15 according to a red tide index.

16  
17 It improved the model fit very much and we all saw a big  
18 decrease in CPUE in 2004 that was unaccountable for by any other  
19 means, but when we put the red tide index in there, we could  
20 address -- We actually got a much better model fit. The model  
21 now had a means to account for this big decline rather than  
22 fishing mortality.

23  
24 We all know that natural mortality affects a lot of the shallow-  
25 water grouper complex, but by allowing natural mortality to vary  
26 year to year with an index, such as red tide, we are accounting  
27 for the ecosystem in setting our harvest levels.

28  
29 The next example I want to introduce is the Commission for the  
30 Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources and their  
31 ecosystem monitoring plan. An example of an objective the Gulf  
32 Council might consider adopting would be to preserve sufficient  
33 prey population to sustain healthy predator populations,  
34 including cetaceans and finfish.

35  
36 Most of the fish that we manage in the Gulf of Mexico are  
37 predators, but rarely do we consider managing the prey items as  
38 well and so one example might be menhaden. The objective could  
39 be to preserve a sufficient prey population and with the tools  
40 that we have at hand, such as Ecopath with Ecosim, we could then  
41 discover and investigate how the menhaden fishery is impacting  
42 some of the larger predator species that use the menhaden as a  
43 forage base and so another example objective could be to  
44 preserve sufficient prey populations.

45  
46 Mind you, these are very broad objectives, as they should be at  
47 this point. The idea would be to start broad and then  
48 eventually work our way down into more and more precise

1 technical guidance on what exactly these objectives are.

2  
3 The next objective example would be from the Pacific Fishery  
4 Management Council and their objective is to improve assessments  
5 on how fisheries affect and are affected by the present and  
6 potential and future states of the marine ecosystems.

7  
8 An example of this is what we tried to do for red snapper. What  
9 I am showing you up here is assessing the impact of future  
10 impact ecosystem status and the map on the left is a map of the  
11 projected larval dispersal of red snapper, based on  
12 oceanography.

13  
14 By knowing the state of the ocean and by knowing the current  
15 rate and speed near real time, which we can do now, we can  
16 address issues of what might this year or last year's  
17 recruitment of red snapper be before they enter the fishery.

18  
19 Instead of trying to pick the most recent recruitments off a  
20 stock recruitment curve or average survivorship or stuff, we can  
21 actually use these ecosystem tools to drop these simulated eggs  
22 right where we know red grouper spawn and let the currents take  
23 them and we can discover things. How many end up in Mexico or  
24 how many end up going around Florida and into the South  
25 Atlantic? Could we expect a good recruitment year, if they're  
26 being evicted onshore into good habitat, or could we expect a  
27 bad year, if they're being evicted offshore?

28  
29 We did this with red snapper and, again, we found a very nice  
30 correlation between some strong year classes and what looked to  
31 be favorable oceanographic conditions and so this is one more  
32 way that we can bring ecosystem indicators into our stock  
33 assessments to help improve our forecasting and our precision  
34 about the forecasts in the future.

35  
36 What I want to try to get across to you then is the steps that  
37 we need to take to do this are very simple actually. The  
38 fisheries management body sets the ecosystem objectives and that  
39 would be the Gulf Council.

40  
41 We need to start with where we want to be. For the analogy in  
42 single species assessments, we don't want to be overfished and  
43 we don't want to be prosecuting in an overfishing manner. Those  
44 are our objectives.

45  
46 We need something similar for the ecosystem, so we can work  
47 toward those goals. If we go down the box, the appropriate tool  
48 chosen or developed and what I want to get across here is we



1 don't come up with a bunch of tools and ask what we can do with  
2 them. The main focus of this entire talk for you today is to  
3 realize that we have to come up with our management goals and  
4 objectives first and we will build the tools.

5  
6 We will build the tools necessary to address these management  
7 objectives, but it is reverse engineering to think that we can  
8 just develop a bunch of tools and throw them in the middle of  
9 the room and say now what can we do with these? That is not the  
10 approach that we're advocating.

11  
12 Management objectives and goals come first. We design and build  
13 the tools around that and we give the advice to meet those  
14 stated management objectives and goals.

15  
16 Also, last week, at the Biltmore, by unanimous vote, the SSC  
17 recommended that the council ask the Ecosystem SSC, in  
18 cooperation with the Standing SSC, to develop a set of suggested  
19 goals and objectives of an ecosystem-based fisheries management  
20 plan complete with measurable targets.

21  
22 Now, we know that sounds like a tall order, but this is not a  
23 document we would expect to be produced overnight, nor is it a  
24 document that would have a defined beginning and end. This  
25 obviously would be an evolution and a document that would need  
26 tweaking and rebuilding from time to time.

27  
28 What I want to go through now is three slides to show you our  
29 basic three steps that we want to do for our three-year plan and  
30 how we're trying to evolve from the way we're doing business now  
31 to introducing ecosystem considerations into our single species  
32 assessments.

33  
34 Step two is trying to gain efficiencies, and I want to emphasize  
35 this, but trying to gain efficiencies in our assessment process  
36 by doing multispecies approaches and then, finally, graduating  
37 to a true IEA, where all ecosystem services are captured in the  
38 assessment.

39  
40 Number one, Tier 1 ecosystem products are designed to  
41 specifically support single species assessment efforts by  
42 bringing ecosystem considerations and this is what we're doing  
43 right now by bringing in the red tide and by bringing in our CMS  
44 model into larval projections and sea surface temperature and  
45 things like that.

46  
47 We are trying to increase the precision of our answers that we  
48 give you. We are trying to improve the assessments by realizing

1 that there is more than just the fishery operating on the fish.  
2 There is the environment as well.

3  
4 Our goal towards this first step then would be to use a  
5 management strategy evaluation to ask if the current harvest  
6 control rule,  $P^*$ , is robust to more frequent and/or more intense  
7 episodic events that could affect natural mortality, such as red  
8 tide. We are going to be trying to present that with the red  
9 grouper assessment for SEDAR-42.

10  
11 Tier 2 products are going to be let's take what we did with red  
12 grouper and let's ask, does  $P^*$ , the way it's operating right  
13 now, is it effective for the shallow-water grouper complex as a  
14 whole? What we want to do is -- We have red grouper up here,  
15 but we also have gag and black grouper and scamp and the rest of  
16 the shallow-water grouper complex.

17  
18 Right now, the  $P^*$  is very much focused on only the three  
19 species, the black, the gag, and the red. The rest of the ABC  
20 is really based on historic landings and so by bringing all  
21 these species into the shallow-water grouper complex on a  
22 backdrop of the forage fish, the menhaden, the sardines, the  
23 anchovies and so on, is the  $P^*$  still effective in the shallow-  
24 water grouper complex?

25  
26 How can we best utilize this complex and, most importantly, can  
27 we assess these as a whole, as a complex, so we don't have to  
28 keep doing single species assessments for each of these three or  
29 four over and over again and keep running in a cycle. Maybe we  
30 can be doing this simultaneously, at the same time, and bring in  
31 any ecosystem considerations.

32  
33 We are working not only on a management strategy evaluation, but  
34 we're also going to be working on a model-free harvest control  
35 rule that simply asks if the catch rates are going up in these  
36 species, perhaps we can adjust TAC based on the slope of the  
37 CPUEs.

38  
39 If they're flat, the TAC stays the same and if they're  
40 increasing, we simulate and discover a formula about how much we  
41 can raise TAC based on how much the CPUEs are going up and if  
42 the CPUEs are going down, we develop a formula, based on the  
43 slope of the last three years, that suggests how much we would  
44 have to reduce catch.

45  
46 We really need to think about efficiencies here. We don't need  
47 to do ecosystem management instead of single species or instead  
48 of assessments. We can bring them together.

1  
2 Finally then, for year three, if everything goes well, we are  
3 going to try to move to our Tier 3 management strategy  
4 evaluations, which takes into account not only the fisheries as  
5 a whole and not only the reefs, but also things like oysters and  
6 marine mammals and hurricane preparedness and energy exploration  
7 in the Gulf as well, as examples.

8  
9 What these MSEs will tell us -- We won't be telling the council  
10 how to manage, but we will take our models, our Atlantis-type  
11 models and our ecosystem-type models, and say that in, for  
12 instance, this blue ecosystem-based fisheries management plan,  
13 if you implement Plan A, you might benefit reefs and oysters,  
14 but you might not be doing so much for mammals or the oil  
15 industry.

16  
17 On the other hand, Management Scenario B, the red one, might do  
18 great for mammals and hurricane preparedness and oil, but it  
19 might not do much for these and so the definition of a  
20 management strategy evaluation is assessing the consequences of  
21 a range of management options and making obvious the tradeoffs  
22 in performance across the range of management objectives.

23  
24 Finally, I want to reiterate that the IEA is not a field of  
25 dreams. We do not envision this as we are going to build it and  
26 hope that you come. We want the Gulf Council there at the very,  
27 very beginning, the SSC and the advisory panels.

28  
29 We need to know what the goals and objectives are before we can  
30 continue with this IEA. Otherwise, there's just too many --  
31 It's not going to work. It's not going to work unless we start  
32 with the goals and objectives first.

33  
34 I was prepared to tell you what I think, the group thinks, about  
35 what we think would be a next practical step in defining the  
36 goals and objectives and I think a very practical step that I  
37 would like to leave you with is to form a multidisciplinary  
38 group of different people from the various advisory panels, a  
39 couple of people from the Socioeconomic Advisory Panel, a couple  
40 of people from Ecosystem, a couple of people from Standing, the  
41 different species ones, and council members and come together in  
42 a multi-advisory panel group and start either using these  
43 examples that we've given them, but start coming up with what  
44 everybody, all of the people involved, think are reasonable  
45 ecosystem management goals and objectives that we can start  
46 working toward and, at the same time, use these to maybe start  
47 thinking about a fisheries ecosystem plan for the Gulf of  
48 Mexico. Thank you.

