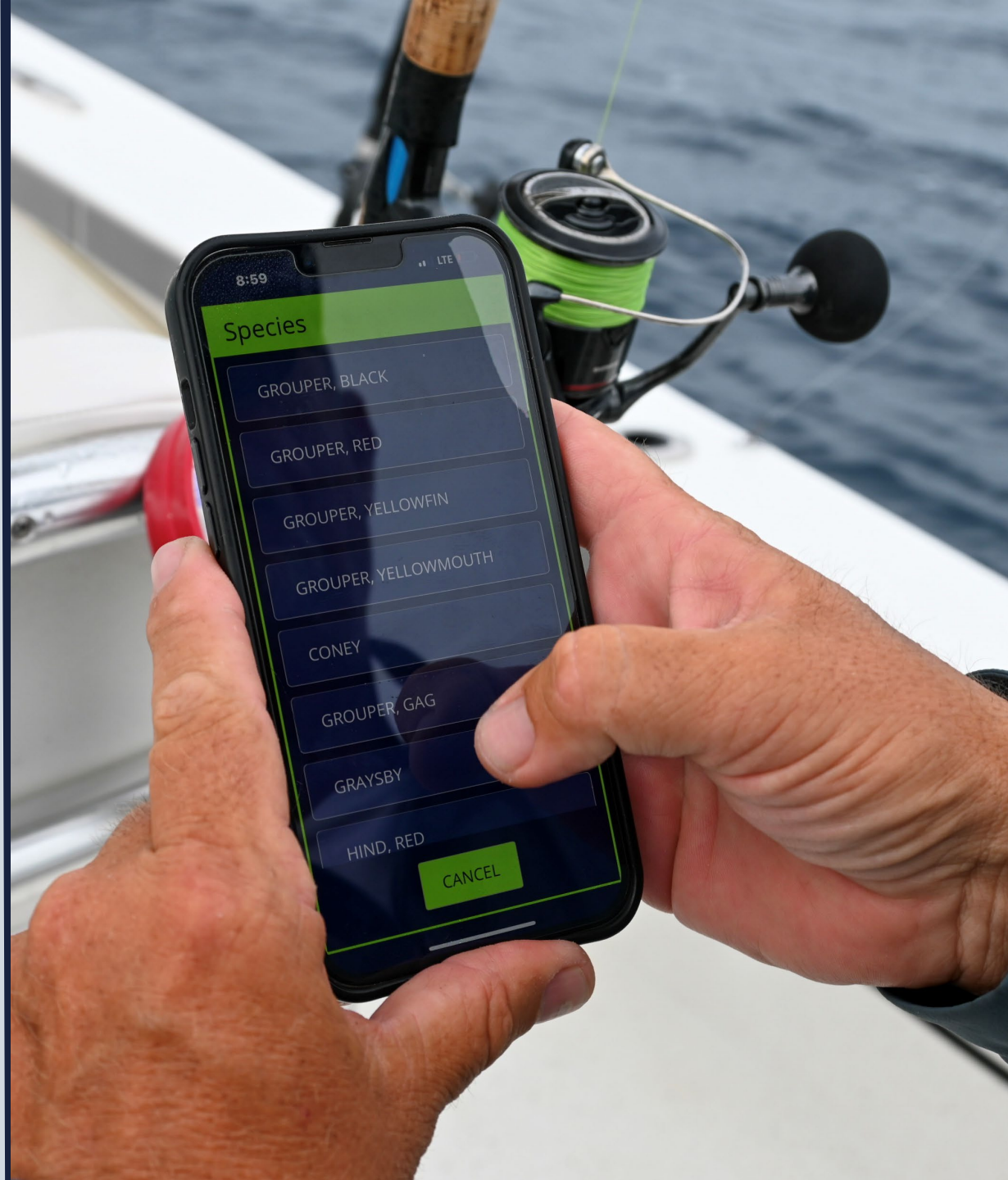




Citizen Science

Citizen Science Program Update

Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel
October 2026



Updates



Red
Snapper



Scamp



Graysby



Black



Yellow-
mouth



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 Sea Grant South Atlantic Release Rodeo

