



# Citizen Science

## **Citizen Science Program Update**

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Social and Economic Panel  
April 2026

# Program Activities



SAFMC Release



SMILE



FISHstory

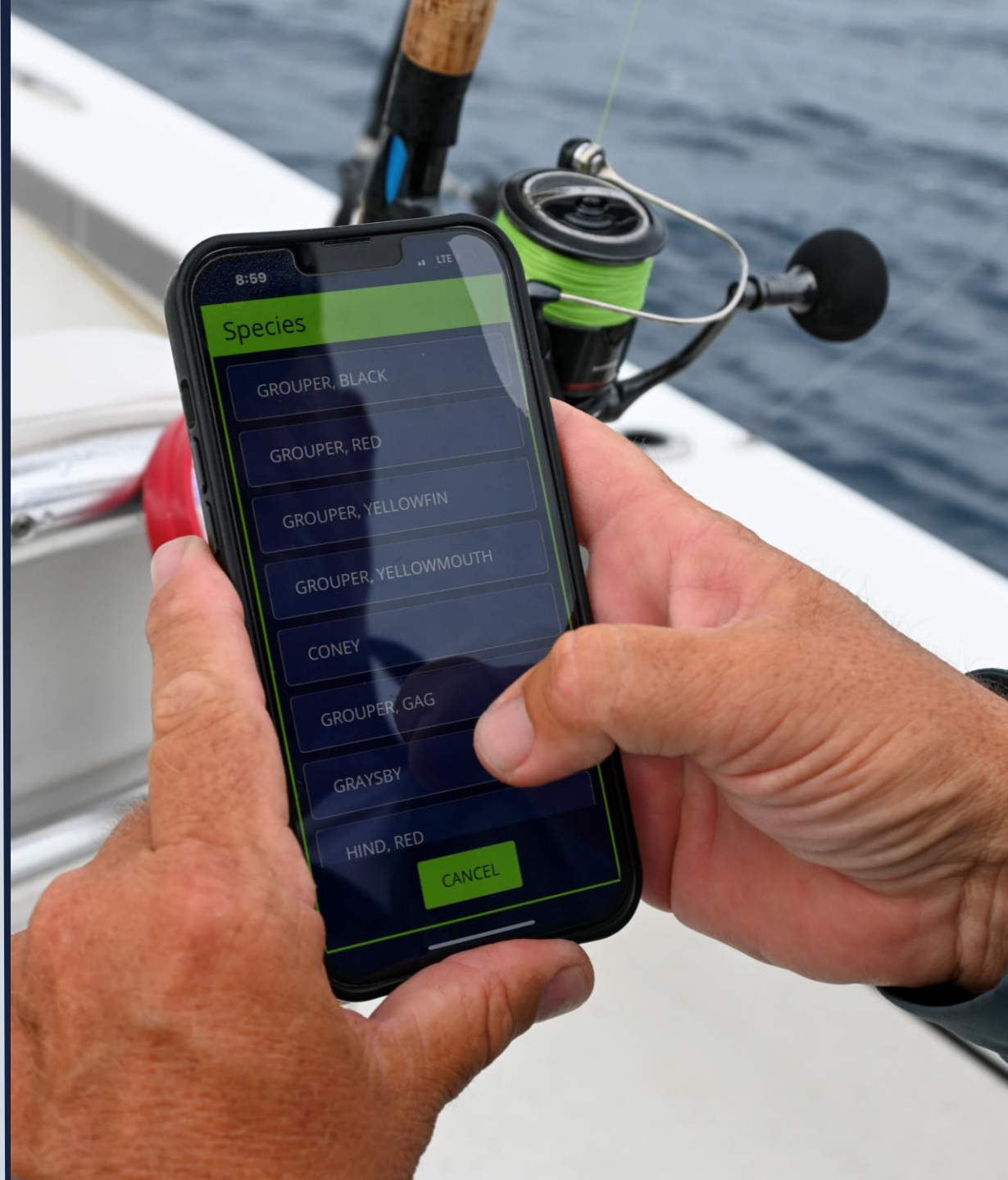


Program Indicators

# SAFMC



# Release



# Updates



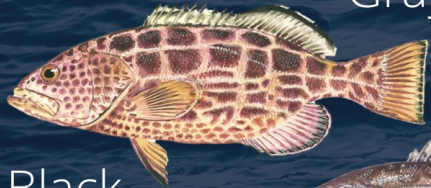
Red Snapper



Scamp



Graysby



Black



Yellowmouth



Gag



Rock Hind



Yellowfin



Red Hind



Red



Coney

Participants recording released shallow water grouper and Red Snapper in SciFish app

Continued outreach, including collaboration with Best Fishing Practices initiative

2026 Participant Recognition Program & Sea Grant South Atlantic Release Rodeo

SEDAR 90 Data Workshop



# SAFMC Release Participant Recognition Program (PRP)

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**SAFMC Release**  
**Participant Recognition Program**



The PRP aims to thank SAFMC Release participants for their contributions to the project and recognize them for their achievements.