1  
2 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you, Mr. Schirripa. Any questions?  
3

4 **MR. ROY WILLIAMS:** Mike, that's a nice presentation and I will  
5 tell you, I think the brain surgeons and rocket scientists and  
6 particle physicists have it easy compared to what you guys work  
7 on.  
8

9 You are creating such complex models and trying to integrate  
10 those things and get answers and I don't really understand how  
11 you get the statistics out of it to see how a red tide is  
12 affecting red grouper recruitment or gag grouper recruitment.  
13 It must -- I guess you just stick numbers in there and start  
14 trying things until you find something that works, but the  
15 models are really complex and I don't envy you, but I'm glad you  
16 guys are doing and I'm glad you didn't present it in a way that  
17 was so complicated that we couldn't understand it at all.  
18

19 **MR. CORKY PERRET:** Again, like Mr. Williams said, thank you for  
20 your presentation and it's an indeed complex issue. About ten  
21 years ago, I attended I think it was the first NOAA whatever it  
22 was called, but workshop in Charleston, South Carolina relative  
23 to ecosystem modeling.  
24

25 In two days, all the brainpower in the room couldn't decide on  
26 what was an ecosystem, but at least you're talking Gulf of  
27 Mexico and that's good. My question is or my comment is, in my  
28 experience, factors beyond the geography of the Gulf of Mexico  
29 play extremely important parts in what is happening in the Gulf  
30 and that's the Mississippi River and the dead zone is a very  
31 good example. My question is ecosystem of the Gulf of Mexico,  
32 would that also include the drainage basins from the land area?  
33

34 **DR. SCHIRRIPA:** Absolutely. Absolutely. One of the projects  
35 that we're eyeing right now -- Again, I don't mean to keep  
36 beating this into the ground, but we do have limited resources,  
37 but one of the ideas that we think could make our West Florida  
38 Shelf IEA less fish centric is the oyster beds off of  
39 Apalachicola Bay and the drainage that affects those.  
40

41 We are in contact with a colleague who actually has a model for  
42 oysters and if we have a model in place that has freshwater  
43 input, we are way ahead of the game. Yes, is the answer to your  
44 question.  
45

46 **MR. PERRET:** Well, I think one of the next major battles is  
47 going to be the freshwater wars. I think there is already some  
48 lawsuit between Florida and Georgia is taking all the water for

1 Atlanta, or trying to, and those sorts of things. We, the  
2 experts, may develop the greatest plan in the world and we're  
3 going to follow it, but when human growth reaches a point, like  
4 Atlanta, for example, that may change the whole drainage thing,  
5 unfortunately, and I think it will be really important that we  
6 can say, wait a minute, guys, yes, your human population growth  
7 is such and such, but, look, you're impacting the entire system  
8 and the oysters are worth this and the fishery is worth this and  
9 so on and so forth.

10  
11 I think as much as we can document not only the ecological  
12 importance of the Gulf of Mexico, but the economic importance,  
13 because, hey, let's face it. The dollars are what drives  
14 things, in most cases, I guess.

15  
16 **DR. SCHIRRIPA:** On that note, the three steps that I laid out,  
17 those last three slides, single species, shallow-water grouper -  
18 - When we get to that full IEA, that is where that challenge  
19 really comes into play, because we're not just dealing with the  
20 Gulf Council now and we're not just dealing with the Gulf States  
21 Marine Fisheries Commission, but we're dealing now with a true  
22 ecosystem-based, where the management of what we're trying to do  
23 is out of the reach of the people in this room necessarily.

24  
25 Thankfully, the governor appoints the councils and so we could  
26 still go back to the governors in that nature when we get to  
27 that point and yes, it's going to be a challenge at that point.

28  
29 **DR. BOB SHIPP:** Hi, Mike. Welcome back to the Gulf Council. I  
30 guess this is kind of a rhetorical question/comment, but in a  
31 paradoxical way, it seems to me that this couldn't have come at  
32 a better time.

33  
34 You mentioned limited resources, but since the spill, there are  
35 literally hundreds of millions of dollars going into ecosystem-  
36 based resource and the Gulf of Mexico Research Initiative and  
37 NRDA and the RESTORE, all of those things.

38  
39 I guess the reason my question is rhetorical is because I know  
40 the answer, that you guys certainly are going to coordinate with  
41 some of these groups to maximize both the goals and objectives  
42 as well as the funding sources.

43  
44 **DR. SCHIRRIPA:** Two-part answer on that, Bob, and thank you for  
45 welcoming me back. It's nice to see you again as well. One of  
46 the things that may not be as strong -- Are these groups  
47 cooperating? Are they taking a unified approach or are they  
48 doing single studies, one over here and one over, or are they

1 doing a whole unified type of study?

2  
3 I think one advantage we have in the IEA is we are trying to  
4 take a holistic approach and design studies that complement  
5 other studies within the IEA and not just ask single questions  
6 unrelated to other ones and I'm not accusing anybody of doing  
7 that at all. I am just saying that I don't know where the -- I  
8 think we might have an advantage, because we are trying this  
9 unified approach, where everything should fit into an overall  
10 picture.

11  
12 The other thing is I am hoping that by the time our three-year  
13 plan is done that -- Because right now, there is a lot of money  
14 that we as NOAA and NMFS employees can't utilize right now. I  
15 am hoping that at the end of this three-year study, this three-  
16 year initial IEA, that we will be in a position to where we will  
17 be one of the few groups that is taking this fully unified  
18 approach.

19  
20 Our model is going to be built and we could show success from  
21 our three years in this and really be a standout bunch, to say  
22 if anybody deserves this extra funding, it would be this group  
23 over here, because look what they've produced in the past three  
24 years and look at this holistic approach that they've taken, I  
25 hope.

26  
27 **MR. GLENN CONSTANT:** Along those lines, the Department of  
28 Interior, USGS, and Fish and Wildlife Service, have developed  
29 this kind of integrated ecosystem assessment before the oil  
30 spill, but certainly those resources that Dr. Shipp mentioned  
31 are going to come into play in the next three or four years or  
32 so, but climate science centers and landscape conservation and  
33 cooperatives, have you guys been engaged with those efforts,  
34 which are much more aligned with the kind of integrated approach  
35 that you've taken?

36  
37 **DR. SCHIRRIPA:** More along the lines of estuaries and wetlands  
38 and things of that nature. Getting way up into the terrestrial  
39 stuff, time and resources and people have not allowed us to go  
40 that far. About as far as we've been able to go are the  
41 estuaries and marshes and stuff and even that -- The Northern  
42 Gulf Institute we're working closely with and they've actually  
43 done work in various bays and so we're trying to get -- We are  
44 working with them as one example, but -- We've also been  
45 involved a little bit with the Open Ocean people too and there's  
46 just so much to do.

47  
48 **MR. CONSTANT:** I appreciate that and I think what you mentioned

1 earlier about having the oyster model as being a great benefit.  
2 If there's something built already, that can be a great asset  
3 and I think part of what they're doing in those cooperatives and  
4 in the climate science centers are seeking the development of  
5 those kinds of things and so I think it could be beneficial and  
6 I understand tying things together right now is a very time-  
7 consuming endeavor, but maybe tomorrow when we hear about the  
8 RESTORE Act stuff, there might be a better connection. I think  
9 in the process of developing the science behind how to invest  
10 these resources that there probably is.

11  
12 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. Anybody else?

13  
14 **MR. DALE DIAZ:** Thank you for coming and I appreciate your  
15 presentation. I am just trying to think through on a timeline.  
16 If everything went forward and you all was able to be  
17 productive, what kind of timeline do you think we would be on in  
18 the Gulf of Mexico to have an ecosystem model that could produce  
19 results that would be useful for management at this point?

20  
21 **DR. SCHIRRIPA:** Our three-year plan is designed on the Florida  
22 west shelf. However, we are already talking about how we are  
23 going to the next plan is going to expand to the entire eastern  
24 Gulf and then around the entire Gulf. It all depends on how  
25 much money S&T and NMFS is going to give us or everybody -- How  
26 much money they get for IEA and that's a big driving force.

27  
28 The good news is that one of our colleagues, Cam Ainsworth, has  
29 a Gulf of Mexico Atlantis model, the entire Gulf of Mexico, and  
30 he started this about two years ago. I am on the committee of  
31 several of his students and that model is coming together  
32 nicely.

33  
34 Because we are so spread out and have so many colleagues with  
35 us, it's not all on us. Our colleagues are doing this as well  
36 and so we actually -- I think Cam has about three or four  
37 students working on this model and I just got an email this  
38 morning saying that people are going to start looking at  
39 management strategy evaluations very soon with that model and so  
40 progress is being made on an entire Gulf Atlantis model, which  
41 is, as you probably know, probably the most sophisticated  
42 modeling platform for ecosystems right now, because it includes  
43 human dimensions and because it includes runoff and because it  
44 includes the fishing industry and employment and things of that  
45 nature.

46  
47 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Anybody else? Any more questions? Thank you,  
48 sir. We're going to move on into the next agenda item, which

1 will be --

2  
3 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Before we go, he did have some recommendations  
4 that came out of the SSC and I think we ought to at least  
5 consider what those recommendations were and possibly offer some  
6 motions.

7  
8 **MR. STEVEN ATRAN:** The next agenda item is to go over the SSC  
9 Recommendations and, Dr. Schirripa, what happened -- The SSC had  
10 a three-day meeting and the first half-day was for the Ecosystem  
11 SSC and the Standing SSC to meet and get the presentations from  
12 Dr. Schirripa and his colleagues and develop some  
13 recommendations and three of the committee recommendations, the  
14 SSC recommendations, were developed while Dr. Schirripa was  
15 there.

16  
17 On the third day, Dr. Schirripa was not there, but we had asked  
18 the Ecosystem SSC folks to stay over through the presentations  
19 of the gag and greater amberjack stock assessments, so they  
20 could see how a stock assessment is done, and then, with that  
21 knowledge behind them, have all of the SSCs get together and  
22 discuss ways to try to integrate ecosystem considerations into  
23 the assessment process.

24  
25 There were two other motions that were made after Dr. Schirripa  
26 left and one of them is very, very similar to a recommendation  
27 that he made right at the end of his presentation and so it  
28 might be worth it if I just very quickly go through that.

29  
30 **MR. WILLIAMS:** We're going to see those then in this next  
31 section?

32  
33 **MR. ATRAN:** Yes.

34  
35 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Okay. That's all I need.

36  
37 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Go ahead.

38  
39 **SSC RECOMMENDATIONS**

40  
41 **MR. ATRAN:** As I said, there was two parts to the ecosystem  
42 portion of the SSC meeting three weeks ago and the first portion  
43 had to do with Dr. Schirripa's presentation and the  
44 recommendations that came out of that and there were three SSC  
45 motions that Dr. Schirripa went through and I will just read  
46 them over. He already explained the rationale behind them and  
47 this is on page 3 if you want to follow along, the bottom of  
48 page 3.



1  
2 The first one is by unanimous vote, the SSC recommends that the  
3 council ask the Ecosystem SSC, in cooperation with the Standing  
4 SSC, to develop a set of suggested goals and objectives of an  
5 ecosystem-based fisheries management plan, complete with  
6 measurable targets. If you approve this, this would be making a  
7 charge to the Ecosystem SSC.

8  
9 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Mr. Chairman, that happened to be one of the ones  
10 that I was going to make. Mike presented that one earlier and  
11 would it be appropriate now to offer a motion following up the  
12 SSC recommendation? Okay.

13  
14 **Then I would like to -- We can just copy it. It's recommend**  
15 **that the council ask the Ecosystem SSC, in cooperation with the**  
16 **Standing SSC, to develop a set of suggested goals and objectives**  
17 **of an ecosystem-based fishery management plan, complete with**  
18 **measurable targets.**

19  
20 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** We will get the motion on the board here in  
21 just a second.

22  
23 **MR. WILLIAMS:** You can just copy it where it says "recommend  
24 that". Okay, Mr. Chairman, that's my motion.

25  
26 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Do we have a second? Second by Dr. Shipp.  
27 Any more discussion about this? I mean I think it was pretty  
28 well laid out.