SAFMC Release Participant Recognition Program



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

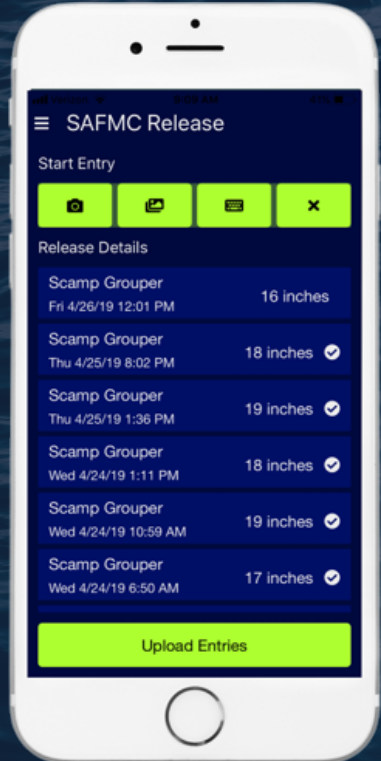


2 names drawn
by Sea Grant/
month!



Sea Grant South Atlantic Release Rodeo

Rodeo Metrics: Submissions



2023/2024 compared to 2025: **+38%**

2025 compared to 2026: **+83%**



Sea Grant South Atlantic Release Rodeo

Rodeo Metrics: Photos



Staff photo

2023/2024 compared to 2025: **+100%**

2025 compared to 2026: **+45%**



Sea Grant South Atlantic Release Rodeo

Rodeo Metrics: Length Validation Photos



PC: T. Roller

2023/2024 compared to 2025: **+164%**

2025 compared to 2026: **+28%**



SAFMC Release Participant Recognition Program (PRP)

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)

SAFMC Release Participant Recognition Program



- About the Program -

The SAFMC Release Participant Recognition Program (PRP) is designed to celebrate the achievements of our project participants. With every released shallow water grouper and Red Snapper our participants record, they're helping us better understand the size and survival rates of released fish and supporting their snapper grouper fishery. We're excited to thank them for all their efforts!

Important Information:

- Some ways in which participants may be recognized include being featured in the SAFMC Release newsletter and mentioned in the annual data summary. See below for more details.
- We do not share sensitive information through this program. Some information that could be shared includes name, number of releases, species released, fish lengths, and a photo of a release.
- Participants who meet a milestone will be notified via email, using the email address associated with their SciFish account.
- If there is a tie for a milestone, all individuals will be recognized, except the Release Champion milestone. See below for more details.
- Some milestones require length validation photos. Photo guidance can be found at the end of this document.
- All milestones reset at the end of the calendar year.
- To opt out of the recognition program, email meg.withers@safmc.net.

Full Details Available in PRP Overview

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



SAFMC Release Participant Recognition Program (PRP)

2026 Milestones



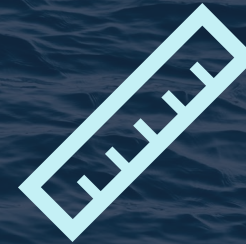
Referral



Quantity of
Submissions



Species
Diversity



Smallest &
Largest



Photo
Highlights



SAFMC Release Participant Recognition Program (PRP)

2026 Milestones

Performing Well



Quantity of
Submissions



Photo
Highlights

Room for Improvement



Species
Diversity



Referral



SAFMC Release Participant Recognition Program (PRP)

2026 Milestones

Performing Well



Quantity of Submissions

*Entry quantities with
milestones: 1, 5, 20, 45,
and top submitter*



Photo Highlights

*Quarterly and annual
photo highlights*

Example Items Earned





SAFMC Release Participant Recognition Program (PRP)

2026 Milestones

Room for Improvement



Species Diversity

*Species included: Black
Grouper, Yellowfin
Grouper, Rock Hind,
Red Hind, Coney*



Referral

*Refer three new
participants to
SAFMC Release*

Example Items Earned





SAFMC Release Participant Recognition Program (PRP)

Looking Ahead to 2027

1. Are there any milestones you recommend adding or removing from the PRP?
2. How can we strengthen existing milestones? (New items, altered requirements, other approaches?)
3. What items would you like to see in the 2027 PRP?
 - Some previously suggested items:
 - Specially designed art
 - Polarized sunglasses (would likely be gift card to sunglasses brand)

