SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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Trish Murphey, Chair | Jessica McCawley, Vice Chair
John Carmichael, Executive Director

AGENDA

Citizen Science Projects Advisory Panel

Monday, October 6, 2026, 1:00 P.M. – 4:00 P.M. – meeting via webinar

Webinar Registration Link: https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/3315037902460200793

1. Welcome & Meeting Overview
2. Citizen Science Research Priorities Update (***Attachment 1a, 1b, 1c***)
3. Citizen Science Program Indicators (***Attachment 2***)
4. Citizen Science Program & Projects Update (***Attachment 3***)

Other Business

Adjourn

CitSci Projects Advisory Panel Members
Steve Donalson, Mackerel Cobia AP
Bryan Fluech, Outreach & Communications AP; Shrimp AP
Richard Gomez, Snapper Grouper AP
David Moss, Snapper Grouper AP
Thoman Newman, Mackerel Cobia AP
Matt Perkinson, Outreach & Communications AP
Jon Reynolds, Dolphin Wahoo AP
Justin Smith, Spiny Lobster AP
Mimi Stafford, Spiny Lobster AP

Attachments
Attachment 1a: Citizen Science Program Research Priorities (2023-2025)
Attachment 1b: Citizen Science Research Priorities Draft Presentation
Attachment 1c: SAFMC Research & Monitoring Plan 2025-2029
Attachment 2: Citizen Science Program Indicators Presentation
Attachment 3: Citizen Science Program Update Presentation

Staff Lead: Julia Byrd (julia.byrd@safmc.net)

OVERVIEW

Citizen Science Projects Advisory Panel

1. **Welcome & Meeting Overview**
   Overview of webinar agenda, materials, and goals for meeting
   Meeting Goals:
   - *Committee member introductions and meeting logistics*
   - *Review and recommend updates to citizen science research priorities*
   - *Overview and discussion on development of Citizen Science Program indicators*
   - *Provide update on Citizen Science Program activities*

2. **Review and Update Citizen Science Research Priorities (*Attachments 1a, 1b, and 1c*)**
   The Citizen Science Projects Advisory Panel (AP) will review and provide feedback to help update the Citizen Science Research Priorities. Recommendations from both the Citizen Science Projects AP and the Citizen Science Operations AP will be incorporated into a revised version, which will be presented to the Council for their review and potential adoption at their December 2025 meeting.

   The Citizen Science Research Priorities are updated every two years in conjunction with the Council updating their overall Research and Monitoring Plan. The Council finalized their 2025-2029 Research and Monitoring Plan at their September 2025 meeting.

   The original Citizen Science Research Priorities were developed by the Citizen Science Action Teams during 2017-2018 and were informed by the Council's Research and Monitoring Plan, Southeast Data Assessment and Review (SEDAR) Consolidated Research Recommendations, and project ideas generated during the 2016 SAFMC Citizen Science Program Design Workshop. These priorities were adopted by the SAFMC in June 2018 and subsequently updated with input from the Citizen Science Operations and Projects APs in December 2019, 2021, and 2023.

   The Citizen Science Research Priorities are organized by topical area (***Attachment 1a***). Staff will guide the AP through the current priorities, providing examples of potential projects and sharing feedback received during the 2023 update (***Attachment 1b)***. Additionally, staff will share new ideas that were submitted through the Citizen Science Project Idea Portal and/or came up during other Council-related meetings. The updated SAFMC Research and Monitoring Plan for 2025-2029 (***Attachment 1c***) is provided as additional resource to help inform the discussion.

   Requested Action:
   AP members are asked to review the current Citizen Science Research Priorities and recommend updates as appropriate. Members are also asked to help identify additional research and data needs across Council fishery management plans that could potentially be addressed through citizen science.

   The following questions may be helpful to consider when providing feedback on the research priorities. Since members from the Citizen Science APs include fishermen, scientists, and managers – there are some questions that target specific areas of expertise and others that are

more general. However, we are eager to hear your thoughts, so please share your perspectives on any of the questions below and/or provide additional feedback to the discussion.

- For each priority:
    - Is this type of data feasible for fishermen or other volunteers to collect? If not, what type of data may be reasonable to collect?
    - Is this type of data collection more appropriate for a smaller, more targeted project and group of participants or a larger, broader project and group of participants?
- Do you think projects that require learning new skills (e.g. otolith removal) are of interest to volunteers? Would volunteers be more interested in participating in projects using existing skill sets and minimal training?
- Are there any priorities that should be removed or added to this list?
- Are there any additions/deletions to the species under the applicable priorities?
- Which of the priorities may help address the most immediate needs for fishermen and/or science and management?
- For brainstorming new research and data needs:
    - Are there changes in your fishery that would be helpful for scientists or managers to know? Would you and others be willing to help collect data on these issues?
    - What information could be collected or observed through typical fishing activities that would be helpful for scientists or managers to know?
    - Are there any issues that citizen science research projects could help address?
    - If you have specific citizen science project ideas, do they fit under the current research priorities? If not, what priority could be added to capture your project idea?

3. Citizen Science Program Indicators

The Citizen Science Program has four goals that guide the purpose and direction of the Program. Each goal has specific objectives and strategies which provide a roadmap and milestones the Program can use to track progress toward these goals. To support this effort, indicators – metrics that help assess whether objectives are being met – can be used to monitor progress, identify areas for improvement, and evaluate the Program's impact.

The Program is currently working to develop 1–3 key indicators per goal that staff can reliably track on a regular basis (e.g., annually or biennially). These indicators will help assess progress toward both goals and objectives, while also offering a way to help measure the Program's impact.

Attachment 2 provides an overview of Program goals along with draft indicators. These were developed with initial input from the Citizen Science Operations AP.

Requested Action:
AP members are asked to provide input on the indicators they think would be important for staff to measure under each goal, keeping in mind indicators will need to be feasible for staff to measure given current resources.

The following questions may be helpful to consider when providing feedback.

- Are the indicators relevant to the Program goal they're tied to?
- Are there any indicators that are confusing or not clear?

- Are there important gaps in what the indicators are currently measuring? Could staff reasonably track the information needed to fill that gap?
- Are there indicators that aren't needed or are duplicative?
- Do the indicators assess the important parts of the Program?
- Do you think you could have a strong understanding of the Program's progress from these indicators? If not, what's missing?

Input provided by this AP will be shared with the Citizen Science Operations AP at their upcoming meeting on October 16. Input from both APs will be used to inform the draft indicators that will be shared with the Council at their December 2025 meeting.

4. **Citizen Science Program Update**
   Staff will provide a brief update on the Citizen Science Program – highlighting recent programmatic and project activities.

Other Business

Adjourn