29  
30 **MS. LEANN BOSARGE:** I just had a question for Dr. Schirripa and  
31 I had this question during the presentation and I should have  
32 asked it then. I especially liked a lot of the things you had  
33 to say about incorporating things into some of our models, like  
34 the red tide and things. I saw Bonnie shake her head yes during  
35 your presentation several times.

36  
37 On the measurable targets of this motion, can you give us some  
38 more information as to what you foresee these measurable targets  
39 focusing on?

40  
41 **DR. SCHIRRIPA:** I think it's a little premature at this meeting  
42 right now to get too finite on those, but measureable targets  
43 would generally be something along the lines of either we are at  
44 this point now and we want to be at this point or the direction  
45 of a particular indicator.

46  
47 A target might be the trophic level indicator seems to have  
48 declined in the past ten years and we don't think that's a good

1 thing and it's a bad indication and we want a management action  
2 that changes the direction of a declining indicator. I say that  
3 in lieu of knowing exactly where that indicator should be. If  
4 we know it's going in a direction that we don't want, we could  
5 at least look to change the direction of that and so I think the  
6 measurable targets is something that the group would come up  
7 with.

8  
9 **MS. BOSARGE:** I will elaborate a little more. The only thing  
10 that scared me is I really like what you're doing and I want to  
11 encourage it and I want to see it go forward. What I wanted to  
12 make sure is that we didn't end up in a situation where we are  
13 on a lot of other things that we do on the council, where we  
14 have these specific measureable items that are given to us,  
15 whether it be in the form of a law or a plan or whatever the  
16 case may be, and they are wonderful ideals to shoot for, but  
17 because we don't have either the funding or we don't have the  
18 data or we don't have the science to support it -- I didn't want  
19 to pigeonhole ourselves into a position where we're trying to  
20 hit targets that maybe we don't have all the resources we need  
21 to truly make an informed decision on it, but yet, we feel like  
22 we have to make a decision and that was the only thing that  
23 scared me in the motion, was the measureable targets.

24  
25 I support you fully on the rest of it. We need these goals and  
26 these objectives and I saw it more, for the moment, while we're  
27 still developing it and getting it to that point, as something  
28 to support us in the management decisions that we're making as  
29 we go along, so we can be more proactive in those management  
30 decisions, but maybe not proactive to the point that we're  
31 already setting measurable targets for -- Does that make sense?  
32 Are you following me?

33  
34 **DR. SCHIRRIPA:** I am following exactly what you're saying and I  
35 think you have a valid point, I really do. While you were  
36 speaking, I am looking at that sentence, where it says "complete  
37 with measurable targets". Would you be more comfortable if it  
38 were to say something along the lines of "ecosystem-based  
39 fisheries management that considers measureable targets"?

40  
41 **MS. BOSARGE:** I love it, considers possible measureable targets.  
42 That sounds great. That way, we don't feel like we're forced  
43 into a situation where if we don't feel we have all the data we  
44 need to hit a target, we can keep working on it.

45  
46 **MR. WILLIAMS:** I am fine with that. That's fine. Thanks for  
47 making that suggestion.

48

1 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** The seconder is not on the committee and so we  
2 have a motion on the board and it was changed and Roy is fine.  
3 Mr. Diaz seconds it. **Any opposition to this motion?**

4  
5 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DOUG GREGORY:** Like some of the concern  
6 raised earlier, the thing I want to be careful with is that we  
7 don't get our SSCs caught up into a major project that's going  
8 to take up a lot of time from the things we're already doing  
9 with stock assessments and I've got a question for Mike.

10  
11 This is an SSC motion and so that's what it is, but the way  
12 forward, it seems to me, is to incorporate ecosystem-based  
13 information in our stock assessments, like we did with gag just  
14 now, and to move forward that way, so that we are considering  
15 ecosystem concepts and parameters in our management plans that  
16 we already have when we do our stock assessments and set our  
17 management goals and that's the way I am kind of pushing things  
18 here at the staff level, instead of going off on a different  
19 direction of creating a management plan.

20  
21 What scares me is that I think back to the Essential Fish  
22 Habitat Plan, when we first tackled it. It was not well defined  
23 and it took a lot of time, but this is an SSC motion and so I  
24 hope we do move in this direction and whether it's another FMP  
25 or we do it in some other way, I think the SSCs can help us  
26 decide what direction to go and as we get into it, they may  
27 recommend some other way to move forward.

28  
29 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Any opposition to this motion before we go any  
30 further? **Hearing none, the motion passes.**

31  
32 **MR. ATRAN:** The next motion is by a vote of twelve to five, the  
33 SSC recommends that the Gulf of Mexico Integrated Ecosystem  
34 Assessment Program work with the Gulf Standing and Ecosystem  
35 SSCs to evaluate the current red grouper harvest control rule to  
36 determine if it is robust to possible future changes in  
37 intensity and frequency of episodic events of non-fishing  
38 mortality.

39  
40 If you're going to make a motion on here, one suggestion I might  
41 have is to also include the assessment scientists on this who  
42 are working on the red grouper assessments.

43  
44 **MR. PEARCE:** I've just got a question. This is a really big  
45 group that met, a bunch of people, and you've got the next three  
46 motions were twelve to five and twelve to six and seventeen to  
47 four and what was the opposition? Who were the people that  
48 didn't like what these motions were? I am just kind of curious

1 of if it was a block of people that were happy and it seems like  
2 a smaller block that's not happy with what's going on and I want  
3 to know some rationale as to why. Maybe I'm wrong and maybe  
4 it's just people moving back and forth, but it doesn't seem that  
5 way. Am I making sense?

6  
7 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** I understand.

8  
9 **MR. ATRAN:** I don't know if Morgan can help me out here, but I  
10 think at least part of the reason why some of them may have  
11 opposed it is the term "harvest control rule" is not a term that  
12 we use and so I think there's been some confusion as to exactly  
13 what was meant by that.

14  
15 **MR. PEARCE:** So it was our SSC members that didn't like what  
16 they were hearing here?

17  
18 **MR. ATRAN:** They're the ones who voted and I know it was  
19 confusing to me what the term meant and in talking with some  
20 other folks, I think it was confusing to some of the others as  
21 well.

22  
23 **MR. PEARCE:** But you've got our Standing SSC and you've got the  
24 Ecosystem SSC and you've got the Special Reef Fish SSC and I'm  
25 just curious what problems evidently some of them had with these  
26 next three motions and what they were.

27  
28 **MR. ATRAN:** Another thought, and I am trying to think as we go  
29 along, is that having passed the first motion to try to come up  
30 with some goals and objectives, I think there might have been a  
31 feeling that that's a good enough start for now and let's get  
32 those goals and objectives before we move on to the next step.

33  
34 **MR. PEARCE:** That's fair and I understand that and that may be  
35 exactly what we want to do, is just to figure out -- Get that  
36 start and then go from there.

37  
38 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Does Dr. Schirripa remember what the dissention  
39 was? Do you remember, Mike? You don't? Okay.

40  
41 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** We have an SSC recommendation here before us.

42  
43 **MR. WILLIAMS:** The Executive Director weighed in on the previous  
44 motion and do you want to weigh in on this one? I'm going to  
45 make this motion on behalf of the SSC if nobody -- I am hearing  
46 a little bit of dissention over there, but the SSC has made the  
47 motion and I'm going to give them a chance to air it if --

48

1 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** No, I think it would be a good  
2 project, but one difficult to accomplish though.

3  
4 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Well, I mean I think it is, but Mike showed us  
5 something he had done with gag grouper and red tide. You had a  
6 couple of spikes in there and you showed us something and so  
7 they're obviously working on it now and I mean if they think  
8 they can do it, I think we ought to ask them to do it.

9  
10 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** In their last gag assessment  
11 update, we included the red tide event and this was simply more  
12 confirmation that indeed it had an effect on the gag population  
13 and so it was like a first step forward.

14  
15 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Well, the red grouper live right out there where  
16 all those red tides occur and so if Dr. Schirripa opposes this,  
17 I won't make the motion, but otherwise, I am going to make it.

18  
19 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** I am not talking against the  
20 motion.

21  
22 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Then I would like to make this motion right here  
23 that the Gulf Council recommend that the Gulf of Mexico IEA  
24 Program work with the Gulf Standing and Ecosystem SSCs to  
25 evaluate the current red grouper harvest control rule to  
26 determine if it is robust to possible future changes in  
27 intensity and frequency of episodic events of non-fishing  
28 mortality.

29  
30 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** We have a motion on the board and do we have a  
31 second? Seeing no second for the motion --

32  
33 **MR. WILLIAMS:** That mystifies me, I will tell you.

34  
35 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** The motion fails for a lack of a second then  
36 and we will move on.

37  
38 **MR. ATRAN:** The next motion is at the top of page 4 and it's  
39 similar, but it looks at the human dimensions. By a vote of  
40 twelve to six, the SSC recommends that the Gulf of Mexico  
41 Integrated Ecosystem Assessment Program work with the Gulf  
42 Standing and Ecosystem SSCs to investigate the human dimension  
43 and long-term ecological implications of the current shallow-  
44 water grouper harvest control and various catch limits. Again,  
45 my suggestion, if you were going to make the motion, since this  
46 is talking about the human dimension, is to perhaps include the  
47 Socioeconomic SSC in this.

48

1 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. We have another SSC recommendation and  
2 seeing no activity, I guess you can carry on, Mr. Atran.

3  
4 **MR. ATRAN:** The next couple of motions occurred on the third  
5 day, when Dr. Schirripa wasn't there. This was after the stock  
6 assessments had been given and we got the Standing, the  
7 Ecosystem, and the Reef Fish SSCs altogether to talk about  
8 integrating ecosystem considerations into SEDAR assessments.

9  
10 The first motion had to do with a new task force that's just  
11 been created. There's a task force that was created by the  
12 Lenfest Program to try to develop a blueprint of action for  
13 ecosystem-based fisheries management. I have an attachment on  
14 the back of the SSC report that has a press release from the  
15 University of Washington on this.

16  
17 This is a group of thirteen scientists who have been appointed  
18 to try to work up some standard way of integrating ecosystem  
19 considerations into fisheries management. At the moment, all  
20 the councils are working in different ways and so they're trying  
21 to come up with some guidelines for the councils to work with.

22  
23 They do plan to create an advisory panel that consists of  
24 members and staff of fishery management councils plus staff with  
25 NOAA Fisheries. They are not at that stage yet and the thirteen  
26 members do include some people who have an affiliation with our  
27 council. That includes Lee Anderson from the University of  
28 Delaware, who I think was on the Socioeconomic SSC or its  
29 predecessor, and Felicia Coleman from Florida State University  
30 is a former council member and Kenneth Rose from Louisiana State  
31 University was on our Ecosystem SSC and so we do have some  
32 representation on this group of thirteen people.

33  
34 My understanding is when they're ready to start getting the  
35 councils involved that they will reach out to us, but the motion  
36 that the SSC made is by a vote of seventeen to four, the  
37 Ecosystem and Standing SSCs encourage the council to pursue  
38 participation in the newly formed taskforce to develop a  
39 blueprint of action for ecosystem-based fisheries management.

