

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program Coordinating Council

*May 2, 2022
10:00 a.m. – Noon
Hybrid Meeting*

Draft Agenda

The times listed are approximate; the order in which these items will be taken is subject to change; other items may be added as necessary.

1. Welcome/Call to Order (*J. Carmichael*)
2. Council Consent
 - Approval of Agenda
 - Approval of Proceedings from October 2021
3. Public Comment
4. Consider Funding Decision Document and FY2023 Request for Proposals (*J. Simpson*) **Action**
5. Committee Updates
 - 2022 Data Accountability Report – Completed (ComTech)
 - Status Update on 2023-2027 Atlantic Recreational Implementation Plan (RecTech)
 - Status Update on Methodology for Logbook Estimates of Catch and Effort with Dockside Validation (RecTech)
6. Program Updates
7. Other Business/Adjourn

The meeting will be held at The Westin Crystal City (1800 Richmond Highway, Arlington, VA; 703.486.1111) and via webinar; click [here](#) for details

**DRAFT PROCEEDINGS OF THE
ATLANTIC COASTAL COOPERATIVE STATISTICS PROGRAM
COORDINATING COUNCIL**

**Webinar
October 19, 2021**

These minutes are draft and subject to approval by the
Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program Coordinating Council
The Council will review the minutes during its next meeting.

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1. **Approval of Agenda** by Consent (Page 1).
2. **Approval of Minutes of August 5, 2021** by Consent (Page 1).
3. **Move to support the updated ACCSP administrative proposal, the top 7 maintenance proposals, and the remaining 3 new proposals as ranked by the Operations and Advisory Committees. The leadership team will be engaged to adjust the funding levels when known** (Page 13). Motion by Jason McNamee; second by Lynn Fegley. Motion carried (Page 13).
4. **Motion to adjourn** by Consent (Page 15).

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ATTENDANCE

Council Members

Bob Beal, ASMFC	Lewis Gillingham, VA, proxy for P. Geer
Pat Keliher, ME	Dee Lupton, NC, proxy for K. Rawls
Renee Zobel, NH	Mel Bell, SC, proxy for P. Maier
Dan McKiernan, MA	Kathy Knowlton, GA, proxy for D. Haymans
Jason McNamee, RI, Vice-Chair	Erika Burgess, FL, proxy for J. McCawley
Colleen Bouffard, CT, proxy for J. Davis	John Carmichael, SAFMC, Chair
Melissa Albino Hegeman, NY, proxy for J. Gilmore	Brandon Muffley, MAFMC, proxy for C. Moore
Joe Cimino, NJ	Mike Millard, USFWS, proxy for L. Whitney
Kris Kuhn, PA, proxy for T. Schaeffer	Max Appelman, NMFS
John Clark, DE	Marty Gary, PRFC
Lynn Fegley, MD	Richard Cody, NOAA

Staff

Toni Kerns	Emilie Franke	Marisa Powell
Laura Leach	Chris Jacobs	Heather Power
Lisa Carty	Jeff Kipp	Mike Rinaldi
Tina Berger	Savannah Lewis	Julie Defilippi Simpson
Pat Campfield	Kirby Rootes-Murphy	Caitlin Starks
Maya Drzewicki	Sarah Murray	Deke Tompkins
Kristen Anstead	Joe Myers	Geoff White

Guests

Renee St. Amand, CT DEP	Shaun Gehan, Gehan Law	Willow Patten, NC DENR
Robert Anderson	Hannah Hart, FL FWC	Cheri Patterson, NH (AA)
Pat Augustine, Coram, NY	Doug Haymans, GA (AA)	Nicholas Popoff, US FWS
Chris Batsavage, NC DENR	Matthew Heyl, NJ DEP	Craig Pugh, Leipsic, DE
Alan Bianchi, NC DENR	Helen Heumacher, US FWS	Jill Ramsey, VMRC
Delayne Brown, NH FGD	Asm. Eric Houghtaling, NJ (LA)	Eric Reid, Kingstown, RI
Jeff Brust, NJ DEP	Raymond Kane, MA (GA)	Adam Rettig, NOAA
Tom Burrell, PA F&B	Rob LaFrance, Quinnipiac Univ	Harry Rickabaugh, MD DNR
Andrew Cathey, PA F&B	Wilson Laney	Brandi Salmon, NC DENR
Heather Corbett, NJ DEP	Loren Lustig, PA (GA)	Tara Scott, NOAA
Nicole Lengyel Costa, RI DEM	John Maniscalco, NYS DEC	Melissa Smith, ME DMR
Sen. Ronnie Cromer, SC (LA)	Jerry Mannen, NC (GA)	Somers Smott, VMRC
Jessica Daher, NJ DEP	Steve Meyers	Beth Versak, MD DNR
Russell Dize, MD (GA)	Roy Miller, DE (GA)	Megan Ware, ME DMR
Wes Eakin, NYS DEC	Sen. Craig Miner, CT (LA)	Lowell Whitney, US FWS
Warren Elliott, PA (LA)	Allison Murphy, NOAA	Wes Wolfe, <i>The News-Leader</i>
James Fletcher, Wanchese Fish	Brian Neilan, NJ DEP	Chris Wright, NOAA
Tom Fote, NJ (GA)	Lindsey Nelson, NOAA	Sarah York, NOAA
Alexa Galvan, VMRC	Gerry O'Neill, Cape Seafoods	Erik Zlokovitz, MD DNR
Pat Geer, VMRC	Derek Orner, NOAA	

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The Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program Coordinating Council of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission convened via webinar; Tuesday, October 19, 2021 and was called to order at 11:00 a.m. by Chair John Carmichael.

MR. GEOFF WHITE: Welcome everybody to the fall Coordinating Council meeting. As you saw from our agenda, we're really focused today on the Proposal Review, and 2022 funding discussions. The monthly committee updates have been going out, so we assume you have those. With that I will turn it over to our Chair, John.

CALL TO ORDER

CHAIR JOHN CARMICHAEL: Okay, thank you, Geoff.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Getting through the sound checks and all the introductions, so the first order of business is Consent on the Agenda. Are there any changes or additions to the agenda, or other business to add to it at this time? No hands, Geoff?

MR. WHITE: No hands.

CHAIR CARMICHAEL: Okay, we'll take that as consent.

APPROVAL OF PROCEEDINGS

CHAIR CARMICHAEL: The other item is Consent for the Approval of the Proceedings from August, 2021. Does anyone have any additions, changes, edits or objections to approving the minutes? Please, raise your hand.

MR. WHITE: So far, no hands.

CHAIR CARMICHAEL: All right, thank you, Geoff, consider the proceedings approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

CHAIR CARMICHAEL: The next item is Public Comment, are there any members of the public that would like to make a comment, please raise your hand and let staff call on you.

MR. WHITE: I see no hands.

CHAIR CARMICHAEL: All right, thank you, Geoff. With that I think we're ready to move into our business. I pass it back to you.

MR. WHITE: Outstanding. The meat of the matter. Of course, we've got the FY2022 submitted proposals. Our Deputy Director Julie Simpson has been leading this through the Operations and Advisory Committee, and will lead off with the majority of this presentation. Julie, take it away.

CONSIDER RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FY2022 SUBMITTED PROPOSALS

MS. JULIE DEFILIPPI SIMPSON: These are the average rankings of the maintenance proposals, so it is the average of the Operations and Advisors scores. What you should note here, this is the same spread sheet that you had in your materials. What you'll note is that there are two proposals that fall to the bottom, and are beyond the expected funding in this particular spreadsheet.

The PRFC electronic trip level reporting and then also the expansion for the Law Enforcement application. Depending on whether we're in the 3.5 or 3.35 range, we do have somewhere between 100- and 200-thousand-dollar shortage in the maintenance proposal. This is the average ranking for the new proposals.

Again, we fall a little bit short, but just for one project. That is for the New Jersey shad DNA and bycatch project. Since the Operations and Advisory Councils have met, there have been some changes behind the scenes, and I want to go over those with you on the next slide. The first one is that the ACCSP Admin Grant has been decreased by just a little over \$70,000.00.

We were able to do this because we were able to get some Help Desk support from some other funds. What this has enabled us to do, with some savings elsewhere, is to without changing any of our services, decrease the Admin Grant by about \$70,000.00 from the proposal reviewed by the Committees. The other item that has changed is that the North Carolina Electronic Quota Monitoring has been withdrawn from ACCSP funding, so that frees up another \$63,854.00.

Big kudos to North Carolina staff, because they really thought a little bit outside the box. They put their proposal in for the ACCSP funding, but they also put their proposal in through the FIS process. Their project got funded through that FIS project, and therefore they didn't need the ACCSP funding.

NC was recognized in the Operations Committee and Advisory Committee meetings, as really thinking ahead and trying to find the best way for us to reach all our coastal objectives when there is not as much money as we might need. That is another \$63,000.00 that is "back on the table" so to speak.

A couple of other notes are on the right-hand side of the slide. The first is that the PRFC Electronic Reporting, you will note that that was the next to last project in the maintenance on your spreadsheet when you got it. There was discussion at Operations and Advisors about the ranking, and how this one fell to the bottom.

The general consensus is that this is an absolutely worthy project. It is recognized that PRFC is pretty new to the process, and that the person who was putting the proposal together has only done that for this year. There were some places, such as indirect funding that weren't in the proposal, and so it caused them to lose points and have a lower ranking.

But that's just the result of the way that the proposal was put together, not so much the

quality of the project. That was something that we felt was important from their discussion to bring forward and note to you all. The other item that we did want to note as part of that discussion, is that the Law Enforcement application as it went through that first year of its pilot, some of the things that were proposed changed a little bit. In particular, it doesn't actually collect data. Folks felt that expanding it, because of the way it went through the pilot, that it was no longer really inside the scope of the ACCSP core mission, and therefore the scope of the RFP. That one is actually ranked accordingly.

What we've done on the next couple of slides is taken into account these three red arrows, and made some adjustments to that. This is an updated version of the average ranking for the maintenance projects. At the top there is the yellow circle there. You can see the Admin Grant. That number has been decreased.

Then at the bottom of the list you can also see that we removed the cost for the Law Enforcement application, with the assumption that it was out of scope, based on the previous discussion. What you can see here is that this now leaves us in a position where, depending on the exact level of funding the PRFC Grant will be funded potentially in full, if there is the whole 3.5 million, which we can get to in a moment, but it was at least partially funded at the very lowest of levels.

This is the change that we'll see in the updated average ranking for the new proposals. You'll see that we removed the North Carolina cost, because that is being covered elsewhere. This actually does leave some money on the table that can be brought up above and used in the maintenance projects. Again, that number varies based on the level of funding.

The next item that I want to address are the recommendations that came from the Operations and Advisory Committee. For the maintenance proposals, the salient recommendation that they had here was that a project that is being funded on

the portside commercial sampling and bycatch for herring, mackerel, and menhaden.

This has been a project that has been quite a long-term project. One of the things that everyone discussed was that there is recognition that if this project isn't funded moving forward, that that would put these species back on the biological matrix as a high priority, and now we would have to have discussions about hey, do we then start funding this project again?

If we went through that process, that is going to result in data gaps, when there is already a long-term data series. The recommendation is that the partners that are involved in the sampling for this project get together and discuss how we can move forward with this project in such a way that we can avoid those data gaps, and moving the species back onto the biological matrix.

For the new proposals, they recommended that if the North Carolina proposal was funded by FIS, which it was, then the remaining funds should be distributed to the new proposals first, and then moved up to the maintenance proposals. That is the end of my presentation, so I will turn it back over to Geoff, to go over the next slide.

