

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

**SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PANEL OF THE
SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE**



SEP Meeting Overview and Summary Report

April 14-15, 2025

**Town and Country Inn
2008 Savannah Highway
Charleston, SC 29407**

PURPOSE

This meeting is convened to discuss and provide input to the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) and the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) on:

- Recent and developing Council actions and amendments,
- Citizen Science Program Projects,
- Citizen Science Program Evaluation,
- Eighth National Meeting of the Scientific Coordination Subcommittee of the Council Coordination Committee recommendations,
- Utilizing information gathered during outreach initiatives,
- Situation assessment on stakeholder perspectives of the Snapper Grouper Management Strategy Evaluation,
- Council climate-readiness projects updates,
- Council research and monitoring priorities.

CONTENTS

1.	Introduction.....	3
2.	Recent and Developing Council Actions.....	3
3.	Update on the Citizen Science Program	5
4.	Citizen Science Program Evaluation	7
5.	Eighth National Meeting of the Scientific Coordination Subcommittee of the Council Coordination Committee Report.....	10
6.	Utilization of Information Gathered During Outreach Initiatives	12
7.	Situation Assessment on Stakeholder Perspectives of the Snapper Grouper Management Strategy Evaluation Presentation	16
8.	Climate Readiness Projects Update	17
9.	South Atlantic Research and Monitoring Prioritization Plan	18
10.	Other Business	19
11.	Report and Recommendations Review.....	19
12.	Next SEP Meeting.....	19

DOCUMENTS

Attachment 1a: Social and Economic Panel Agenda Overview

Attachment 1b: Minutes from the October 2024 meeting

Attachment 2: Recent and developing South Atlantic Council amendments

Attachment 3: Citizen Science Program update presentation

Attachment 4a: Citizen Science Initial Program Evaluation Overview

Attachment 4b: Survey of Scientists and Managers Working in the Region Covered by SAFMC

Attachment 4c: Overview Presentation of Scientist and Managers Survey Findings Presentation

Attachment 4d: Decoding the Motivations of Fishers Considering Participation in Citizen Science Projects

Attachment 4e: Decoding the Motivations of Fishers Overview Presentation

Attachment 4f: Comparison of Research Findings, Citizen Science Program Efforts and Recommendations

Attachment 5a: Eighth National Meeting of the Scientific Coordination Subcommittee of the Council Coordination Committee Report

Attachment 5b: Eighth National Meeting of the Scientific Coordination Subcommittee of the Council Coordination Committee Presentation

Attachment 6: Utilizing Information Gathered During Outreach Initiatives Presentation

Attachment 7: Situation Assessment on Stakeholder Perspectives of the Snapper Grouper Management Strategy Evaluation Presentation

Attachment 8: Climate Readiness Projects Update Presentation

Attachment 9: South Atlantic Council Research and Monitoring Prioritization Plan Draft

1. Introduction

1.1. Documents

- **Attachment 1a.** Social and Economic Panel Agenda Overview
- **Attachment 1b.** Minutes from the October 2024 meeting

1.2. ACTIONS

- Introductions
- Review and approve the agenda
- Approve October 2024 minutes
- Opportunity for public comment

SEP RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The SEP approved the October 2024 minutes and April 2025 agenda.

2. Recent and Developing Council Actions

2.1. Document

- **Attachment 2.** Recent and Developing South Atlantic Council Amendments

2.2. Overview

Council staff will provide a briefing on recent and upcoming amendments and actions (*Attachment 2*). The following amendments may be of particular interest to SEP members:

Amendment 48 (Wreckfish ITQ Program Modernization)

Staff Lead: Christina Wiegand

Purpose of Amendment: The Council finished its second review of the Wreckfish ITQ program in September of 2019. As part of the review there were several recommendations made to modernize the program, which will be addressed in this amendment.

Action Summary: moving away from a paper coupon-based program to an electronic program; fishing season; cost recovery; wreckfish permit requirement; allocation issues; offloading sites and times; and monitoring requirements.

Development Level: Under review. Amendment submitted to NMFS on December 19, 2024.

Amendment 46 (Private Recreational Permit and Education Requirement)

Staff Lead: John Hadley

Purpose of the Amendment: Address deficiencies in recreational data through the creation of a permit requirement for private recreational vessels or anglers. Additionally, considers establishing a required education component to encourage best fishing practices that help reduce discard mortality in the snapper grouper fishery.

