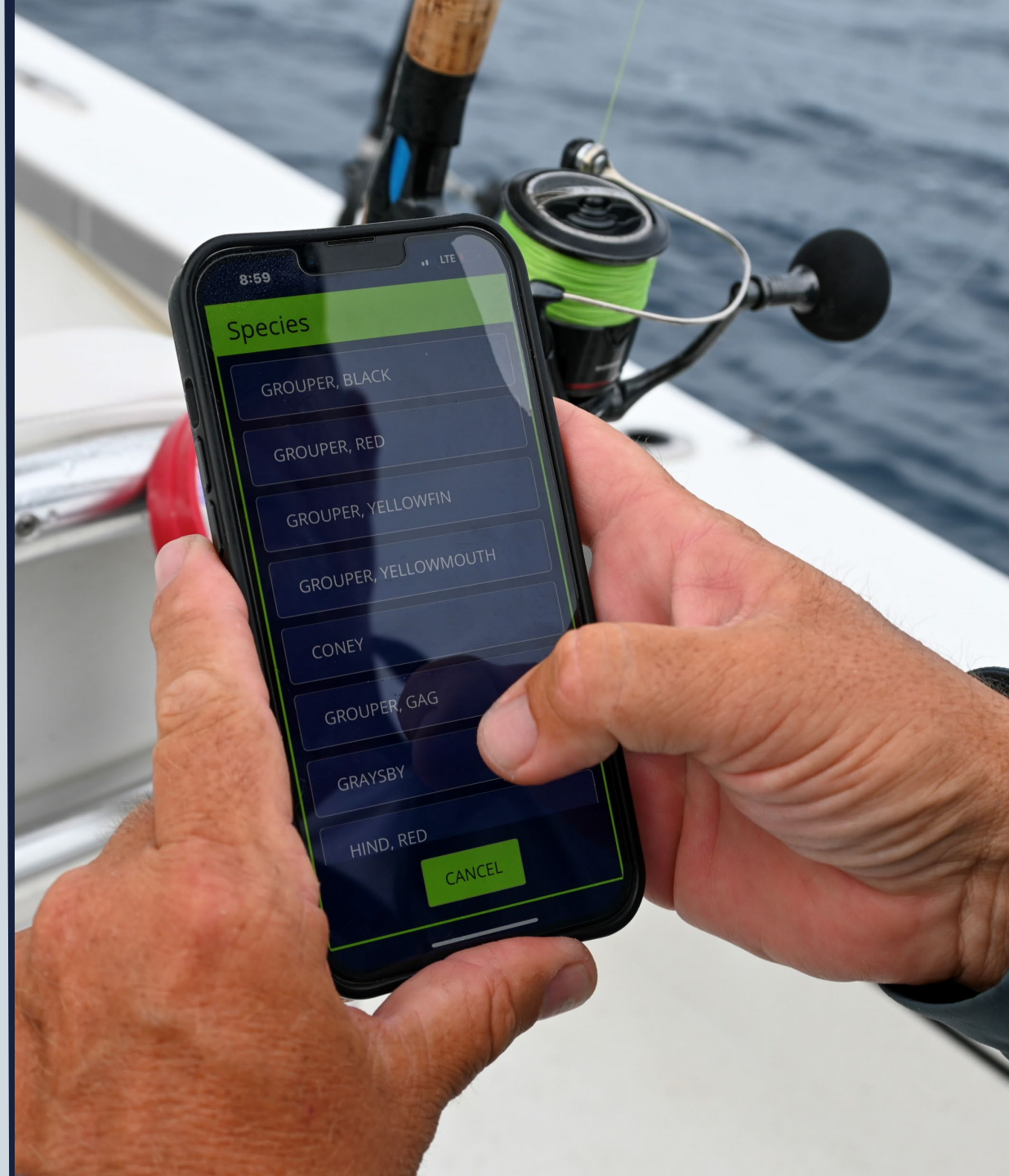


Citizen Science Program Update

CitSci Projects Advisory Panel
November 2026

SAFMC Release



Sectors


PC: N. Bowers

Species



SAFMC Release Outreach Activities

GA & SC recruitment mailing to recreational anglers



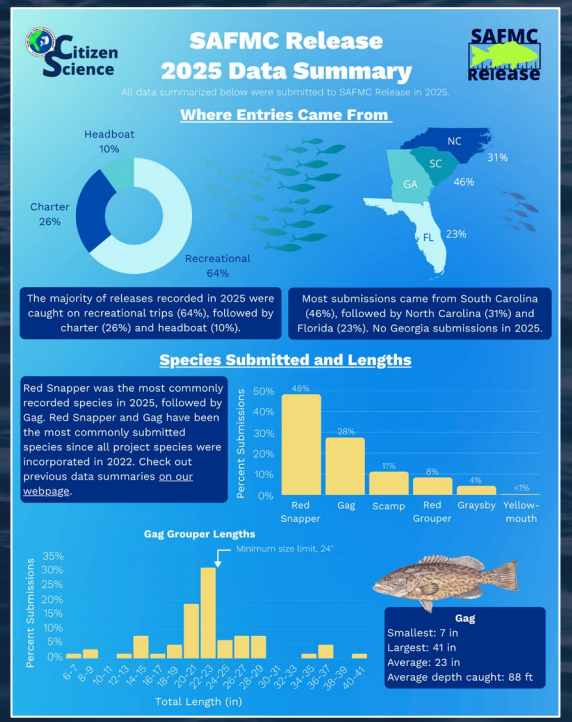
Seminars & Expos



Call to Action Video with participants

Other SAFMC Release Activities

Annual Data Summary



safmc.net/documents/release-2025-data-summary-final/

Participant Recognition Program



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

Sea Grant South Atlantic Release Rodeo

Sea Grant
FLORIDA • NORTH CAROLINA
SOUTH CAROLINA • GEORGIA
South Atlantic
RELEASE
RODEO

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

Keep Up with the Project



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


PC:Tom Sparke

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

South Atlantic Fishery Management Council Citizen Science

SECOORA Southeast Coastal Ocean Observing Regional Association

FISHstory

A SAFMC CitSci Project



PC: Skip Nielsen

Project Update



Over 2,300 photos have been digitized & archived from the South Atlantic from the 1930s-2000s



Over 4,000 volunteers analyzed 1,950 photos
Validation Team reviewed 280 photos
Relative indices of abundance for King Mackerel & Red Snapper



All King Mackerel & Red Snapper have been measured
Length compositions were produced for both species

