

ACTION: Notice of the South Atlantic; Southeastern Data, Assessment, and Review (SEDAR) Workshop for Goliath grouper and hogfish.

SUMMARY: The SEDAR process for stock assessments consists of a series of three workshops, a Data Review Workshop, an Assessment Workshop, and a Review Workshop. As part of this series, an Assessment Workshop is being held for Goliath grouper and hogfish.

DATES: The workshop will take place January 27–30, 2004. The workshop will be held on January 27, 2004, 2 p.m.–5:30 p.m.; January 28–29, 2004, 8:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m.; January 30, 8:30 a.m.–3 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The workshop will be held at the Hilton Tampa Airport Westshore, 2225 North Lois Avenue, Tampa, FL 33607; telephone: (813) 877–6688.

Council address: South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, One Southpark Circle, Suite 306, Charleston, SC 29407.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kim Iverson, Public Information Officer; telephone: (843) 571–4366 or toll free (866) SAFMC–10; fax: (843) 769–4520.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, in conjunction with NOAA Fisheries, has implemented the SEDAR process, a multi-step method for determining the status of fish stocks. SEDAR includes three workshops: (1) Data Workshop, (2) Stock Assessment Workshop and (3) the Review Workshop. The product of the Data Workshop and the Stock Assessment Workshop is a stock assessment report. This report is then peer reviewed at the Review Workshop and a final consensus report and advisory report is prepared that includes strengths and weaknesses in the stock assessment and recommendations to fishery managers for future data and research needs. The process includes data collectors, biologists, fishermen, environmental representatives, database managers, stock assessment scientists and Council members and staff.

SEDAR 6 consists only of a Review Workshop for Goliath grouper and hogfish. This deviation from the standard SEDAR process was recommended by the SEDAR Steering Committee to address an immediate need to review these two assessments for upcoming amendments to the Snapper/Grouper Fishery Management Plan. The hogfish stock assessment was prepared by the University of Miami under contract to the state of Florida and initiated before the SEDAR process existed. The State has requested that an

Assessment Review be conducted prior to accepting the stock assessment. Goliath grouper was reviewed in a prior SEDAR Data Workshop (SEDAR 3) but not assessed during the Assessment Workshop. Upon consideration at the SEDAR 3 Review Workshop, the panel indicated that an assessment could be conducted. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) conducted the assessment as instructed and has submitted it for review.

The Review Workshop involves a peer review of the report created from the earlier two workshops.

Although non-emergency issues not contained in this agenda may come before this group for discussion, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during this meeting. Action will be restricted to those issues specifically identified in this notice and any issues arising after publication of this notice that require emergency action under section 305(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, provided the public has been notified of the Council's intent to take final action to address the emergency.

Special Accommodations

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to the Council office (see **ADDRESSES**) at least 5 business days prior to the workshop.

Dated: December 23, 2003.

Richard W. Surdi,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.
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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Notice of Indirect Cost Rates for the National Marine Sanctuary Program

AGENCY: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), DOC.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary Program (NMSP) is announcing the establishment of indirect cost rates and a policy on the recovery of indirect costs for its involvement in natural resource damage assessment and restoration activities. These rates and the NMSP policy will be applied to all damage assessment and restoration case costs as of October 1,

2001, for cases not settled prior to that date. More information on these rates and the NMSP policy can be obtained from the address provided below.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2001.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Harriet Sopher, 301–713–3125, ext. 109; (Fax: 301–713–0404; e-mail: Harriet.Sopher@noaa.gov).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The mission of the NMSP under the National Marine Sanctuaries Act (NMSA) (16 U.S.C. 1431 *et seq.*) is to manage and protect specifically designated areas of the nation's oceans and Great Lakes for their habitats, ecological value, threatened and endangered species, and historical archaeological, recreational and esthetic resources. The NOAA NMSP is part of the National Ocean Service, and consists of a system of individual sanctuary sites (13 at present) and a headquarters office.

The NMSP has the mandate to restore sanctuary resources injured as the result of physical harm (section 312, NMSA), or caused by releases of hazardous substances or oil (Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), 42 U.S.C. 9601 *et seq.* and Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA), 33 U.S.C. 2701 *et seq.*) The NMSP conducts Natural Resource Damage Assessments (NRDAs) as a basis for recovering damages from responsible parties and uses the funds recovered to restore injured sanctuary resources and to reimburse the NMSP for assessment costs incurred.

NOAA has promulgated natural resource damage regulations under the Oil Pollution Act (OPA), 33 U.S.C. 2701 *et seq.* While oriented towards claims arising under OPA, the regulations provide guidance to NOAA in developing natural resource damage claims under a variety of statutes including the NMSA. The OPA regulations define the scope of the costs of the damage assessment and specifically allow for the inclusion of indirect costs provided, however, that those costs are developed according to generally acceptable accounting practices. Specifically, the regulations state that “both direct and indirect costs contribute to the full cost of the assessment and restoration * * *” and are defined to mean “expenses that are jointly or commonly incurred to produce two or more products or services * * *. Indirect costs are not specifically identifiable with any of the products or services, but are necessary for the organization to function and produce the products or services. An indirect cost rate, developed in