# SAFMC Release Participant Recognition Program (PRP)

## 2026 Milestones



Referral



Quantity of  
Submissions



Species  
Diversity



Smallest &  
Largest



Photo  
Highlights





# Sea Grant South Atlantic Release Rodeo



Sea Grant wants best fishing practices gear in fishermen's hands



SAFMC Release wants more entries that can be used for validation

## Rodeo Structure



May - July



4 entries/month



8 entries/month if include ruler



2 names drawn by Sea Grant/month!



# Sea Grant South Atlantic Release Rodeo: Outcomes



When comparing SAFMC Release submissions to challenge months during an average of previous years (2023 & 2024)



28% increase in submissions



Number of submissions with photos doubled



Number of submissions with photos that can be used for length validation almost tripled



# Sea Grant South Atlantic Release Rodeo: Outcomes



Best fishing practices gear distributed by Sea Grant to randomly select participating fishermen



Positive feedback from fishermen on challenge & Sea Grant giveaways



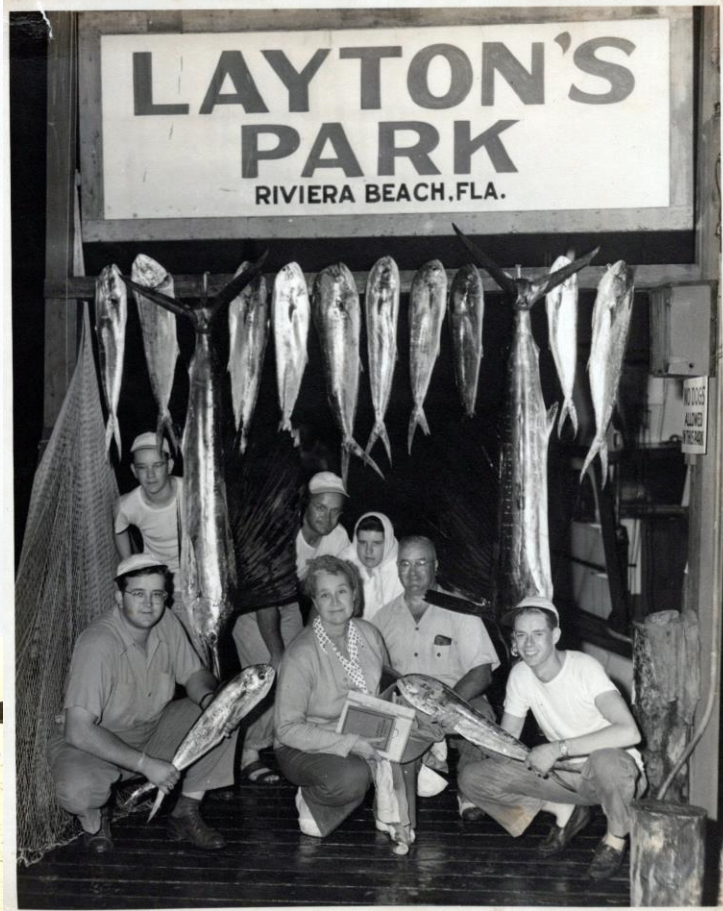
Built meaningful relationships with fishing community members



# SAFMC Release Data Update

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- Shared Red Snapper length data at the SEDAR 90 Data Workshop ([SEDAR90-DW-17](#)).
- Data were recommended for use in the assessment by the Data Workshop Panel.



# FISHstory



# Project Findings To Date

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Over 2,300+ photos have been digitized & archived from the South Atlantic from the 1940s-1990s  
Looking for more photos from the Carolinas