Thank You





Project Updates



Planning trip to Outer Banks History Center to scan photos in late October 2026

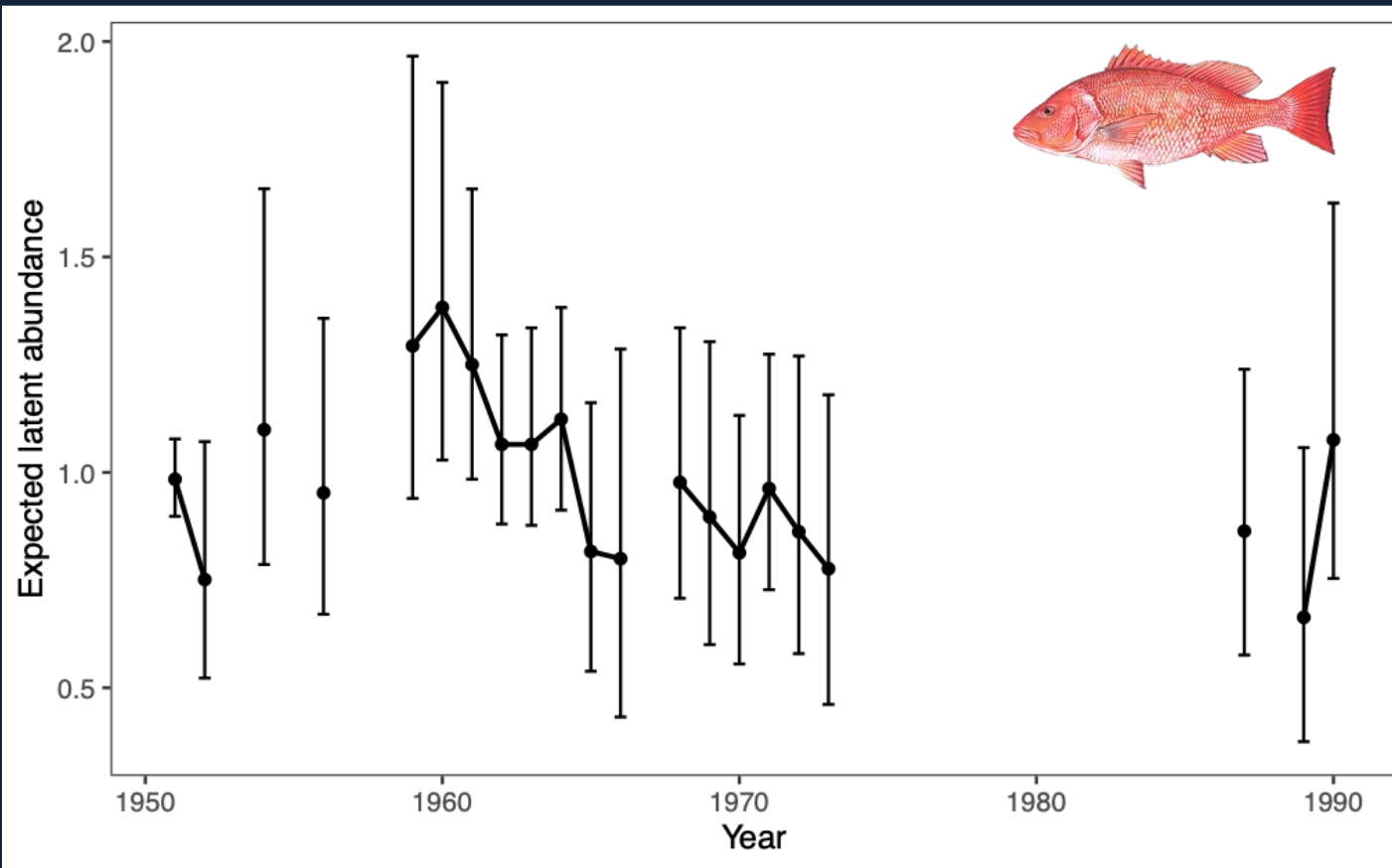


To see project findings to date: visit [FISHstory Results](#) in Zooniverse or watch [NOAA Library Seminar Series on FISHstory](#)