40  
41 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. We have an SSC recommendation on the  
42 board.

43  
44 **MR. WILLIAMS:** I will make it on behalf of the committee.  
45 Steve, you said that Ken Rose is on this and Felicia Coleman and  
46 who else?

47  
48 **MR. ATRAN:** Lee Anderson. He was on one of our SSCs and was he

1 on -- He still is? The Socioeconomic SSC.

2  
3 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Ken Rose used to be on our Reef Fish Committee.  
4 He and Jim Cowan were on the Reef Fish Committee at one time.

5  
6 **MR. ATRAN:** That's right and he was also on the Ecosystem SSC  
7 until a few years ago.

8  
9 **MR. WILLIAMS:** I am going to go ahead and hazard a motion then  
10 that the council pursue participation in the newly formed  
11 taskforce to develop a blueprint of action for ecosystems-based  
12 fisheries management.

13  
14 **MR. DIAZ:** I will second.

15  
16 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** We have a motion on the floor and it's been  
17 seconded by Mr. Diaz and any further comments or considerations?  
18 **Any opposition to the motion?**

19  
20 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** I was informed that this taskforce  
21 has just been formed by Lenfest and they are still getting  
22 organized and part of what they are talking about doing is  
23 contacting all the councils for us to participate in some  
24 fashion and so we don't need to pursue anything, but I think to  
25 be receptive to participating or to cooperating with the Lenfest  
26 taskforce is, I think, direction to staff.

27  
28 I don't know if that would involve council members as well, like  
29 the Fisheries Forums do and some of the other things that we're  
30 invited to participate in. Yes, we will do that, but as far as  
31 pursuing it, we will just wait and let them contact us.

32  
33 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. We will move on, Mr. Atran.

34  
35 **MR. ATRAN:** I agree with what Doug Gregory said, but if we were  
36 going to do anything, given the very early stage at which this  
37 taskforce is at, about the only thing we can maybe do is send a  
38 letter to the chairman of the taskforce saying we're aware that  
39 your taskforce has been formed and we're very much interested in  
40 participating at the appropriate time or something to that  
41 effect.

42  
43 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Atran has made a recommendation for a  
44 letter and does anybody want to move on that idea?

45  
46 **MR. DIAZ:** I don't know that it needs a motion, but I think that  
47 would be a good way to follow up on this motion that was  
48 previously passed, to let them know that we're interested in

1 participating.

2

3 **MR. ATRAN:** My intent was if the motion passes, that would be  
4 our response to the motion passing.

5

6 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** We have a motion on the floor. **Is there any**  
7 **opposition to passing this motion? Seeing none, the motion**  
8 **passes.** Go ahead, Mr. Atran.

9

10 **MR. ATRAN:** Finally, there was one more motion that was made and  
11 you may remember at the end of Dr. Schirripa's presentation, he  
12 suggested that we form a multidisciplinary committee composed of  
13 members from various SSCs and APs, et cetera, in order to  
14 prioritize and identify the information needs for fisheries  
15 managed by the council.

16

17 The combined SSCs went ahead and made that exact motion. By a  
18 vote of fourteen to two, the SSC recommends that the council  
19 convene a working group comprised of some members from the  
20 Ecosystem SSC, Standing SSC, Socioeconomic SSC, advisory panels,  
21 and the Sustainable Fisheries Committee of the council to  
22 develop approaches for identifying and prioritizing ecosystem  
23 and socioeconomic information needs for the fisheries managed by  
24 the council.

25

26 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** We have an SSC recommendation before us.

27

28 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Could I make a request that Doug and/or Steve  
29 comment on this motion? Is it a useful thing to do? It looks  
30 fairly -- It's going to have a rigorous group there. There's  
31 going to be quite a few people on it and are you all right with  
32 it?

33

34 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** I think eventually yes. Certainly  
35 it's a working group of the three SSCs and it's going in the  
36 direction that I've been wanting to go in integrating the three  
37 SSCs. We're the only council that has more than one SSC and  
38 this discussion really brings to focus the need to have an  
39 integrated SSC structure and so this could be the beginning of  
40 that.

41

42 I don't know if the three groups with some advisory panel  
43 members and council committee all meeting at once or working as  
44 one group is the way to go, but it's certainly a direction to go  
45 in. I think we take it step-wise and form a working group of  
46 the SSC and then incorporate the advisory panel representation  
47 and that's something for the council to discuss. We can pass  
48 this and then work on setting up the structure of it later.



1  
2 **MR. WILLIAMS:** I would be glad to take out the advisory panel  
3 and Sustainable Fisheries Committee if that would make it more  
4 palatable to you. I think Steve has a comment, too.

5  
6 **MR. ATRAN:** I think the idea was to include stakeholders as well  
7 as scientists in this. I think though that perhaps if this  
8 group is formed that it might need a little bit clearer charge,  
9 considering that, as currently proposed, it includes both  
10 scientists and non-scientists. I am not sure that simply saying  
11 "information needs" really gives us enough of a direction.

12  
13 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** Our hesitation is that we've never  
14 approached anything this way before. We have our system of the  
15 scientists providing the best recommendation they can and it  
16 being reviewed by the public, through our advisory committee,  
17 and the recommendation coming to the council.

18  
19 Now, a tweaking of that, our approach, could be in order for  
20 this, but I think first -- We have anthropologists and  
21 sociologists on our SSCs and so they have socioeconomic  
22 information and so, to me, our current way of operating seems to  
23 be the best and most efficient way to go.

24  
25 I was at the SSC meeting, but, unfortunately, I was in a SEDAR  
26 Steering Committee webinar when these discussions and these  
27 motions were made and so I didn't really participate in their  
28 discussion with that, but if you read the report, it does talk  
29 about a need to try to integrate the SSCs and so we would have  
30 to identify advisory panel members or an ad hoc advisory panel  
31 to work with them, but I see it going forward in a step-wise  
32 fashion.

33  
34 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Don't you think it -- If I were to make this  
35 motion, isn't it a little premature to have APs on there? This  
36 is going to be fairly technical kind of --

37  
38 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** That's what I'm trying to say. It  
39 doesn't fit our paradigm of operating and so it feels a little  
40 awkward.

41  
42 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Mr. Chairman, I am going to go ahead and try a  
43 motion. I am not going to include the advisory panel or the  
44 Sustainable Fisheries Committee of the council. It seems to me  
45 that if the Chairman at that time wants to send somebody, he  
46 could always send someone. He or she could always send someone.

47  
48 **I am going to recommend that the council convene a working group**

1 comprised of some members from the Ecosystem SSC, Standing SSC,  
2 and Socioeconomic SSC to develop approaches for identifying and  
3 prioritizing ecosystem and socioeconomic information needs for  
4 the fisheries managed by the council.

5  
6 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Williams, is that your motion?

7  
8 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Yes, it is.

9  
10 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. Do we have a second? Mr. Sanchez  
11 seconds it and any discussion about this motion? **Any opposition**  
12 **to this motion?**

13  
14 **MR. DIAZ:** For discussion, Steve did mention that the charge is  
15 kind of weak and that's the only thing that's got me a little  
16 apprehensive. I don't mind this group getting together and I  
17 think we need to look in this general direction and I'm just  
18 wondering if it's specific enough.

19  
20 **MS. BOSARGE:** I think Dr. Gregory mentioned one thing that he  
21 saw where this could definitely be used maybe more in the short  
22 term, while we're working on some longer-term objectives and  
23 goals, and that was -- Like I said, I saw Bonnie shake her head  
24 yes a couple of times and maybe we could have these SSCs  
25 evaluate what we could possibly use to fill in some of the gaps  
26 when we look at variations in stocks and what's happening with  
27 the stocks.

28  
29 Where can we use these now as we're getting a longer-term plan  
30 for this? That could be one thing that the SSC -- That  
31 definitely would be right up their alley, right, Bonnie?

32  
33 **DR. BONNIE PONWITH:** I could see as a possible outcome from  
34 this an ecosystem contribution to your research needs report,  
35 which is a report that you prepare and contribute to annually  
36 that helps guide our planning process and traditionally, that  
37 report deals with data gaps and where is the biggest shortfall  
38 in data for some stock assessment, but you could also include  
39 additional information of things you would learn from this  
40 exercise, to help deal with those research needs.

41  
42 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Any other discussion about this motion? **Any**  
43 **opposition?** Okay. We will move on, Mr. Atran.

44  
45 **MR. ATRAN:** That concludes the SSC report.

46  
47 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Mr. Chairman, I was told that there was -- Along  
48 the same lines, somebody sent me a copy of something -- A person

1 by the name of David Chagaris of the Florida Fish and Wildlife  
2 Commission provided to this group. It was apparently one of  
3 their background documents.

4  
5 From what I read here, they are doing something similar on this  
6 Ecopath and Ecosim and Ecospace model and they are looking at  
7 fisheries on the West Florida Shelf and apparently they have  
8 some information.

9  
10 I mean reading from his summary here, they could perhaps tell us  
11 something about gag grouper and how the overfishing of gag  
12 grouper or the rebuilding of gag grouper might affect other  
13 fisheries on the West Florida Shelf.

14  
15 I don't want to step on anybody's toes here, but I would kind of  
16 like to know -- If they are working on this as well, I would  
17 sort of like to know -- I would like to hear more about what the  
18 Fish and Wildlife Commission and the Florida Fish and Wildlife  
19 Research Institute is doing on this and maybe we could even get  
20 a report from them at some point.

21  
22 If they're working on gag grouper and other shallow-water  
23 groupers on the West Florida Shelf, I would like to hear what it  
24 is they're doing and what kind of advice they might be able to  
25 offer.

26  
27 **MR. ATRAN:** Actually, Dave Chagaris works with Behzad Mahmoudi,  
28 who was an Ecosystem SSC member until relatively recently, and  
29 they have been working on this Ecosim with Ecopath model for  
30 several years. I know Dr. Mahmoudi is a real expert on that  
31 model.

32  
33 Back several years ago, our Ecosystem SSC was pursuing a project  
34 of trying to demonstrate the feasibility of using an ecosystem  
35 approach to some real-world fishery issues and they held a  
36 series of workshops in which they looked at how this Ecosim  
37 model or a couple of other models might be applied to red tide  
38 events and might be applied to interactions between shrimp and  
39 red snapper with shrimp trawl bycatch mortality.

40  
41 They looked at a few other items and this is like maybe eight or  
42 nine years ago and the results, in my mind, showed that it was  
43 feasible to use ecosystem modeling as an approach to look at  
44 some of the fishery issues, but, at the time, a lot of the data  
45 inputs were pure guesses.

46  
47 There was a lot of data gaps and the models were still being  
48 developed. They have been working on this for years and they

1 are probably very much advanced now on where they were and so  
2 yes, they have been working very heavily on this.

3  
4 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Just a point of information. I hired Behzad  
5 Mahmoudi about thirty years ago right out of the University of  
6 Miami. Mr. Chairman, toward that end, I would like to offer one  
7 more motion, if I might, and I provided it to Phyllis earlier  
8 and so perhaps she could pull it up for me.