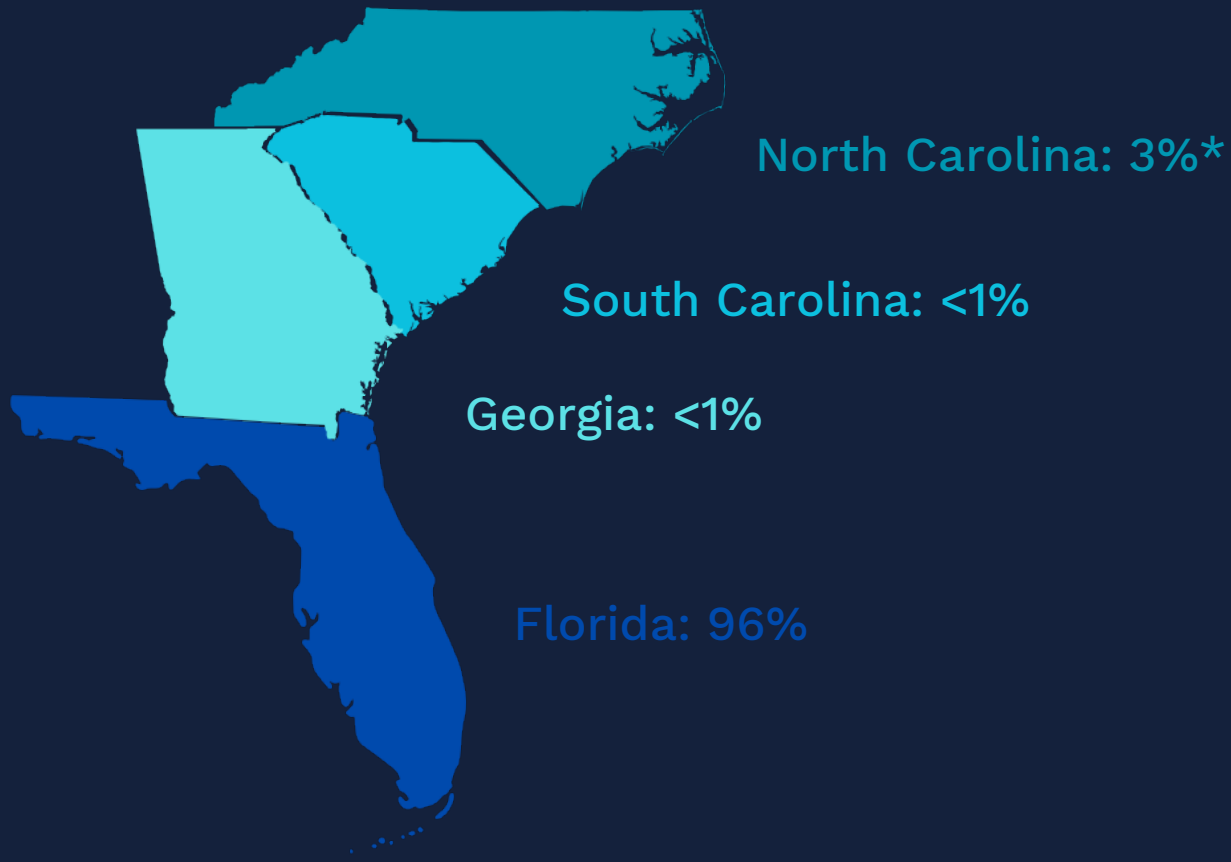


To see project findings to date: visit FISHstory Results in Zooniverse or watch NOAA Library Seminar Series on FISHstory

