

## **Update on Implementation of the Southeast Region Bycatch Implementation Plan**

Listed below are some of the steps that the Southeast Region is taking to implement its Bycatch Plan.

### Bycatch Implementation Plan

- The Southeast Region's Bycatch Implementation Plan was submitted to the Gulf, Atlantic, and Caribbean Councils. A formal presentation was provided at the spring 2004 Council meetings.
- Comments were requested from the three Councils, nongovernmental organizations, states, and the public. Input was received.

### Enhanced Observer and Logbook Programs

- Shrimp Amendment 13 (Gulf), Shrimp Amendment 6 (Atlantic), Reef Fish Amendment 22 (Gulf), Reef Fish Amendment 23 (Gulf), Reef Fish Amendment 13 B (Atlantic), and the Caribbean SFA amendment will mandate the use of an enhanced observer and/or logbook programs to estimate bycatch and fishing effort in the shrimp and reef fish fisheries.
- A federal shrimp permit program (Shrimp Amendment 6) will assist in the identification of participants so that they can be targeted for data collection.
- Regional Office participation in the National Observer Program Advisory Team was funded.

### Bycatch Reduction Devices

- Research continues on efforts to reduce finfish bycatch in shrimp trawls.
- Criteria for certification of BRDs has been established in Shrimp Amendment 6 (Atlantic).

### Industry/NMFS Turtle Excluder Device (TED)/Bycatch Reduction Device (BRD) Workshop

- A TED/BRD workshop that involved the fishing industry and NMFS was conducted May 4-5, 2004.
- Topics covered at the workshop included TED regulations, BRD regulations, current gear research, issues, and direction of future research.

### Southeast Bycatch Workshop

- A Bycatch Workshop for the Southeast Region is in its early stages of development. At the workshop, participants will discuss and prioritize bycatch issues pertaining to science/research, gear development/engineering, and data collection/monitoring (observer programs, logbooks, etc).
- The goal of the workshop will be to better understand bycatch issues in the Southeast Region, identify potential solutions that can reduce bycatch (discard mortality), and enhance ability to measure bycatch in the Southeast.

- Issues identified at the workshop will be incorporated into an updated version of the Southeast Region Bycatch Implementation Plan.
- The Workshop will involve commercial fishermen, recreational fishermen, NGOs, managers, and scientists.
- Individuals from a number of organizations, including nine state Sea Grant programs, Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Caribbean Fishery Management Council, Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission, Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, Southeast Fisheries Science Center, Southeast Regional Office, and Oceana, will be invited to participate.
- A steering committee has been established to plan the workshop. This committee includes representatives from some of the organizations listed above.
- The workshop will probably occur sometime during 2005.