

FINAL
SUMMARY REPORT
CITIZEN SCIENCE COMMITTEE
SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
Beaufort, North Carolina
December 9, 2021

The Committee approved the December 2021 Citizen Science (CitSci) Committee meeting agenda and the minutes from the December 2020 meeting. Council staff introduced Nick Smillie, the new Citizen Science Project Coordinator.

Citizen Science Research Priorities

Staff provided background information on the citizen science research priorities and gave a brief overview of the process outlined in the Citizen Science SOPPS to update these priorities. The Council reviewed and discussed the updated citizen science research priorities which incorporated input from the Citizen Science Projects Advisory and Operations Committees.

Key discussion points from the Committee's discussion are below.

- The citizen science research priorities are used to guide the projects the Citizen Science Program supports or pursues. They are also shared with partners throughout the region to encourage collaboration and the development of projects that address the identified research priorities.
- The current citizen science research priorities are not ranked or prioritized. In the future, it would be helpful to prioritize or rank these priorities and potentially target species within a priority to help focus program efforts.
- Projects under some research priorities may be more complicated to develop and implement. For example, projects that partner with fishermen to collect biological samples will require collaborations and partnerships with organizations to help process and analyze those samples. It would be helpful to incorporate the level of involvement or collaboration required within each research priority. The Committee noted the following priorities would likely require a high level of collaboration: *Age Sampling, Maturity Data, Genetic Sampling, Fishing Oral Histories, and Observations in Managed Areas*.
- When developing citizen science projects, the Committee noted the importance of supporting, collaborating, and complementing existing programs and projects. For example, under the 'Movement and Migration' priority, members suggested potentially working with existing tagging programs like the Beyond Our Shores/Dolphinfish Tagging Program and NMFS Cooperative Tagging Program.

The Committee supported adopting the updated citizen science research priorities as presented with the following modifications. Modifications are noted below with yellow highlighted or strikethrough text.

- Remove '*Diet Samples*' from the list of citizen science research priorities
- Make the following changes to the 'Personal Fishing Logbooks' priority
Historic Personal Fishing Logbooks/Diaries:
 - Target volunteers: For-hire and commercial
 - Data needed: translate fishermen's **historic** logbooks into electronic data/database

- Anticipated outcome: develop relative indices of abundance
- Potential cost: \$-\$\$
- Make the following changes to the ‘Monitoring in Managed Areas’ priority
 - Monitoring Observations in Managed Areas***
 - Target volunteers: recreational and commercial, divers
 - Data needed: species, length, depth, videos/photos
 - Target species: ~~deepwater~~ snapper grouper
 - Anticipated outcome: species composition, develop relative indices of abundance
 - Potential cost: \$\$
- Make the following change to the ‘Movement & Migration’ priority
 - Movement & Migration***
 - Target volunteers: recreational & commercial; focus on supporting and working with existing tagging programs
 - Data needed: species, location, length, tag details
 - Target Species: Dolphin & Wahoo
 - Anticipated outcome: movement & migratory patterns
 - Potential cost: \$-\$\$

The following motion was made:

MOTION: ADOPT THE UPDATED CITIZEN SCIENCE RESEARCH PRIORITIES WITH MODIFICATIONS AS SUGGESTED.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE
APPROVED BY COUNCIL

Citizen Science Program Update

Due to time limitations, staff provided a brief verbal update on Citizen Science Program and project activities highlighting work done since the September Council meeting. The Citizen Science Update presentation (Attachment 2) provides more detailed information on program activities.

Other Business

No further business was brought before the Committee.