Historical Photo Locations

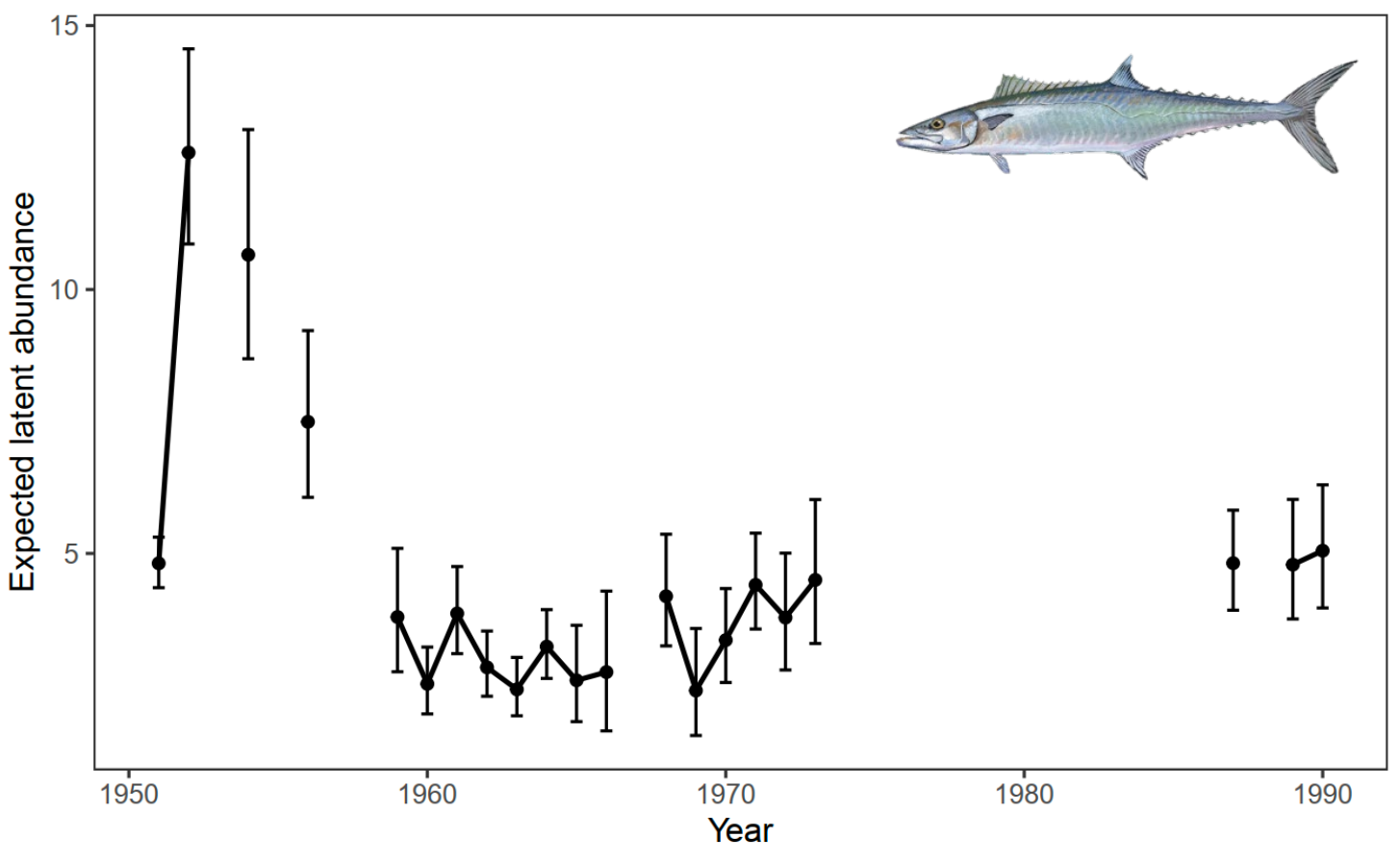


PC: B. Freeman; J. Garner & Sanitary Fish Market; and S Neilsen



* Late Oct 2026 trip to Outer Banks History Center

King Mackerel



Main pattern