Action Summary: This amendment considers establishing a permit and education requirement for anglers or vessels to participate in the private recreational component of the snapper grouper fishery.

Development Level: Scoping has been conducted and the amendment is being developed. Approval for public hearings is expected at the June 2025 meeting.

Snapper Grouper Amendment 56 (Black Sea Bass)

Staff Lead: Mike Schmidtke

Purpose of Amendment: Respond to most recent stock assessment (SEDAR 76).

Action Summary: Revise catch levels and status determination criteria, consider revision of sector allocations, other black sea bass management measures.

Development Level: Post-scoping; draft amendment under development.

Snapper Grouper Amendment 44/ Reef Fish Amendment 55 (Yellowtail Snapper)

Staff Lead: Allie Iberle

Purpose of Amendment: Respond to the latest stock assessment (SEDAR 64). Yellowtail snapper are not overfished and overfishing is not occurring.

Action Summary: adopt recommended ABC, adjust jurisdictional allocation between the South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico Councils, adjust ACLs, and sector allocations (SA only).

Development Level: Post-scoping. Development paused.

Snapper Grouper Management Strategy Evaluation

Staff Lead: Chip Collier, Judd Curtis

Purpose of the Amendment: Dead releases are a major issue in the snapper grouper fishery as a whole and affect many species within the complex. The Council has directed a management strategy evaluation (MSE) project that would consider multispecies effects of potential management changes and be used to develop a more holistic approach to management of the snapper grouper fishery. The amendment will follow the MSE project and consider implementation of management changes evaluated through the MSE.

Action Summary: This amendment will provide actions intended to incorporate recommendations from the MSE project. The MSE is currently undergoing additional work, including research to potentially capture some of the human behavior components of the recreational Snapper Grouper fishery.

Comprehensive Recreational For-Hire Limited Entry Amendment

Staff Leads: John Hadley & Myra Brouwer

Purpose of Amendment: To establish limited entry for the for-hire components of the snapper grouper, coastal migratory pelagics, and dolphin wahoo fisheries.

Action Summary: TBD

Development Level: Pre-scoping.

Comprehensive For-Hire Reporting Improvement Amendment

Staff Leads: John Hadley & Myra Brouwer

Purpose of Amendment: To improve compliance with for-hire reporting requirements.

Action Summary: TBD

Development Level: Scoping.

2.3. Presentation and Discussion

John Hadley, SAFMC staff

2.4. ACTIONS

Discuss and make recommendations as appropriate. In general, this agenda item is meant to brief the SEP on potential Council actions that may be presented to the group for review later in the meeting or at a future SEP meeting.

SEP RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The SEP appreciated the updates but had no questions.

3. Update on the Citizen Science Program

3.1. Document

- **Attachment 3.** Citizen Science Program update presentation

3.2. Overview

Julia Byrd, SAFMC staff, will provide an update program activities and recent efforts of the [SAFMC's Citizen Science Program](#). Program activities currently underway include the Citizen Science Project Idea Portal, the SMILE Project, FISHstory, and SAFMC Release. Staff will also present new efforts to track relationship building to look for patterns in engagement with the Citizen Science Program.

Presentation and Discussion

Julia Byrd and Meg Withers, SAFMC staff

3.3. ACTIONS

Discuss and make recommendations as appropriate.

Discussion Questions:

1. What modes of contact do you think would be most beneficial to track to document relationship building?
2. What details (without logging any personal information) would be useful to us illustrating the path to relationship-building?

SEP RECOMMENDATIONS:

- SEP members raised several questions for the Council regarding the Citizen Science Program update:
 - What is the status of the app-project idea portal? How many submissions have been received so far (any metrics)?
 - Are there geographic data available on user submissions or logins?
 - Why does South Carolina have more logins compared to other states? What is driving higher engagement there?
 - Are participants receiving any recognition or credit, particularly when their projects inform Council decisions?
 - Is there concern about upward bias in data—e.g., fishers may be more likely to photograph and report larger catches, which could skew size and catch data over time?

Discussion question: What modes of contact do you think would be most beneficial to track to document relationship building?