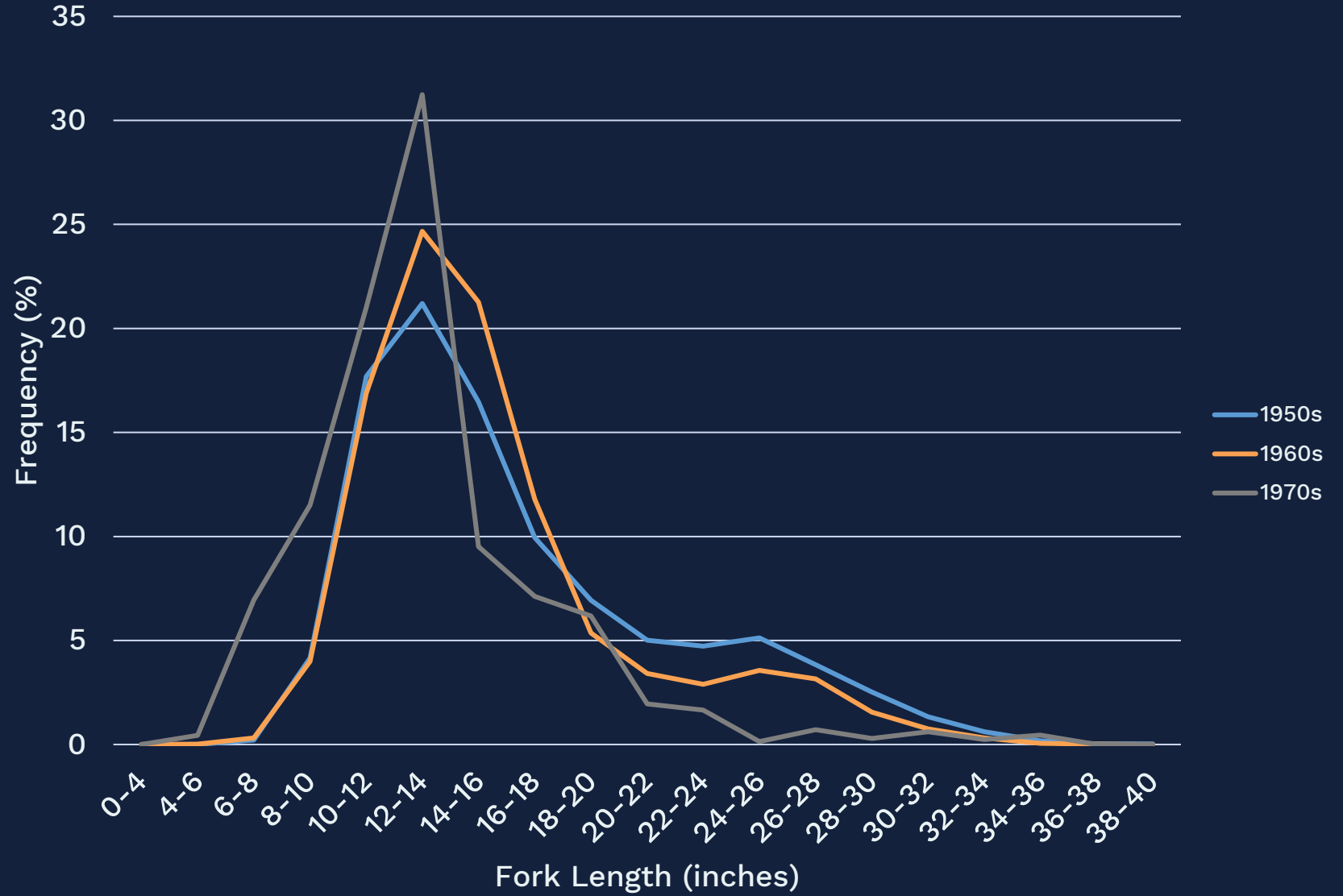
Over 4,000 volunteers analyzed 1,950 photos in Zooniverse  
Validation Team reviewed 400+ photos  
Analysis underway by NC State analytical team



All King Mackerel & Red Snapper measured in current photo archive  
Red Snapper length compositions were recommended for use by SEDAR 90 (South Atlantic Red Snapper) Data Workshop Panel  
King Mackerel length compositions are being updated & will be presented at next SEDAR South Atlantic King Mackerel assessment



Red Snapper  
FISHstory  
length  
compositions  
by decade





# SMILE Project

- Led by Reef Environmental Education Foundation
- Partner with divers to collect length info on data limited species
- Laser-mounted Olympus underwater cameras
- Field testing in FL Keys
- 3 year pilot project complete; additional year of funding secured
- [SMILE presentation](#) – SAFMC Oct Seminar Series
- Survey to better understand demographics, motivations, and barriers of recreational divers



# CitSci Program Planning & Evaluation



# Program Goals *Few key indicators per goal*

## GOAL 1

**Design, implement, and sustain a program framework** to guide the development of projects that support fishery management decision making.

## GOAL 2

Facilitate the development of **individual projects** to **address** specific **research priorities**.

## GOAL 3

Ensure that **data** collected by projects are **accessible, robust, and fit for purpose**.

## GOAL 4

Foster mutual **learning, collaboration,** and program **engagement**.



**Citizen  
Science**

# Program Indicators

## GOAL 1: PROGRAM

1. Diverse perspectives advising Program
2. Program seen as resource or example for others

## GOAL 2: PROJECT

3. Number of projects
4. Diversity of research priorities addressed through projects
5. Diversity of FMPs addressed through projects
6. Proposal submissions by or in collaboration with Program
7. External funding to support Program & project activities

