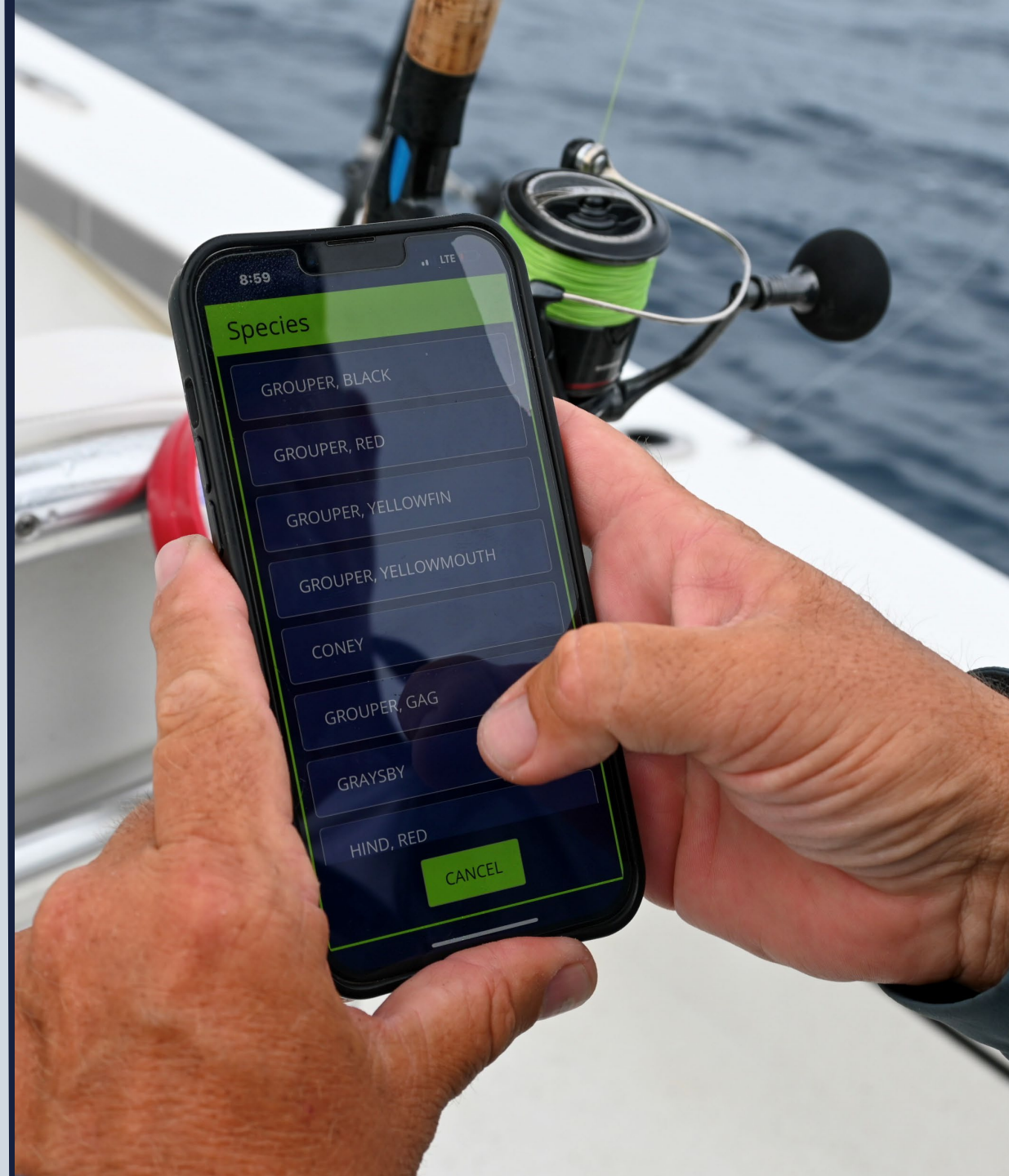


Citizen Science Program Update

CitSci Operations Advisory Panel
November 2026

SAFMC Release



Sectors


PC: N. Bowers

Species



Key SAFMC Release Activities





- **Continued Outreach**
  Industry events, fishing club seminars

Key SAFMC Release Activities



SAFMC Release

Participant Recognition Program

- About the Program -

The SAFMC Release Participant Recognition Program (PRP) is designed to celebrate the achievements of our project participants. With every released shallow water grouper and Red Snapper our participants record, they're helping us better understand the size and survival rates of released fish and supporting their snapper grouper fishery. We're excited to thank them for all their efforts!

