

PROJECT SYNOPSIS

Project Title: Characterization of Bycatch Associated with the South Atlantic Snapper Grouper Bandit Fishery with Electronic Video Monitoring, At-Sea Observers, and Biological Sampling

Project Status/Duration: New x | **Con't** | **Project Period:** 24 Months

Name, Address, Telephone Number of Applicant; Statement of Qualifications
 M. Scott Baker, Jr. – North Carolina Sea Grant, UNCW-Center for Marine Science, 5600 Marvin Moss Lane, Wilmington, NC 28409, 910-962-2492. Mr. Baker has 14 years experience working collaboratively with recreational and commercial fishermen.

Project Objectives: The specific objectives are: 1) To compare data obtained from electronic video monitoring (EM) to data collected simultaneously with fishermen logbooks and at-sea observers; 2) To determine the age-size structure of frequently encountered and discarded snapper grouper species; 3) To collect information on number and disposition of discards with respect to depth and location of capture; and 4) To present the findings of this study to stakeholders at a public workshop.

Specific Priority(ies) in Solicitation to Which Project Responds: 1. Commercial Finfish; 1.A(3): Develop methods to increase the amount of at-sea observations utilizing imaging systems and 1.A(1): Collect information on the composition and disposition of bycatch and discards.

Summary of Work:
 This is a proposal to work cooperatively with fishermen to evaluate electronic video monitoring (EM) as a tool to characterize fishing activities of the commercial snapper grouper vertical hook and line (bandit) fleet. This study will involve multiple layers of data collection that revolves heavily on the participation of fishermen collaborators. The project design will allow for statistical comparisons among fishermen’s logbooks, at-sea-observers, and electronic video monitoring systems as well as provide information on the age-size structure of frequently discarded species in the complex.
 Briefly, six EM systems will be installed on bandit-rig vessels operating out of NC, SC and GA. Each EM system will consist of 2-5 cameras placed on the back deck of a boat, plus a global positioning system, all connected to a digital video recorder. Pertinent data collected by the EM system will include species caught, location, depth, date, time, and disposition of released organisms. Each EM system will be configured to collect data for the entire study period (12 months). In addition to completing detailed discard logbooks, fishermen will retain up to 300 regulatory discards for selected species in order to characterize the age-size structure by the stock. At-sea observers will be placed on a portion of trips monitored with video hardware. Electronic monitoring data will be interpreted and compared to results from fishermen’s discard logbooks as well as data recorded by at-sea observers. A workshop held post data collection (2nd year) will allow stakeholders an opportunity to learn more about this study and explore future opportunities for collaborative partnerships.

			%	of Total
PROJECT FUNDING:	Federal	\$	<u> 381,765 </u>	<u> 100 </u> %
	Non-Federal	\$	<u> </u>	<u> </u> %
	Total	\$	<u> 381,765 </u>	<u> 100 </u> %