## GOAL 3: DATA

8. Data considered for use in assessment & management
9. Projects inform future research

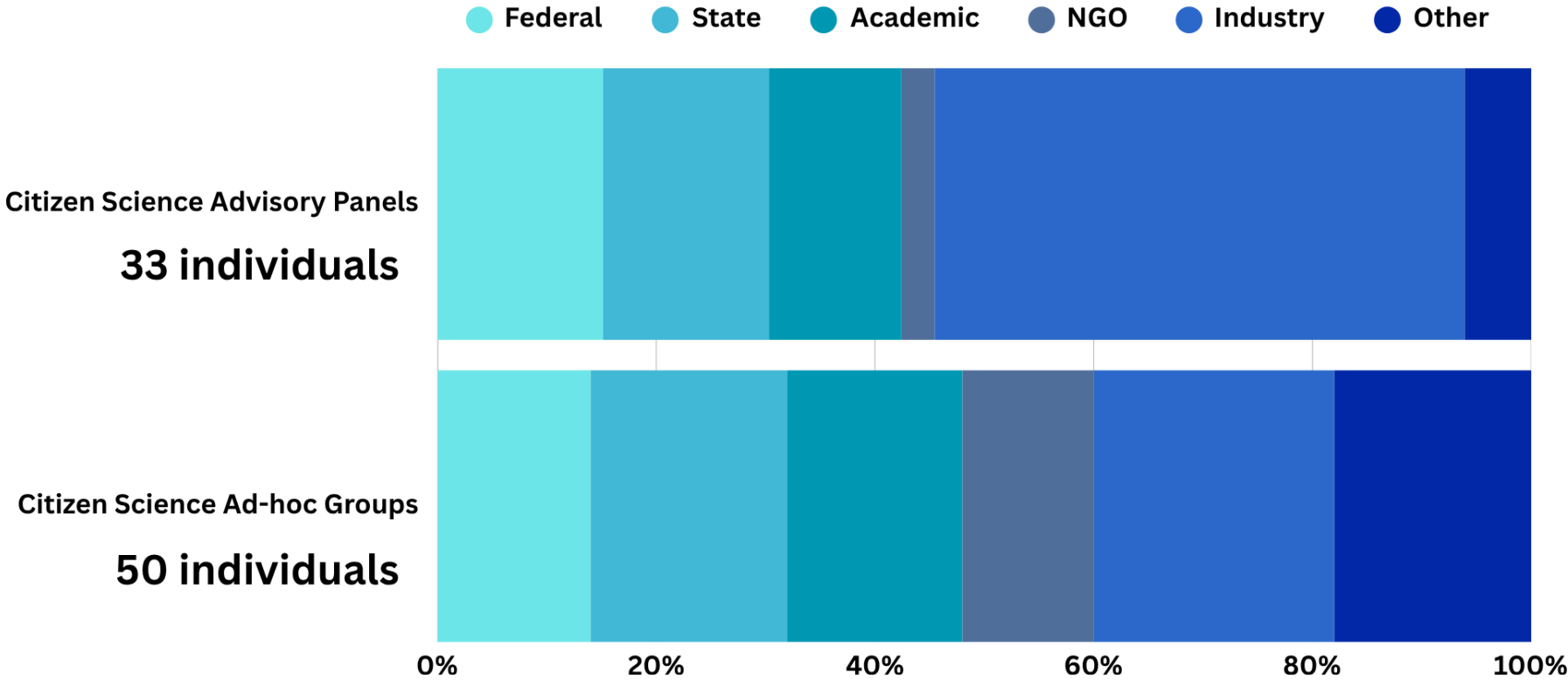
## GOAL 4: COLLABORATION & ENGAGEMENT

10. Number of volunteers
11. Diversity of ways volunteers can engage with Program
12. Number and diversity of partners contributing to Program
13. Number and diversity of outreach activities
14. Online Reach