Important Information:

- Some ways in which participants may be recognized include being featured in the SAFMC Release newsletter and mentioned in the annual data summary. See below for more details.
- We do not share sensitive information through this program. Some information that could be shared includes name, number of releases, species released, fish lengths, and a photo of a release.
- Participants who meet a milestone will be notified via email, using the email address associated with their SciFish account.
- If there is a tie for a milestone, all individuals will be recognized, except the Release Champion milestone. See below for more details.
- Some milestones require length validation photos. Photo guidance can be found at the end of this document.
- All milestones reset at the end of the calendar year.
- To opt out of the recognition program, email meg.withers@safmc.net.

safmc.net/documents/2026-prp-milestones-updated/

- **Continued Outreach**
  Industry events, fishing club seminars
- **2026 Participant Recognition Program**
  Strong performance thus far

Key SAFMC Release Activities

- **Continued Outreach**
  Industry events, fishing club seminars
- **2026 Participant Recognition Program**
  Strong performance thus far
- **Sea Grant South Atlantic Release Rodeo**
  Successful challenge in 2026

gulfseagrant.org/reef-fish-extension/safmc-release-rodeo/

Keep Up with the Project



safmc.net/citizen-science/safmc-release/



SMILE Project

- Led by Reef Environmental Education Foundation
- Partner with divers to collect length info on data limited species
- Transitioned to dual laser mounted GoPro camera system
- Backend AI workflow to extract lengths
- SECOORA Data Portal
- Collaborations with dive operators
- Proposal to continue efforts in South Atlantic, expand into the Gulf, and formalize data delivery in 2027