Relative indices of abundance developed for Red Snapper & King Mackerel with Zooniverse data

Red Snapper



Main pattern

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

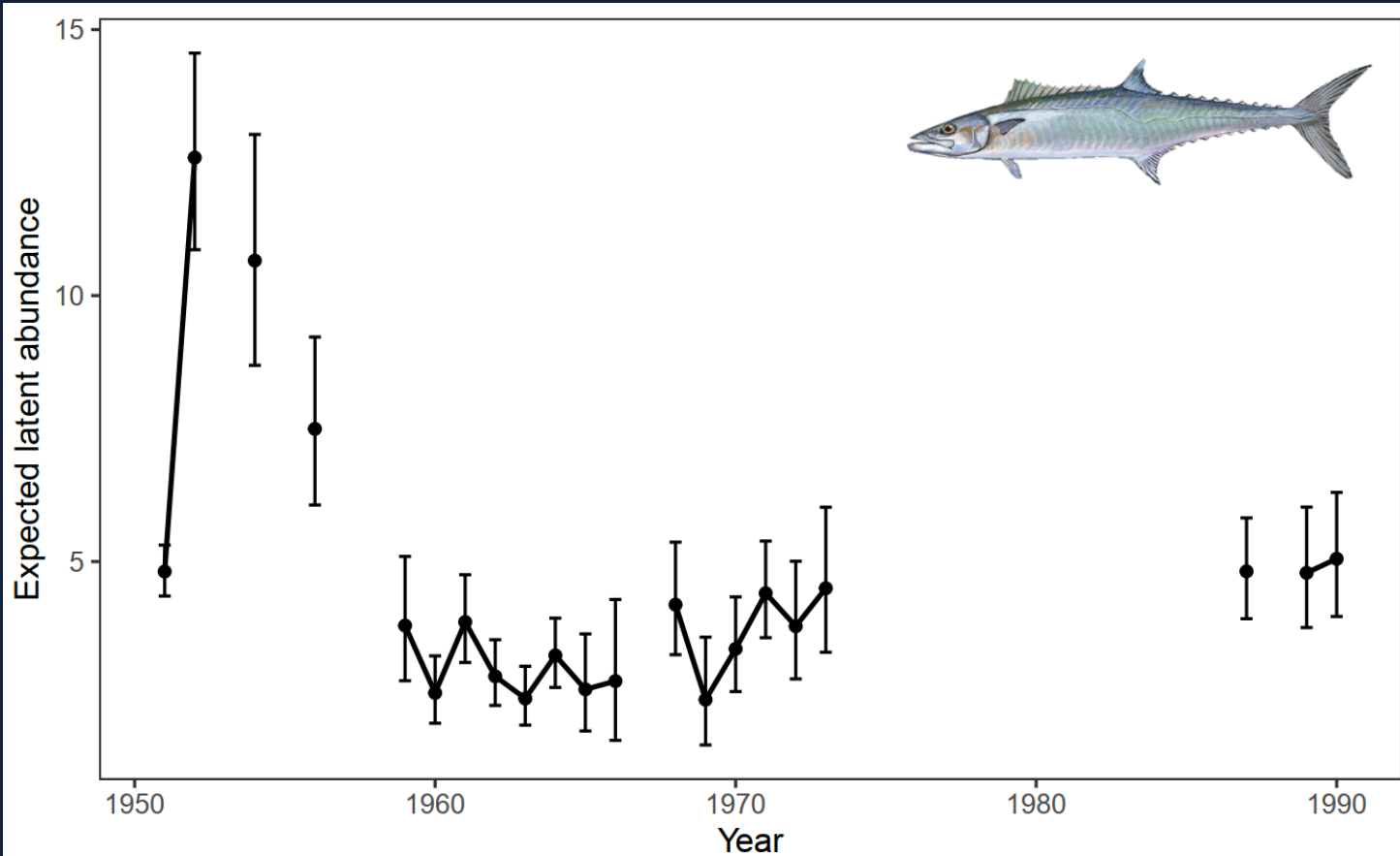
What the model adds

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.