# GOAL 1

Indicator #1  
Diverse  
perspectives  
advising Program

## Number of people that have served on Advisory Groups for the Citizen Science Program by organization type, 2017-2025



# GOAL 1

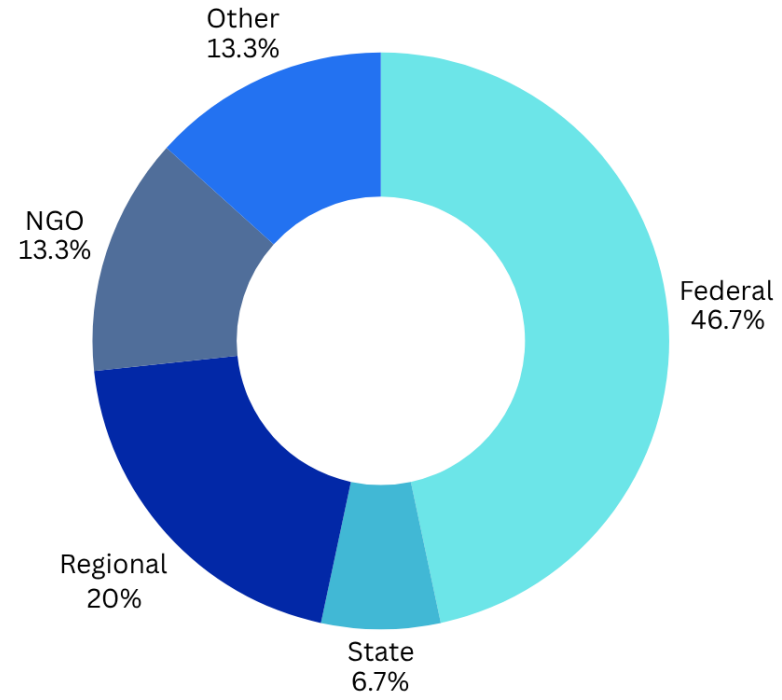
## Indicator #2

Program seen as a resource or example for others

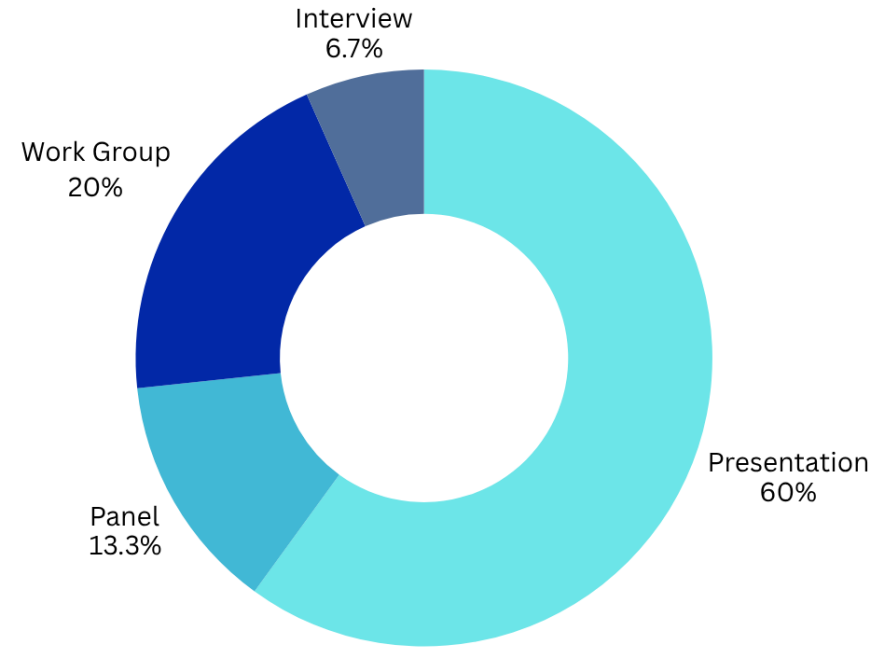
# Invitations to share information on the CitSci Program & projects

## 15 Total Invitations

### Invited By



### Activity Type



# GOAL 2

*Indicator #3*  
Number of projects

## Projects developed by or in collaboration with CitSci Program

3 completed projects



Development of SciFish mobile app

Dolphin Wahoo Participatory Workshops led by NOAA



Program Evaluation: Bonney & Sweeney Tookes et al.

*Indicator #4*  
Diversity of research priorities addressed through projects

3 ongoing projects



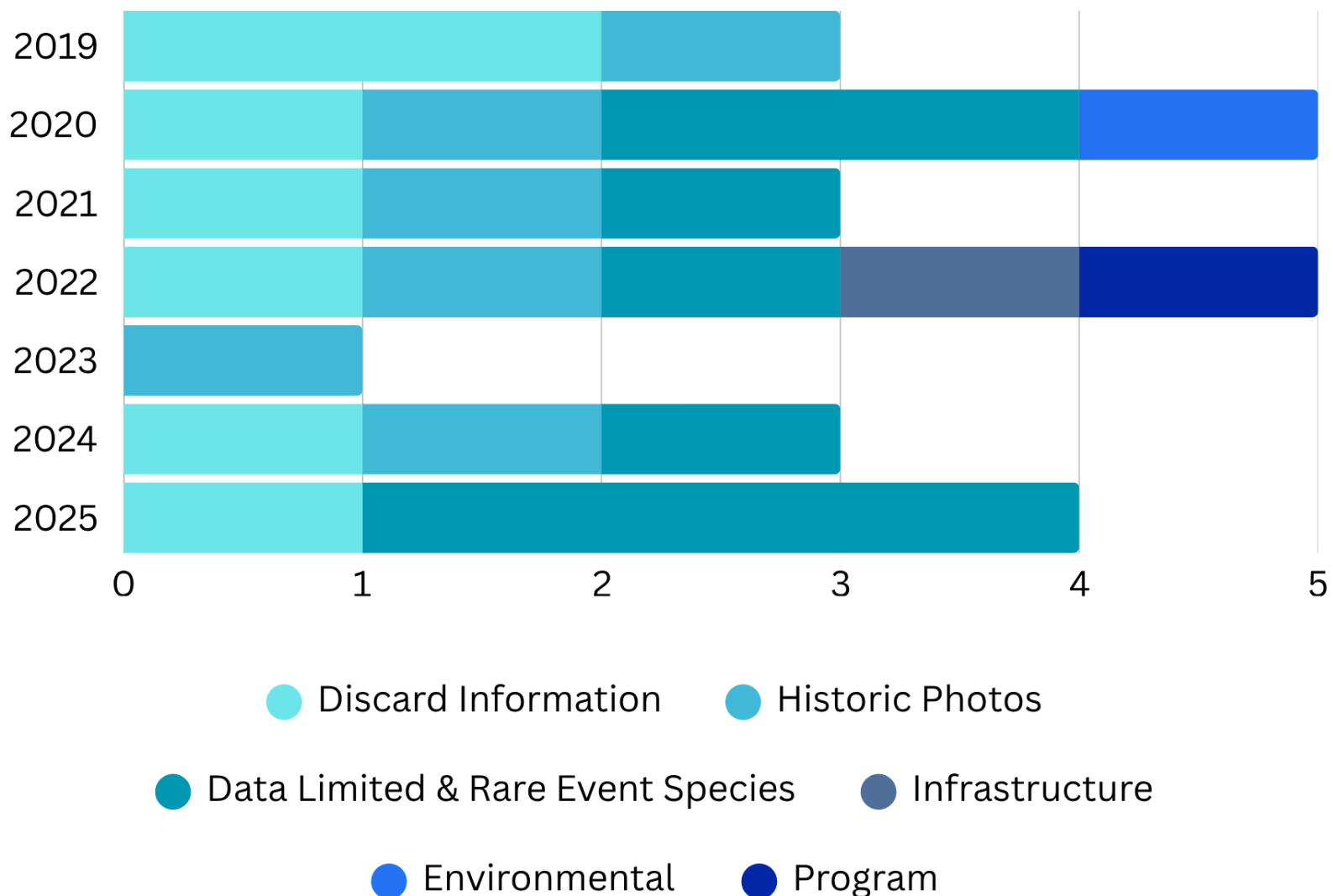
*Indicator #5*  
Diversity of FMPs addressed through projects

