

South Atlantic Research and Monitoring Prioritization Plan for 2011-2015

Introduction

The 2006 reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSFCMA) directs the Federal Regional Fishery Management Councils to develop a prioritized research plan for annual submission to the Secretary of Commerce. The following research and monitoring needs for 2011-2015 were developed by the South Atlantic Council in fulfillment of that requirement.

Highlighted Issues for 2011-2015

The South Atlantic Council requests that NMFS annually provide SAFE reports including complete landings and discard information, and estimates of OFL and MSY for all managed stocks, for use in setting annual specifications (including ABC, ACL, and ACT) and evaluating AMs as required in the MSRA.

The South Atlantic Council recommends that obtaining accurate fishery information providing increased spatial resolution for landings, discards, and effective effort remain a top priority for NOAA fisheries.

The South Atlantic Council recommends that efforts continue to improve recreational fisheries data collection, with increased emphasis on improving the precision of estimates for the many stocks in the snapper-grouper complex with extremely high PSE's.

The South Atlantic Council recommends adequate funding for the fishery independent monitoring program as described in the report of the joint SAFMC-SEFSC Fishery Independent Monitoring Program Workshop.

The South Atlantic Council recommends increased monitoring of discarding during seasonal and area closures.

The South Atlantic Council recommends that NMFS provide an annual progress report detailing efforts to implement the research recommendations noted in annual Council Research and Monitoring Reports. This report should be provided by June 1 of each year for consideration as the Council develops its annual research prioritization.

SAFMC Prioritized Research Recommendations for 2011-2015

Research and monitoring priorities are recommended that will enable the SAFMC to manage the resources under its jurisdiction in a manner consistent with the requirements of the MSRA.

1. Provide annual SAFE Reports for all FMPs and managed stocks that include estimates of MSY and OFL, landings and discards by fishery sector, evaluations of current management, and summarized findings of any recent research activities.
2. Implement adequate fishery and population monitoring programs by 2015.
 - a. Collect basic fishery information and population statistics for all managed stocks.
 - b. Collect additional biological and survey information necessary to develop age-based quantitative stock assessments for those stocks which comprise the bulk of the fishery.
 - c. Initiate comprehensive fishery-independent surveys to provide measures of abundance for all remaining managed stocks.

3. Resolve data collection and dissemination issues that burden constituents, create availability delays, and impede access by the Council and its technical bodies to the information required for adequate management by 2015.
 - a. Fully implement the data collection standards developed through ACCSP and ensure all data are provided to ACCSP in a timely basis.
 - b. Resolve data confidentiality issues that prevent dissemination of basic landings information to the SAFMC and its SSC.
 - c. Eliminate duplicative data collection programs and adopt electronic reporting.
4. Evaluate the effectiveness, with regard to preventing overfishing and restoring overfished stocks, of current MPAs and other closed areas by 2015.

Appendix 1. SAFMC Recommended Fishery Monitoring Framework

1. Basic fishery data required for managed species

The following information is required for all fisheries listed below:

- Complete catch and bycatch reporting by species
- Per unit (ie, tow, set, site, deployment, depending on the nature of the fishery) information from for-hire and commercial fisheries collected through onboard electronic logbooks linked to GPS
- License id information for all participants and vessels linked to trip and set reports
- Global participant frame provided through licensing of all participants
- Desired location elements include latitude, longitude, and depth

1. Shrimp Trawl Fishery

Per tow: duration, location, trawl details, catch estimate, discard estimate

Per trip: landings by species, trip costs, price paid per lb, # crew

Supplement: 5% observer coverage for discard, 20% coverage for detailed social & economic reporting.

2. Finfish Trap Fisheries

Per trap/string: duration, location, trap details, catch estimate, discard count

Per trip: landings by species, trip costs, price paid per lb, # crew

Supplement: 2% observer coverage for discard, 10 % video discard coverage, 20% coverage for detailed social & economic reporting.

3. Dive or Spear Fisheries

Per dive: duration, location, gear details, # divers, catch estimate

Per trip: landings by species, trip costs, price paid per lb, # crew

Supplements: 20% coverage for detailed social & economic reporting.

4. Handline Fisheries

Per set/site: duration, location, gear details, catch estimate, discard count

Per trip: landings by species, trip costs, price paid per lb, # crew

Supplement: 5% observer coverage for discard, 10% video discard coverage, 20% coverage for detailed social & economic reporting.

5. Deepwater Longline Fishery

Per set/deployment: duration, location, gear details, catch estimate, discard count

Per trip: landings by species, trip costs, price paid per lb, # crew

Supplement: 5% observer coverage for discard, 10% video discard coverage, 20% coverage for detailed social & economic reporting.

6. Pelagic Longline Fishery

Per set/deployment: soak, location, gear details, catch estimate, discard count

Per trip: landings by species, trip costs, price paid per lb, # crew

Supplement: 5% observer coverage for discard, 10% video discard coverage, 20% coverage for detailed social & economic reporting.

7. Bottom Longline

Per set/deployment: soak, location, gear details, catch estimate, discard count

Per trip: landings by species, duration, trip costs, price paid per lb, # crew,
Supplement: 5% observer coverage for discard, 10% video discard coverage, 20%
coverage for detailed social & economic reporting.

8. Private Recreational

Per trip: mode, location, gear details, duration, landings by species, discard by species,
expenditures,

Per Year: # trips by mode, location

Supplement: Voluntary logbook for discard characteristics (e.g., size and reason for
discarding), 20% coverage for detailed social & economic reporting.

9. Headboat Recreational

Per set/site: location, duration, catch & discard estimate by species

Per Trip: # anglers, # lines, duration, landings by species

Supplement: 5% observer coverage for discard characteristics. Voluntary logbook for
discard (size), 20% coverage for detailed social & economic reporting of
owner/operators. 20% coverage for social & economic evaluations of participants.

10. Party/Charter Recreational Fishery

Per trip: mode, location, gear details, duration, catch & discard by species

Supplement: 5% observer coverage for discard characteristics. Voluntary logbook for
discard (size), 20% coverage for detailed social & economic reporting of
owner/operators. 20% coverage for social & economic evaluations of participants.

11. Coral Fishery

12. Spiny Lobster Fishery

13. Golden Crab Fishery

14. Wreckfish Fishery

Appendix 2. Priority Stocks

SAFMC Primary Data Collection Species:

vermilion snapper	gray triggerfish
red snapper	mutton snapper
snowy grouper	red pogy
tilefish	wreckfish
red grouper	king mackerel
black grouper	Spanish mackerel
scamp	Spadefish
black sea bass	Sheepshead
gag grouper	dolphin
greater amberjack	spiny lobster
white grunt	golden crab
yellowtail snapper	spiny lobster

Expanded Data Elements for Primary Species:

- Representative sampling, adequate to support quantitative age-based stock assessments, by season, fishery, and area, of length, age, sex, and weight for landed & discarded fish
- Fishery-dependent survey derived measures of population abundance.
- Timely and up-to-date life history research: rates of growth, mortality, maturity, fecundity; movements, migrations, and stock structure evaluations

SAFMC Secondary Data Collection Species

blueline tilefish	Goliath grouper
cobia	tomtate
speckled hind	wahoo
Scup	hogfish
Warsaw grouper	shrimp
yellowedge grouper	

Additional Data Elements for Secondary species:

- Fishery-dependent survey derived measures of population abundance
- Evaluation of life history traits: rates of growth, mortality, maturity, fecundity; and movements, migration, and stock structure evaluations.