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

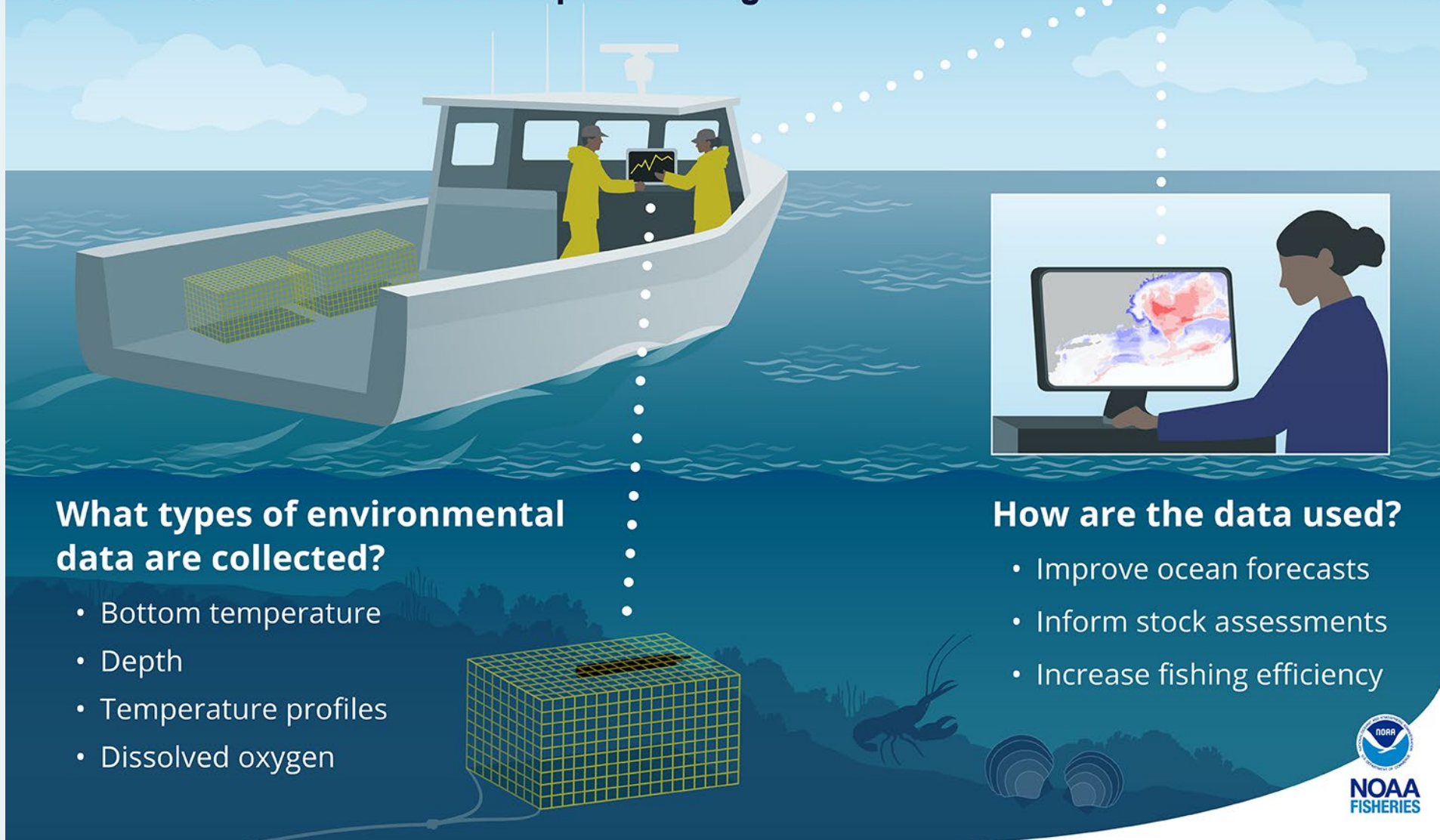
Broad uncertainty and missing years prevent strong conclusions about fine-scale trends.

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?

eMOLT Environmental Monitors on Lobster Traps and Large Trawlers



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?



Keep up with projects
& the Program!

safmc.net/citizen-science-program/



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