



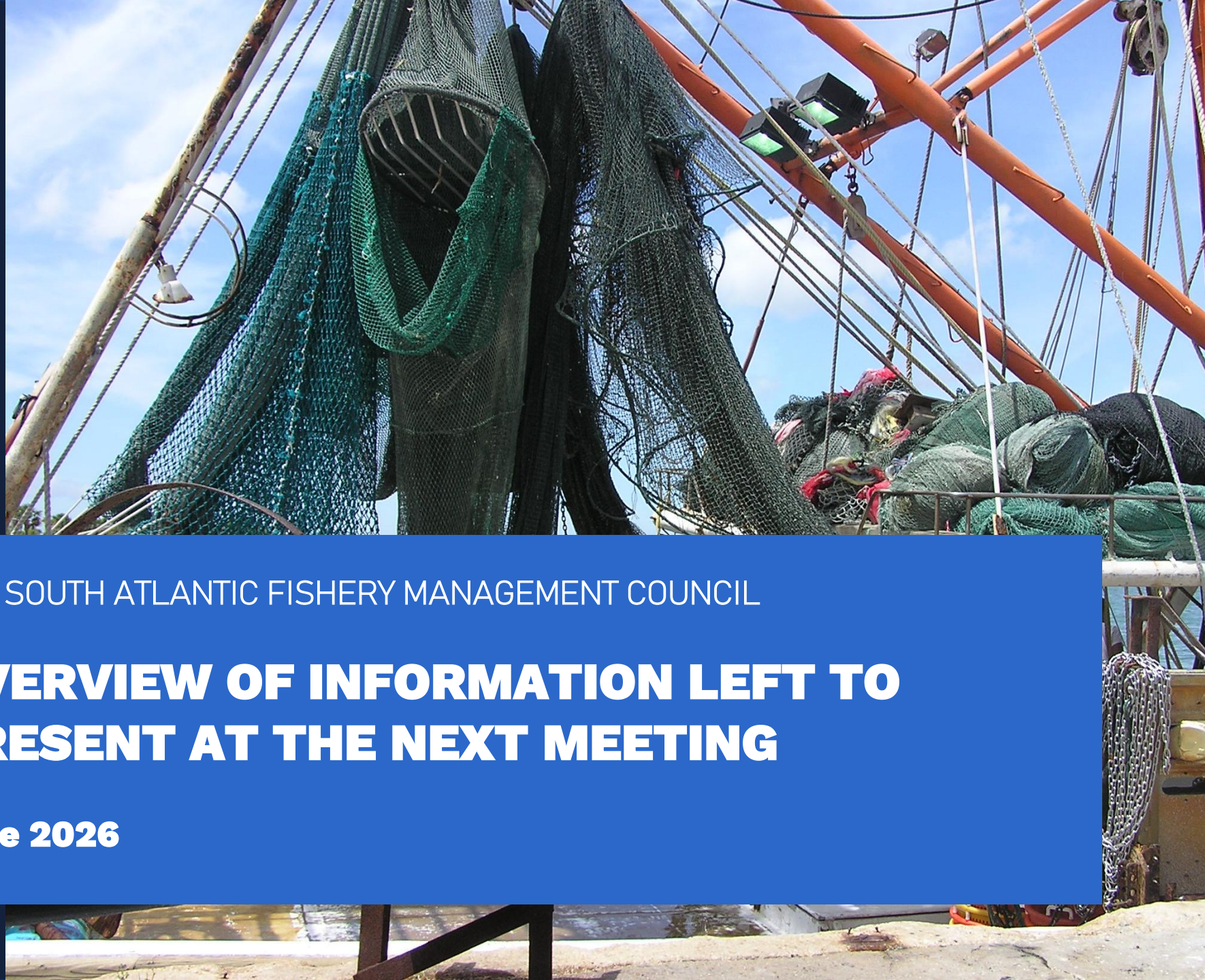
Shrimp Workgroup

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THE SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

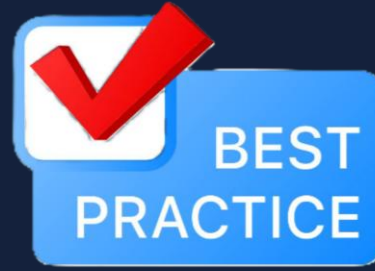
OVERVIEW OF INFORMATION LEFT TO PRESENT AT THE NEXT MEETING

June 2026





**AVAILABLE
RESEARCH ON
BYCATCH
MITIGATION**



**CURRENT
AGENCY BEST
PRACTICES**



**FINAL
PRODUCT OF
THIS
WORKGROUP**

REVIEW OF RESEARCH ON BYCATCH MITIGATION

The following research is relevant to the workgroup:

- **Can sawfish bycatch within the Northern Prawn Fishery be mitigated using an electric field?**
Abrantes, K., Barnett, A., Soetaert, M., Kyne, P. M., Laird, A., Seymour, J., ... & Huveneers, C. (2020). *Report No. 9781925562361 (Fisheries Research and Development Corporation)*. <https://www.frdc.com.au/sites/default/file/products/2016-058-DLD.pdf>.
- **Mitigating Threatened Species Bycatch in Commercial Gillnet Fisheries**
Pini-Fitzsimmons, J. (2026). Fisheries Research and Development Corporation Project 2023-111 Final Report. <https://www.frdc.com.au/project/2023-111/>
- **Effect of ground gear modification on bycatch of rays in Mediterranean bottom trawl fishery**
Y.E. Fakioğlu, H. Özbilgin, G. Gökçe, B. Herrmann. *Ocean & Coastal Management*, Volume 223, 2022, 106134, ISSN 0964-5691, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ocecoaman.2022.106134>.
PDF NOT AVAILABLE

CURRENT BEST PRACTICES: SMALLTOOTH SAWFISH

- **Before the next meeting**, think about how the guidance works on the water or what could be modified to benefit both the sawfish and the crew?
- Were you familiar with this guidance document prior to this process? If not, how could it be more widely spread to reach more fishermen?



Smalltooth Sawfish, Safe Handling and Release Procedures for Commercial Fisheries

The guidelines presented here describe procedures for releasing a smalltooth sawfish incidentally caught in commercial fishing gears. Sawfishes are listed as endangered under the U.S. Endangered Species Act and it is therefore illegal to harm, injure, or kill them.

General Handling and Release

- Sawfish must be released as quickly as possible and without harm
- Leave sawfish in the net or on the line until ready for release
- Keep sawfish in the water as much as possible
- Keep sawfish wet if it must be removed from the water
- Do NOT stand or sit next to the rostrum
- Tie rope around tip of saw or tail only if needed to control sawfish for safety

Line Gears (e.g., longline, rod and reel)

- Keep the sawfish, especially the gills, in the water
- Use line-cutting poles, long-handled dehookers, and/or boat hooks to remove line or gear
- DO NOT attempt to remove the hook, just cut the line as close to the hook as possible
- If line is tangled around the body or saw, untangle and remove as much of the line from around the sawfish as possible and then cut the line close to the hook

Net Gears (e.g., trawls and gillnet)

- Keep the sawfish, especially the gills, in the water as much as possible
- Roll netting away from the body of the sawfish
- Use line-cutting pole, scissors, and/or knife to cut free any net tangled around the saw by cutting the mesh along the length of the saw
- Once the mesh is cut, continue rolling the netting off the sawfish for release

Data Recording

- Date and time
- GPS coordinates
- Photographs and videos
- Sex (check for claspers by pelvic fins)
- Tag number, if applicable
- Length (estimate saw and total length)
- Release condition (alive, dead, injured)

Reporting: 1-844-4SAWFISH (1-844-472-9347)

For more information contact:
Adam Brame, Sawfish Recovery Coordinator
727-209-5958; Adam.Brame@noaa.gov



June 24, 2021

CURRENT BEST PRACTICES: GIANT MANTA RAY

- **Before the next meeting**, think about how the guidance works on the water or what could be modified to benefit both the sawfish and the crew?
- Were you familiar with this guidance document prior to this process? If not, how could it be more widely spread to reach more fishermen?



Southeast Shrimp Fisheries Giant Manta Ray Release Guidance

This guidance describes the procedures for releasing a manta ray from a shrimp trawl. Under these procedures, the trawl is retrieved in a normal manner. **The manta ray is not brought onboard the vessel.** The objective is to bring portions of the net tail and body out of the water in order to maneuver the captured ray towards and out the mouth of the net.

Step 1: The haulback of all nets should proceed as usual. Bring doors to the block.

Step 2: Position the vessel so that the manta/trawl is on the windward/upwind side of the boat. Reduce speed or take the engine out of gear if possible. This will reduce drag on the animal, allowing it to move towards the mouth of the net in subsequent steps.

Step 3: Retrieve the bag and dump the catch as usual.

Step 4: Using a whip/lifting line positioned forward of the TED, raise sections of trawl netting out of the water as high as possible, causing the animal to slide toward the trawl mouth.

- It may require several lifts/whips, moving forward in the trawl body with each lift, to move the animal toward the trawl mouth.
- If the animal stops moving, try lowering the trawl doors to the water. This will increase the angle of the whip line lifting point relative to the trawl mouth and help move the animal toward the trawl mouth.

Step 5: If the animal does not move after repetitive lifts are attempted, it may be necessary to cut portions of the trawl net webbing that appear to be under tension near or around the animal. Bring those areas of the trawl as close to the vessel as possible and make necessary cuts to relieve tension. Take care to avoid cutting the animal.

Step 6: Once released from the trawl, monitor the animal's direction of movement. Take care to maneuver the vessel away from the animal while it is recovering.

Step 7: Report the incident to manta.ray@noaa.gov or call Calusa Horn, NMFS Southeast Giant Manta Ray Recovery Coordinator at 727-824-5312



FINAL PRODUCT OF THIS WORKGROUP



- Combine species knowledge, fishery input and relevant bycatch research and techniques into recommendations packaged in a report for the Council.
 - Recommendations could include multiple things.
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- A matrix might be helpful to organize multiple recommendations and their feasibility.
 - Council staff will draft the report, send to the group for review and then present the final report to the Council.