

Implications for NOAA; and (4) Discussion of Working Group Issues and Working Group Concept of Operations.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Elizabeth Turner, Acting Executive Director, Science Advisory Board, NOAA, Room 146 Gregg Hall, 35 Colovos Road, Durham, NH 03824. Email: Elizabeth.Turner@noaa.gov; or visit the NOAA SAB Web site at <http://www.sab.noaa.gov>.

Dated: March 15, 2016.

Jason Donaldson,

Chief Financial Officer, Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XE527

Fisheries of the South Atlantic; Southeast Data, Assessment, and Review (SEDAR); Pre-Assessment Webinar for South Atlantic Red Snapper and Gray Triggerfish

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of SEDAR 41 Post-Review Workshop Webinar.

SUMMARY: The SEDAR 41 assessments of the South Atlantic stocks of *red snapper* and *gray triggerfish* will consist of a series of workshop and webinars: Data Workshops; an Assessment Workshop and Webinars; and a Review Workshop, see **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

DATES: The SEDAR 41 Post-Review Workshop Webinar will be held on Friday, April 8, 2016, from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The Webinar is open to members of the public. Those interested in participating should contact Julia Byrd at SEDAR (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** below) to request an invitation providing Webinar access information. Please request Webinar invitations at least 24 hours in advance of each Webinar.

SEDAR address: South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, 4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201, N. Charleston, SC 29405.
www.sedarweb.org.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Julia Byrd, SEDAR Coordinator, 4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201, North

Charleston, SC 29405; phone (843) 571-4366; email: julia.byrd@safmc.net.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Agenda

The Gulf of Mexico, South Atlantic, and Caribbean Fishery Management Councils, in conjunction with NOAA Fisheries and the Atlantic and Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commissions, have implemented the Southeast Data, Assessment and Review (SEDAR) process, a multi-step method for determining the status of fish stocks in the Southeast Region. SEDAR is a three-step process including: (1) Data Workshop; (2) Assessment Process utilizing webinars; and (3) Review Workshop. The product of the Data Workshop is a data report which compiles and evaluates potential datasets and recommends which datasets are appropriate for assessment analyses. The product of the Assessment Process is a stock assessment report which describes the fisheries, evaluates the status of the stock, estimates biological benchmarks, projects future population conditions, and recommends research and monitoring needs. The assessment is independently peer reviewed at the Review Workshop. The product of the Review Workshop is a Summary documenting panel opinions regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the stock assessment and input data. Participants for SEDAR Workshops are appointed by the Gulf of Mexico, South Atlantic, and Caribbean Fishery Management Councils and NOAA Fisheries Southeast Regional Office, Highly Migratory Species Management Division, and Southeast Fisheries Science Center. Participants include: Data collectors and database managers; stock assessment scientists, biologists, and researchers; constituency representatives including fishermen, environmentalists, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs); international experts; and staff of Councils, Commissions, and state and federal agencies.

The items of discussion for the Post-Review Workshop Webinar are as follows:

1. Participants will discuss any remaining assessment issues and recommendations from the Review Workshop in order to finalize the Review Workshop summary reports.

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 intent to take final action to address the emergency.

Special Accommodations

This meeting is accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for auxiliary aids should be directed to the SAFMC office (see **ADDRESSES**) at least ten working days prior to the meeting.

Note: The times and sequence specified in this agenda are subject to change.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: March 21, 2016.

Tracey L. Thompson,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2016-06755 Filed 3-24-16; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

The Department of Commerce will submit to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for clearance the following proposal for collection of information under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35).

Agency: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).
Title: Southeast Region Permit Family of Forms.

OMB Control Number: 0648-0205.

Form Number(s): None.

Type of Request: Regular (revision of a currently approved information collection).

Number of Respondents: 13,909.

Average Hours per Response: Vessel and dealer permit applications, 29 minutes each; wreckfish permit applications, live rock permit applications and operator card applications, 21 minutes each.

Burden Hours: 7,023.

Needs and Uses: This request is for a revision to the existing reporting requirements. The SERO Permits Office (Southeast Permits Office) administers Federal fishing permits in the Gulf of Mexico (Gulf), South Atlantic, and Caribbean Sea under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, 16 U.S.C. 1801. The Southeast Permits Office proposes to revise two parts of the collection-of-information approved under OMB Control Number 0648-0205.

The Southeast Permits Office proposes to collect additional information on five applications for economic analysis and for purposes of notifying respondents. These data include race, sex, and business type and ownership information, as well as email addresses and the option to provide cellular contact information for digital notifications. The revision will also include a small business certification section, so NMFS can determine if the respondent is a small or large business according to standards established by the Small Business Administration. These proposed revisions will not change the current cost burden but will increase the annual time burden for respondents.