MR. WHITE: Excellent, thank you, Julie, for leading the group through the details of all the proposals and moving parts. Just as a note these adjustments that have been made reflect kind of an overall move to the core mission of the projects where you should see staff and partner actions to balance available funding across the Admin Grant and the partner projects. I certainly appreciate everyone's activity to direct their proposals and the options on the table as efficiently as possible. John, at this point did you ask for questions on the spreadsheets and the rankings and the Operations and Advisors points, or would you like me to go to the next slide on the Admin Grant?

CHAIR CARMICHAEL: Yes, Geoff, I think it would be good to see if questions, and I just want to

say, thanks to the Ops Committee and the Advisors for this. I have been there and done that, as many of us have and know what a task that is. Really appreciate their efforts, and how they do always look out for the intent of the program, and try to make recommendations that are best for data collection at the end of the day. I think they just do a great job. I can't thank them enough for what they do to make our job a little bit easier. With that said, just open up the floor and see if anybody has any questions on the recommendations or the matrix as it stands now.

MR. WHITE: Brandon, I see your hand up, go ahead, and then followed by Richard Cody.

MR. BRANDON MUFFLEY: Thanks, Geoff. Just in regards to the top bullet here on the maintenance proposals and on the portside commercial catch sampling. I'll follow up with Council staff to talk through the needs on Atlantic mackerel and the use of the sampling program here.

But maybe I would just recommend that maybe not just talking through the states, but maybe including the federal partners in any of that discussion, to see if we could think through how we could fund and continue to do the sampling, because I think obviously, we need to have the states involved, but getting some of the federal partners like the Council, engaged in that discussion I think would be beneficial.

MR. WHITE: Thank you, Brandon, we could certainly do that. While the Ops discussed this recommendation if the desire for ACCSP to participate in these discussions, or even organize or facilitate them, that is totally something that we can do. Because this is specific to the herring, mackerel and menhaden sampling, I do want to just remind folks that it was a highly ranked project, it's in its last year of funding, and it is in the FY22 support at about the \$26,000.00 range. Brandon has his hand down; John are you okay with me just running through the hands up?

CHAIR CARMICHAEL: Yes.

MR. WHITE: The next one I saw was Richard Cody, go ahead.

MR. RICHARD CODY: John, this is probably just more of a comment than anything else. But since most people realize the importance of the commercial catch sampling for herring and so on, but I think it does raise a question of exceptions to the rules that were sort of put in place for maintenance versus new proposals. I think that should be part of the discussions going forward as well.

What constitutes an exception, and then perhaps, are there other mechanisms that could be used for partial funding or some way to keep the program alive, basically, so we don't have these data gaps, and maybe some kind of a risk analysis for the other surveys that are maintenance currently that possibly fall into this realm. That is all.

MR. WHITE: I think a lot of those brainstorming ideas would fall to the group as it goes. One thing I do want to point out is Maine has done a good job of covering the primary sampling in Maine, and the amount of funding that remains is really about sending Maine staff into other states to do the portside sampling.

There have been discussions and reports that other states were able to pick up some of that sampling, when travel hasn't been allowed over the last few years. Again, that is one of the items that is probably in the mix for this to be discussed. The next hand I saw up was Lynn Fegley. Go ahead.

MS. LYNN FEGLEY: This is sort of maybe philosophical and possibly rhetorical. I want to say that I was a little bit discomfited by the idea that the PRFC proposal fell to the bottom because of a formatting issue, so I think the wording was, this is a great use of ACCSP tools, it satisfies, it's a very good project. They just didn't have an experienced proposal writer, which makes me wonder.

You know if you have a really expert proposal writer who scores well, but the project is not as worthy. It makes me worry a little bit if maybe we need to see scores broken down. It just worried me a little bit that maybe, are we really ranking these proposals to what is the most important and valuable piece we need to fulfill? I don't know why that sort of bothered me a little bit, but it kind of did.

MR. WHITE: If you guys will allow me a moment. I had Kathy's hand up and also Marty Gary. That language choice was mine, and it was the Operations Committee and our Advisors Committee discussions about, was the in kind funding included in the proposal, and the ranking sheet included that part as well. There was a lot of recognition from everyone on the Operations Committee, and Julie, if I miss something please add in when I'm done. They've all learned over the years how to kind of write the proposals and follow the format.

When they (other partners) were new, they got guidance as well. My goal in transparency in this language, and putting this on screen for the Coordinating Council, is to recognize exactly where the scores came out, a little bit of understanding about why that happened, if it hasn't already been shared by your Operations-Committee members and Advisors to you, and kind of help out with that. That was the intent. Kathy, if you don't mind, I think I'm going to go to Marty Gary next and come back to you. Marty.

MR. MARTIN GARY: Thanks, Geoff and John, and thank you, Lynn, for weighing in and thank you, Julie. Thanks all around. Julie, thanks for adding that narrative to that slide, so folks have some semblance of what PRFC is dealing with. The abridged version would be, we're tiny, there are only five of us. We don't have a full time IT person so we have a contractor who is brand new to us. Our previous contractor had worked with us since the early nineties, and we just went through a transition, so we're really working with a very limited capacity to put together these proposals. It's new to us, I'm trying to provide as much time and effort to help our

contractor and stay engaged with us. We also understand there is a lot of great projects at play along the coast, and we all have to work together to give and support, to make sure the greater good is accomplished. But we are coming out of the dark ages.

PRFC has been paper only. We have a great baseline framework to work from. We have trip level daily reports submitted weekly, as opposed to monthly for a lot of entities and jurisdictions. We have strong accountability in our process for accurate and timely reporting. We think we are a great candidate to keep this going, and get us out of the dark ages and into the light with electronic reporting.

To that end we're going to do the very best we can with whatever funding we're afforded. But we don't really want to see anybody else be compromised. You know we want to work with everybody together. I guess the end story here is, we're doing the best we can with what we have, and we're going to continue to do that within the process. I just appreciate both Julie and Lynn providing a little bit of clarity to our scenario, so thank you.

MR. WHITE: Julie, I gave you a hint of an opportunity to weigh in with details at this point.

MS. SIMPSON: Yes, sure. I think you covered a lot of it. There were just some items that do get points, like the in kind you get the certain number of points for whatever percentage, and because that part was missing it meant that they couldn't get those points. But I think one of the other things, to Lynn's point, is that there was great discussion that happened at the Ops and Advisors.

I think it also speaks to John's comment earlier of all the great work that they do, because they noted that hey, this project fell to the bottom, but it was only because of some technical details that came out because of the way the ranking gives you points for, hey you included all of the

right aspects so you get points for that, and hey you have in kind and you get points for that.

A couple of those things were missing, so it was more of a technicality than a real result of what they felt was worthy. That's why we wanted to make sure that that discussion came forward from them. But they also similarly have discussions for things that maybe rank higher because of the technicality, because it's really well put together, but just aren't as worthy.

I think Lynn is right, those discussions do happen, and that's why it's really good to bring the discussion forward as well as just the math. I will say that Blair, who is the IT contractor, did speak up and ask for advice, and was offered a number of helpful points for next year. From a process standpoint it was also a great discussion.

MR. WHITE: We have three hands up, let's go back to Kathy and then we have Dee Lupton and Renee Zobel after that, so Kathy, go ahead.

MS. KATHY KNOWLTON: Good morning. Two points, one that's popped up in the most recent discussion to Lynn's point. They are in the ranking process, I just wanted to add this. There are a lot of the points derived from a broad range of points that are available for which ACCSP module the project falls within. Operations and Advisors have a lot of discretion for how many points are awarded in that section. I understand your concern, Lynn, but I feel confident that the ranking and the matrix that has been developed just because of projects, can tick off the bullet points for certain components that might give it points.

There are a lot of points that are in that model section as well, and the Operations and Advisor member knows that just because something is in there doesn't mean they have to actually give it that point if there is a problem with that component. I understand why you were concerned, but I know from my years of doing this that those kinds of concerns can be addressed through the ranking process. I hope that was okay to add.

Then with the comment on the portside commercial catch sampling, to Richard's point about an exception. I hope that that part of the discussion goes back to Ops and Advisors, and it's something for the Coordinating Council to think about, because that's exactly the kind of thing that originally, not take an extra point, Richard, but it's the exact kind of thing that we set up the phase out to avoid, is for there to be exceptions.

However, there is going to be probably one off that because of the nature of the project, like this one, in terms of the need for the data. Not only is it long term, but for the stock assessment, that it might have to result in some sort of other option. I just think that was really interesting. It's not something I had thought about in the years of doing this, that a data gap for a specific species could make it pop back on as a priority in the biological matrix.

The same could be true for the bycatch matrix, with if there is a data gap based on a gear type. I think that is something that has never occurred to me before. I appreciate you all making the point, and it's something that I would like to just encourage the Coordinating Council members to think about.

Keep this at the forefront of our minds as we move forward, because we're on the very cusp of being able to have all the projects that were funded for 15, 20, 25 years phase out. I think this is going to be very interesting moving forward, and I really appreciate that you guys made that point for us so clearly. Thanks.

MR. WHITE: Thank you, Kathy, appreciate those points. The next person I had was Dee. Dee, take it away.

MS. DEE LUPTON: Good morning. I have to point out an observation I have about the Potomac River Project. It has nothing to do with their IT project, that we allowed an extension of the

step-down process from 5 years to 6 years due to COVID. I think three projects had resubmitted, and they're all above the Potomac River.

You know, and this group made that decision to allow that extension. I think that actually hurt Potomac River during this process, regardless of the ranking criteria, three of those projects that probably should not have had a project in here this year, if they weren't here may have made up the money for Potomac River. I just have to point that out as an observation. Some of those projects have been on here since 2000 and 2001. Just an observation that when I was reviewing these I was like, well this is what I thought may happen in my own mind that would have occurred. I don't have a solution here, because we made those decisions so we'll abide by those decisions, to allow that extension.

I do believe if we go down the process of allowing exceptions, it will have to be vetted out very clearly what is an exception. I recognized actually for this project, that it would, if we take them off, and I think there have been other species that if we didn't fund the items that their biological rankings would come up higher.

I think some of the snapper group aging work was in that same boat as that. You know other projects, whether it's a catch and effort program. You know if they don't get ACCSP money we have data gaps. You know the ACCSP has always been dealing with that issue. I had no problem researching and discussing thoroughly exceptions.

But I also see that the step-down was to allow for people to wean off the money and continue to fill those data gaps and seek other funding sources. I think you have an example here, where when there is basically an exception, which we had for the six year, that one project that is a good project may not get all its funding. That's just some points I wanted to point out.

MR. WHITE: Dee, thank you for raising that. The last hand that we have up at the moment is Renee, and

Renee when you're done, John, I'm going to ask you to summarize and take the next direction.

MS. RENEE ZOBEL: Kathy kind of picked a point right out of my mouth with that first point. Also, as a long-term Ops member, Lynn, I understand your reservation with the process. There is a lot that goes into that ranking process, and it is easy to discern something that is just not properly prepared, but has good merit.

There is, the bulk of the points are in that module. That is an area where there is a lot of discretion on each member, and that's where the primary point scoring happens. My second question, and I think I heard Marty address this. But if the PRFC project wasn't funded completely, I'm assuming, but I wanted to ask the question. Could they be partially funded, Marty, and could you guys still make good use of those funds?

MR. GARY: Thank you for asking. I did talk to Blair, our contractor, who is on the Ops Committee and he was in attendance. As Julie noted, he participated in the discussion. The original two scenarios, I asked him, you know we set down and we tried to characterize what we would be able to achieve.