9  
10 **The motion is simply that the council request SSC feedback on**  
11 **the Florida Fish and Wildlife Research Institute's West Florida**  
12 **Shelf ecosystem model's ability to evaluate gag and other**  
13 **shallow-water grouper harvest strategies and evaluate whether**  
14 **the model can provide information on ecological and economic**  
15 **tradeoffs, in order to help determine best management outcomes,**  
16 **and, if possible, for the council to receive a presentation on**  
17 **the model at the next meeting or whenever is feasible. That's**  
18 **my motion.**

19  
20 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** We have a motion on the floor and it's been  
21 seconded by Mr. Diaz and is there any more discussion about this  
22 motion? **Seeing none, any opposition to the motion? The motion**  
23 **carries.** Anything else before we move on, Mr. Atran?

24  
25 **MR. ATRAN:** The motion you passed before about creating this  
26 group consisting of members of the Ecosystem SSC, Standing SSC,  
27 and Socioeconomic SSC, do you have any recommendations on how  
28 large this should be? We could maybe try to get five members  
29 from each of those SSCs and that would be a fifteen-member  
30 working group. Just a little guidance.

31  
32 Actually, during the SSC meeting, they were talking about  
33 convening the entire Standing, Socioeconomic, and Ecosystem SSC  
34 and I looked around the room and with what we had, we already  
35 had a huge SSC meeting in Miami and this would have been  
36 unmanageable if the entire SSCs met jointly.

37  
38 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** The West Florida Shelf model was  
39 presented to the Ecosystem SSC a year or two ago, but it's never  
40 been presented to the Standing SSC and I know Behzad was on the  
41 Ecosystem SSC and he just resigned a week before the meeting and  
42 he suggested that Dave be put on to replace him and we said when  
43 we go back to reappoint people that we will consider that and we  
44 will certainly solicit Dave to apply to be on the SSC, but  
45 apparently I think there's some -- Like there are in some  
46 institutions, some competing efforts to do modeling and we will  
47 do our best to get the groups together, working together, but I  
48 think there are two different models and they will operate in

1 two different ways and so we do need to evaluate the relative  
2 utility of each modeling approach.

3  
4 **MR. WILLIAMS:** When you're talking about the other, you're  
5 talking about the FWRI approach versus the NMFS approach? I am  
6 not trying to create any problems here, but I used to work for  
7 the Florida Institute and they didn't call them that then, but I  
8 would like to hear what they have to say.

9  
10 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Atran was looking for some guidance as far  
11 as how to put the group together on a motion that had passed  
12 about number-wise, Mr. Williams.

13  
14 **MR. WILLIAMS:** I would agree that fifteen would be the max, I  
15 would think, and even smaller. I would defer to the Executive  
16 Director and staff to do something like that, but my opinion  
17 would be no more than fifteen.

18  
19 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** I think that's pretty well understood, that  
20 you're going to let the staff do it, but it would be no more  
21 than fifteen and probably less, if at all possible. Any other  
22 questions?

23  
24 **DR. SCHIRRIPA:** I feel there's a misunderstanding here that I  
25 feel compelled to jump in and I'm sorry if I'm -- There is  
26 absolutely, positively no competing efforts going on here and  
27 that is absolutely the wrong perception. Nobody is competing  
28 for anything.

29  
30 Rather, we would look at this as a multi-model approach, in  
31 fact. In fact, that's our idea, is to use Ecopath with Ecosim  
32 and OSMOSE and Atlantis and what you have to understand is that  
33 these are simulation models and their results generally don't  
34 have formal error and uncertainty around them and so much like  
35 hurricane models -- You have seen the spaghetti models and this  
36 is the approach we plan on taking.

37  
38 We are welcoming to absolutely any models whatsoever to put into  
39 this ensemble approach of models and say with this set of  
40 assumptions you get this and with this set of assumptions, you  
41 get that and try to -- If all models are pointing in the same  
42 direction, then great. Have at it, but if they're going in  
43 different directions with slightly different assumptions, we  
44 need to know that as well and so by no means do I think  
45 competing or competition is the proper word here. I would say  
46 cooperation and all models are welcome.

47  
48 **MR. WILLIAMS:** If I said competing, I apologize.

1  
2 **DR. SCHIRRIPA:** I heard it a couple of times and whatever, but I  
3 am just --

4  
5 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** No, that was me.

6  
7 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you, Dr. Schirripa.

8  
9 **MR. PERRET:** Mike, I think two or three years ago, you were  
10 chairman of our ecosystem -- No, it wasn't you? Okay. We had a  
11 committee and they looked at these ecosystem models and so on  
12 and so forth and came back and gave us a presentation. I assume  
13 the models today are more refined than they were two or three or  
14 four or whatever years ago.

15  
16 Dr. Crabtree I'm sure will correct me if I'm wrong, but it seems  
17 to me in the presentation they gave there was some concern about  
18 shrimp trawling and you mentioned the menhaden and the menhaden  
19 fishery and the prey. It seems like it came back that, hey, if  
20 you didn't have shrimp trawling that your catfish or whatever  
21 fish may take over and all that sort of thing and the same thing  
22 with menhaden. If you weren't on that committee, was their work  
23 made available to you and do you recall any of that?

24  
25 **DR. SCHIRRIPA:** Yes, I do recall that and --

26  
27 **MR. PERRET:** I'm sure it's clearer than my memory.

28  
29 **DR. SCHIRRIPA:** I would implore the group to move beyond the  
30 catfish/shrimp story that was told then. It was published in  
31 the *Bulletin of Marine Science*, but if you read it carefully and  
32 if you take that one sentence out -- Yes, it says that, but if  
33 you read the very next sentence or two, it admits that this is  
34 not a commonsense answer and that this was an example and this  
35 was a demonstration project and that these results should not be  
36 taken as a direct management action.

37  
38 Things evolve and surely in ten years I would like to think that  
39 we know a little bit more and not just the models are being more  
40 refined, but it's the data, which is just as, if not more,  
41 important than the models.

42  
43 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** I don't see anybody else and so I've got one  
44 more question and I guess it would be to Bonnie or Dr. Schirripa  
45 or somebody, but one of the things that we've talked about  
46 throughout the whole course of this meeting is with regard to  
47 stock assessments and timing and trying to get stuff done on  
48 time.

1  
2 Moving in this direction and using the spaghetti model approach  
3 and everything, is this going to slow down or limit us in the  
4 number of stock assessments that we can have in any given time?  
5 I know we do a certain number and is this going to really slow  
6 this down and how would that part of the program work out?

7  
8 **DR. SCHIRRIPA:** The motions, if you read them carefully, were  
9 designed specifically to not include the Southeast Fisheries  
10 Science Center. It said that the Gulf of Mexico IEA group would  
11 do this work and that was done with a very conscious effort that  
12 we need to run parallel for now to the single species stuff, so  
13 what you're saying does not occur.

14  
15 In the end, our ideal product would increase the efficiency of  
16 our single species assessments, but by not bothering the single  
17 species people and letting them take care of those terms of  
18 reference. We need a separate group doing this stuff alongside  
19 them and that's the approach that we're taking right now, using  
20 funding as we can make available, through whatever means, MARFIN  
21 or IEA money and so on, to run parallel, so that we do not run  
22 into that problem.

23  
24 I realize, of course, it's on everyone's mind and so we've been  
25 in this business for a long time and I know what some of the  
26 priorities are and so yes, we're intentionally making that  
27 point.

28  
29 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you and I thought that's what it was and  
30 I just wanted to make absolute certain. I think that's  
31 everything on this and with that, we will move on to Item Number  
32 V, which will be Options Paper for Status Determination  
33 Criteria, Optimum Yield, and Red Snapper ACL Designation. That  
34 will be Tab E, Number 6, led by Mr. Atran.

35  
36 **OPTIONS PAPER - STATUS DETERMINATION CRITERIA, OPTIMUM YIELD,**  
37 **AND RED SNAPPER ACL DESIGNATION**

38  
39 **MR. ATRAN:** Thank you. I think it was some time last year that  
40 I brought a scoping document on this topic to the committee and  
41 it was a very confusing and very technical issue and the  
42 committee said that they would like to get it revised and try to  
43 make it a little bit easier to read.

44  
45 I came back and met with our IPT and the IPT recommended that  
46 because this document is so technical in nature that if we went  
47 out to scoping, we weren't going to get anybody showing up and  
48 so they suggested that we go straight to an options paper and

1 start considering some actual options.

2  
3 Just to remind you, the reason why we're considering this is  
4 because the status determination criteria consists of the  
5 maximum fishing mortality threshold, which is necessary to  
6 determine if overfishing is occurring, the overfishing limit,  
7 which is an alternate way to determine if overfishing is  
8 occurring, and the minimum stock size threshold, which is used  
9 to determine if the stock is overfished.

10  
11 We have overfishing definitions for most of our stocks that was  
12 adopted in 1999. Most of them, we adopted F 30 percent SPR as  
13 the maximum fishing mortality threshold. However, the document  
14 where we attempted to do that also tried to set the biomass  
15 thresholds in terms of SPR and NMFS at that time said that SPR  
16 is not a biomass measurement and couldn't be used to develop the  
17 biomass reference points and so they accepted our overfishing  
18 definitions, but not our overfished definitions.

19  
20 Since then, we have started calling our overfished definitions  
21 based upon the yield corresponding to fishing at F some SPR and  
22 that's been acceptable to the National Marine Fisheries Service,  
23 but we have a large number of stocks where we don't have biomass  
24 reference points. We have overfishing reference points, but we  
25 may want to see if we want to revisit them. I know the council  
26 is specifically interested in red snapper in that aspect.

27  
28 Then, in addition to that, there's a couple of other items here  
29 dealing with formally adopting ACLs for red snapper, which we  
30 haven't done and I will explain that in a second, and adopting  
31 an OFL for black grouper and trying to define the relationship  
32 between optimum yield and annual catch limits, which at least to  
33 me has been a confusing subject and I'm trying to clear that up.

34  
35 With that, I will go into this document and we'll start on page  
36 5, which is still in the introduction section, but it has to do  
37 with ACL designation for red snapper. Now, the Magnuson Act,  
38 when it was reauthorized in 2006, and I believe that was when it  
39 was reauthorized last, required that all overfished stocks have  
40 annual catch limits by 2010 and then all other stocks by 2012,  
41 but it allowed the use of some alternative designation if it was  
42 compatible with the objectives of the Magnuson Act and the  
43 National Standards.

44  
45 At the time, we were doing quota changes and management changes  
46 through framework -- Well, we called them regulatory amendments.  
47 We were advised that a full plan amendment was needed to  
48 formally adopt ACLs and so what we did was we set TACs and then



1 later quotas and we said that the quotas were the functional  
2 equivalent of an ACL and that was acceptable under the National  
3 Standard 1 Guidelines.

4  
5 It's acceptable, but it's very awkward to keep having to talk  
6 about our functional equivalent of an ACL rather than an ACL  
7 itself and so we've been looking for some place in a plan  
8 amendment where we can say, no, we're actually going to have  
9 ACLs for red snapper and not just the functional equivalents.