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

Species-specific model

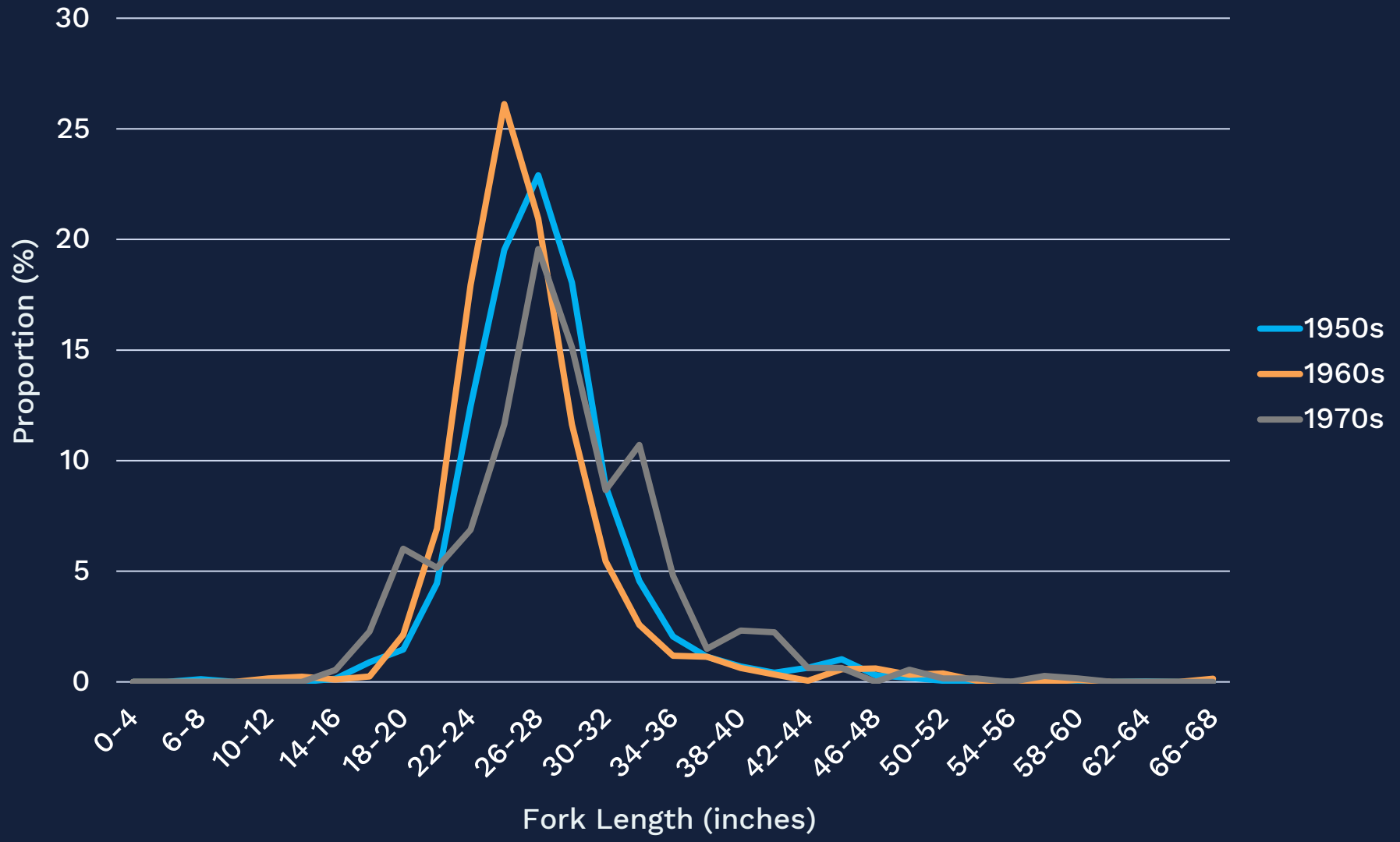
People count was estimated as a weak covariate; false positives were switched off for this case.