Under the first scenario, and Julie you might have to help me, because I'm kind of getting confused with what was presented today versus the original two options coming out of the Ops Committee. But the first scenario the higher level of funding, we agreed that we could make some tangible progress. The second tier of lower funding, it's like we're treading water, for lack of a better term. We could continue the program, but it would be questionable how much progress we would be able to make. That's probably unfortunately the best way I can answer that.

MR. WHITE: Marty, this is Geoff, I appreciate that. There have been a lot of moving parts here. With the change to the Admin Grant, and this is kind of the updated ranking of maintenance

proposals. I wanted to at least take a moment. The columns to the right, 3.5 versus 3.35 funding scenarios are the two kinds of upper and lower bounds that we've historically dealt with, and usually we fall somewhere in the middle.

This is probably a good time to say, if we're similar funding to last year, I'm expecting we'll be in that \$3.4 to 3.5M range, which would in this case, take care of almost all of the PRFC proposal. If that works out, the maintenance funding and the admin approach look like it will support the next year of PRFC at nearly the full requested amount, which is \$215,000.00. With that, John, do you want to?

CHAIR CARMICHAEL: Sure, Geoff, thank you, and I appreciate you pointing that out. I think it's been good discussion. We've certainly helped clarify the record and the process here some, you know even raised some other points about the potential consequences of decisions, such as extending the maintenance another year, which aren't always thought about.

Thanks to the members who raised all of these issues. I would say it sounds like there is a lot of support here for funding the PRFC project, and as Geoff pointed out, if we get funding along the lines of what we received last year, then it seems that the entire project can be funded. If we get the lower bound of funding it's going to be about 100K short.

I guess if that's what happens, once we see the funding, perhaps you know I think PRFC considers what they can do with that, and we consider what other developments happen. As seems to be the case in many years, you know we get a project that's on the bubble, and quite often we're able to get it close enough to where they can move forward and make progress.

I think that sort of sums up where I see it right now. We do have the big unknown of the funding that we're going to actually get. But it does sound like everyone supports funding that, and I didn't hear any objection to dropping the Law Enforcement App from consideration, so I think that is sort of where

we're left, with either PRFC being fully funded to being potentially 100K short at the lowest funding level.

MR. WHITE: I don't have any more hands at the moment, so I'll pause before I just jump forward to the Admin Proposal slide. I still see no hands. At this point I'm going to provide a little bit more information about the Admin Proposal for next year. As we already covered, we reduced about \$70,000.00 off of this for taking away SAFIS Help Desk support specifically.

This proposal does add in one software staff member, and reduces some contract support for development of mobile applications, as we begin to onboard that process. This software staff member was put into the proposal and discussed last year, and chosen to delay that decision for a year, as we developed this proposal I did speak with John and Jay and the leadership team, to keep that in, and see where things ended up at this meeting, and after proposal ranking. The real benefits to bringing on the additional software staff member is more timely development of the ACCSP priorities, including the electronic dealer reporting redesign. But this last year's focus has been the eTRIPS mobile and online and upload redesign. That aligns the processing as of the data, adds a whole lot of flexibility, and really it makes the data quality flowing through the old system at a very consistent level.

There have been more changes, or adjustments to eTRIPS requested by partners. Because of all that extra time and effort that went into the setup, some of those occur amazingly quickly. It's been really impressive to watch that, and partners work through some of those issues and be like, oh well, because of the new design we'll just change this and this and this, and in a matter of hours, some requests have been met.

That's where we want to go with more of the software design on the dealer reporting side. That's where we recognize need for registration

tracking type things, which are in the Action Plan, so a little foreshadowing for tomorrow's Business meeting. That's why the software staff was in there, and because it's been such a point of discussion for the Coordinating Council, staff growth, the needs and the tradeoffs between ACCSP staff testing software and partner staff testing software.

Sometimes partner staff just don't have the time to do that testing in all the variety of ways, where the user account, the permits, the questions that show up on the screen are really fully tested and vetted. Adding that in as a staff position and functionality, really kind of brings in-house a bit more capability.

That ultimately is to keep up with the list of changes that are useful and requested by regulations and partners to move forward. That's in the material as a supporting document to the Admin Proposal, but I wanted to make sure again it was transparent that we covered that, in terms of the future outlook.

We have been reviewing and looking at the very valid discussion points before of, is this a continual uptick in ACCSP staff size, and the stable staffing levels is a point to say no, this looks like it's going to be where we want to be for quite some time. It maintains the support of integrated coastal data collection, working with the federal and the state partners to align things through the one-stop reporting approach, as well as additional regulatory needs.

I want to again holler out thanks to North Carolina, but also point out ACCSP has two projects funded by FIS for the attribute validation for some of the at-entry checks, make sure that the data are clean and valid, in terms of the codes that are going in, as well as support for FISMA for some approaches that are required for our data connections with our federal partners, and has certainly had good benefits for both the federal partners and our data sharing, as things move forward.

Tried to avoid the too tech-y in the weed's summary here, but those are some of the perspectives that we're considering, as we presented the Admin Proposal for this year. I'll pause there and ask John

and others if you have questions for us. I see a first hand from Kathy Knowlton, so Kathy, go ahead.

MS. KNOWLTON: Having been with this group for a really long time, I've never been a huge supporter, I guess, of seeing the Admin Budget go up, in terms of growth. This is actually going to end up being a positive comment, Geoff, don't worry. I've always had caution; you know I've always been in a crew that is "use this with caution."

I think there are appropriate discussions when you have an Admin budget that is 2.2 million of an expected maximum 3.5. I appreciate the flexibility last year to delay bringing in this new software staff position. But I think when it comes to expanding the software ability and reducing our reliance on contractors.

If we want the program to keep growing then we have to add this position. If we want the program not to be able to continue to grow, that could be a decision that we make, or if we have a budgetary crisis in the future that's always a possibility. But in order, there is what 23 partners in ACCSP, and the majority of them are working on either catch effort modules or biological modules that are actively utilizing the data support team weekly, monthly, annually.

There are projects like the Citizen Science Program that's got a developing, customizable App for our partners to use. I think we just have to take a minute to remember all of the work that is done by the software development team. It helps us not only fulfill our regulatory obligation, in terms of our partnerships with our federal partners, but it allows the state partners.

I can speak from experience, we have IT with Georgia DNR in Atlanta, but we don't have it locally. Some of the only ways we're able to get this work done is in our partnership through ACCSP. Though I am not a huge fan of seeing the Admin Budget grow, I think this was an

appropriate decision, and I just wanted to speak in support of that. Thanks, Geoff.

MR. WHITE: To the hand I have up, who is Bob Beal. Go ahead, Bob.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ROBERT E. BEAL: Just to sort of follow along Kathy's comments, if I might. You know I understand why we're suggesting adding the new software staff, and I get it, and for all the reasons that Kathy mentioned. But I think in the presentation today, you know in Julie's slides it says the Admin Grant was going down \$70,000.00. I think it's important to note that it went down \$70,000.00 from the original ask of this year. But when you compare the Admin Grant that's proposed for '22, Geoff, is it up about \$150,000.00 or so from FY21 the current year?

MR. WHITE: In terms of what was actually funded last year, yes, that would be true. The number on the screen, the 2.2 million is actually very similar to what was originally requested last year, and there was a lot of give and take last year to reduce the Admin Grant.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: You know I think, you know this is an obvious statement, but the more that goes into the Admin Grant the more we're going to have conversations similar to what we had with PRFC. I'm not saying I don't support the growth on staff. I know they're doing a lot of work. They're all busy, they're all flat out. I see them every day cranking things away. It just needs to be a very conscious decision, I think, of the Coordinating Council, the tradeoffs between partner project funding and staff funding. You know we need to be very deliberate about, is this the right balance between the two. You know it is good to see what Geoff has on the slide here about future outlook that if we were to hire this new software person, we can probably stay stable at that level of funding for some time in the future, as he was saying. As Kathy said, reducing the reliance on contractors is great. The way it's proposed right now it's not a one-to-one ratio of we didn't spend a dollar on software person and saved a dollar on contractor.

We're spending a little bit more this year than we are reducing our contract support. Hopefully in the out years we can balance that out a little bit more, and as the new staffer gets up to speed, we can even reduce contractor support even further and make up the difference, is what I'm hopeful for.

Again, just sort of piling on. It is a tough balance, it's a zero-sum game, where ACCSP has been fixed for a really long time, probably too long of a time with the in between 3.5 and 3.35, and maybe that's really what we really need to work on, is figuring a way to try to get some more money in just data collection projects coastwide, so we can cover what the partners need to do, as well as what staff needs to happen. Just wanted to make those comments, Mr. Chair, thank you.

MR. WHITE: We have two more hands up, the next is Pat Keliher and then back to Kathy Knowlton.

MR. PATRICK C. KELIHER: Just a question to you, Geoff, on timing of the new staff and bringing them on. Just wondering if there is some logic in just waiting to see where the final number comes in before that staff person is brought on, and seeing what those numbers look like. I'm sensitive to the needs of PRFC, considering the size of their shop, the fact that this would be a major game changer for them if we can find a way to fund them in their project.

I'm just wondering if there is a way to balance this out a little bit. I say that, I don't want it to sound like I'm not supporting the need for a new staff. Those issues are real, the future outlook. I appreciate how you've laid that out. The one thing that is kind of the big question mark that is not on the future outlook.

It's going to be lobster tracking if ACCSP is going to have a big role with that data storage, and how that's going to impact numbers and admin cost going into the future. Anyway, I'm starting

to ramble, Mr. Chairman, but I'm just wondering if there is a balanced approach here that we could think about, so we could find a way to resolve this issue of funding for PRFC.

MR. WHITE: Would rather call on John a little bit here, but I'm certainly in support of when those numbers come through, working with the Leadership Team on what those timelines are. It felt lengthy to include the entire action plan it needs to get to be meeting here, when that will be handled under the Business Meeting.

Really, it's the big point that you're all making about priorities of, what do we get done as a group in the Action Plan, versus what do we wait on. The hiring process takes at least three months, at least. We're right now backfilling a couple of open positions, and the point is well taken of making sure the partner projects get funded here, and balancing out the timing of the staff position with the leadership team, once we know more about the Congressional process. John, did you want to add to that?

CHAIR CARMICHAEL: Sure, Geoff, I appreciate the opportunity, and I think that many of us share the sentiments echoed by Kathy and Bob looking at the Grant. The long-term outlook and balance for the admin versus projects are certainly an important topic. We all know how much ACCSP has come to be relied upon for so many things, and the reach has expanded and the scope of data has expanded, and that's certainly going to continue.

I do wonder if there isn't an option, you know Geoff, to potentially just tap the brakes a little bit on filling the position, until we do see how much money actually comes through. That seems like a pretty easy to accomplish compromise that may not have a whole lot of negative impacts, as far as this staff person. Am I wrong on that, or do you see something that that makes sense, and when do we think we know? I'm trying to remember when we find out. I guess it's all tied on the federal budget process. None of us have a crystal ball for that thing.

MR. WHITE: Given the current continuing resolution and what Congress may or may not do, I have no idea when they're going to get done. I would lean on Bob or somebody else to answer that. Delaying by a few months, and keeping with the idea that it's good to add this person sometime in FY2022, I think I can work with the leadership team and move that way.

I would be concerned about saying let's delay it an entire year during this meeting, without taking some pretty significant items off of the action plan. In the ability to do the work during 2022, so that we can put updated software out in the field in early 2023. The alignment of when the work gets done and when it can be tested and when it can be released in the fishing year, means that the actual time to develop.