- The SEP suggests looking at successful examples of relationship building in the number of SAFMC Release submissions from South Carolina, where staff is likely interact with anglers most often due to the location of the Council office. Consider working with partners in other states to expand this relationship building.
 - *It was noted that staff currently work to do this by leveraging relationships with state agencies, fishing clubs, etc. but understand the importance of in-person interaction.*
- The SEP recommends that staff consider modifying QR Codes to record data that would allow staff to better understand who is sharing information and where that information is being shared. This would help identify community leaders.
 - It will be important to make sure anyone receiving one of these QR codes knows that their information will be recorded (trust building).
- Look at correlation of the number of events in a given area with active participation in Citizen Science projects and other Council public participation opportunities.
 - Sign-ups on SciFish, Release, etc. surrounding an event.

Discussion Question: What details (without logging any personal information) would be useful to us illustrating the path to relationship-building?

- The number of times someone reached out to request information, a seminar, attendance at an event, etc.
- Consider developing a spreadsheet to record interactions (date, name, project, conversation etc.) This can be valuable even if kept confidential.

- Look at templates from other industries that track interactions with clients, customers, etc.
- Contact Sea Grant peers, who often quantify and track interactions yearly to include in various grant and annual reports.
- It is important to consider the difference of outputs vs. outcomes. It would be beneficial to note what individuals are involved and how they are helping to achieve *outcomes* (like a logic model).
 - Social network analysis software with different symbols based on outcomes, geographic location, etc.
- Consider trying push notifications to see if individuals will interact with the app.
 - Ex. *Have you been fishing in the last two weeks?*

FISHstory Recommendations

- Individuals are more likely to take a picture and retain a photo long-term with larger catch (size and number of fish), concern about upward bias.
 - *FISHstory focuses on photos that include the entire catch displayed and not just one individual fish. Individual preference and regulations will influence what fish and size of fish are caught over time.*

Project Portal Recommendations

- Important to consider intellectual property and how to continue involvement of someone who submitted an idea that the Program decides to move forward with developing.

SAFMC Release Recommendations

- Recommendation to talk to those that are star participants to see what is motivating them to continue to be involved in the SAFMC Release project.

4. Citizen Science Program Evaluation

4.1. Document

- **Attachment 4a.** Citizen Science Initial Program Evaluation Overview
- **Attachment 4b.** Survey of Scientists and Managers Working in the Region Covered by SAFMC
- **Attachment 4c:** Overview Presentation of Scientist and Managers Survey Findings Presentation
- **Attachment 4d:** Decoding the Motivations of Fishers Considering Participation in Citizen Science Projects
- **Attachment 4e:** Decoding the Motivations of Fishers Overview Presentation
- **Attachment 4f:** Comparison of Research Findings, Citizen Science Program Efforts and Recommendations

4.2. Overview

At their December 2020 meeting, the Council supported working with Rick Bonney on an initial evaluation plan for the SAFMC's Citizen Science Program (Program). The plan focuses on

gathering baseline data on knowledge, attitudes, collaborations, engagement, and trust from various stakeholder groups to help evaluate the Program’s fourth goal to ‘foster mutual learning, collaboration, and program engagement’.

In the original evaluation plan, baseline data was proposed to be collected in three phases: 1) interviews, 2) the development and piloting of an online survey, and 3) the implementation of the online survey. Rick Bonney presented findings from the phase one interviews to the Operations Committee in May 2023 and to the SAFMC in June 2023. Conclusions from the interviews noted the fisherman audience needed to be studied in much more detail and that research into the needs, desires, and motivations of fishermen and how best to reach fishermen will be critical to the Program. Bonney also noted that deploying an online survey to scientists and managers should not be too challenging, but deploying an online survey to fishermen could be challenging.

During summer 2022, additional funding was obtained for this project through NOAA Fisheries and the SAFMC. Staff consulted with Rick Bonney on how best to apply the funds for these evaluation efforts. The decision was made to have Rick Bonney lead the research to gather information from a broader group of scientists and managers through an online survey and to put out a request for proposals in December 2022 to gather information from a broader group of fishermen. Jennifer Sweeney Tookes and Tracy Yandle’s proposal was selected for funding. They collected information from a broader group of fishermen via interviews. **Attachment 4a** provides background information on the Citizen Science Program’s initial evaluation.

Bonney conducted the online survey with scientists and managers from approximately March through September 2024. The final report summarizing survey findings is **Attachment 4b**. Julia Byrd, Citizen Science Program Manager, will present an overview of survey findings highlighting recommendations on how the Program can respond to this research (**Attachment 4c**).