Interpret carefully

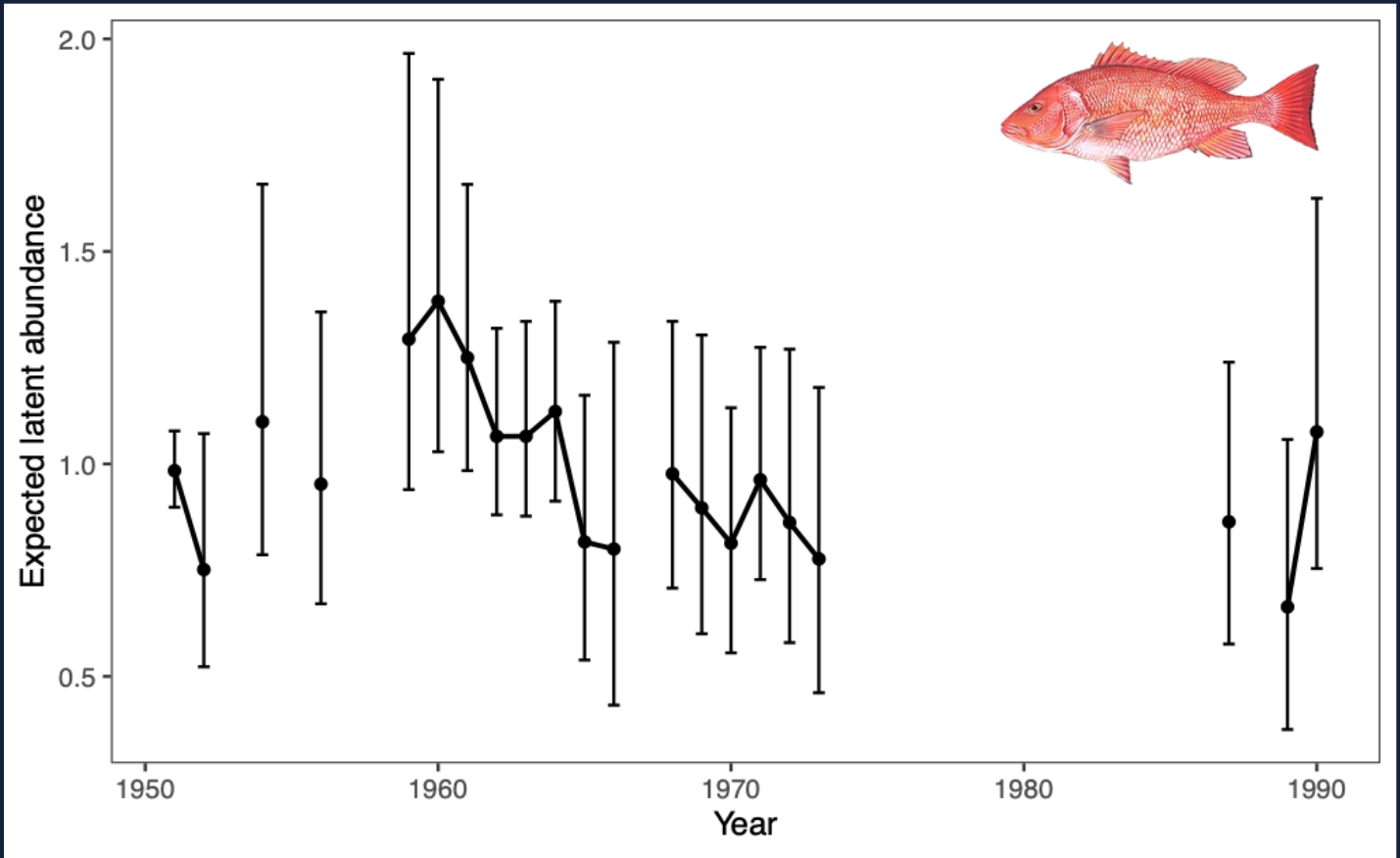
Broad uncertainty and missing years prevent strong conclusions about fine-scale trends.