The time to learn, is actually pretty far offset from the time to put it in the field in a way that supports all the partners and data collections that paper forms the different data flow systems and the fishermen getting used to it. I know I took a tangent there, but certainly open for those discussions. John, do you want to reply or do you want to call on Kathy, who is our last hand up at the moment?

CHAIR CARMICHAEL: You know I think maybe, I guess the current continuing resolution goes until December, if memory serves. You know maybe we can sit on it until then, and perhaps invoke the Leadership Team at that time to decide whether to say, you know go ahead into January and do this, or do we want to try to find some other way to fund the PRFC Project, because I think that's the bottom line that everyone is sort of looking at achieving is just getting that project funded. With that, you know maybe Kathy has an idea.

MS. KNOWLTON: I don't know that I have an idea. I just have a perspective that when we look at the development of this program over the last 20 years. When we started out and we had ACCSP staff, you know down around the 7 to 9

persons, in terms of what they were covering. Then leaping forward about 20 years. I don't think any of us could have foreseen the reliance upon software development, and the success that has been seen with having reporting tools that have significantly reduced the burden among constituents, in terms of lowering the number of times they are reporting to multiple entities, whether they be multiple states of states and federal. Some of the growth in the Admin Proposal, I feel the need to remind everybody it was because we took on the APAIS, statewide conduct of APAIS. I am by no means advocating that that stop. I think we've seen a huge advancement in that program, and that was due partially, or if not mostly, to the states working through ACCSP for the electronic tablet data collection.

The least that was seen in the potential for increased timeliness and QC happening and reduction of recall bias for being able to correct mistakes after the fact. I think the way we need to brace this, and of course the added transparency that Geoff has been providing the last two years on exactly what those increases are and are not for.

I really appreciate that the time is being taken to have this discussion at the Coordinating Council level, and it's very clear what is being requested. I think the models have changed in the last 20 years. We started off with most of our partners unable to collect 100 percent catch effort in the commercial sector. We've had to work through developing that.

Yet, if you look at the FY22 proposal rankings, you see that the majority of the proposals that are on their last, fifth/sixth year of continued maintenance funding. Most of them are not asking for a lot of money to continue. The mandatory dealer reporting, Maine, Rhode Island, the herring. You know most of those are well on their way to going down.

But I think it is a conversation that needs to continue at the executive leadership level, because it's basically a new model. We've got this, it is a behemoth of even admin proposals, but I almost

think that the term admin isn't even appropriate anymore, because it's really Admin and Operations.

It's not just administering the program. The Admin Budget is the heart of being able to maintain the data warehouse and new developments for partners through software development. I think the place where this needs to pivot is the amount of money. I hope that in no way, Bob, you take that as me pushing back against your comments, because I agree with not increasing the Admin Budget.

But it's very difficult to be able to balance the needs of partners coming in with new proposals. Obviously, we made that step down process, hoping that we were assuring the possibility for more money to go to the new proposals, and to have that ingenuity and entrepreneurship from the partners that ACCSP so needs, and it was designed to promote. I think this is a new sort of, the last three or so years, in terms of having to grow that portion of the staff is a reflection of a very large development in the program itself.

As difficult as it is to have this limitation on funding that will impact new funds. I understand, I am well aware that the situation in Maine with 100 percent lobster reporting is a huge issue hanging over us, and trying to deal with how much support we can get from ACCSP. But understanding all those things, I just wanted to kind of wrap this up and say that it's sort of a new model, that I think we're approaching, so thank you. I hope I didn't make anybody mad with that, by the way.

CHAIR CARMICHAEL: I don't think so, Kathy, I think those are good points, and I think you are right, it is a lot more than what admin was traditionally. It is Admin and Operations, and there is a lot being done, and there is a lot of value to that. Perhaps the Leadership Team can get together next year, and think about some of those points, like where does this Admin Budget go in the future, and what does that mean for

funding. You know how do we try to find some way to get the message out there to fit the funding. It probably does need to increase to match the much-expanded mission that ACCSP is pursuing at this point. Geoff, any more hands?

MR. WHITE: We do have one from Bob, and Kathy, I certainly appreciate all of the points you made. I do want to point out two things in response. One of Kathy's was the staff size and the increase relative to taking on MRIP. The MRIP staff are funded out of not the Admin Grant, so we do have three staff that are part of ACCSP, but not included in the Admin Grant, because that is covered by bringing on MRIP funding.

The other is the lobster reporting, whether that will be an actual location tracking or the harvester reporting. There are partner projects that had been funded to continue to support that, and once the systems are in place the number of data records going through is not expected to be an extra-large task from the ACCSP staff. At least pointing those two things out, I do want to make sure I call on Bob. Bob, go ahead.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: No, Kathy, you definitely didn't make me angry at all, I agree with you. You know the model has changed. The 23 partners rely on ACCSP staff for day-to-day activities and long-term programming activities, and everything else. I agree 100 percent with what you said.

I think my point was just that we need to be conscious about that transition of the model from just we're calling it the old Admin Model, the Admin and Operations. You know I think that needs to just be made consciously, and the partners need to be aware that reliance on that staff is great, and 100 percent appropriate. But we just need to be aware.

It means there is going to be less money available for partner projects. You know if things aren't funded. We need to recognize the reason why they weren't funded, which is, we're putting an investment into the staff, which is the group that we're all relying on to keep things moving along more than we use to.

That's fine, programs transition over, it's been 20 years, so it should be a very different animal than it was 20 years ago. I don't disagree with anything you said at all, Kathy.

MR. WHITE: John, I don't want to force things, but Maya, could you move forward one slide.

CHAIR CARMICHAEL: Yes, Geoff, I think it's time for that and see where we stand.

MR. WHITE: Okay, then John, there you are.

CHAIR CARMICHAEL: We've had great discussion. I think we have good guidance for going forward. At this point we normally would get a motion to clarify the intent of the group, with regard to the proposals and the rankings and where we go, approving the Admin Grant and then what's available for project and funding and the order of those. Open up and see if someone is willing to make a motion.

MR. WHITE: A hand up from Jason McNamee.

DR. JASON McNAMEE: Are you ready for me, Mr. Chair?

CHAIR CARMICHAEL: Yes.

DR. McNAMEE: Okay, and just for the record, Kathy, I'm not mad at you either. I thought what you said was great. Okay, here is a motion. **Move to support the updated ACCSP administrative proposal, the top 7 maintenance proposals, and the remaining 3 new proposals as ranked by the Operations and Advisory Committees. The ACCSP leadership team will be engaged to adjust the actual funding levels when known.**

MR. WHITE: Thank you, Jason, we have a hand up from Lynn Fegley. Go ahead, Lynn.

MS. FEGLEY: I was going to offer a second.

CHAIR CARMICHAEL: I guess, Geoff, the easiest way to probably do it is to just see if there is any objection to the motion, raise your hand.

MR. WHITE: Looking for hands. I see no hands; we'll wait another 10 seconds or so.

CHAIR CARMICHAEL: I'll say if no hands come up, then the motion is approved. Then I think, Geoff, just a clarification. You know if we were to continue on a level funded situation, the funding for this year was that at the 3.4 range?

MR. WHITE: Yes. I would probably have to go back and check on that, but my memory at the moment says we are in that 3.4.

CHAIR CARMICHAEL: If we are continuing resolution for the year and level funded, then we can fully cover the PRFC project.

MR. WHITE: That is my expectation, yes.

CHAIR CARMICHAEL: Thanks. No hands, so motion approved.

MR. WHITE: We now have two hands up for discussion, so first was Jason McNamee and second would be Bob Beal. Jason.

DR. McNAMEE: Yes, sorry, mine is not an objection, I'm not objecting to the motion that I made. But just a clarification. In the text, and it may have been me not saying this, but the text should say after the second comma, and the remaining 3 new proposals. The word new is missing. Thanks.

MR. WHITE: Go ahead, Bob.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: Just to be clear. Is the expectation that, with John's recent comment that at 3.4 PRFC is fully funded. Does that mean the Coordinating Council is comfortable with starting the hiring process for the software staff member, or does everyone still want to hold off on that until maybe we get the next round of information from Congress after the continuing resolution is

addressed? I'm fine either way, I just want to make sure. Geoff, you have the direction from the group.

MR. WHITE: Thank you, I appreciate that. Comments or response to Bob?

CHAIR CARMICHAEL: Yes, Geoff, I'm trying to think about that and reflect on the timing. You know you said it takes about three months to get it done, and getting someone hired, which makes sense. If we were to wait and see what happens after the current continuing resolution expires in December, that potentially puts us back three months. That might be something the group supports, I'm not sure.

MR. WHITE: The Admin Grant starts as of March 1, 2022 is the normal cycle for that. My best case would not be to announce this position today, it would be to wait until January. I think we do have time to see what happens with the continuing resolution, until we see where we're at in December, and meet with the leaders.

CHAIR CARMICHAEL: Thanks, Geoff, I think that achieves it, then that gives us a chance to see what happens from Congress in December, before you put this into motion.

MR. WHITE: We have another hand up from Kathy Knowlton. Kathy.

MS. KNOWLTON: Jason, I agree with that. That plan sounds very judicious, but also still have an opening as a possibility to the latter half of the fiscal year. Thanks.

MR. WHITE: Mr. Chair, we had no objections to the motion, but haven't captured the status of the motion.

CHAIR CARMICHAEL: I think the motion stands approved, and agreement to, you know as you said, you wouldn't advertise this until January anyway, so we do have a chance to see where the next funding decision takes us, and allow the

leadership team, as it says, to deal with that and keep the group informed, and try to best achieve the intent of the Coordinating Council, working with you and Julie.

MR. WHITE: We are near the end of our primary business. Thanks everybody for your discussion and for your support of ACCSP, the process, the partnerships and the group activities. I did want to note once again that the Action Plan ACCSP is listed primarily under Goal 3, and that review is going to be up for tomorrow for the Business Meeting. I wanted to give you guys a chance. We have until 12:30 if there are questions. I see a hand up from Marty Gary. But if you have questions or thoughts that you want to ask, or things that you would like us to follow up on, either during the meeting or after, now is an opportunity to do so. Thank you for your participation today. With that let me jump over to Marty.

MR. GARY: Thanks Geoff, and Mr. Chair. Not a question, but I just wanted to express my deepest gratitude to all the members of the Coordinating Council, to the Chairman of our Commission, Pat, for your comments, and to all the staff, Bob, Julie, everyone, Geoff, yourself, for working with us to try to put PRFC in a position to succeed, you know as we go into this second year. I'm humbled by the amount of attention you provided to us, and deeply appreciative, so thank you all.

MR. WHITE: All right, Mr. Chair, I see no other hands, so thank you for leading us through this meeting. It is yours to call the question.

ADJOURNMENT

CHAIR CARMICHAEL: All right, well thank you Geoff. If no more comments, I think I'll adjourn the meeting and echo what Marty said. This is a great group to work with, and it is always encouraging how well everyone tries to do the best for the program. With that, we stand adjourned.

(Whereupon the meeting convened at 12:03 p.m.
on Tuesday October 19, 2021.)

ACCSP FY23 RFP Summary of Changes

1. RFP

1.1. General Changes

1.1.1. Updated dates appropriately

1.2. Funding Subcommittee Recommendation (**PAGE 2**)

1.2.1. COVID paragraph removed

1.2.2. In consideration of the unique situation the COVID 19 has created, the step down process will be paused in FY22. This means that all maintenance projects in the step down process will be in the same year of the step down process as they were in FY21. All maintenance project submissions that are in the step down process are required to submit an appendix to the proposal with a summary of why the additional funding is needed and if there are any funds from the previous year that were not spent. This status is reflected in Appendix A of the FDD, which has a list of those maintenance projects entering year 6 and the maximum funding available to them.

