

SEDAR

SouthEast Data, Assessment, and Review

South Atlantic Fishery Management Council
Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council
Caribbean Fishery Management Council
NOAA Fisheries Southeast Fisheries Science Center
NOAA Fisheries Southeast Regional Office
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission

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Tasks, Responsibilities, and Supplemental Instructions for SEDAR Assessment Workshop Participants

SEDAR Overview

SouthEast Data, Assessment, and Review (**SEDAR**) is a cooperative Fishery Management Council process initiated in 2002 to improve the quality and reliability of fishery stock assessments in the South Atlantic, Gulf of Mexico, and US Caribbean. SEDAR is managed by the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic Regional Fishery Management Councils in coordination with NOAA Fisheries and the Atlantic and Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commissions. Oversight is provided by a Steering Committee composed of representatives of these partner agencies.

SEDAR is organized around three workshops. First is the Data Workshop, during which fisheries, monitoring, and life history data are reviewed and compiled. Second is the Assessment workshop, during which assessment models are developed and population parameters are estimated using the information provided from the Data Workshop. Third and final is the Review Workshop, during which independent experts review the input data, assessment methods, and assessment products. The charge to each SEDAR Workshop is specified in Terms of Reference that are approved by the appropriate Council. The completed assessment, including the reports of all 3 workshops and all supporting documentation, is then forwarded to the Council SSC for certification as 'appropriate for management' and development of specific management recommendations.

Workshop panel participants, appointed by the Councils and NOAA Fisheries, include representatives from state and federal agencies, non-government organizations, Council members, Council advisors, and constituents. All participants are expected to contribute to the process by preparing working papers, contributing, providing assessment analyses, and completing the workshop report.

SEDAR workshops are open, transparent, public processes administered according to the rules and regulations governing Federal Fishery Management Council operations and other applicable Federal laws. All workshops are recorded. The names and affiliations of workshop panel participants and workshop observers will be disclosed. SEDAR workshop reports and submitted working papers are public documents that become part of the official SEDAR Administrative Record and will be posted on the SEDAR website. The public is given opportunities to comment during SEDAR Workshops and may submit written comments to the associated Councils in accordance with Council guidelines.

Assessment Workshop Goal

The goal of SEDAR assessment workshops is to conduct quantitative population analysis to determine stock status, evaluate management benchmarks, and project future stock conditions.

Pre-Workshop Preparation

Participants should review the findings of the data workshop, including any submitted working papers and reference documents. Those with analytical capabilities may wish to conduct their own model runs.

Working Papers

Initial analyses, data summaries, and program documentation should be submitted in advance as SEDAR Working Papers. Deadlines for submission will be provided on the schedule for each project. Working papers and all other documentation will be distributed electronically via email and the SEDAR website (<http://www.sefsc.noaa.gov/sedar/>). Papers should be submitted as word documents or .pdf files. Authors may follow any format of their choosing. Working papers are numbered sequentially by SEDAR cycle and workshop. Please contact the SEDAR Coordinator to obtain document numbers. Working papers shall not contain confidential information.

SEDAR Agendas

Establishing strict agendas for SEDAR workshops is not usually practical, as no one can foresee all the issues that will develop or predict the amount of discussion that will be generated for any particular item. Therefore, workshop agendas provide a general listing of meeting times and are constructed around daily milestones and tasks. Evening working sessions are likely. Only the starting and ending time of the workshop are certain, to enable appropriate travel planning; all other events during the workshop may change as necessary to meet the tasks outlined in the Terms of Reference.

Consensus

SEDAR workshops strive to achieve group consensus on many potentially complex and controversial issues, and it is recognized that consensus may not always equate to unanimous consent for each issue. For SEDAR purposes, consensus is taken to mean that all workshop panelists consent to the range and treatment of recommendations included in the report.

Nature of Discussions

Those criticizing the work and recommendations of others are expected to do so constructively and to offer reasonable solutions to go along with any criticisms. Recommendations for sensitivity and exploratory analyses along with ranges for critical parameters should all be considered when evaluating uncertain information.

Materials Distribution

SEDAR workshops are 'paperless' to the extent possible. Materials such as datasets and working papers that are received within submission deadlines will be distributed by SEDAR staff via

email and website posting, and hard copies or cds will be mailed upon request. Paper copies of the agenda and Terms of Reference will be provided at the workshop. Working papers that are distributed in advance by SEDAR staff and made available on the website will not be provided in print copy at the workshop, but will be available by cd and posted to the workshop network. Those who submit working papers after the submission deadline are responsible for providing both print and electronic copies for distribution at the workshop. **Please contact the SEDAR Coordinator for the appropriate number of copies.**

Confidentiality

SEDAR is a Council Process and therefore it is an open and public process. All working papers are available to distribution to the general public, all data summaries are available to distribution to the general public, but not all workshop participants have clearance to view confidential data. Therefore, no confidential data should be included in any SEDAR documentation. This includes working papers, reference documents, workshop presentations, and SEDAR assessment reports. Under no circumstances should confidential data be stored on publicly accessible locations of SEDAR workshop networks. **Authors and data submitters are responsible for ensuring that submitted papers and datasets do not contain confidential data.**

Administrative Record and Public Comment

SEDAR is a public Council process. All submitted documents and official correspondence become part of the official administrative record. All SEDAR workshops are announced in the Federal Register. All workshop discussion sessions are recorded. All working papers and final documents will be publicly posted on the SEDAR website. The names and affiliations of all workshop participants and observers will be listed in the workshop reports. The general public is welcome to view all workshop proceedings and will be given the opportunity to comment during plenary sessions as necessary. Written public comments will be accepted in accordance with each Council's Standard Operating Procedures.

Meeting Attendance and Sign-in Forms

Sign in forms will be posted in the meeting space during each day of the workshop. All appointed participants are expected to sign in each day that they attend. Failure to sign-in could result in denial of reimbursement requests. SEDAR workshops seldom 'end early' and it is never known when a critical issue may be discussed; therefore, participants are strongly encouraged to stay for the entire workshop.

Network and IT

A wireless network is available at each SEDAR workshop to provide internet and file server access. IT staff will be available during each workshop to aid each participant in securing network access.

What to Bring

Workshop participants should come prepared to conduct analyses and prepare report text. Ideally they should bring a laptop computer with word processing and networking capabilities. Participants should bring electronic copies of any documents they want considered during the workshop.

SEDAR Workshop Panelist Code of Conduct

- SEDAR workshop panel decisions shall be based on science. Discussions and deliberations shall not consider possible future management actions, agency financial concerns, or social and economic consequences.
- SEDAR workshop decisions are based on consensus. Panels are expected to reach conclusions that all participants can accept, which may include agreeing to acknowledge multiple possibilities.
- Personal attacks will not be tolerated. Advancement in science is based on disagreement and healthy, spirited discourse is encouraged. However, professionalism must be upheld and those who descend into personal attacks will be asked to leave.
- SEDAR workshop panelists are expected to support their discussions with appropriate text and analytical contributions. Each panelist is individually responsible for ensuring that their points and recommendations are addressed in workshop reports; they should not rely on others to address their concerns.
- Panelists are expected to provide constructive suggestions and alternative solutions; criticisms should be followed with recommendations and solutions.