The Sweeney Tookes’ et al. research team conducted interviews with fishermen from approximately July 2023 to February 2024. The final report summarizing survey findings is **Attachment 4d**. Sweeney Tookes will present an overview of survey findings highlighting recommendations on how the Program can respond to this research (**Attachment 4e**).

Julia Byrd will provide an overview comparing key findings from the Bonney and Sweeney Tookes et al. research; share efforts the Citizen Science Program is currently undertaking that help address report recommendations; and provide recommendations for additional strategies and activities the Program can implement to further respond to this research effort (**Attachment 4f**). The recommendations presented were developed and reviewed by the Citizen Science Operations Committee at their October 2024 meeting.

4.3. Presentation

Julia Byrd, SAFMC Staff

Jennifer Sweeney-Tookes, Georgia Southern University

4.4. ACTIONS

Discuss and make recommendations as appropriate.

Discussion Questions

1. Does the SEP support the recommendations developed by the Citizen Science Operations Committee? Are there additional ways the Citizen Science Program should adapt or be refined based on these research efforts?
2. What issues, challenges, and recommendations should the Program prioritize addressing in the short term (1-3 years)? In the long term (> 3 years)?

SEP RECOMMENDATIONS:

Discussion Question: Does the SEP support the recommendations developed by the Citizen Science Operations Committee? Are there additional ways the Citizen Science Program should adapt or be refined based on these research efforts?

- SEP members support the recommendations developed by the Citizen Science Operations Committee.
- SEP members have heard from stakeholders about interest in improving communication by meeting fishermen in their communities and using new or alternative forms of media.
 - Podcasts could be a way to “meet fishermen where they are” through a new media.
- SEP notes that there is also a mistrust issue amongst scientists (not just fishermen) especially in terms of the program meeting scientific standards (study design, sampling, etc.)
- SEP suggests that in terms of building trust, it is important to tell the story and process of *how* decisions are being made for fisheries to help stakeholders feel that their input is being actively considered. This will be important for Citizen Science projects and management, generally.
 - Need to understand the root of why fishermen do not trust managers and do not feel that their input is genuinely considered, suggest consulting recent research by Tookes et al. and the Lorenzen Lab.

Discussion Question: What issues, challenges, and recommendations should the Program prioritize addressing in the short term (1-3 years)? In the long term (> 3 years)?

- Keep doing what you’re doing! The Citizen Science program is doing great work!
- **Acknowledging fishermen input should be a priority.** Look at what the Gulf Council does in response to public comments as well as sentiment analysis done with their Fishermen Feedback tool.
- Ask fishermen what would make them feel like their input is being considered.
- Finding the spot where fishermen data and scientist trust can meet - turning fishermen knowledge into Citizen Science data streams.
- Determine what scientists need more information on, and where Citizen Science and fishermen are uniquely suited to address the gap.
- Win-Win projects are important, but **messaging** will be important. Management often works on a long-term time horizon, so it will be important that stakeholders understand that this might be a long-term win-win.

- Prioritize reaching out to neutral parties (ex. Sea Grant, university partners) because it helps to leverage resources and capitalize on the relationships those organizations have already cultivated.
- Don't forget that building relationships and trust takes a long, long time and **consistent effort and communication to achieve**. It is hard won and easily lost.
- Building relationships and trust should be a priority because it will ultimately help with the frustration around fisheries management being a black box.
- Focus on short videos and useful infographics as a way to address fisheries management being a "black box."
- Transparency in the process is important, but the messenger is equally important.

5. Eighth National Meeting of the Scientific Coordination Subcommittee of the Council Coordination Committee Report

5.1. Documents

- **Attachment 5a:** Eighth National Meeting of the Scientific Coordination Subcommittee of the Council Coordination Committee Report
- **Attachment 5b:** Eighth National Meeting of the Scientific Coordination Subcommittee of the Council Coordination Committee Presentation

5.2. Overview

The Scientific Coordination Subcommittee convened its 8th workshop (SCS8) in Boston, MA on August 26-28, 2024, hosted by the New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC). The SCS8 meeting theme was Applying ABC Control Rules in a Changing Environment and featured three sub-themes: (1) Advances in ecosystem science and assessment to inform ABC control rules in a dynamic environment, (2) Application of social science to achieve management goals under dynamic conditions, and (3) Adaptation of reference points, control rules, and rebuilding plans to a changing environment. The meeting included several keynote speakers in sub-theme areas and regional case studies from SSC members and NOAA staff followed by break-out groups and synthesis of ideas. On the final day, participants broke out into regional SSC groups and brainstormed several ideas for actionable outcomes, implementation, and pathways forward for their respective regional SSCs. Staff will present a summary of the discussions relative to sub-theme two (application of social science), including challenges and recommendations.