2. Funding Decision Document

2.1. General changes

2.1.1. All dates have been updated

2.2. Detailed Steps of Funding Decision Process Added Bullet 3 (**PAGE 2**)

2.2.1. COVID paragraph removed

2.2.2. In consideration of the unique situation the COVID 19 has created, the step down process will be paused in FY22. This means that all maintenance projects in the step down process will be in the same year of the step down process as they were in FY21. All maintenance project submissions that are in the step down process are required to submit an appendix to the proposal with a summary of why the additional funding is needed and if there are any funds from the previous year that were not spent. This status is reflected in Appendix A.

2.2.3. Sentence moved from bullet 1 to bullet 2 and edited

2.2.4. Please see Appendix A for a list of maintenance projects entering year 5 or 6 in FY23 and the maximum funds available for these projects.

2.3. Approach (**PAGE 7**)

2.3.1. Language added to clarify that only a single secondary module will be considered for the ranking

2.3.2. Please note that only one primary module and one secondary module are considered for ranking.

2.4. Appendix A (**PAGE 15**)

2.4.1. Change year 6/7 to year 6 to reflect standard (Non-COVID) process

2.4.2. Adjusted language to note that table referred to year 5 and 6 FY23 projects

3. Biological Priority Matrix – No Changes

4. Bycatch Priority Matrix – No Changes

5. Recreational Technical Committee Priorities – No Changes

6. Socioeconomic Priority Data Elements – No Changes

7. Timeline for Proposal Review

7.1. Dates are updated

7.2. Overall timeline remains relatively the same

8. Ranking Criteria Document

8.1. Secondary Module

8.1.1. Language adjusted to add word **single**

8.1.2. Clarifies that only one additional module will be considered in the ranking



Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program

1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200A-N | Arlington, VA 22201
703.842.0780 | 703.842.0779 (fax) | www.accsp.org

TO: ACCSP Coordinating Council and All ACCSP Committees

FROM: Geoff White, ACCSP Director

SUBJECT: ACCSP Request for 2023 Proposals

The Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (Program or ACCSP) is issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) to Program Partners and Committees for FY23 funding.

ACCSP's [Funding Decision Document](#) (FDD) provides an overview of the funding decision process, guidance for preparing and submitting proposals, and information on funding recipients' post-award responsibilities. Projects in areas not specifically addressed in the FDD may still be considered for funding if they help achieve Program goals. These goals, listed by priority, are improvements in:

- 1a. Catch, effort, and landings data (including licensing, permit and vessel registration data);
- 1b. Biological data (equal to 1a.);
2. Releases, discards and protected species data; and,
3. Economic and sociological data.

Project activities that will be considered according to priority may include:

- Partner implementation of data collection programs;
- Continuation of current Program-funded partner programs;
- Funding for personnel required to implement Program related projects/proposals; and
- Data management system upgrades or establishment of partner data feeds to the Data Warehouse and/or Standard Atlantic Fisheries Information System.

Proposals for biological sampling should target priority species in the top quartile (Attachment II) of the Biological Priority Matrix. Proposals for observer coverage should align with fisheries affecting the top quartile priority species (Attachment III) of the Bycatch Priority Matrix. Brief descriptions of the current levels of biological or bycatch sampling by any of the Partners would be helpful to the review process. Projects for recreational catch and effort data should target the priorities set by the Recreational Technical Committee (Attachment IV). Projects involving socioeconomic data should reference the Socioeconomic Priority Data Elements (Attachment V).

Proposals to continue Program-funded partner projects ("maintenance proposals") may not contain significant changes in scope (for example the addition of bycatch data collection to a dealer reporting project), and must include in the cover letter whether there are any changes in the current proposal from prior years' and, if so, provide a brief summary of those changes.

Additionally, in FY16 a long-term funding strategy policy was instituted to limit the duration of maintenance projects. Maintenance projects are now subject to a funding reduction following their

Our vision is to produce dependable and timely marine fishery statistics for Atlantic coast fisheries that are collected, processed, and disseminated according to common standards agreed upon by all program partners.

fourth year of maintenance funding. For maintenance projects entering year 6, a further 33 percent cut will be applied and funding will cease in year 7.

All project submissions must comply with the Program Standards found [here](#). Please consider using [this successful project proposal](#) as a template. Overhead rates may not exceed 25% of total costs unless mandated by law or policy. Items included within overhead should not also be listed as in-kind match.

Submissions will be reviewed in accordance with the FDD (Attachment I), ranking criteria (Attachment VII), and funding allocation. Current funding allocation guidelines are 75% for maintenance projects and 25% for new projects within the Program priorities. If either allocation is not fully utilized, remaining funds will be available to approved projects in the other category. For example, if maintenance projects only use 67% of the total available funds, the remaining balance would be added to the 25% new project allocation to fund new projects as approved by the Coordinating Council.

Attachment VI provides a timeline for the FY23 funding process. The final decision on proposals to be funded for FY23 will be made in October 2022. Project awards will be subject to funding availability and, if there is a funding shortfall, awards may be adjusted in accordance with the FDD. Successful applicants will be notified when funding becomes available.

Project Investigators will be required to report progress directly to the Program's Operations and Advisory Committees in addition to meeting the standard Federal reporting requirements.

Please submit initial proposals as Microsoft Word and Excel files no later than **June 15, 2022** by email to Julie DeFilippi Simpson, ACCSP Deputy Director julie.simpson@accsp.org. If you have any questions about the funding decision process, please contact your agency's Operations Committee member (<http://www.accsp.org/committees>) or ACCSP staff (703-842-0780).

RELEVANT ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT I	FY2023 Funding Decision Document
ATTACHMENT II	FY2023 Biological Priority Matrix
ATTACHMENT III	FY2023 Bycatch Priority Matrix
ATTACHMENT IV	FY2023 Recreational Technical Committee Priorities
ATTACHMENT V	FY2023 Socioeconomic Priority Data Elements
ATTACHMENT VI	FY2023 Timeline for Proposal Review
ATTACHMENT VII	FY2023 Ranking Criteria Document

Funding Decision Process
Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program
May 2022

The Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (the Program) is a state-federal cooperative initiative to improve recreational and commercial fisheries data collection and data management activities on the Atlantic coast. The program supports further innovation in fisheries-dependent data collection and management technology through its annual funding process.

Each year, ACCSP issues a Request for Proposals (RFP) to its Program Partners. The ACCSP Operations and Advisory Committees review submitted project proposals and make funding recommendations to the Deputy Director and the Coordinating Council.

This document provides an overview of the funding decision process, guidance for preparing and submitting proposals, and information on funding recipients' post-award responsibilities, including providing reports on project progress.

Overview of the Funding Decision Process

- [Funding Decision Process Timeline](#)
- [Detailed Steps](#)

Funding Decision Process Timeline

April- Operations and Advisory Committees develop annual funding priorities, criteria and allocation targets (maintenance vs. new projects)

May- Coordinating Council issues Request for Proposals (RFP)

June- Partners submit proposals

July- Operations and Advisory Committees review initial proposals, PIs are invited (not mandatory) to this meeting to answer questions and hear feedback; ACCSP staff provide initial review results to submitting Partner

August- Final proposals are submitted. Final proposals must be submitted electronically to the Deputy Director, and/or designee by close of business on the day of the specified deadline. Final proposals received after the RFP deadline will not be considered for funding.

September- Operations and Advisory Committees review and rank final proposals

October- Funding recommendations presented to Coordinating Council; Coordinating Council makes final funding decision

ACCSP Staff submits notification to submitting Partner of funded projects and notification of approved projects to appropriate grant funding agency (e.g. NOAA Fisheries Regional Grants Program Office, “NOAA Grants”) by Partner

As Needed- Operation and/or Leadership Team and Coordinating Council review and make final decision with contingencies (e.g. scope of work, rescissions, no-cost extensions, returned unused funds, etc.)

Detailed Steps of Funding Decision Process

1. Develop Annual Funding Priorities, Criteria and Allocation Targets (maintenance vs. new projects).

Prior to issuing the Request for Proposals, the Coordinating Council will approve the annual funding criteria and allocation targets. These will be used to rank projects and allocate funding between maintenance and new projects respectively.

In FY16, a long-term funding strategy policy was instituted to limit the duration of maintenance projects. Maintenance projects are now subject to a funding reduction following their fourth year of maintenance funding.

- For maintenance projects entering year 5 of ACCSP funding in FY20, a 33 percent funding cut was applied to whichever sum was larger: the project’s prior two-year-average base funding set in FY16, or the average annual sum received during the project’s four years of full *maintenance* funding. In year 6, a further 33 percent cut will be applied and funding will cease in year 7. Please see Appendix A for a list of maintenance projects entering year 6 in FY20 and the maximum funds available for these projects.
- For more recent maintenance projects (i.e., those entering year 5 of maintenance funding after FY20), the base funding will be calculated as the average of funding received during the project’s four years as a *maintenance* project. These projects will receive a 33 percent cut in year 5, a further 33 percent cut in year 6, and funding will cease in year 7. Please see Appendix A for a list of maintenance projects entering year 5 or 6 in FY23 and the maximum funds available for these projects.

2. Issue Request for Proposals

An RFP will be sent to all Program Partners and Committees no later than the week after the spring Coordinating Council meeting. The RFP will include the ranking criteria, allocation targets approved by the Coordinating Council, and general Program priorities taken from Goal 3 of the current ASMFC Five-Year Strategic Plan. The RFP and related documents will also be posted on the Program’s website [here](#).

All proposals MUST be submitted either by a Program Partner, jointly by several Program Partners, or through a Program Committee. The public has the ability to work with a Program Partner to develop and submit a proposal. Principle investigators are strongly encouraged to work with their Operations Committee member in the development of any proposal. All proposals must be submitted electronically to the Deputy Director, and/or designee, in the standard format.

3. Review initial proposals

Proposals will be reviewed by staff and the Operations and Advisory Committees. Committee members are encouraged to coordinate with their offices and/or constituents to provide input to the review process. Operations Committee members are also encouraged to work with staff in their offices who have submitted a proposal in order to represent the proposal during the review. Project PIs will be invited to attend the initial proposal review, held in July. The review and evaluation of all written proposals will take into consideration the ranking criteria, funding allocation targets and the overall Program Priorities as specified in the RFP. Proposals may be forwarded to relevant Program technical committees for further review of the technical feasibility and statistical validity. Proposals that fail to meet the ACCSP standards may be recommended for changes or rejected.

4. Provide initial review results to submitting Partner

Program staff will notify the submitting Partner of suggested changes, requested responses, or questions arising from the review. The submitting Partner will be given an opportunity to submit a final proposal incorporating suggested changes in the same format previously described in Step 2(b) by the final RFP deadline.

5. Review and rank final proposals

The review and ranking of all proposals will take into consideration the ranking criteria, funding allocation targets, and overall Program Priorities as specified in the RFP. The Deputy Director and the Advisory and Operations Committees will develop a list of prioritized recommended proposals and forward them for discussion, review, and approval by the Coordinating Council.

6. Proposal approval by the Coordinating Council

The Coordinating Council will review a summary of all submitted proposals and prioritized recommended proposals from the Operations and Advisory Committees. Each representative on the Coordinating Council will have one vote during final prioritization of project proposals. Projects to be funded by the Program will be approved by the Coordinating Council by the end of November each year. The Deputy Director will submit a pre-notification to the appropriate NOAA Grants office of the prioritized proposals to expedite processing when those offices receive Partner grant submissions.

