



# Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission NEWS RELEASE

*Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries*

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## **SEDAR Begins Preparations for Benchmark Stock Assessment for the Atlantic Migratory Group Cobia *Data Scoping Webinar Scheduled for March 18<sup>th</sup>, from 1 – 3 p.m.***

Arlington, VA – The SouthEast Data, Assessment and Review (SEDAR) process has initiated a benchmark stock assessment for Atlantic migratory group (AMG) cobia to be completed in the fall of 2025. The goal of the assessment is to evaluate the health of AMG cobia and inform the Commission's management of this species. SEDAR's stock assessment process and meetings are open to the public.

As the first step in a multi-step method for determining the status of AMG cobia along the US Atlantic coast, SEDAR will be conducting a Data Scoping Webinar on March 18 from 1 – 3 p.m. Information on registering for the webinar is available by contacting Julie Neer, SEDAR Coordinator, at [Julie.Neer@safmc.net](mailto:Julie.Neer@safmc.net). Another six Data Webinars, each focusing on a different topic, will be conducted from June 3 – August 12. The final product of these data webinars is a data report which compiles and evaluates potential datasets and recommends which datasets are appropriate for assessment analyses.



*Photo © Aaron Game*

The remaining two steps in the SEDAR process include an Assessment Process utilizing webinars, and an in-person Review Workshop. 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. Additional information on the schedule of events can be found at <https://sedarweb.org/documents/sedar-95-atlantic-cobia-schedule-of-events/>.

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission was formed by the 15 Atlantic coastal states in 1942 for the promotion and protection of coastal fishery resources. The Commission serves as a deliberative body of the Atlantic coastal states, coordinating the conservation and management of nearshore fishery resources, including marine, shell and diadromous species.

Participants for the upcoming SEDAR Workshops were appointed by the Commission's Coastal Pelagics Management Board and NOAA Fisheries Southeast Fisheries Science Center. Participants include: data collectors and database managers; stock assessment scientists, biologists, and researchers; and staff of the Commission and state and federal agencies.

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