REEF™
Reef Environmental Education Foundation

Citizen Science

SECOORA
Southeast Coastal Ocean Observing Regional Association

FISHstory

A SAFMC CitSci Project



PC: Skip Nielsen

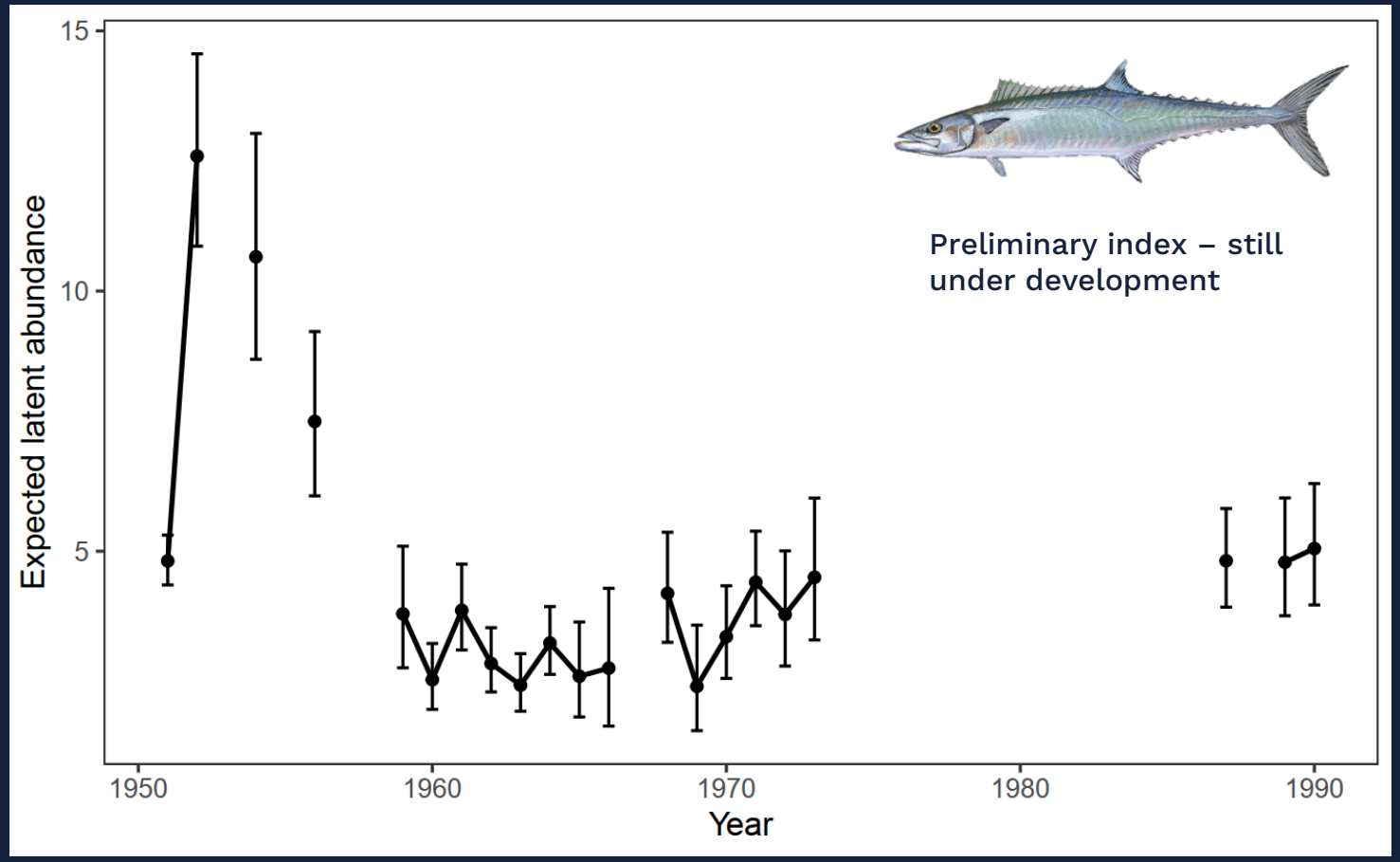
Project Updates

Trip to Outer Banks History Center to scan photos in late October 2026

To see project findings to date: visit FISHstory Results in Zooniverse or watch NOAA Library Seminar Series on FISHstory

Preliminary relative indices of abundance developed for Red Snapper & King Mackerel with Zooniverse data

King Mackerel



Main pattern

Estimated abundance is generally higher early in the series and lower in later observed years.