7. Confirmation of final funding amounts

The Director and Deputy Director will be notified by NOAA Fisheries of any federal grant adjustments (e.g. additions or rescissions). Additional funds will generally go to the next available ranked project. Reductions may include, but are not limited to:

- Lower than anticipated amounts from any source of funding
- Rescission of funding after initial allocations have been made
- Partial or complete withdrawal of funds from any source

If these or other situations arise, the Operations Committee will notify Partners with approved proposals to reduce their requested budgets or to withdraw a proposal entirely. If this does not reduce the overall requested amount sufficiently, the Director, Deputy Director, the Operations Committee Chair and Vice-Chair, and the Advisory Committee Chair will develop a final recommendation and forward to the ACCSP Leadership Team of the Coordinating Council. These options to address funding contingencies may include:

- Eliminating the lowest-ranked proposal(s)
- A fixed percentage cut to all proposals' budgets
- A directed reduction in a specific proposal(s)

8. Notification to submitting Partner of funded projects and submittal of project documents to appropriate grants agency (e.g. NOAA Grants) by Partner.

Notification detailing the Coordinating Council's actions relevant to a Partner's proposal will be sent to each Partner by Program staff.

- Approved projects from Non-federal Partners must be submitted as full applications (federal forms, project and budget narratives, and other attachments) to NOAA Grants via www.grants.gov. These documents must reflect changes or conditions approved by the Coordinating Council.
- Non-federal Partners must provide the Deputy Director with an electronic copy of the narrative and either an electronic or hard copy of the budget of the grant application as submitted to the grants agency (e.g. NOAA Grants).
- Federal Partners do not submit applications to NOAA Grants.

9. Operation and/or Leadership Team and Coordinating Council review and final decision with contingencies or emergencies.

Committee(s) review and decide project changes (e.g. scope of work, rescissions, no-cost extensions, returned unused funds, etc.) during the award period.

Proposal Guidance

- [General Proposal Guidelines](#)
- [Format](#)
- [Budget Template](#)

General Proposal Guidelines

- The Program is predicated upon the most efficient use of available funds. Many jurisdictions have data collection and data management programs which are administered by other fishery management agencies. Detail coordination efforts your agency/Committee has undertaken to demonstrate cost-efficiency and non-duplication of effort.
- All Program Partners conducting projects for implementation of the program standards in their jurisdictions are required to submit data to the Program in prescribed standards, where the module is developed and formats are available. Detail coordination efforts with Program data management staff with projects of a research and/or pilot study nature to submit project information and data for distribution to all Program Partners and archives.
- If appropriate to your project, please detail your agency's data management capability. Include the level of staff support (if any) required to accomplish the proposed work. If contractor services are required, detail the level and costs.
- Before funding will be considered beyond year one of a project, the Partner agency shall detail in writing how the Partner agency plans to assume partial or complete funding or, if not feasible, explain why.
- If appropriate to your project, detail any planned or ongoing outreach initiatives. Provide scope and level of outreach coordinated with either the Program Assistant and/or Deputy Director.
- Proposals including a collection of aging or other biological samples must clarify Partner processing capabilities (i.e., how processed and by whom).
- Provide details on how the proposal will benefit the Program as a whole, outside of benefits to the Partner or Committee.
- Proposals that request funds for law enforcement should confirm that all funds will be allocated towards reporting compliance.
- Proposals must detail any in-kind effort/resources, and if no in-kind resources are included, state why.

- Proposals must meet the same quality as would be appropriate for a grant proposal for ACFCMA or other federal grant.
- Assistance is available from Program staff, or an Operations Committee member for proposal preparation and to insure that Program standards are addressed in the body of a given proposal.
- Even though a large portion of available resources may be allocated to one or more jurisdictions, new systems (including prototypes) will be selected to serve all Partners' needs.
- Partners submitting pilot or other short-term programs are encouraged to lease large capital budget items (vehicles, etc.) and where possible, hire consultants or contractors rather than hire new permanent personnel.
- The Program will not fund proposals that do not meet Program standards. However, in the absence of approved standards, pilot studies may be funded.
- Proposals will be considered for modules that may be fully developed but have not been through the formal approval process. Pilot proposals will be considered in those cases.
- The Operations Committee may contact Partners concerning discrepancies or inconsistencies in any proposal and may recommend modifications to proposals subject to acceptance by the submitting Partner and approval by the Coordinating Council. The Operations Committee may recommend changes or conditions to proposals. The Coordinating Council may conditionally approve proposals. These contingencies will be documented and forwarded to the submitting Partner in writing by Program staff.
- Any proposal submitted after the initial RFP deadline will not be considered, in addition to any proposal submitted by a Partner which is not current with all reporting obligations.

Proposal Format

Applicant Name: Identify the name of the applicant organization(s).

Project Title: A brief statement to identify the project.

Project Type: Identify whether new or maintenance project.

New Project – Partner project never funded by the Program. New projects may not exceed a duration of one year.

Maintenance Project – Project funded by the Program that conducts the same scope of work as a previously funded new or maintenance project. These proposals may not contain significant changes in scope (e.g., the addition of bycatch data collection to a catch/effort dealer reporting project). Pls must include in the cover letter whether there are any changes in the current proposal from prior years' and, if so, provide a brief summary of those changes. At year 5 of maintenance funding, a project's base funding will be calculated as the average of funding received during the project's four years as a maintenance project.

Requested Award Amount: Provide the total requested amount of proposal. Do not include an estimate of the NOAA grant administration fee.

Requested Award Period: Provide the total time period of the proposed project. The award period typically will be limited to one-year projects.

Objective: Specify succinctly the “why”, “what”, and “when” of the project.

Need: Specify the need for the project and the association to the Program.

Results and Benefits: Identify and document the results or benefits to be expected from the proposed project. Clearly indicate how the proposed work meets various elements outlined in the ACCSP Proposal Ranking Criteria Document (Appendix B). Some potential benefits may include: fundamental in nature to all fisheries; region-wide in scope; answering or addressing region-wide questions or policy issues; required by MSFCMA, ACFCMA, MMPA, ESA, or other acts; transferability; and/or demonstrate a practical application to the Program.

Data Delivery Plan: Include coordinated method of the data delivery plan to the Program in addition to module data elements gathered. The data delivery plan should include the frequency of data delivery (i.e. monthly, semi-annual, annual) and any coordinate delivery to other relevant partners.

Approach: List all procedures necessary to attain each project objective. If a project includes work in more than one module, identify approximately what proportion of effort is comprised within each module (e.g., catch and effort 45%, biological 30% and bycatch 25%). **Please note that only one primary module and one secondary module are considered for ranking.**

Geographic Location: The location where the project will be administered and where the scope of the project will be conducted.

Milestone Schedule: An activity schedule in table format for the duration of the project, starting with Month 1 and ending with a three-month report writing period.

Project Accomplishments Measurement: A table showing the project goals and how progress towards those goals will be measured. In some situations the metrics will be numerical such as numbers of anglers contacted, fish measured, and/or otoliths collected, etc.; while in other cases the metrics will be binary such as software tested and software completed. Additional details such as intermediate metrics to achieve overall proposed goals should be included especially if the project seeks additional years of funding.

Cost Summary (Budget): Detail all costs to be incurred in this project in the format outlined in the budget guidance and template at the end of this document. A budget narrative should be included which explains and justifies the expenditures in each category. Provide cost projections for federal and total costs. Provide details on Partner/in-kind contribution (e.g., staff time, facilities, IT support, overhead, etc.). Details should be provided on start-up versus long-term operational costs.

In-kind - ¹Defined as activities that could exist (or could happen) without the grant. ²In-kind contributions are from the grantee organization. In-kind is typically in the form of the value of personnel, equipment and services, including direct and indirect costs.

¹The following are generally accepted as in-kind contributions:

- i. Personnel time given to the project including state and federal employees
- ii. Use of existing state and federal equipment (e.g. data collection and server platforms, Aging equipment, microscopes, boats, vehicles)

Overhead rates may not exceed 25% of total costs unless mandated by law or policy. Program Partners may not be able to control overhead/indirect amounts charged. However, where there is flexibility, the lowest amount of overhead should be charged. When this is accomplished indicate on the 'cost summary' sheet the difference between the overhead that could have been charged and the actual amount charged, if different. If overhead is charged to the Program, it cannot also be listed as in-kind.

Maintenance Projects: Maintenance proposals must provide project history table, description of completed data delivery to the ACCSP and other relevant partners, table of total project cost by year, a summary table of metrics and achieved goals, and the budget narrative from the most recent year's funded proposal.

Principal Investigator: List the principal investigator(s) and attach curriculum vitae (CV) for each. Limit each CV to two pages. Additional information may be requested.

Budget Guidelines & Template

All applications must have a detailed budget narrative explaining and justifying the expenditures by object class. Include in the discussion the requested dollar amounts and how they were derived. A spreadsheet or table detailing expenditures is useful to clarify the costs (see template below). The following are highlights from the NOAA Budget Guidelines document to help Partners formulate their budget narrative. The full Budget Guidelines document is available [here](#).

Object Classes:

Personnel: include salary, wage, and hours committed to project for each person by job title. Identify each individual by name and position, if possible.

Fringe Benefits: should be identified for each individual. Describe in detail if the rate is greater than 35 % of the associated salary.

Travel: all travel costs must be listed here. Provide a detailed breakdown of travel costs for trips over \$5,000 or 5 % of the award. Include destination, duration, type of transportation, estimated cost, number of travelers, lodging, mileage rate and estimated number of miles, and per diem.

Equipment: equipment is any single piece of non-expendable, tangible personal property that costs \$5,000 or more per unit and has a useful life of more than one year. List each piece of equipment, the unit cost, number of units, and its purpose. Include a lease vs. purchase cost analysis. If there are no lease options available, then state that.

Supplies: purchases less than \$5,000 per item are considered by the federal government as supplies. Include a detailed, itemized explanation for total supplies costs over \$5,000 or 5% of the award.

Contractual: list each contract or subgrant as a separate item. Provide a detailed cost breakdown and describe products/services to be provided by the contractor. Include a sole source justification, if applicable.

Other: list items, cost, and justification for each expense.

Total direct charges

Indirect charges: If claiming indirect costs, please submit a copy of the current approved negotiated indirect cost agreement. If expired and/or under review, a copy of the transmittal letter that accompanied the indirect cost agreement application is requested.

Totals of direct and indirect charges

Example. Budget narrative should provide further detail on these costs.

Description	Calculation	Cost
Personnel (a)		
Supervisor	Ex: 500 hrs x \$20/hr	\$10,000
Biologist		
Technician		
Fringe (b)		
Supervisor	Ex: 15% of salary	\$1500
Biologist		
Technician		
Travel (c)		
Mileage for sampling trips	Ex: Estimate 2000 miles x \$0.33/mile	\$660
Travel for meeting		
Equipment (d)		
Boat	Ex: \$7000, based on current market research	\$7000
Supplies (e)		
Safety supplies		\$1200
Sampling supplies		\$1000
Laptop computers	2 laptops @\$1500 each	\$3000
Software		\$500
Contractual (f)		
Data Entry Contract	Ex: 1000 hrs x \$20/hr	\$20,000
Other (h)		
Printing and binding		
Postage		
Telecommunications charges		
Internet Access charges		
Totals		
Total Direct Charges (i)		
Indirect Charges (j)		
Total (sum of Direct and Indirect) (k)		

Post-award Responsibilities

- [Changing the Scope of Work](#)
- [Requesting a No-cost Extension](#)
- [Declaring Unused/Returned Funds](#)
- [Reporting Requirements](#)
- [Report Format](#)
- [Programmatic Review](#)

Changing the Scope of Work

Partners shall submit requests for amendments to approved projects in writing to the Deputy Director. The Coordinating Council member for that Partner must sign the request.