# GOAL 2

## Indicator #6

Proposal submission by or in collaboration with Program

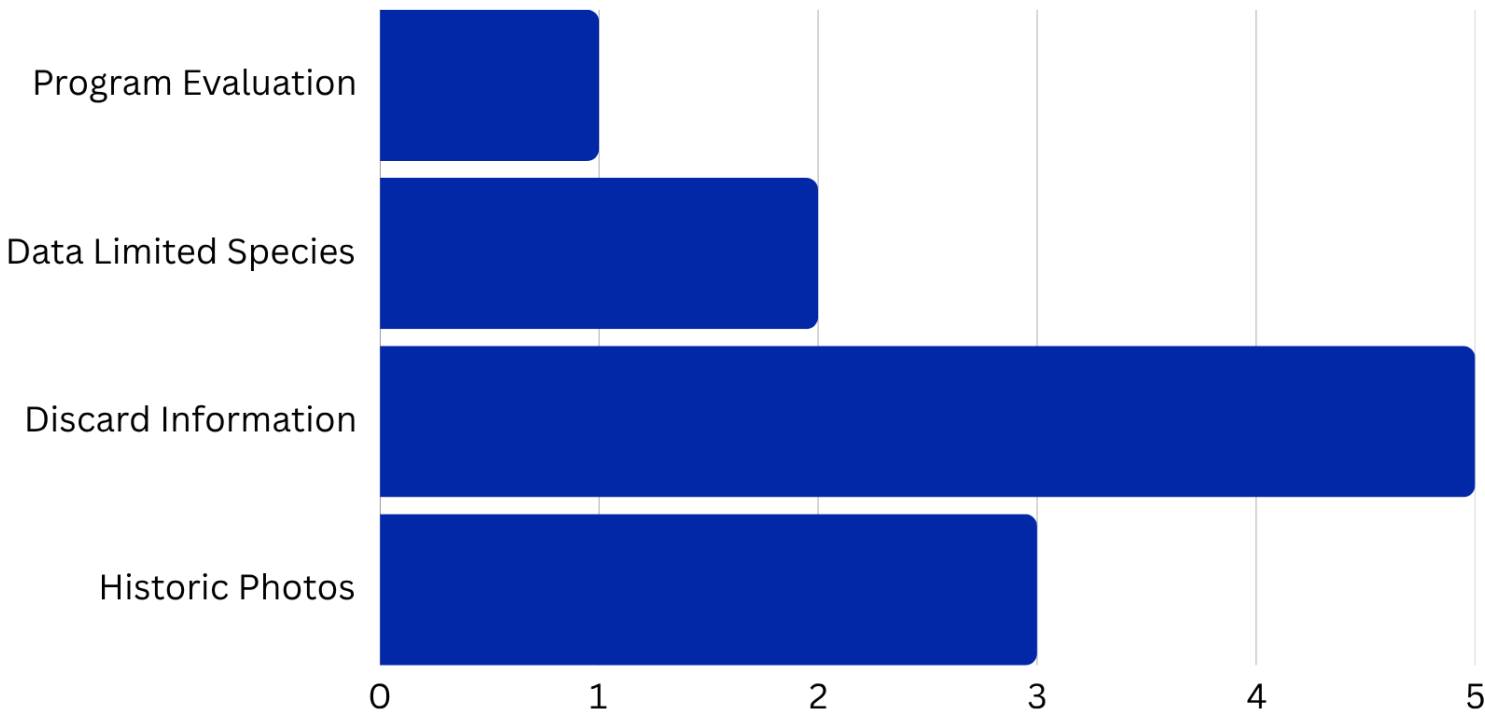
### Number of proposal submissions by or in collaboration with the CitSci Program by research priority



# GOAL 2

*Indicator #7*  
External funding to support Program and project activities

## Number of external grants CitSci Program has received by research priority, 2019-2025



Plus: 2024 MOU finalized with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission which provides more flexibility in opportunities to fund the Program and projects











# GOAL 3

## Indicator #8

Projects considered for use in assessment or management

## Indicator #9

Projects inform future research

	<b>SEDAR 68</b> South Atlantic Scamp Spring 2020 	<b>SEDAR 90</b> South Atlantic Red Snapper April 2025 	<b>SEDAR 94</b> Florida Hogfish August 2025 
	Recommended for use Research recommendations	Recommended for use Research recommendations	Recommended for use Research recommendations
			Not applicable
	Not applicable		Not applicable
	Not applicable	Not applicable	

\*SAFMC Release started in June 2019, so limited data were available from the project. Although the data weren't recommended for use in the assessment, SEDAR 68 Data Panelists found the info useful when interpreting trends in other data sources.