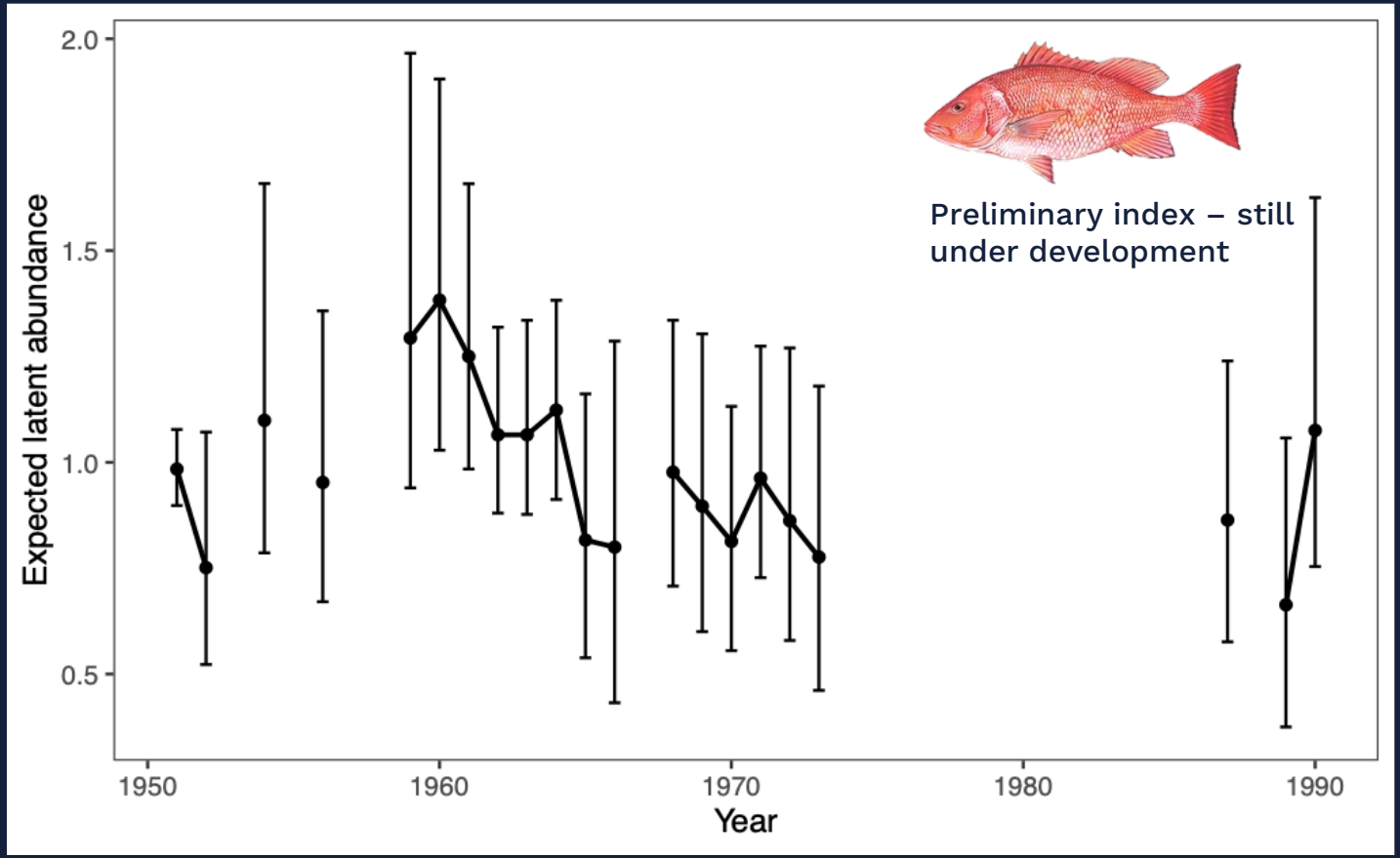
Species-specific model

People count was estimated as a weak covariate; false positives were switched off for this case.

Interpret carefully

Broad uncertainty and missing years prevent strong conclusions about fine-scale trends.

Red Snapper



Main pattern

Temporal variation is modest, and credible intervals overlap in many adjacent years.

What the model adds

The index accounts for missed detections, false positives, and observer-specific count bias.