When Partners request an amendment to an approved project, the Deputy Director will contact the Chair and Vice Chair of the Operations Committee. The Deputy Director and Operations Committee Chairs will determine if the requested change is minor or substantial. The Chairs and Deputy Director may approve minor changes.

For substantial proposed changes, a decision document including the opinions of the Chairs and the Deputy Director will be sent to the Operations Committee and the ACCSP Leadership Team of the Coordinating Council for review.

The ACCSP Leadership Team will decide to approve or reject the request for change and notify the Deputy Director, who will send a written notification to the Partner's principal investigator with a copy to the Operations Committee.

When a requested major amendment is submitted shortly before a Coordinating Council meeting, the approval of the amendment will be placed on the Council Agenda.

The Deputy Director will notify NOAA Grants of any change in scope of work for final approval for non-federal proposals, and the Partner will need to request a Change in Scope through Grants Online. Necessary communications will be maintained between the concerned Partner, the Program and NOAA Grants. Any changes must be approved through the normal NOAA Grants process.

Requesting a No-cost Extension

If additional time is needed to complete the project, Program Partners can request a no-cost extension to their award period. Partners should let the Program know of the need for additional time and then request the extension as an Award Action Request through NOAA Grants Online at least 30 days before the end date of the award.

Necessary communications will be maintained between the concerned Partner, the Program, and NOAA Grants office. Any changes must be approved through the normal NOAA Grants process.

Declaring Unused/Returned Funds

In an effort to limit the instances in which funds are not completely used during the award period, draw down reports from the NOAA Grants offices indicating remaining grant balances will be periodically reviewed during each fiscal year.

While effort should be made to complete the project as proposed, if Program Partners find that they will not be able to make use of their entire award, they should notify the Program and their NOAA Federal Program Officer as soon as possible. Depending on the timing of the action, the funds may be able to be reused within the Program, or they may have to be returned to the U.S. Treasury.

Program Partners must submit a written document to the Deputy Director outlining unused project funds potentially being returned. The Partner must also notify their Coordinating Council member (if applicable) for approval to return the unused funds. If the funding is available for re-use within the Program, the Director and Deputy Director will confer with the Operations Committee Chair and Vice-Chair and the Advisory Committee Chair, and then submit a written recommendation to the ACCSP Leadership Team of the Coordinating Council for final approval on the plan to distribute the returned money.

Necessary communications will be maintained between the concerned Partner, the Program, and NOAA Grants office. Any changes must be approved through the normal NOAA Grants process.

Reporting Requirements

Program staff will assess project performance.

The Partner project recipients must abide by the NOAA Regional Grant Programs reporting requirements and as listed below. All semi-annual and final reports are to include a table showing progress toward each of the progress goals as defined in Step 2b and additional metrics as appropriate. Also, all Partner project recipients will submit the following reports based on the project start date to the Deputy Director:

- Semi-annual reports (due 30 days after the semi-annual period) throughout the project period including time periods during no-cost extensions,
- One final report (due 90 days after project completion).
- Federal Partners must submit reports to the Deputy Director, and State Partners must submit reports to both the Deputy Director and the appropriate NOAA Grants office.

Program staff will conduct an initial assessment of the final report to ensure the report is complete in terms of reporting requirements. Program staff will serve as technical monitors to review submitted reports. NOAA staff also reviews the reports submitted via Grants Online.

A project approved on behalf of a Program Committee will be required to follow the reporting requirements specified above. The principle investigator (if not the Chair of the Committee) will submit the report(s) to the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee for review and approval. The Committee Chair is responsible for submitting the required report(s) to the Program.

Joint projects will assign one principle investigator responsible for submitting the required reports. The principle investigator will be identified within the project proposal. The submitted reports should be a collaborative effort between all Partners involved in the joint project.

Project recipients will provide all reports to the Program in electronic format.

Partners who receive no-cost extensions must notify the Deputy Director within 30 days of receiving approval of the extension. Semi-annual and final reports will continue to be required through the extended grant period as previously stated.

Partners that have not met reporting requirements for past/current projects may not submit a new proposal.

A verbal presentation of project results may be requested. Partners will be required to submit copies of project specifications and procedures, software development, etc. to assist other Program Partners with the implementation of similar programs.

Report Format

Semi-Annual(s) – Progress Reports: (3-4 pages)

- Title page - Project name, project dates (semi-annual period covered and complete project period), submitting Partner, and date.
- Objective
- Activities Completed – bulleted list by objective.
- Progress or lack of progress of incomplete activities during the period of semi-annual progress – bulleted list by objective.
- Activities planned during the next reporting period.
- Metrics table
- Milestone Chart – original and revised if changes occurred during the project period.

Final Report:

- Title page – Project name, project dates, submitting Partner, and date.
- Abstract/Executive Summary (including key results)
- Introduction
- Procedures

- Results:
 - Description of data collected.
 - The quality of the data pertaining to the objective of the project (e.g. representative to the scope of the project, quantity collected, etc.).
 - Compiled data results.
 - Summary of statistics.
- Discussion:
 - Discuss the interpretation of results of the project by addressing questions such as, but not limited to:
 - What occurred?
 - What did not occur that was expected to occur?
 - Why did expected results not occur?
 - Applicability of study results to Program goals.
 - Recommendations/Summary/Metrics
- Summarized budget expenditures and deviations (if any).

Programmatic review

Project reports will inform Partners of project outcomes. This will allow the Program as a whole to take advantage of lessons learned and difficulties encountered. Staff will provide final reports to the appropriate Committee(s). The Committees then can discuss the report(s) and make recommendations to modify the Data Collection Standards as appropriate. The recommendations will be submitted through the Program committee(s) review process.


Appendix A: Maximum Funding for Maintenance Projects Entering Year 5 or 6 of Funding in FY23

Projects in Year 5 or 6 of Maintenance Funding	Calculated Base (4-year avg)	Maximum Funding Year 5	Maximum Funding Year 6 (Final Year)
Advancing Fishery Dependent Data Collection for Black Sea Bass (<i>Cetropristis striata</i>) in the Southern New England and Mid-Atlantic Region Utilizing Modern Technology and a Vessel Research Fleet Approach	\$132,229	\$88,153	

Appendix B: Ranking Criteria Spreadsheet for Maintenance and New Projects

Ranking Guide – Maintenance Projects:

Primary Program Priority	Point Range	Description of Ranking Consideration
Catch and Effort	0 – 10	Rank based on range within module and level of sampling defined under Program design. When considering biological, bycatch or recreational funding, rank according priority matrices.
Biological Sampling	0 – 10	
Bycatch/Species Interactions	0 – 6	
Social and Economic	0 – 4	
Data Delivery Plan	+ 2	Additional points if a data delivery plan to Program is supplied and defined within the proposal.

Project Quality Factors	Point Range	Description of Ranking Consideration
Multi-Partner/Regional impact including broad applications	0 – 5	Rank based on the number of Partners involved in project OR regional scope of proposal (e.g. geographic range of the stock).
> yr 2 contains funding transition plan and/or justification for continuance	0 – 4	Rank based on defined funding transition plan away from Program funding or viable justification for continued Program funding.
In-kind contribution	0 – 4	1 = 1% - 25% 2 = 26% - 50% 3 = 51% - 75% 4 = 76% - 99%
Improvement in data quality/quantity/timeliness	0 – 4	1 = Maintain minimum level of needed data collections  4 = Improvements in data collection reflecting 100% of related module as defined within the Program design. Metadata is provided and defined within proposal if applicable.
Potential secondary module as a by-product (In program priority order)	0 – 3 0 – 3 0 – 3 0 – 1	Ranked based on additional module data collection and level of collection as defined within the Program design of individual module.
Impact on stock assessment	0 – 3	Rank based on the level of data collection that leads to new or greatly improved stock assessments.


Other Factors	Point Range	Description of Ranking Consideration
Properly Prepared	-1 – 1	Meets requirements as specified in funding decision document Step 2b and Guidelines
Merit	0 – 3	Ranked based on subjective worthiness

Ranking Guide – Maintenance Projects: (to be used only if funding available exceeds total Maintenance funding requested)

Ranking Factors	Point Range	Description of Ranking Consideration
Achieved Goals	0 – 3	Proposal indicates project has consistently met previous set goals. Current proposal provides project goals and if applicable, intermediate metrics to achieve overall achieved goals.
Data Delivery Plan	0 – 2	Ranked based if a data delivery plan to Program is supplied and defined within the proposal.
Level of Funding	-1 – 1	-1 = Increased funding from previous year 0 = Maintained funding from previous year 1 = Decreased funding from previous year
Properly Prepared	-1 – 1	-1 = Not properly prepared 1 = Properly prepared
Merit	0 – 3	Ranked based on subjective worthiness

Ranking Guide – New Projects:

Primary Program Priority	Point Range	Description of Ranking Consideration
Catch and Effort	0 – 10	Rank based on range within module and level of sampling defined under Program design. When considering biological, bycatch or recreational funding, rank according priority matrices.
Biological Sampling	0 – 10	
Bycatch/Species Interactions	0 – 6	
Social and Economic	0 – 4	
Data Delivery Plan	+ 2	Additional points if a data delivery plan to Program is supplied and defined within the proposal.

Project Quality Factors	Point Range	Description of Ranking Consideration
Multi-Partner/Regional impact including broad applications	0 – 5	Rank based on the number of Partners involved in project OR regional scope of proposal (e.g. fisheries sampled).
Contains funding transition plan / Defined end-point	0 – 4	Rank based on quality of funding transition plan or defined end point.
In-kind contribution	0 – 4	1 = 1% - 25% 2 = 26% - 50% 3 = 51% - 75% 4 = 76% - 99%
Improvement in data quality/quantity/timeliness	0 – 4	1 = Maintain minimum level of needed data collections  4 = Improvements in data collection reflecting 100% of related module as defined within the Program design. Metadata is provided and defined within proposal if applicable.
Potential secondary module as a by-product (In program priority order)	0 – 3 0 – 3 0 – 3 0 – 1	Ranked based on additional module data collection and level of collection as defined within the Program design of individual module.
Impact on stock assessment	0 – 3	Rank based on the level of data collection that leads to new or greatly improved stock assessments.

Other Factors	Point Range	Description of Ranking Consideration
Innovative	0 – 3	Rank based on new technology, methodology, financial savings, etc.
Properly Prepared	-1 – 1	Meets requirements as specified in funding decision document Step 2b and Guidelines
Merit	0 – 3	Ranked based on subjective worthiness



Biological Sampling Priority Matrix

Created in February 2021
For FY2023

Our vision is to be the principal source of fisheries-dependent information on the Atlantic coast through the cooperation of all program partners.

Biological Review Panel Recommends:

- Species in the upper 25% of the priority matrix should be considered for funding.
- Sampling projects which cover multiple species within the upper 25% are highly recommended.