5.3. Presentation

Christina Wiegand, SAMFC staff

5.4. ACTIONS

Discuss and make recommendations as appropriate.

Discussion Questions:

1. What are the most significant data gaps in our understanding of the South Atlantic social and economic environment.
 - a. Are there available data sources or ongoing research that has not been explored to-date that would help fill these gaps?

2. How can the Council better illustrate the ways in which they utilize public testimony and LEK in the management process?
 - a. How can the Council improve the public testimony process?
3. How can the Council encourage participation in the public participation processes that already exist (public comment, advisory panels, Citizen Science, Lines, etc.)?
4. Are there opportunities for Council staff to better coordinate with external entities to leverage resources that have not been explored to-date?
5. Given limited staff resources, how can Council staff capitalize on nontraditional sources of social and economic data (foreshadowing, for a presentation later in the meeting)?
6. How can Council staff better illustrate the role of social and economic data in the analysis of management actions to the Council?
 - a. How can the decision-making process more explicitly incorporate social science?
7. Does the Social and Economic Panel feel they need more information on how Council members understand social science and what they are looking to receive from the Panel?
8. SCS9 will be hosted by the Gulf Fishery Management Council in 2026. Does the SEP have suggestions for a social science sub-theme(s) to include?

SEP RECOMMENDATIONS:

Discussion Questions: What are the most significant data gaps in our understanding of the South Atlantic social and economic environment? Are there available data sources or ongoing research that has not been explored to-date that would help fill these gaps?

- The SEP suggested that to fully answer this question, it is necessary to consider updating and revising the list of data sources that was previously presented to the SEP.
- The SEP noted that there is so much good work happening, it can be difficult to keep track.
 - They suggest the creation of a landing page for ongoing projects in the region.
 - Could potentially be housed through the Council Coordinating Committee (CCC).
 - Also consider coordinating across state and federal agencies, including non-marine fisheries related agencies.
 - Could be a good potential workshop theme to encourage information sharing.
- The SEP would like to see more economic impact data at the county level, which could be important within the state as well as useful for the Council. Overall, the SEP would appreciate the ability to look at information in finer detail.

Discussion Questions: How can the Council better illustrate the ways in which they utilize public testimony and LEK in the management process? How can the Council improve the public testimony process? How can the Council encourage participation in the public participation processes that already exist (public comment, advisory panels, Citizen Science, Lines, etc.)?

- Demographic information could be used to target specific locations and communities.
- *How* people are received at a meeting is important to participants.
- Consider incorporating brief “origin stories” on where projects originate, particularly if they originate from a public comment.

Discussion Questions: Given limited staff resources, how can Council staff capitalize on nontraditional sources of social and economic data (foreshadowing, for a presentation later in the meeting)? How can Council staff better illustrate the role of social and economic data in the analysis of management actions to the Council? How can the decision-making process more explicitly incorporate social science?

- The SEP noted that it can be difficult to point out where the social and economic information is consistently included in FMPs.
 - Can be difficult to explain how information is specifically used in the management process.
 - It is important that all people with management insights continually try to direct people to where the information is located and that it is produced for all managed species.
- The SEP suggests following the excellent examples from Georgia Sea Grant (by Adam Stemle and Eugene Frimpong), and consider summarizing information in infographics that are widely released to the public and other agencies.
 - During fisheries disaster assessment, communicate how the data is being used for relief efforts.

Discussion Question: Does the Social and Economic Panel feel they need more information on how Council members understand social science and what they are looking to receive from the Panel?

- The SEP suggested holding a conversation with the Council to find out what kind of social & economic information *they* find most important in management. Then using this to co-create a list between the SEP and the Council. However, this may be less effective as Council might now be as aware of existing gaps or needs as they relate to social science.
 - Would be helpful to gather information from the Council on what they consider is trustworthy data.
 - This could help focus future projects.

Discussion Question: SCS9 will be hosted by the Gulf Fishery Management Council in 2026. Does the SEP have suggestions for a social science sub-theme(s) to include?

