

SAFMC Citizen Science Program Design Workshop

DRAFT: 5/18/2015

Goal

To develop a framework for a comprehensive citizen science program for the South Atlantic Council

Vision:

A collaborative fisheries research and monitoring program run by the SAFMC that effectively blends citizen science and technical science to expand the base of information available for SAFMC decision-making.

Project Description and Need

For many years the South Atlantic Council has grappled with the challenge of ensuring adequate science to support its fisheries management program despite inadequate resources, many managed species and a complex and highly variable ecosystem. Discussions of data shortcomings and the resultant scientific uncertainties often include offers from fishermen, both commercial and recreational, to provide vessels and samples and their own observations to help increase scientific knowledge and 'fill the gaps'. While many fields facing similar challenges of gathering observations across wide expanses of time and space have turned to the concept of Citizen Science to take advantage of such offers, development in the marine arena has been slow. Recognizing the desire of constituents to get involved and the need to have well designed sampling protocols to ensure that information collected through such efforts is useful and can ultimately meet the requirements of Best Scientific Information Available, the South Atlantic Council intends to develop a comprehensive Citizen Science Program. The first step in this process will be a workshop where interested citizens and fisheries professionals can gather to develop recommendations for a council based program.

Project Objectives (Workshop TORS)

- 1) Evaluate existing citizen science programs across a range of disciplines, to consider pros and cons, successes and pitfalls
- 2) Document and evaluate citizen science and cooperative research experiences in the South Atlantic

- 3) Document existing funding opportunities for citizen science activities, such as CRP, MARFIN, SeaGrant.
- 4) Develop objectives for the South Atlantic Citizen Science Program
- 5) Develop a framework for achieving program objectives and improving citizen science in the South Atlantic, considering
 - a. research and monitoring activities appropriate for citizen science, for both short term and long term projects.
 - b. funded and unfunded opportunities and avenues to support citizen science
 - c. the full range of data needs (fishery, biological, research, assess, socio-econ, etc)
 - d. potential web-based platforms to encourage participation and provide project information, advertising and support.
 - e. Outreach and education needs, short and long term
 - f. Program governance, including ongoing staff support, finances, management and oversight
- 6) Develop a prioritized list of citizen science project candidates, and identify 2 – 5 high priority projects that could be implemented within 1 year of the workshop.

Deliverables

The final deliverable will be a report to the South Atlantic Council describing and documenting recommendations for a Citizen Science program by addressing workshop ToRs. The Council will use this report and its recommendations to guide development of the SAFMC Citizen Science Program.

Time and Place

January 19 – 22, 2016, in Charleston, SC.

Preliminary timing: 1 pm Tuesday – noon Friday.

Planning and Organization

An organizing Committee will be convened to plan the workshop. Responsibilities include developing workshop objectives and Terms of Reference, identifying potential participants, identifying briefing materials and necessary advance preparation work, suggesting a workshop time and location, and developing an overall workshop approach to address the TORs.

Organizing Committee:

- Ben Hartig
- Michelle Duval
- Mark Brown
- Bonnie Ponwith
- Leda Dunmire
- John Carmichael (Staff lead)
- Amber Vonharten

Advance Prep Work & Briefing Need

<<documents or steps to optimize workshop time>>

Workshop Approach -

<< how the workshop will be structured...all plenary, workgroups, invited speakers, etc...work in progress!>>

General Approach

- 1) Introductory speakers to define citizen science and share experiences
 - a. Keynote: Rick Bonney – Cit Sci in general
 - b. Federal Citizen Science Opportunities (CRP, MARFIN etc)
 - c. SeaGrant experiences and examples – Scott Baker?
 - d. State perspectives & experience (e.g., tagging, carcasses, NC FRG)
 - e. Chesapeake Bay Foundation Experience (?)
 - f. Northeast Research Set Aside (?)
- 2) Brainstorming sessions to develop program recommendations
 - a. Plenaries, breakouts, or both under consideration
- 3) Narrow and refine recommendations and address TORs
- 4) Prioritize potential projections, identify initial 2-5

Global approach notes

- 1) Multiple flip charts for ideas
- 2) Sticky wall dedicated to project suggestions
- 3) Ensure adequate time for free discussion & brainstorming

Participants

Appointment Process

Council members and the workshop organizing committee will nominate participants, who will then be appointed through the SAFMC Data Collection Committee.

Participants

The initial estimate for planning purposes is approximately 30 participants. Constituent and scientific representation is desired.

Preliminary workshop panel composition.

Constituent representatives: 12-15; across states, fisheries, sectors

Scientific representatives: 12-15; from state agencies, SSC & NOAA

Citizen Science Invited Experts: 5-6

Organizing Committee (facilitation role): 6 (one to chair)

FUNDING

The preliminary cost estimate is \$35,000

This is based on 30 Council-supported participants and a 4-day workshop in Charleston in January.

TIMELINE

Tasks and milestones

- Organizing Committee Planning Activities: March 2015 – January 2016
- Progress report and budget request to SAFMC: June 2016
- Final date and participant count: August 1, 2016
- Nominations for participants due: August 17, 2015
- Council appointments: September 2015
- Progress report including agenda: December 2015 SAFMC meeting
- Federal Register Notice submitted: December 15, 2015
- Briefing Materials distributed: January 5, 2016
- Workshop: January 19 – 22, 2016
- Final workshop report presented to the Council : March 2016
 - AP & SSC Presentations: April 2016