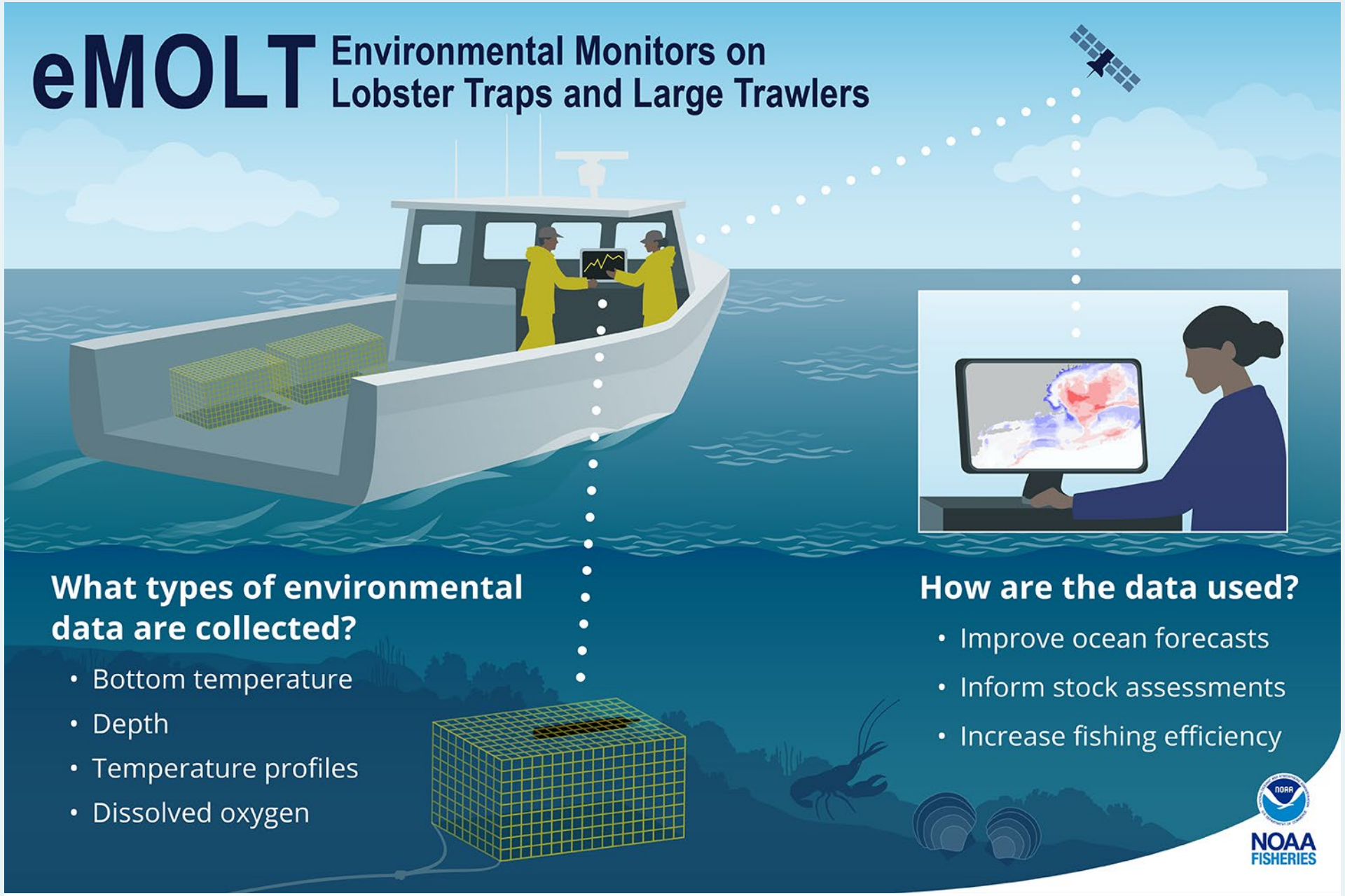
Interpret carefully

A historical fishery-dependent sample - not a coastwide abundance index.

Project Idea

Partner with fishermen to collect environmental data

- Exploring development of a project in the South Atlantic that aims to partner with fishermen to collect bottom temperature data
- eMOLT: successful cooperative ocean observing program in the Northeast administered through NOAA's NEFSC and the Gulf of Maine Lobster Foundation
- Could South Atlantic develop a similar pilot project?
- Asked for input during some fall AP meetings



https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/new-england-mid-atlantic/climate-change/partnering-fishing-industry-monitor-northeast-shelf

Project Idea

Partner with fishermen to collect bottom temperature

Example deck box and sensors







https://www.zebra-tech.co.nz/moana-td-sensor/

Collaborative Science Workshop & Proposal

South Atlantic

Northeast

Alaska

Update on development of cross regional, collaborative science proposal



Keep up with projects & the Program!

safmc.net/citizen-science-program/

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