- The SEP felt that all of the discussion questions included above could be a sub-theme at a future meeting. Other ideas presented by the SEP include:
 - Highlight the regional differences in how different councils incorporate TEK/LEK/regional knowledge sets outside the norm.
 - Conversations between social scientists and non-social scientists could be particularly beneficial.
 - Strongly recommend that SCS9 explicitly and concretely identify and explain ways to incorporate qualitative data into management. This needs to be explored and discussed further at the national scale.
 - Specifically, explicit guidance on how to add to sections on SE data to FMPs and other areas of management would be highly desirable.

6. Utilization of Information Gathered During Outreach Initiatives

6.1. Document

- **Attachment 6.** Utilizing Information Gathered During Outreach Initiatives Presentation

6.2. Overview

The Council has an extensive Outreach and Communication Program allowing outreach staff to engage with fishery stakeholders throughout the Council's jurisdiction. Through these activities outreach staff passively collects a significant amount of qualitative information on Council managed fisheries. While not collected using any formal social science methodology, it is important to consider the value of these activities and how to better utilize the information to inform the Council decision making process. Staff will review the in-person outreach initiatives conducted by Council staff and the information they collect both explicitly and passively. Additionally, staff will cover how the value of these outreach programs is tracked and presented to the Council.

6.3. Presentation

Christina Wiegand, SAFMC staff

6.4. ACTIONS

Discuss and make recommendations as appropriate.

Discussion Questions:

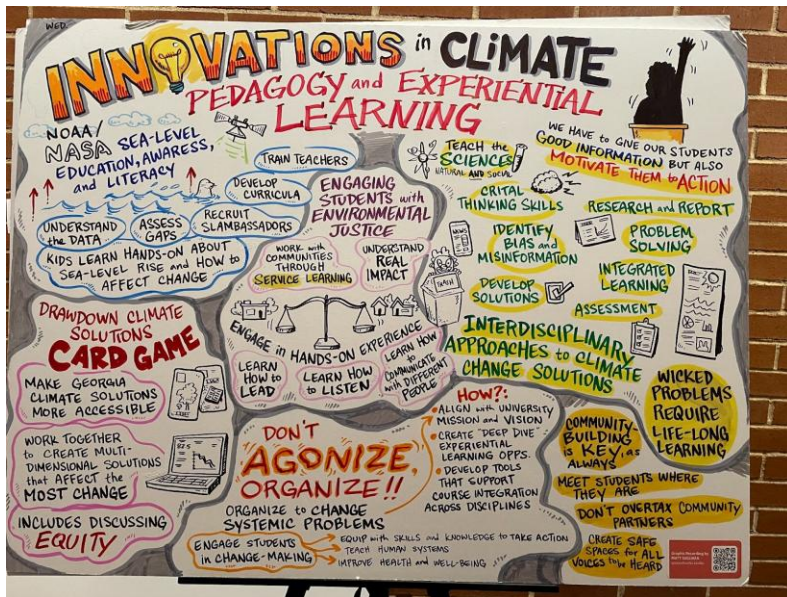
1. How can the information gathered through these various efforts be captured, if not already?
 - a. How can we track qualitative information consistently and comparably across different outreach events?
2. How can the information captured be analyzed to better understand trends in South Atlantic fisheries?
3. How can Council staff effectively present and communicate the qualitative insights to the Council?
 - a. Present this information as more than purely anecdotal evidence.
4. How can Council staff better track the development of relationships over time?
5. How can the Council effectively present and communicate the value of outreach efforts to achieve Council goals and objectives?

SEP RECOMMENDATIONS:

Discussion Questions: How can the information gathered through these various efforts be captured, if not already? How can we track qualitative information consistently and comparably across different outreach events? How can the information captured be analyzed to better understand trends in South Atlantic fisheries?

- The SEP gave feedback on ways qualitative information can be tracked consistently and comparably across different outreach events and to effectively present and communicate qualitative insights to the Council. The SEP recommended a number of options to explore, including:
 - Drafting a consistent series of questions to answer following each different type of event.
 - Entering each event with specific goals and questions in mind to try to answer and revisit after each event to evaluate what is and isn't working.
 - Exploring Social Network Analysis.