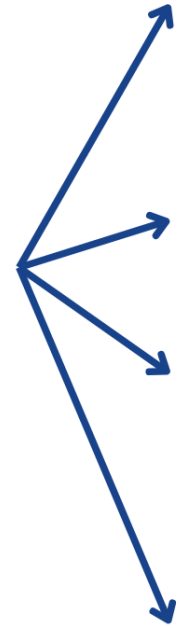
\*\* An index with combined data from NMFS' Roving Visual Census Survey and REEF's Volunteer Fish Survey Project (outside citizen science project) were recommended for use in a sensitivity run.

# GOAL 4

*Indicator #10*  
Number of  
volunteers

*Indicator #11*  
Diversity of ways  
volunteers can  
engage with  
Program

**4,922**  
**Volunteers**  
**contributing to**  
**projects in**  
**multiple ways**



**Project  
Development**



**Data  
Collection**



**Data  
Classification /  
Analysis**



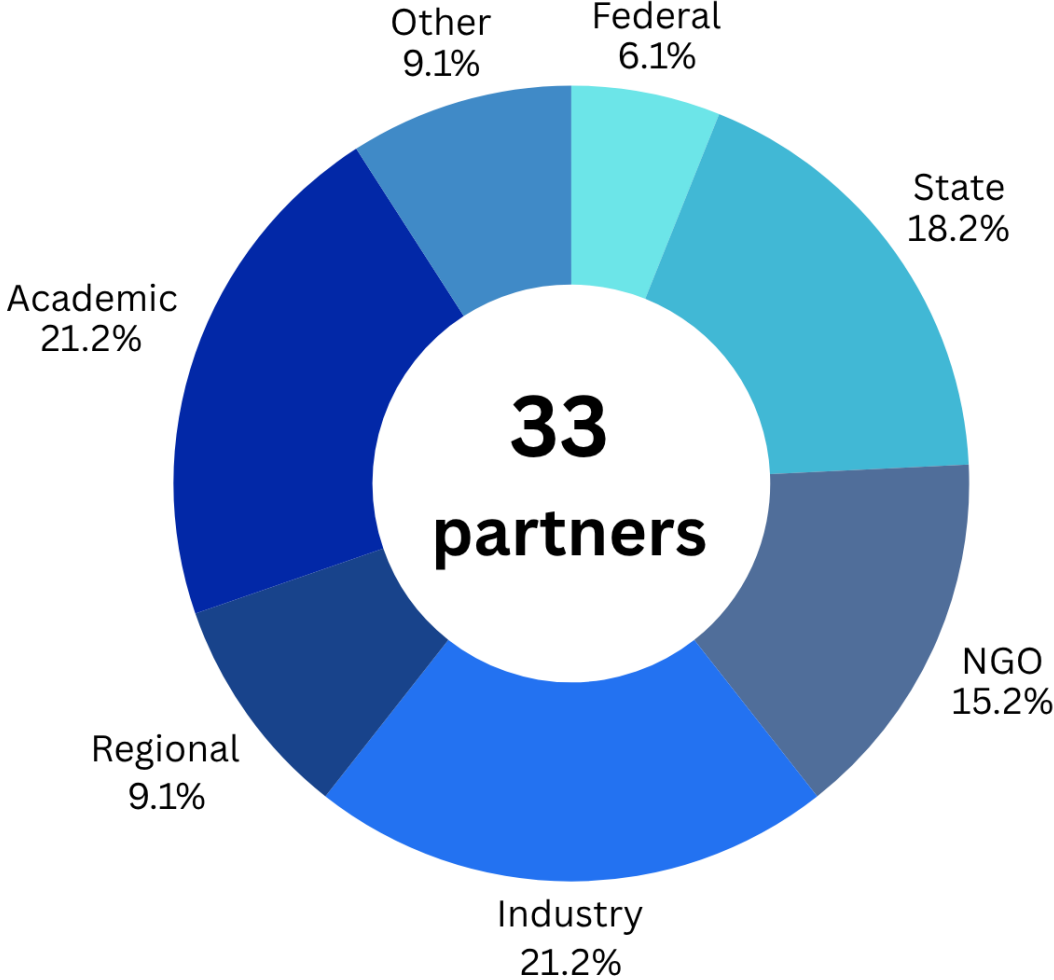
**Data Validation**

# GOAL 4

Indicator #12

Number and diversity of partners contributing to Program

## Citizen Science Program partnerships by organization type, 2019 - 2025

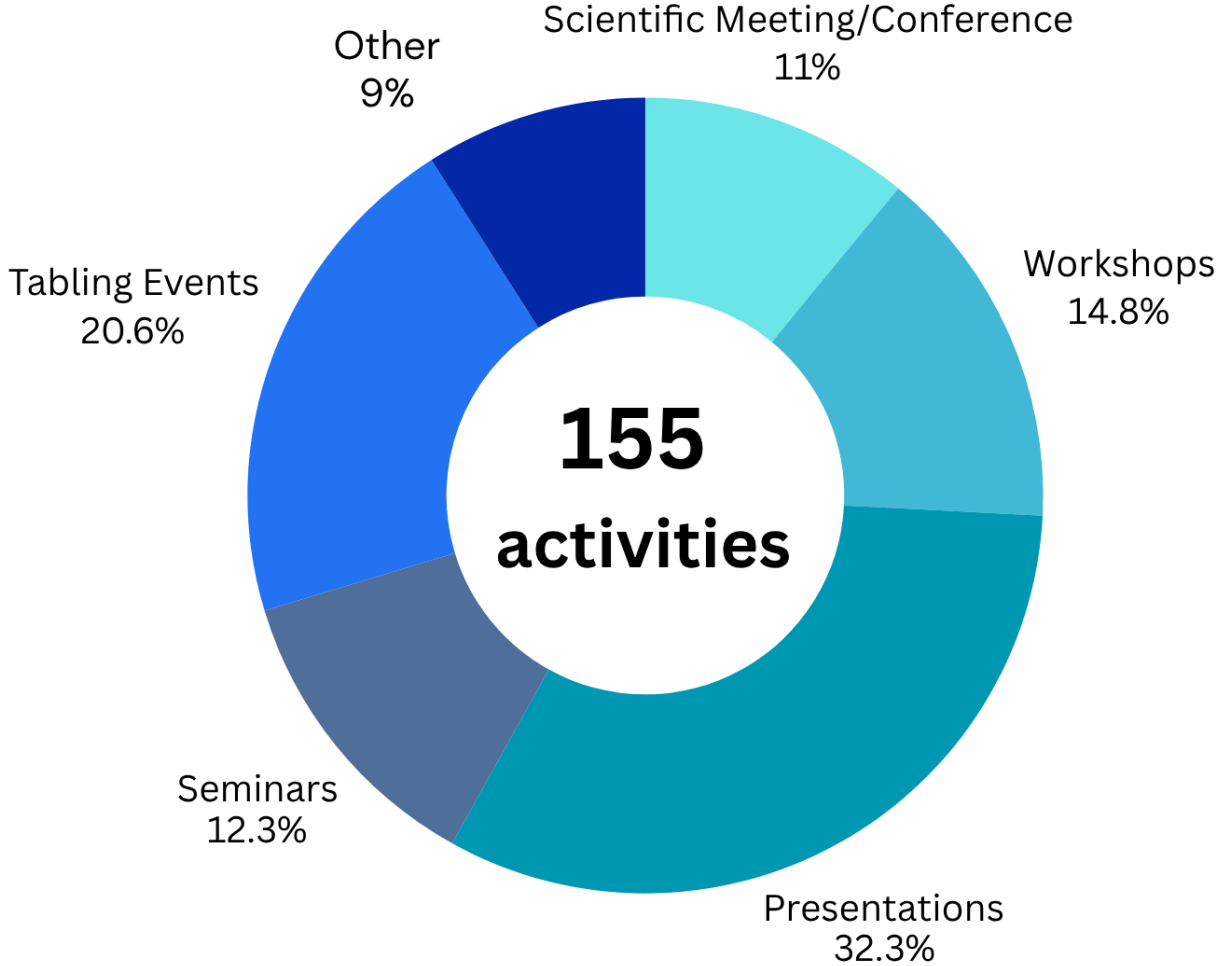


# GOAL 4

Indicator #13

Number and diversity of outreach activities

## Outreach activities by CitSci Program and collaborators, 2019 - 2025



# GOAL 4

## Indicator #14 Online Reach



### Webpage views

July 1, 2023 - Nov 11, 2025

Web Page	Number of Views
CitSci Program	2,115
CitSci Program Development & Resources	395
SAFMC Release	4,670
FISHstory	1,699
SMILE	360



### QR code scans

Nov 2023 - Nov 11, 2025

QR Code	Total Scans / Unique Scans
CitSci Program	28 / 28
SAFMC Release	295 / 271
FISHstory	8 / 8
Project idea Portal	22 / 22



### Social media analytics

July 1, 2023 - April 15, 2025

Metric: Platform	Post	Number
Top reach: Facebook	FISHstory March 1, 2024	2.8k reach
Top likes & reactions: Facebook	FISHstory July 5, 2024 SAFMC Release Sept 1, 2024	26 like & reactions
Top comments: Facebook	FISHstory March 1, 2024 SAFMC Release Aug 30, 2024	20 comments
Top shares: Instagram	SAFMC Release June 21, 2024	7 shares



**Keep up with projects  
& the Program!**

[safmc.net/citizen-science-program/](http://safmc.net/citizen-science-program/)



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