10  
11 At our last IPT meeting, we were informed by our NOAA General  
12 Counsel that we didn't actually have to have an action with  
13 multiple alternatives since this change does not have any NEPA  
14 effects. It won't have any effect on the environment and it's  
15 just a technical change.

16  
17 It means that in the codified regulations there will be a  
18 section under the ACL section where we will say red snapper ACLs  
19 are as follows. Right now, that's not in there, but there are  
20 quotas for red snapper and those quotas are required under the  
21 407(d) section of the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

22  
23 With this technical change, we will now officially get ACLs in  
24 the codified regulations and we can start talking about setting  
25 ACLs for red snapper instead of functional equivalents of ACLs.  
26 Again, this has absolutely no change to the actual management of  
27 red snapper and it's just a technical change so that we can get  
28 rid of this awkward wording.

29  
30 Now we'll get into the action items where we do have some  
31 alternatives, which is in Chapter 2, beginning on page 7. The  
32 first thing we have is Action 1 and that's to adopt some  
33 reference points for maximum sustainable yield.

34  
35 There is a number of different reference points. We usually  
36 adopt 30 percent SPR or, in a few cases, maximum yield per  
37 recruit. There are other alternative ways of setting a proxy  
38 for maximum sustainable yield, but those are the two most  
39 commonly used and so at least for the first couple of  
40 alternatives, we are restricting ourselves to those two methods  
41 of defining a reference point.

42  
43 Alternative 1, no action, states that the reference points will  
44 remain as shown in Table 2.1, which I bypassed. It lists which  
45 species are using 30 percent SPR as the reference point and  
46 which are using 26 percent SPR. That would be red snapper.  
47 Goliath grouper is using 50 percent SPR for fishing mortality  
48 and it doesn't have a biomass reference point and then we have

1 two species, gag and vermilion snapper, which are using maximum  
2 yield per recruit.

3  
4 The majority of our species are basing our reference points on  
5 30 percent SPR and so Alternative 2 would do that for all of the  
6 stocks that don't currently have a biomass reference point. It  
7 states that fishing mortality and biomass MSY reference points  
8 will be based upon 30 percent SPR and so, in other words, the  
9 overfishing threshold would become F 30 percent SPR and the  
10 maximum sustainable yield proxy would become the biomass at F 30  
11 percent SPR.

12  
13 Option a -- These options are not exclusive and they call all be  
14 adopted or any combination of them. Option a would apply this  
15 to all the stocks that currently do not have a defined biomass  
16 reference point and there's a list here of hogfish, queen  
17 snapper, blackfin snapper.

18  
19 I won't go through the whole list, but these are mostly data-  
20 poor species that have never had a stock assessment and so  
21 there's never been any reason in the past to apply an  
22 overfishing or an overfished threshold, but we're supposed to  
23 have those for all stocks and so Option a would fill in the  
24 gaps.

25  
26 Option b would add gray triggerfish to all those other ones and  
27 the reason why we think gray triggerfish might need to have a  
28 change is because right now, the overfishing threshold is based  
29 upon 30 percent SPR, but the overfished threshold is based upon  
30 20 percent SPR.

31  
32 It doesn't make a whole lot of sense and I'm not sure how we  
33 ended in that situation, but you really want your overfishing  
34 and overfished thresholds to be using the same reference point  
35 and so Option b would apply 30 percent SPR to both the  
36 overfished and the overfishing threshold for gray triggerfish.

37  
38 Option c would switch gag from its Fmax, it's maximum yield per  
39 recruit proxy, to F 30 percent SPR. Yesterday in Reef Fish  
40 Committee, we got a report on the gag stock assessment and  
41 basically, rationale was provided as to why maximum yield per  
42 recruit is a better proxy than 30 percent SPR for gag and so it  
43 might not be a good idea to adopt Option c, but for  
44 completeness, it is included in this alternative.

45  
46 Then Option d, vermilion snapper is also based upon maximum  
47 yield per recruit and I believe it was for the same reasons as  
48 gag, that if we used F 30 percent SPR that we were going to end

1 up with an overfishing proxy that was above the model-generated  
2 estimates of FMSY, whereas maximum yield per recruit would be a  
3 little more conservative.

4  
5 Alternative 3 is the counterpart to Alternative 2, except it  
6 would convert everything to using maximum yield per recruit  
7 instead of the F 30 percent SPR. If we did that, then the  
8 overfishing threshold would be Fmax and the overfished threshold  
9 would be biomass below the biomass when fishing at Fmax.

10  
11 Option a would apply this change to all stocks that don't have a  
12 defined biomass reference point and have the 30 percent fishing  
13 mortality reference point and, again, there's a list here of  
14 hogfish, queen snapper, et cetera.

15  
16 Option b would apply it to all the stocks under Option a plus  
17 add black grouper, mutton snapper, yellowtail snapper, greater  
18 amberjack, tilefish, red grouper, yellowedge grouper, and gray  
19 triggerfish and so essentially, all of the species covered in  
20 this generic amendment. By the way, this generic amendment  
21 covers all of the reef fish stocks plus red drum.

22  
23 Alternative 4 deals specifically with goliath grouper, because  
24 unlike most of the other stocks, instead of using 30 percent SPR  
25 on which to base the overfishing mortality threshold, we're  
26 using 50 percent SPR and that was adopted based upon a  
27 recommendation that came out of an ad hoc panel back in the late  
28 1990s that suggested that goliath grouper may be more vulnerable  
29 to overfishing and therefore, a more conservative proxy than  
30 what's used for most of the reef fish would be appropriate.

31  
32 That panel had recommended a proxy somewhere between 40 percent  
33 and 60 percent and the council went with 50 percent, because  
34 that's the midway point there, but if you want to reconsider  
35 that, we have options to set the overfishing and overfished  
36 proxies at either 60 percent SPR, 50 percent SPR, 40 percent  
37 SPR, or 30 percent, which is what we do for most of our reef  
38 fish stocks, or we could also set it at maximum yield per  
39 recruit.

40  
41 At the moment, I don't think we have much biological information  
42 to support going to an Fmax policy and the so the question is  
43 whether you want to continue with the 50 percent SPR and have a  
44 biomass threshold as well as an overfishing threshold, based on  
45 that, if you want to get more conservative and go to 60 percent  
46 SPR.

47  
48 40 percent would be less conservative, but still more

1 conservative than most stocks, but just to put it in  
2 perspective, we were told yesterday that gag, where -- Although  
3 Fmax was the adopted overfishing threshold, that's the  
4 equivalent of F 40 percent SPR in the case of gag and so you  
5 might think, as far as 40 percent, do you want the same level of  
6 conservation for goliath grouper that you're applying for gag?  
7 If so, the 40 percent SPR might be appropriate and if you think  
8 it should be more conservative, than the 50 or 60 percent might  
9 be appropriate.

10  
11 Then Alternative 5 deals specifically with red snapper. This  
12 was a request that came from the council. At the moment,  
13 overfishing and overfished thresholds are based upon 26 percent  
14 SPR. The council asked that a switch to Fmax be considered.

15  
16 The alternatives we have here -- If you don't adopt anything in  
17 Alternative 5, we stick with 26 percent SPR. Option a would go  
18 to 30 percent SPR and so it would put red snapper on the same  
19 proxies as most of the other reef fish and Options b and c would  
20 switch the proxy to Fmax, maximum yield per recruit, and there,  
21 you have a choice of either basing that on total removals or  
22 basing it on retained yield and there is a slight difference.

23  
24 The equivalent SPR, if you based it on total removals, would be  
25 20.4 percent SPR and if you based it on retained yield, it would  
26 be 22.4 percent SPR. Again, to put this in perspective, prior  
27 to 1996, a 20 percent SPR was the overfishing and overfished  
28 threshold for red snapper.

29  
30 We went to 26 percent SPR because the available scientific  
31 information supported that as being closer to what the true MSY  
32 might be, but 20 percent is below those recommendations.

33  
34 The next section deals with setting maximum fishing mortality  
35 threshold and it is on page 13 and that's Action 2. Alternative  
36 1 would be no action and the existing maximum fishing mortality  
37 thresholds would be retained and that would be 30 percent SPR  
38 for all stocks except gag and vermilion snapper, which use Fmax.  
39 Red snapper uses F 26 percent SPR and goliath grouper uses F 50  
40 percent SPR.

41  
42 Alternative 2 would use whatever proxy was adopted in Action 1  
43 and set the maximum fishing mortality threshold to whatever  
44 proxy was adopted in 1. For most stocks, that would either be F  
45 30 percent SPR or Fmax, but it wouldn't be necessary to list the  
46 individual species here, because they're already listed in  
47 Action 1.

48

1 Alternative 3 is similar to Alternative 2, in that it sets FMSY  
2 or its proxy based upon the proxy that was adopted in Action 1,  
3 but it adds another line. It says the maximum fishing mortality  
4 threshold is equal to F rebuild for stocks that are in a  
5 rebuilding plan.

6  
7 The reason why this was added was because of an issue that arose  
8 last year when we were setting red snapper catch limits and  
9 quotas. The SSC had been basing the overfishing limit on the F  
10 rebuild level, which is more conservative than FMSY, but we were  
11 told that OFL, by definition, is the yield when fishing at the  
12 maximum fishing mortality threshold, or FMSY.

13  
14 We had to go back and recalculate OFLs based upon the higher F  
15 rate. The problem is that on a rebuilding stock if you base the  
16 rebuilding, the OFL, on FMSY, you're never actually going to get  
17 to your target level. You will approach it on an asymptotic  
18 basis, but you will never actually get to it and so this  
19 corrects what we saw as an issue for rebuilding stocks and it  
20 makes sure that overfishing occurs if fishing is occurring at a  
21 higher rate than is consistent with rebuilding the stock.

22  
23 At the bottom of page 15, there is a section titled "Discussion  
24 of Overfishing Limit" and OFLs are also a status determination  
25 criteria, but we don't need to define how they're calculated,  
26 because, as I mentioned before, it's already defined in the  
27 National Standard Guidelines.

28  
29 OFL is the yield when you're fishing at FMSY or your FMSY proxy.  
30 That's pretty automatic once you've determined your proxy.  
31 However, when we put together our Generic ACL and AM Amendment  
32 in 2012, that's where we assigned OFLs and ABCs and ACLs and  
33 ACTs to most of our stocks and we had several species complexes  
34 where we were assigning OFLs and ACLs and whatnot, deepwater  
35 grouper and tilefishes and amberjacks other than greater  
36 amberjack and certain snappers, which we called the mid-water  
37 snapper complex, and shallow-water grouper other than red  
38 grouper and gag.

39  
40 That other category included black grouper, along with  
41 yellowmouth, yellowfin, and I don't recall the other one. The  
42 problem is that we have a stock assessment on black grouper and  
43 so we have an OFL for black grouper, but that OFL covers both  
44 the South Atlantic and Gulf regions, because that stock moves  
45 across the jurisdictional boundaries.