King Mackerel FISHstory length compositions by decade



Red Snapper



Main pattern

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

What the model adds

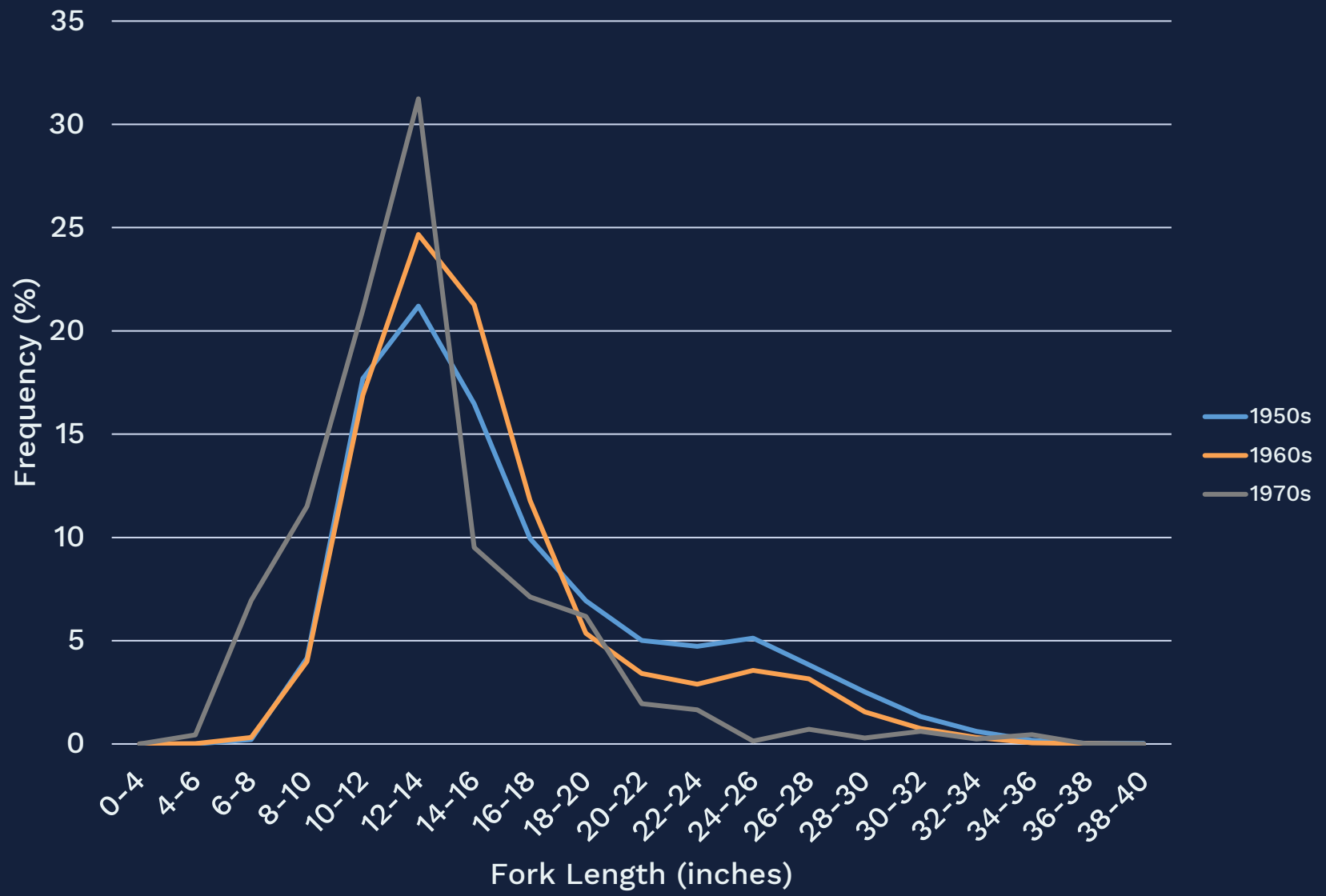
The index accounts for missed detections, false positives, and observer-specific count bias.