Currently, NMFS requires fishermen (respondents) to display one adhesive decal on their vessel indicating that they have a Federal fishing permit in at least one of two Gulf fisheries; the applicable permits are the Charter Vessel/Headboat Permit for Gulf Reef Fish, the Charter Vessel/Headboat Permit for Gulf Coastal Migratory Pelagic fish, and their respective Historical Captain endorsements. NMFS proposes to revise OMB Control Number 0648-0205 to split the single decal covering both fisheries into two decals, with one decal administered with each specific fishery permit or endorsement. In addition, this revision also addresses a new fee of \$10 per decal to cover administrative costs, as required by NOAA Finance Handbook, Exhibit 9-1. The Federal Permit Application for Vessels Fishing in the Exclusive Economic Zone would also be revised to reflect the new fee. The decal is currently issued at no cost to permit applicants. These decals allow individuals and law enforcement officials to easily identify vessels that have Federal permits.

Affected Public: Business or other for-profit organizations.

Frequency: Annually and on occasion.

Respondent's Obligation: Mandatory.

This information collection request may be viewed at reginfo.gov. Follow the instructions to view Department of Commerce collections currently under review by OMB.

Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be sent within 30 days of publication of this notice to OIRA_Submission@omb.eop.gov or fax to (202) 395-5806.

Dated: March 22, 2016.

Sarah Brabson,

NOAA PRA Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. 2016-06803 Filed 3-24-16; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

United States Patent and Trademark Office

[Docket No.: PTO-P-2016-0006]

Patent Quality Metrics for Fiscal Year 2017 and Request for Comments on Improving Patent Quality Measurement

AGENCY: United States Patent and Trademark Office, Commerce.

ACTION: Request for comments.

SUMMARY: The United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) is revising its patent quality metrics to better identify quality-related issues and more clearly communicate its quality measurements to the public. The new patent quality metrics are part of the USPTO's Enhanced Patent Quality Initiative (EPQI), which was launched in 2015 to engage patent stakeholders in enhancing patent quality. As part of the Enhanced Patent Quality Initiative, the prior patent quality metrics have been reassessed, and new patent quality metrics are now being designed for adoption for fiscal year 2017. The new patent quality metrics for use in fiscal year 2017 are planned to focus on the correctness and clarity of Office actions and will be applied through a newly unified review process using a standardized review form that will permit data from a significantly larger number of finished product quality reviews conducted at the agency to be aggregated and mined for information. The USPTO will also mine data on transactions during patent prosecution (e.g., the types of actions taken by the applicant and the USPTO) to assess examination processes and identify potential quality issues requiring further study. The review process will apply the new quality metrics and standardized form to increase the accuracy, consistency, transparency, clarity, and simplicity of USPTO quality review procedures. The USPTO is seeking comment from its stakeholders on further improvements to the changes proposed herein.

DATES: *Comment Deadline Date:* To be ensured of consideration in the development of the next iteration of metrics, written comments must be received on or before May 24, 2016.

ADDRESSES: Comments should be sent by electronic mail message over the Internet addressed to: QualityMetrics2017@uspto.gov. Comments may also be submitted by postal mail addressed to: Mail Stop Comments—Patents, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA,

22313-1450, marked to the attention of Michael Cygan, Senior Legal Advisor, Office of Patent Legal Administration, Office of the Deputy Commissioner for Patent Examination Policy.

Although comments may be submitted by postal mail, the Office prefers to receive comments by electronic mail message over the Internet because sharing comments with the public is more easily accomplished. Electronic comments are preferred to be submitted in plain text, but also may be submitted in ADOBE® portable document format or MICROSOFT WORD® format. Comments not submitted electronically should be submitted on paper in a format that facilitates convenient digital scanning into ADOBE® portable document format.

Timely filed comments will be available for public inspection at the Office of the Commissioner for Patents, currently located in Madison East, Tenth Floor, 600 Dulany Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314. Comments also will be available for viewing via the Office's Internet Web site (<http://www.uspto.gov/patent/laws-and-regulations/comments-public/comments-improving-patent-quality-measurement>). Because comments will be made available for public inspection, information that the submitter does not desire to make public, such as an address or phone number, should not be included in the comments. It would be helpful to the USPTO if comments included information about: (1) The name and affiliation of the individual responding; and (2) an indication of whether the comments represent views of the respondent's organization or are the respondent's personal views.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Michael T. Cygan, Senior Legal Advisor, at (571) 272-7700. Inquiries regarding this notice may be directed to the Office of Patent Legal Administration, by telephone at (571) 272-7701, or by electronic mail at PatentPractice@uspto.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

Prior to fiscal year 2005, the USPTO quality metric was solely directed to the correctness of the final output of the examination process that would result in a patent: An allowed application. During fiscal years 2005 through 2009, the USPTO expanded its review efforts, employing two official metrics of examination quality: (1) The correctness of the examiner's determination of allowance of an application; and (2) the quality of the actions taken during the