- Debriefing and summarizing what was collected during each event, especially if there are several top questions of focus during the effort will help illuminate the common themes across the events and interactions.
- The SEP recommended *starting with* thinking about how they will analyze information (such as sticky notes data or answers to generated questions) *systematically*, to identify how much they can answer questions with some level of agreement in order to identify larger salient points.
 - Planning for analysis from the start and framing actionable questions in engagement exercises were noted as potentially helpful– thinking ahead of time about “what are our goals and what do we think we can learn/answer here?” in order to end with data-driven results: “These are the 3 key topics that came out across the interactions.” Also be cognizant of what cannot be answered with this data.
 - It was also recommended to look at how workshop questions can complement findings in other studies, such as the Bonney work.
 - Focus on the guiding research questions and/or event goals (which must be clearly articulated before the event) and determine whether the goals were met or not.
- The SEP also noted that it could be useful to identify the opinion leaders at each meeting to determine:
 - Where do people go or who do they trust for this type of information?
 - Collect social network information at each meeting in order to be able to analyze over the long term to see if the same names come up throughout the engagement.
 - This information could shape effective relationship building.
- The SEP suggested staff consider the tradeoffs of quantity and quality in outreach, such as tackle shop visits, acknowledging that with limited capacity sometimes more visits to fewer shops may help build those relationships and be ultimately more beneficial to trust-building and relationship-building than fewer visits to more shops.
- The SEP urged Council staff to consider the sequencing and goals of these meetings, and to consider offering people an opportunity to tell you what is on their minds first. It may also be useful to focus questions/discussion on topics that the Council can change or has jurisdiction over; specifically focus on questions that feed into actionable items by the Council. Part of this may include teaching about the management process, and how information is provided.
- The SEP recommended considering the use of a sketch artist to listen to the information and present it as a visual synopsis/graphic representation of what participants said (such as the example below).



Discussion Question: How can Council staff effectively present and communicate the qualitative insights to the Council?

- In addition to ideas listed above, the SEP recommends that Council staff:
 - Be deliberate and systematic about *what* is collected (e.g. are there items of interest, such as relationships, etc.?) over a period of time.
 - Be thoughtful about who and how the meetings and resultant information are being recorded; consider having a social scientist involved.
 - Use a consistent process throughout all the events to gather information/data in a systematic way to get at what is salient— this consistent methodology is necessary to differentiate the information from anecdotes.
 - Develop a social science analysis plan to result in rigorous results, and explain methods of data collection and analysis to illustrate how the information is more than anecdotal.
 - When presenting this information, be clear and detailed about the differences between social science data and findings vs. anecdote.

Discussion Question: How can Council staff better track the development of relationships over time?

- The SEP recommended ways to help staff track relationships over time, including:
 - Having questions to ask those doing outreach over time to record these elements.
 - Looking to extension for evaluation tools.
 - Asking attendees about their motivations.
 - Tracking outcomes as well as outputs (e.g., QR codes that can track), developing targets (e.g., the number of people who use a QR code).
- The SEP proposed:
 - Using Expectancy Disconfirmation Theory which would include gathering expectations prior to the meeting to help with gap analysis and to calibrate future effort.
 - Use a pre and post expectation analysis to determine whether expectations were met and whether time is appropriately being spent during the meeting on specific items.
 - Compiling general metrics and trying to understand demographic and fisher motivations.

- Asking participants about their relationship with the Council, how they learned about the meeting, and what motivated them to be involved.
- QR codes linked to specific outreach events can help with tracking.
 - Goals for what percent of attendees go to social media sites, QR codes, etc.
 - Output oriented goals to evaluate outcomes.
- Asking networks (APs, ambassadors, etc.) to help push out information.
- Overall, the SEP urged that Council staff keep notes and records– ”If you don’t write it down, it didn’t happen.”

Discussion Question: How can the Council effectively present and communicate the value of outreach efforts to achieve Council goals and objectives?

- The SEP noted that relationship graphics in presentations would be helpful (e.g. what is the relationship between a stakeholder idea and this particular program/project). It is also useful to show metrics over time, including:
 - Interactions over time.
 - Multiple interactions with the same individual or organizations.
 - Tracking invites, repeats, interactions, etc.
- The SEP recommends deferring to extension agencies for their expertise and best practices, such as:
 - Building infographics for social and economic data.
 - Explaining the connectivity between social and economic data and disaster relief initiatives and applications.
 - Piggy back on the studies that have been done on outreach (Cit Sci survey and evaluation) to develop outreach questions.
 - Develop a targeted approach to piggy back on work that has already been accomplished.