46  
47 The way in which we were determining OFL for our complexes was  
48 to add the individual OFL values for each stock together to get

1 an OFL for the entire complex. If we did that for the other  
2 shallow-water grouper complex, we would have been including some  
3 black grouper that are in the South Atlantic side that we really  
4 shouldn't be counting.

5  
6 I wasn't quite sure how to handle that at the time and so for  
7 purposes of getting that amendment completed and implemented, we  
8 said that OFL was undefined for the shallow-water grouper  
9 complex.

10  
11 Since then, we've determined that we can determine an OFL  
12 component for the Gulf side. There was an allocation or an  
13 apportionment formula that was developed as part of the Generic  
14 ACL and AM Amendment for dividing up the ABC between the Gulf  
15 and the Atlantic and I believe the Gulf side got 53 percent of  
16 the black grouper ABC and the South Atlantic got the remainder.

17  
18 We can take that formula and apply it to the OFL as well, so we  
19 just have a Gulf portion of the OFL. Then we can add together  
20 all those other species' OFLs and come up with an OFL for the  
21 complex. At the bottom of page 14, if we do that, we get an  
22 other shallow-water grouper OFL in the Gulf of Mexico for 2014  
23 of 800,876 pounds gutted weight. Then for 2015 and beyond, it's  
24 798,828 pounds gutted weight. I don't think we've come anywhere  
25 close to this, but it allows us to put an OFL on the books for  
26 the complex so we have a measurement to determine if the complex  
27 has entered an overfishing state.

28  
29 I didn't feel that this needed to be an action item with  
30 alternatives, because we're using already established methods  
31 for setting OFL and just determining that we can use the  
32 apportionment formula to determine how much of the black grouper  
33 OFL to apply to the Gulf side and so this, like the red grouper  
34 ACL adoption, is just a statement of here's what the OFL is for  
35 the shallow-water grouper complex.

36  
37 The next section is Action 3 on page 15, which is setting  
38 minimum stock size threshold, which is the third and last status  
39 determination criteria.

40  
41 Alternative 1 is no action and right now, for several of our  
42 stocks, we don't have any biomass threshold for minimum stock  
43 size threshold and the council's approach has been to adopt them  
44 on a case-by-case basis as needed. The problem with that --  
45 That's what Alternative 1 would do.

46  
47 The problem with that is if we get a stock assessment for the  
48 first time on a stock, the assessment does not have any

1 information on what the overfished and what the overfishing  
2 limits are.

3  
4 The assessment scientists have to pretty much make a guess at  
5 what they think the council is going to adopt and then use that  
6 guess in order to evaluate the status of the stocks and the  
7 council most of the time goes along with the SSC, but they may  
8 not and so it would be better to have these thresholds in place  
9 before the assessments ever get done.

10  
11 What we do for most of our assessments is what Alternative 2  
12 would do. It sets maximum stock size threshold based on the  
13 formula one minus M times BMSY and M is the natural mortality  
14 rate and so if we're talking about a stock that has a natural  
15 mortality rate of 0.2, the stock would become overfished when  
16 the biomass levels drop below 80 percent of the MSY level and  
17 this is what we've done for pretty much all of our stocks and  
18 it's a fairly conservative reference for declaring a stock  
19 overfished.

20  
21 The National Standard Guidelines allow that threshold to go down  
22 to as low as 50 percent of BMSY and that's what Alternative 3  
23 would do. If you were to adopt Alternative 3, there would be a  
24 lot more leeway to managing a stock and trying to correct  
25 declines before it actually enters an overfished state and so in  
26 that respect, it's more flexible than our current strategy.

27  
28 However, if the stock does get below 50 percent of its MSY  
29 biomass, you would probably need a very restrictive rebuilding  
30 plan in order to rebuild the stock in ten years or whatever  
31 timeframe you are given and so those are the tradeoffs. Table  
32 2.2 on page 16 -- I went to the websites for all of the other  
33 councils and looked at some of their fishery management plans to  
34 determine what thresholds they're using for MSST and it looks  
35 like six of them are using this formula, the one minus M times  
36 BMSY formula.

37  
38 Three of them are using 50 percent of BMSY and two of them are  
39 using different approaches, depending upon what stocks. Both of  
40 these approaches are currently in use and, as I said,  
41 Alternative 2 represents what we're applying on a case-by-case  
42 basis now and this would just apply it to all of the stocks.

43  
44 The last action item is on page 18, Action 4, optimum yield. I  
45 included this because up until the 2006 reauthorization of the  
46 Magnuson Act, we had two reference points that we were targeting  
47 for management, MSY, which we didn't want to exceed -- We wanted  
48 to be at least at the MSY level for our stocks and then optimum

1 yield, which was MSY as reduced by relevant sociological,  
2 ecological, environmental factors, or due to international  
3 treaties. That is not the exact wording, but I think it's close  
4 to what's in the Magnuson Act.

5  
6 At any rate, we had two reference points. When the Magnuson Act  
7 was reauthorized in 2006, the Act added ACLs and the National  
8 Standard Guidelines added ACTs and OFLs and we have a whole  
9 bunch of different reference points.

10  
11 Basically now, we are managing to try to reach an annual catch  
12 limit, an ACL, which is calculated based upon the ABC plus  
13 management uncertainty, but we still are required, under  
14 National Standard 1, to achieve optimum yield, which is based  
15 upon MSY as reduced by these relevant factors.

16  
17 When the calculations are done, because different formulas are  
18 used, we get different numbers for what our target should be if  
19 we're going to fish at optimum yield versus what our target  
20 should be if we're going to fish at the ACL level and I was  
21 trying to figure out how could we resolve this what to me  
22 appeared to be a conflict.

23  
24 What I did was come up with a couple of alternatives.  
25 Alternative 2 states that when we have a stock assessment that  
26 defines a maximum fishing mortality threshold, optimum yield is  
27 the annual yield when fishing at 75 percent of MFMT.

28  
29 If we don't have a stock assessment, a data-poor species, where  
30 perhaps all we have is an estimate of OFL based upon recent  
31 catches, then OY is 75 percent of that OFL and this is basically  
32 what we've been doing anyway.

33  
34 What's added to this is that for stocks in a rebuilding plan, OY  
35 is the yield corresponding to the rebuilding plan and so we  
36 wouldn't go over that level and then what's added to try to  
37 reconcile using both an OY and an ACL, the last line in this  
38 alternative states that in all cases the stock ACL may not  
39 exceed the equilibrium optimum yield or the ABC and so there  
40 could be situations -- Equilibrium OY is, over the long term, if  
41 everything else remains constant, what the yield would be for  
42 the stock, but everything is not constant.

43  
44 We get strong year classes and weak year classes and when we get  
45 a strong year class, it may be possible that we could fish the  
46 stock temporarily at a level higher than OY and we would be  
47 fishing the stock down to its OY level, but then when we get a  
48 weak year class, we would have to put some restrictions in in



1 order to get the stock back up to its OY level and so this would  
2 try to stabilize the fishery by setting some maximum level that  
3 we could not go above.

4  
5 Alternative 3 is very similar, only OY would be defined as at  
6 equilibrium each year rather than the annual level of OY and so  
7 we would never be able to go above the equilibrium level under  
8 Alternative 3.

9  
10 It would provide a little bit more stability than Alternative 2  
11 and it would be a little bit more conservative than Alternative  
12 2, but other than that, it's very much the same and it has the  
13 other factors in here, with OY as equal to either 75 percent of  
14 the maximum fishing mortality threshold or 75 percent of the  
15 OFL. For stocks in a rebuilding plan, OY is the yield  
16 corresponding to the rebuilding plan and in all cases, ACL may  
17 not exceed the OY or the ABC.

18  
19 Then Alternative 4 is the simplest solution to reconciling  
20 having differences between OY and ACL. It simply says OY will  
21 be set equal to the stock ACL. That way, the two numbers are  
22 the same and we no longer have a conflict between the two  
23 numbers.

24  
25 The drawback here is that that does not recognize the reasons  
26 why we have an OY versus the reasons why we have an ACL and so  
27 those are the actions that we have in here right now. It's  
28 still a very technical document and I think we still need to go  
29 through and try to make it more readable. I have tried to  
30 simplify it, but this is where we stand right now.

31  
32 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. Any questions?

33  
34 **MR. PEARCE:** Dr. Atran, are you asking us to -- Are you trying  
35 to develop this into a public hearing document? Is that what  
36 you're trying to do?

37  
38 **MR. ATRAN:** Yes, eventually. I don't think this options paper  
39 is quite ready to go to that step yet and I think probably we'll  
40 need to come back with either a pre-public hearing document or a  
41 revised options paper, but we would like to get some feedback  
42 from the council.

43  
44 **MR. PEARCE:** So you're still going to come back to us with  
45 another document that we're going to try to develop into a  
46 public hearing document? I am trying to get past where we are,  
47 because I think a lot of us are in the weeds around this table  
48 right now and if you want to go to a public hearing document, I

1 will make a motion that you develop this into a public hearing  
2 document right now, but other than that, I'm not sure what  
3 direction we're going to go today, unless somebody else can help  
4 me.

5  
6 **MR. PERRET:** Steve, you're right that it's a very technical  
7 document. On Action 1 and Action 2, Action 1 of MSY and Action  
8 2 of maximum fishing mortality threshold, why do we have -- Why  
9 are we developing MSYs for a species that's been closed since I  
10 think 1988, goliath grouper, and red drum? Hopefully we'll get  
11 red drum opened for something, but I see red drum mentioned in  
12 Action 1, but not in Action 2, but I see goliath grouper in both  
13 1 and 2 and why are we dealing with goliath grouper?

14  
15 **MR. ATRAN:** Right now, there is a joint committee composed of  
16 South Atlantic and Gulf Council members and they are going to be  
17 meeting later this summer to try to work out issues with goliath  
18 grouper, to see if there is some way we could open them up. We  
19 will need some thresholds to define overfishing and overfished.

20  
21 **MR. PERRET:** Okay and so we're just trying to get ahead of the  
22 curve if indeed that happens with goliath and red drum?

23  
24 **MR. ATRAN:** Correct.

25  
26 **DR. CRABTREE:** I think this still has a long, long way to go. I  
27 guess one thing that strikes me is in Action 1. I mean we have  
28 OFLs that were defined based on average catch series and I don't  
29 see anything in here that addresses that and it seems to me  
30 though we used average catch as the basis for some of our ACLs  
31 in the ACL Amendment and OFLs. I don't see that the SPR proxies  
32 here work outside of assessed stocks.

33  
34 **MR. ATRAN:** To that point, yes, our data-poor species OFL was  
35 set based upon recent history of catches and we do have -- The  
36 reason why they're not in here is because we do have OFLs  
37 established for everything except that other shallow-water  
38 grouper complex and so it's not really necessary to revisit them  
39 here.

40  
41 **DR. CRABTREE:** Okay, but the OFL is directly related to MSY and  
42 then as the basis for the ACLs and everything else and not an  
43 SPR proxy. I think you overstate that NMFS has subsequently  
44 accepted the use of yield at SPR reference points as an  
45 acceptable biomass proxy. I don't believe that's accurate.