Interpret carefully

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



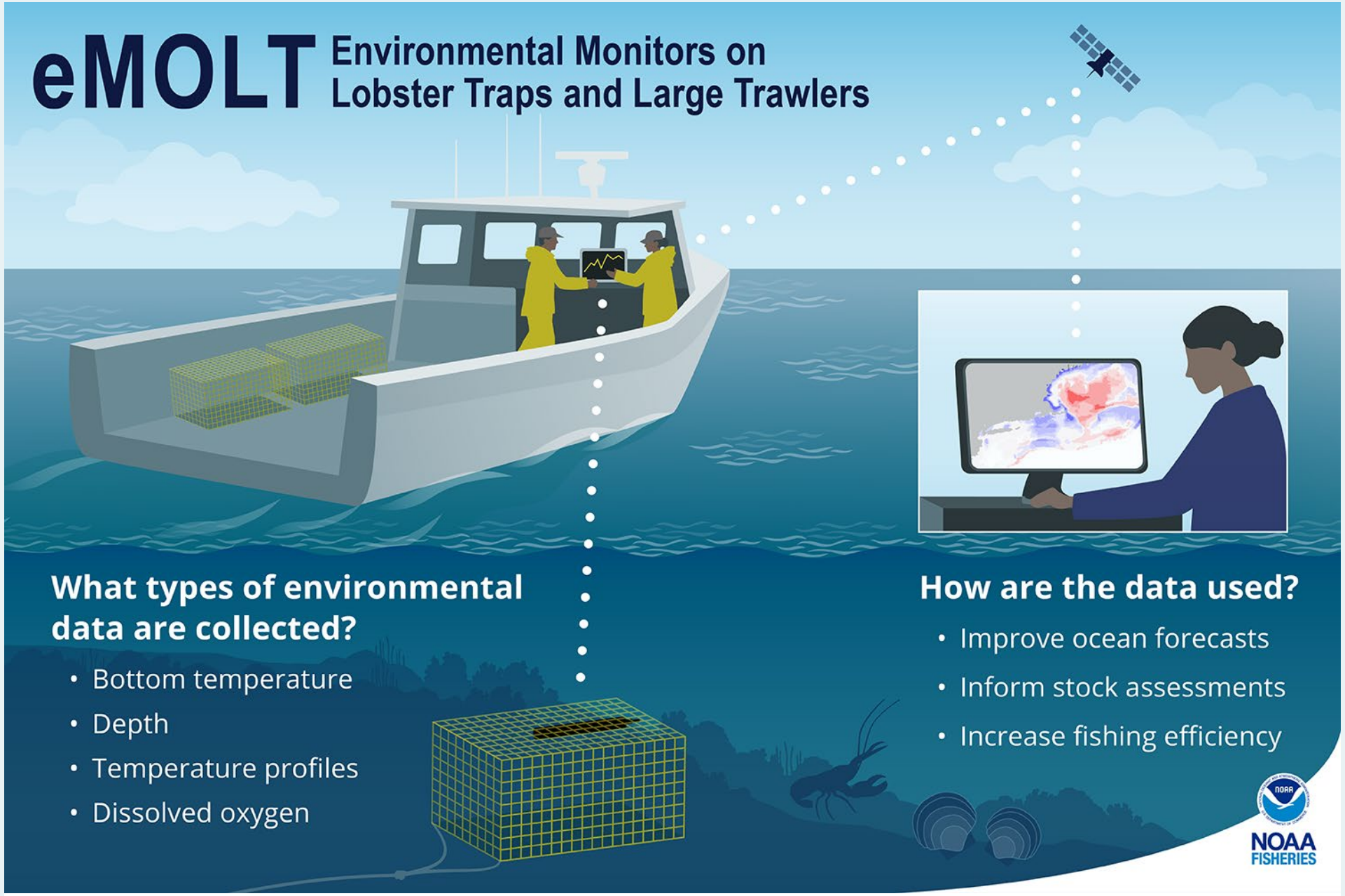
Red Snapper FISHstory length compositions by decade



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?



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/

Project Idea

Partner with fishermen to collect bottom temperature

- Does bottom temperature play a role in deciding where or when you fish? How do you access that info now?
- Would it be helpful to have real time bottom temperature info or access to this info when you are back onshore?
- What are your initial thoughts on what a project like this could look like in the South Atlantic – gear, logistics, or anything else?
- Are there benefits that would make you or others interested in participating in a project like this?
- Are there things that might make you hesitant or prevent you from participating in a project like this?

Collaborative Science Workshop & Proposal

South Atlantic

Northeast

Alaska

Workshop held May 2026 in Charleston, SC

Developing collaborative, cross-regional fisheries science proposal



Keep up with projects & the Program!

safmc.net/citizen-science-program/

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