7. Situation Assessment on Stakeholder Perspectives of the Snapper Grouper Management Strategy Evaluation Presentation

7.1. Document

- **Attachment 7.** Situation Assessment on Stakeholder Perspectives of the Snapper Grouper Management Strategy Evaluation Presentation

7.2. Overview

As part of the South Atlantic Snapper Grouper Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) a situation assessment of stakeholder perspectives on the snapper grouper fishery, the discard mortality issues, management process and role of snapper grouper MSE developed by Blue Matter Science was conducted. A key part of MSE is gathering information on stakeholder perspectives. This situation assessment will be used to improve the next iteration for the snapper grouper MSE. Outcomes include identification of key stakeholders to engage, main concerns of stakeholders, areas where public input could shape the discussion, and issues or constraints that could impact participation.

7.3. Presentation

Kai Lorenzen, University of Florida

7.4. ACTIONS

Discuss and make recommendations as appropriate.

SEP RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The SEP noted that the MSE could be used to examine data inputs and implications of different assumptions, and suggested that literature on angler satisfaction in the Southeast US could be useful.
- The SEP suggested integrating angler satisfaction into MSE outcomes, specifically to define satisfaction and how to evaluate it, such as asking: “What are the expectations of angler satisfaction?” and examining the gap between performance and expectations. They suggested that there would likely be biological vs socially determined outcomes- or some combination of both.
- The SEP suggested determining who can access the fish and how that access occurs, particularly in relation to a tradeoff of access vs landings (open seasons, retention limits, etc.)
- They further suggested that the MSE prioritize quantifying effort shifts between modes of fishing (bottom fishing vs trolling) based on MSE scenarios, and tie this into extended in-depth engagement with different stakeholder groups.

8. Climate Readiness Projects Update

8.1. Documents

- **Attachment 8.** Climate Readiness Projects Update Presentation

8.2. Overview

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has provided funding to support Council efforts to develop and advance climate ready fisheries management. This presentation will provide background information and updates on the Council’s Climate Readiness Projects including various Resilient Fisheries Initiatives, and ongoing collaborations with East Coast and Southeast Regional management partners and an update on the four Council Climate Readiness Projects.

8.3. Presentation

Lara Klibansky, SAFMC Staff

8.4. ACTIONS

Discuss and make recommendations as appropriate. In general, this agenda item is meant to brief the SEP on potential Council activities that may be presented to the group for review at a future SEP meeting.

SEP RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The SEP appreciated this overview of current and upcoming projects.

- Members expressed interest in being consulted or somehow included in the 4th project described, which will focus on “Communicating Climate Impacts with Fishing Communities.”
 - Council staff confirmed that this will likely be possible and opportunities will be communicated to the SEP when they arise.

9. South Atlantic Research and Monitoring Prioritization Plan

9.1. Documents

- **Attachment 9.** South Atlantic Research and Monitoring Prioritization Plan Draft

9.2. Overview

The Council revises their research and monitoring plan every two years. The research and monitoring plan is used by Council and NOAA Fisheries staff to develop research concepts that are intended for use in management, provided to NOAA Fisheries for potential inclusion in research grants as priorities, and used by other researchers during development of research proposals. The Panel is provided with an opportunity to review the 2025-2029 South Atlantic Research and Monitoring plan. The Council will consider the plan at its June 2025 meeting.

9.3. Presentation

Chip Collier, SAFMC staff

9.4. ACTIONS

Discuss and make recommendations as appropriate.

Discussion Questions:

1. Do the social and economic priorities in the South Atlantic Research and Monitoring Prioritization Plan accurately reflect the needs in this region?
2. Are there any additional priorities that should be added to the current list? Consider general needs as well as recent nationwide initiatives.

SEP RECOMMENDATIONS:

Discussion Question: Do the social and economic priorities in the South Atlantic Research and Monitoring Prioritization Plan accurately reflect the needs in this region?

- Edits made to goals in document during meeting per SEP discussion- see separate document to follow via email.

Discussion Question: Are there any additional priorities that should be added to the current list? Consider general needs as well as recent nationwide initiatives.

- The SEP recommends using/revising “Fishing Community Snapshots” instead of profiles.
- The SEP is interested in concise reports that address the social aspects of each fishery or FMP.
 - For example, look to the “Social dimensions of the Gulf shrimp fishery.”

10. Other Business

There were no items under Other Business

11. Report and Recommendations Review

12. Next SEP Meeting