46  
47 SPR can be a useful guide when you have stock assessments that  
48 combine it then with recruitment estimates and can give you

1 those yields, but for unassessed stocks, I don't think it's  
2 informative and doesn't get you at MSY at all. I think that's  
3 going to have to be more based on the ORCS method or average  
4 catches and so I don't think you can treat assessed stocks and  
5 unassessed stocks in the same fashion here.

6  
7 It seems, to me, there's a significant amount of restructuring  
8 of all this and the whole OY discussion that's going to have to  
9 be done to better address that and then it seems, to me, on the  
10 Actions 2 and 3 that you're going to definitely need, if we're  
11 going to go down this path, a much wider range of alternatives  
12 there. I don't think it's going to be okay to just say MFMT  
13 equals FMSY. Why isn't it 90 percent of FMSY or some level  
14 below that and the same with MSST.

15  
16 There is a host of different levels we might set it at other  
17 than one minus M times BMSY and 50 percent and so I think  
18 there's a lot more that's going to go into this and it seems, to  
19 me, this needs to be looked at with some technical subcommittees  
20 and maybe with some input from the SSC, but I think it's got a  
21 long way to go to get us to where we need to be.

22  
23 **MR. ATRAN:** To a couple of your points, yes, I realized I was  
24 kind of limiting which proxies for MSY or FMSY would be used to  
25 the most commonly used ones. There are others that we could put  
26 in there and I was kind of relying on our NEPA expert on our IPT  
27 to tell me when we've got a sufficient number and so we'll go  
28 back and I will use his guidance to indicate what we need to put  
29 in and how much we need to put in.

30  
31 As far as the SSC, we are already planning to bring this or if  
32 it's a subsequent document to the SSC at its next meeting for  
33 review.

34  
35 When we started working on this a couple of years ago, at that  
36 time I didn't have a document, but I went to the SSC and I  
37 explained that we were trying to come up with default status  
38 determination criteria for all the stocks that didn't currently  
39 have them and asked if they had some guidance, but their  
40 response was let's wait and see what you come up with and then  
41 come back to us and then we'll comment on it. It is imperfect  
42 at this point, but I think we have something that the SSC can  
43 comment on.

44  
45 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Any further discussion on this?

46  
47 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** I would just say that we don't want  
48 to overly complicate this. I think it's already complicated,

1 just in jargon, and, to me, with the MSST discussion, the  
2 important thing is to get out of the literature why the more  
3 sophisticated stock assessment councils are using one-half of  
4 BMSY and why are the southern councils using one minus M and  
5 what are the ramifications of both?  
6

7 I don't favor either one as the ideal solution and so we might  
8 want to look for something in between, but that's the kind of  
9 analysis I think we ought to bring to the council, is a better  
10 understanding of why different councils are using different  
11 definitions, but you can go anywhere from 50 percent to 90  
12 percent on MSST as far as a fraction of MSY, but it doesn't  
13 really -- It's all arbitrary. I want to try to keep it simple  
14 and straightforward and related to what's kind of existing in  
15 the literature.  
16

17 **DR. CRABTREE:** I agree with you on that. We need to revisit  
18 MSST. The one minus M formula is a real problem and doesn't  
19 work, because the natural mortality rates that we're using now  
20 are so low, in many cases, that we're setting the MSST, I think,  
21 awfully close to BMSY and that's a real problem. I agree with  
22 you that that's something we need to look at.  
23

24 I think the most -- The part of this that creates the most  
25 heartburn, for me, is in the MSY and OY and I think it's overly  
26 reliant on SPR, which I think we're going to have to use more  
27 catch-based proxies in a lot of cases, because that's the basis  
28 for more of these ACLs.  
29

30 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Any more comments? I am not seeing any and  
31 we'll move on into the next agenda item, which is Number VI, the  
32 Permits for Veterans Proposal.  
33

#### 34 **PERMITS FOR VETERANS PROPOSAL**

35  
36 **MR. ATRAN:** This is based upon a series of emails that were  
37 addressed to Kevin Anson and Kevin indicated that he could lead  
38 on this.  
39

40 **MR. ANSON:** I was forwarded an email from Charlene regarding a  
41 request to look at the possibility of veterans receiving permits  
42 or having access to permits and it's more along the lines of  
43 for-hire permits and reef fish permits, but also for potentially  
44 commercial permits too and so we threw that in there, but it was  
45 originally more along the lines of the for-hire permits.  
46

47 Mr. Barton, who inquired about the possibility of the council to  
48 allow some permits to be issued, he just came up with a few

1 points here, just for discussion purposes, to get the ball  
2 rolling to see if there's any interest on the council to do that  
3 or set up that program, but must have been honorably discharged  
4 in order to be eligible and permits are non-transferable, except  
5 to immediate family members.

6  
7 They are not able to be transferred and then a timeline for  
8 transfer and some maximum two permits allowed per category to be  
9 held by the individual and so just I told him I would at least  
10 bring it to the council and start the discussion and see if  
11 there was any interest among the council to go ahead and do  
12 something like this.

13  
14 I was thinking potentially we're trying to look at growth in the  
15 industry and we have some folks that might be interested in  
16 getting in and certainly our veterans should receive some  
17 additional recognition, in my mind, if there's an opportunity to  
18 issue or reissue permits, if you will, but maybe something along  
19 the lines of every year bring back some permits that don't get  
20 renewed and we have a certain percentage of those that are  
21 available for a pool and if you meet the eligibility  
22 requirements as they're listed here, if we develop, and then  
23 they're randomly selected.

24  
25 I don't know if legally the agency can do that, but potentially  
26 have some permits available that way and so, again, I just  
27 brought it to the committee and the Ecosystem/Sustainable  
28 Fisheries Committee is where it landed and so I would leave it  
29 up to you, Mr. Chair.

30  
31 **MR. PERRET:** I am not on your committee and it's certainly an  
32 admirable goal, but the first question is legal. Mara, can we  
33 legally do something like this, permits for veterans?

34  
35 **MS. LEVY:** I guess I feel like it would depend on exactly what  
36 it is you're trying to do. Obviously we would have to comply  
37 with the Magnuson requirements and I would have to think about  
38 that.

39  
40 I mean there's not going to be any implication about  
41 discrimination between residents of different states and I think  
42 you could probably set up some sort of program. I think, just  
43 from an implementation standpoint, that that may create a lot of  
44 issues and I'm not sure how you would address some of those, but  
45 I think we would have to talk further about what it is exactly  
46 that you would want to do and then look at the different  
47 requirements.

1 **MR. PERRET:** Again, I think it's a very admirable thing, but  
2 we've got a lot of veterans and we have no idea the number of  
3 people we're talking about and non-transferable except to  
4 immediate family members, I've got a problem with that right  
5 away.

6  
7 If we want to do it for the veterans, that's one thing, but I  
8 don't think they should be transferable to anyone and are we  
9 going to -- If we get into this, are we going to do it forever  
10 and any time a veteran is honorably discharged they can get a  
11 permit? I think it's going to take a whole lot of thought if we  
12 want to go down this line and I think we all want to help our  
13 veterans, but we need to give this a lot of thought.

14  
15 **MR. CAMPO MATENS:** I agree with Corky, to a large extent. I am  
16 a veteran, although I am probably too old, but I was honorably  
17 discharged, contrary to what you might think. It's a nice idea  
18 and we are going to find ourselves in a position of trying to  
19 pick and choose between veterans and if we get 10,000  
20 applicants, what are we going to do? Veterans from where, of  
21 what arena? I am certainly in favor of veterans, but this, I  
22 think, is something that's just too complicated to fool with.  
23 Thank you.

24  
25 **MR. ANSON:** I am not on your committee, but to address Corky's  
26 comments, certainly these are just some ideas that Mr. Barton  
27 had proposed and we can set the criteria as we wish, based on  
28 the legal parameters that we have to work with within the Act or  
29 other legal requirements.

30  
31 Again, just I look at it as a potential, or at least my proposal  
32 or thoughts on it, were that for those permits that don't get  
33 renewed and so they've been issued and they were issued at one  
34 time and they were potentially part of the fishery, but then  
35 they go away.

36  
37 Taking those permits and, again, there are few in number  
38 relative potentially to the demand, but somehow or another  
39 having some of those permits go back into the fishery to help  
40 maintain the fishery might be a possibility and certainly it  
41 would be challenging.

42  
43 It's something that I don't think the agency has ever done or a  
44 council has ever done before, but you know like other things  
45 that we do, think outside the box and try to do some programs  
46 that address certain needs and I just think that it would be at  
47 least worthwhile to maybe investigate it, but I am not on your  
48 committee and so, again, thank you for allowing me to speak.

1  
2 **MS. BOSARGE:** When I look at this, I try not to look at it from  
3 a veteran perspective as much as from a holistic perspective of  
4 allowing people, whoever -- Whether they are Indians or women or  
5 veterans or whoever they are, to come back and get these permits  
6 that we have these moratoriums on.

7  
8 I have an issue with that simply because we put these  
9 moratoriums into place for a reason and every industry, whether  
10 it's charterboat or whether it's the IFQ or whether it's shrimp  
11 moratorium permits, they may have a different reason in every  
12 circumstance, but there was a reason and they serve a purpose  
13 for being there.

14  
15 I worry about opening this up, where we're starting to let  
16 people in and we have an exception for this group or for you or  
17 for whoever and if we were to issue more permits, in the  
18 situations where it's a permit with a moratorium, in my personal  
19 opinion, that should first and foremost go to the men and women  
20 that chose to spend their life in the fishing industry and that  
21 want to further their life in the fishing industry.

22  
23 Everybody makes a choice at some point early on, usually, in  
24 their life as to what they're going to do and what path they're  
25 going to go down and I would like to see the people that chose  
26 fishing for their livelihood for the long term to be the first  
27 that would have access to something like this that have put  
28 their years in and their time in.

29  
30 That's not to say that -- I mean veterans, they made a very  
31 important career path choice and I mean they take care of all of  
32 us, but when we're talking about fishing, I try to block out who  
33 it is that's asking, what group, and focus on what we're dealing  
34 with and that, to me, is an important thing to think about.

35  
36 **MS. LEVY:** I just wanted to mention that this is -- Doing  
37 something like this is arguably an allocation, right, because  
38 you're going to allocate fishing privileges to a specific,  
39 identifiable group of people.

40  
41 If you were thinking about doing this, it has to be fair and  
42 equitable and it has to be in line with the objectives of the  
43 FMP and so it can't just be we like these people and we're going  
44 to allocate them. What does it do in terms of the objectives of  
45 the FMP and I think that was a really good point that Leann made  
46 about what's the purpose of the moratorium and how does that fit  
47 into the objective of the FMP and how does allowing other people  
48 to come in meet with that objective? I think there are a lot of

1 things that you're going to have to consider before you can go  
2 down this road.

3

4 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. I didn't have anything else  
5 listed under Other Business and is there anything else? Okay,  
6 Mr. Chairman, I will hand it back over to you.

7

8 (Whereupon, the meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m., June 25, 2014.)

9

10

- - -