

# Using Fishery Performance Reports to Explore Management Efficacy

Socio-Economic Panel

April 2021

## Background

The purpose of fishery performance reports (FPR) is to assemble information from the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) fishery advisory panel members' experience and observations on the water and in the marketplace to complement scientific and landings data. The FPRs are used to complement stock assessment reports and aid in developing stock status recommendations, as well as inform future Council management decisions. Additionally, the FPRs are posted publicly on the [Council's website](#).

Recently, Council staff has been discussing ways to better explore the efficacy of current and past management actions. Understanding what management measures have or haven't been successful in the past could help guide the Council as they discuss modifications to the regulatory system in currently place. To that end, staff would like to get fishermen's perspective on management success through the FPR process.

## Refresher on the FPR Process

1. Fishery background information is prepared by Council staff and provided to advisory panel members via an interactive web application. The background document and web application contain information for the species that will be discussed including general biology, stock status, management history, commercial and recreational statistics, and economic performance.
2. Discussion questions are also prepared by Council staff. The discussion questions have been standardized across fisheries, excluding a few additions and minor variations to account for differences among fisheries and stock assessment data needs. Questions address landing and discard levels, environmental conditions and ecology, social and economic influences, and other concerns or data gaps.
3. During the advisory panel meeting, questions are posed to advisory panel members who then discuss their thoughts and observations on the record.
4. Using notes and meeting minutes, Council staff prepares an FPR which summarizes the discussion that took place during the advisory panel meeting.

## Current Management Measure Questions

- Is the minimum size limit for the commercial and recreational sectors appropriate?
- Are the current ACLs for each sector appropriate? If not, why?
- Are the quotas for each zone appropriate? If not, why?
- Are there new management measures that the Council should consider?
- Are there existing management measures that should be changed?

## Questions for the Socioeconomic Panel

1. Should questions about management efficacy be roped into the other discussion questions? For example, how have management measures affected the price/demand? How have management measures influenced shifts in effort to/from the fishery?
  - a. Should AP members be asking directly about specific management measures? For example, in your opinion, has the shallow water grouper closure had a positive effect, a negative effect or no effect on the populations of SWG? Please share observations that support your opinion.
2. What other additions or improvements could be made to the discussion questions to produce more valuable information on management efficacy?
  - a. Currently, many of the FPR questions included “appropriate” as an adjective to describe management measures. Should the question be modified to gather more specific feedback. For example, does the ACL match your perception of the stock – is it too high, too low, or about right? Does your sector receive enough share of the ACL? How do the zone quotas affect the fishery? Do they help or harm?
3. How can staff work to address confounding changes that may influence perceptions successful/unsuccessful management has been such as changing environmental conditions, overall change in value of stock etc.
4. How should the information gathered during the FPR process be presented and incorporated into the management process?