

**FINAL**  
**SUMMARY REPORT**  
**CITIZEN SCIENCE COMMITTEE**  
**SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**  
**Wilmington, NC**  
**December 3, 2019**

The Committee approved the December 2019 Citizen Science (CitSci) Committee meeting agenda with one modification, switching the order of agenda items three and four, and the minutes from the December 2018 meeting.

**Citizen Science Program and Project Update**

The Committee received an update from staff on 2019 Programmatic activities. A brief summary of these activities is below.

- **Dec 2018/Jan 2019:** CitSci SOPPS adopted
- **Spring 2019:** Program Manager transition
- **March 2019:** SAFMC team participation in CitSci 2019 Conference
- **Summer 2019:** Formation of CitSci Projects Advisory Team  
Submission of Bioscience Manuscript (Bonney et al.)
- **Summer/Fall 2019:** Updating CitSci Research Priorities
- **Fall 2019:** Work on Program & Project Evaluation
- **Oct 2019:** CitSci Projects Advisory Committee & Operations Committee webinars
- **Dec 2019:** SAFMC CitSci Committee met; updates have been provided during full Council at other SAFMC meetings during 2019
- **Presentations:**
  - Spring 2019: I&E, Mackerel/Cobia, Snapper Grouper, Habitat APs
  - May 2019: CCC meeting
  - June 2019: Panel for Federal Community of CitSci & Crowdsourcing Meeting
  - Fall 2019: Mackerel/Cobia, Snapper Grouper, Habitat APs
  - Nov 2019: South Carolina Marine Educators Association
- **Program Promotion & Outreach Events:**
  - July 2019: CitSci Program featured at SAFMC ICAST booth
  - Oct 2019: GA CoastFest
  - Nov 2019: NC Industry Summit
- **Program Outreach:** CitSci brochure, CitSci Corner in SAFMC quarterly newsletter, #CitSciFri; email distribution list; annual report

The Committee also received updates on projects and collaborations under development, as well as an update on the two pilot projects in progress, SAFMC Scamp Release and FISHstory. The FISHstory update included a demonstration of the FISHstory test project in Zooniverse. The projects under development include a project to collect data on rare species observations to potentially serve as an early warning system for shifting species and a project to collect diver observations on data limited species.

An additional collaboration is under development with the SEFSC to expand their series of Participatory Modeling Workshops from the Gulf of Mexico to the South Atlantic. The South Atlantic workshops would focus on the Dolphin/Wahoo fishery. The tentative plan is for workshops to be held in the Carolinas and FL Keys in 2020 and have initial information available for the Council in late 2020. Staff will work with the SEFSC and reach out to the states and Dolphin/Wahoo AP members to help determine when and where to hold the workshops.

### **Updated Citizen Science Research Priorities**

Staff gave a brief overview of the process outlined in the Citizen Science SOPPS to update the citizen science research priorities. The Council reviewed the updated citizen science research priorities document which incorporated input from the Citizen Science Projects Advisory and Operations Committees, as well as the Habitat AP. Committee members asked for clarification on a few of the proposed language changes and suggested adding gray triggerfish as a target species under priority #3 (Discard Information). The following motion was made.

MOTION #1: ADOPT THE UPDATED CITIZEN SCIENCE RESEARCH PRIORITIES, WITH MODIFICATIONS AS NEEDED.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

### **Researching the Role of Program Infrastructure in Guiding Effective Development of a Scamp Discard Citizen Science Project**

Dr. Jennifer Shirk, Interim Director of the Citizen Science Association, presented preliminary findings from her research on the development of the Council's Citizen Science Program. Her research was carried out through a mix of interviews, observations of the Citizen Science Action Team meetings, and review of the SOPPS and other products produced by the Action Teams. Her findings found a high return on the Council's investment in the development of the Citizen Science Program. By supporting the Citizen Science Project Design Workshop and one staff person, a volunteer corps of over 45 people was mobilized, devoting the estimated equivalent of over \$50k worth of time to develop the SOPPS and the community capacity to implement them, as well as the development of 2+ pilot projects. Her findings also found that the collaborative process used to develop the Program helped build relationships which can have long-term value and help build resiliency within the Program.

Recommendations for the continued development and growth of the Council's Program included:

- Investing in the continuity of the Program by maintaining and growing staff support
- Retaining the Action Teams, which will both require and offset staff time (e.g. mobilize to review/update products)
- Seeking and securing funds on hand to anticipate and enable timely project roll-out; and
- To conduct an analytical study of success factors and evaluation of both the Program and individual projects.

### **Program Evaluation**

Rick Bonney gave a presentation on evaluation, highlighting its importance in order to determine whether a project or program is working and to identify ways to improve overall effectiveness. He noted that evaluation can be complicated and requires a careful look at goals, objectives, and indicators of success. He noted that the Council has led the way in the development of its Citizen Science Program by focusing on the Program first approach and that they will need to lead the way in the development of an evaluation plan for this Program.

The Committee supported pursuing evaluation for both the overall Citizen Science Program and individual projects. As a next step for the Program evaluation, they supported staff working with Rick Bonney and the Operations Committee to draft Program objectives and indicators of success based on the Program goals identified in the SOPPS. These draft objectives and indicators of success would then be brought to the Council for their review and consideration. Once there are agreed upon Program goals, objectives, and indicators of success, an evaluation plan can begin to be developed. Staff noted that it

would be helpful to have someone independent of the Program help conduct an evaluation and additional resources may be required to support the evaluation.

**Other Business**

No further business was brought before the Committee.