Biological Review Panel Recommendations Based on Matrix*:

Species	Overfished		Overfishing	Most Recent Stock Assessment	Current/Next Stock Assessment	Council Priority	ASMFC Priority	State Priority	NMFS Priority	Fishery Management	Sig. change in landings	Sig. change in mgmt w/in 24 mo	Adequacy of level of sampling	Stock Resilience	Seasonality of Fishery	Average Priority	TOTAL
Black Sea Bass <i>Centropristis striata</i>	N: MA	N:SA	N: MA N:SA	MA: 2019 SA: 2018	MA:2021 SA:2023	5.0	5	3.5	5.0	5	1	1	4	3	1	4.5	32.43
Red Grouper <i>Epinephelus morio</i>	Y		Y	2017	2023	5.0	0	1.1	5.0	3	1	4	3	4	3	2.8	32.14
Snowy Grouper <i>Epinephelus niveatus</i>	Y		N	2019	2021	5.0	0	0.9	5.0	3	3	1	3	5	3	2.8	30.14
Bluefin Tuna <i>Thunnus thynnus</i>	U		N	2017	2021	0.0	0	1.8	5.0	5	5	5	3	3	1	2.0	30.14
River Herring <i>Alosa</i>	D		U	2017	2023	0.0	4	3.6	0.0	5	3	1	4	4	4	2.3	30.00
Cobia <i>Rachycentron canadum</i>	N		N	2020		1.0	5	1.5	4.0	3	1	3	4	3	3	3.1	29.86
Tilefish <i>Lopholatilus</i>	N: MA	N:SA	N: MA Y:SA	MA:2017 SA:2016	MA/SA:2021	5.0	0	1.9	4.0	5	1	1	3	4	3	2.8	29.71
American Shad <i>Alosa</i>	D		U	2020		0.0	3	3.8	0.0	5	3	1	4	5	3	2.2	29.21
Atlantic halibut <i>Hippoglossus</i>	U		U	2020		4.0	0	1.2	1.0	3	5	1	4	5	3	2.0	28.71
Atlantic Menhaden <i>Brevoortia tyrannus</i>	N		N	2020	2022	0.0	5	3.1	3.0	5	1	3	3	3	1	2.8	28.64
Gray Triggerfish <i>Balistes capriscus</i>	U		U			5.0	0	1.0	4.0	3	5	1	3	2	3	2.6	28.36
Atlantic Smooth Dogfish <i>Mustelus canis</i>	N		N	2015	2021	0.0	3	1.4	3.0	5	5	1	3	2	3	2.1	28.21
Ocean Pout <i>Macrocarpes americanus</i>	Y		N	2020		0.0	0	0.2	0.0	3	5	5	5	5	3	1.0	27.79
Spanish Mackerel <i>Scomberomorus</i>	N		N	2020	2022	5.0	2	1.2	4.0	3	1	2	3	2	3	3.0	27.50
Blueline Tilefish <i>Caulolatilus microps</i>	U		U	2017	2024	3.0	0	1.1	5.0	3	3	2	3	3	3	2.4	27.29
Sandbar Shark <i>Carcharhinus plumbeus</i>	Y		N	2017		0.0	1	1.1	5.0	5	5	1	2	3	3	1.8	27.21
American Eel <i>Anguilla rostrata</i>	D		U	2017	2022	0.0	5	3.5	0.0	5	1	1	4	5	1	2.5	27.21
Gag Grouper <i>Mycterperca microlepis</i>	N		N	2014	2021	5.0	0	0.9	5.0	3	1	0	3	4	3	2.8	26.57
Red Snapper <i>Lutjanus campechanus</i>	Y		Y	2016	2021	5.0		0.6	5.0	3	1	1	1	5	3	2.9	26.57
Dolphin <i>Coryphaena hippurus</i>	U		U			5.0	0	1.1	4.0	5	3	0	4	1	1	2.8	26.43
Horseshoe Crab <i>Limulus polyphemus</i>	U		U	2019	2021	0.0	4	3.1	0.0	5	3	0	3	4	2	2.0	26.00
Scamp <i>Mycterperca phenax</i>	U		U		2022	5.0	0	1.0	4.0	3	1	0	3	4	3	2.6	25.93
Winter Skate <i>Raja ocellata</i>	N		N	2019	2023	0.0	0	1.0	0.0	3	5	5	4	5	1	1.0	25.36
Spiny Dogfish <i>Squalus acanthias</i>	N		N	2018	2022	0.0	3	2.6	2.0	5	3	0	2	5	1	1.9	24.93



Bio-sampling Priority Matrix

- Grouping of species in upper 25% of total matrix score, based on sampling adequacy and average priority (average of ASMFC, Council, NMFS and State priorities).
- Projects that target multiple upper quartile species should be given a higher priority.

		Biological Sampling Adequacy	
		Adequate (0 - 2)	Inadequate (3 - 5)
Averaged Priority Columns	High (≥ 3.0)		Black Sea Bass - Bluefin Tuna
	Low (< 3.0)	River Herring - Tilefish	Red Grouper - Snowy Grouper - Cobia - American Shad - Atlantic Halibut - Atlantic Menhaden - Atlantic Smooth Dogfish - Gray Triggerfish - Oceanpout - Spanish Mackerel - Blueline Tilefish - Sandbar Shark - Gag Grouper - American Eel - Red Snapper - Dolphin - Horseshoe Crab - Scamp - Winter Skate - Spiny Dogfish





Bycatch Sampling Priority Matrix

Created in February 2021
For FY 2023

*Our vision is to be the principal source of fisheries-dependent information
on the Atlantic coast through the cooperation of all program partners.*

Top Quartile of Bycatch Matrix Suggestions

Combined Fleets	Sig. Change in mgmt w/in past 36 mo	Amt of reg discards	Amt of non reg discards	Prot Spp Interactions	Score
Mid-Atlantic Gillnet	3	4	2	5	14
Mid-Atlantic Pound Net	1	4	2	5	12
american american lobster Pots	1	4	1	5	11
american american lobster Pots	1	4	1	5	11
Snapper grouper H&L Fleet	3	4	1	3	11
New England Extra-Large-Mesh Gillnet	0	4	2	5	11
Mid-Atlantic Small-Mesh Otter Trawl, Bottom	1	4	1	5	11
Mid-Atlantic Fish Pots and Traps	1	4	1	5	11
South Atlantic Large Mesh Gillnet	0	4	2	5	11
Southeastern, Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico HMS Pelagic Longline	1	4	1	5	11
New England Crab Pots	3	2	1	5	11
South Atlantic shrimp Trawl	1	4	2	3	10
New England Otter Trawl	1	4	2	3	10
Southeastern, Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico HMS Shark Bottom Longline	0	4	1	5	10
Pelagic H&L Fleet (North)	1	4	1	3	9
Mid-Atlantic Extra-Large-Mesh Gillnet	1	2	1	5	9
New England Gillnet	1	2	1	5	9
South Atlantic Skimmer shrimp Trawl	3	2	1	3	9





Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program

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ACCSP Funding Prioritization of the Recreational Technical Committee

July 2017

The Recreational Technical Committee sets the recreational data collection priorities for inclusion in ACCSP's annual request for proposals (RFP). In 2017, the committee opted to use its Atlantic Coast Recreational Implementation Plan priorities as the recreational data priorities for ACCSP's annual funding process. The prioritized list of data needs, which were reviewed and approved by the ACCSP Coordinating Council, is provided below:

- 1. Improve precision (PSE) of MRIP catch estimates**
- 2. (t) Comprehensive for-hire data collection and monitoring**
- 2. (t) Improved recreational fishery discard and release data**
- 4. Biological sampling for recreational fisheries separate from MRIP APAIS**
- 5. Improved spatial resolution and technical guidance for post-stratification of MRIP estimates**
- 6. Improved timeliness of recreational catch and harvest estimates**

Our vision is to be the principal source of fisheries-dependent information on the Atlantic coast through the cooperation of all program partners.

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SOCIOLOGICAL AND ECONOMIC DATA

The Committee on Economics and Social Sciences (CESS) developed a list of priority socioeconomic data elements for coastwide collection. The list is not exhaustive; it represents key elements that can serve as a baseline of fundamental socioeconomic information to support management decisions. The list of priority data elements includes:

1. Trip-level information (to be collected through voluntary or mandatory reporting, for all or a subset of participants)
2. Data elements for an owner/operator survey (to be collected through an annual or semiannual survey)*

The CESS identified these priority data elements with the understanding that data would be collected in the aforementioned methods and would be linked to other ACCSP data through identifiers. Alternative collection methods or the inability to link data with identifiers may require changes to the priority data elements list in order to ensure the utility of the data.

Note: Priorities for standalone surveys will differ from the priorities identified below due to their distinct methodologies and inability to leverage other ACCSP data. The CESS should be consulted when identifying data elements for standalone socioeconomic surveys to ensure their utility and, where practical, consistency across studies.

*The ACCSP recognizes the analytic value of collecting the data elements below. We recommend that partners be aware of and take into account the reporting burden to industry, the sensitivity and at times confidentiality of socioeconomic information, and other relevant perspectives when determining which data elements to collect and set as optional or mandatory.

A. COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

**Table 1:
TRIP LEVEL INFORMATION**

DATA ELEMENT	DESCRIPTION / CRITERIA
Trip Information	
Vessel Identifier	-Unique vessel identifier (e.g., US Coast Guard, state registration number, etc.) -These identifiers must be trackable through time and space.
Trip Identifier	- Unique identifier assigned to the trip
Labor Cost Information	
Total Crew Cost	- Total monetary amount that was given to the crew for this trip

Total Captain Cost (If other than owner)	- Total monetary amount that was given to the captain for this trip
Owner Share	- Total monetary amount the vessel (or permit) owner received for this trip
Other Trip Cost Information	
Fuel & Oil Costs	- Cost for all fuel and oil used on this trip
Bait Costs	- Cost for all bait used on this trip
Ice Costs	- Cost for all ice used on this trip
Grocery Costs	- Cost for all groceries used on this trip
Miscellaneous Costs	- Cost of any other expenses specific to this trip (not including wages, overhead, or fixed costs) E.g., offloading/non-crew labor costs, packaging costs, etc.

**Table 2:
DATA ELEMENTS FOR OWNER/OPERATOR SURVEY**

DATA ELEMENT	DESCRIPTION / CRITERIA
Vessel Identification*	-Unique vessel identifier (e.g., US Coast Guard, state registration number, etc.) -These identifiers must be trackable through time and space.
Fishermen Identification	-Unique ACCSP Identifier for fishermen
Labor Cost Information	
Crew Payment System	- Code to identify crew & captain payment system (e.g. share system, per day, per trip)
Percentage Share Crew	- Percentage share to crew (if applicable)
Percentage Share Captain	- Percentage share to captain (if applicable)
Percentage Share Boat/Owner	- Percentage share to boat/owner (if applicable)
Crew Wages	- Average crew wages for the year (crew payment system indicates whether by hour, trip, day, etc.) (if applicable)
Captain Wages	- Average captain wages for the year (crew payment system indicates whether by hour, trip, day, etc.) (if applicable)
Annual Costs (Most Recent Year)	
Labor costs (captain and crew not in household)	- Total costs of labor for captain and crew outside the owner/operator's household
Labor costs (to people within owner/operator household)	- Total costs of labor for captain and crew within the owner/operator's household
Annual Insurance Costs	- Hull, health, protection and indemnity, mortgage, etc.
Dockage	- Total cost for vessel dockage, home port and transient dockage
Loan Payments	- Principal and interest
New Gear/ Equipment	- Total cost of new gear or equipment acquired
Repairs & Maintenance	- Total cost of repairs & maintenance of vessel and gear that were conducted in the previous year
Permits & Licenses	- Total cost of fishing permits / licenses for the previous year

Leased Quota Cost	- Total cost of leased quota for the previous year
Other Professional Expenses	- Professional expenses not otherwise itemized
Demographic Information	
Household Size	- # of individuals in the household (including respondent)
Employment Status	- Current employment status (e.g., employed fulltime, part-time, unemployed, retired, etc.)
Education	- Highest level of education completed
Marital/Cohabital Status	- Current marital or cohabital status of respondent
Age	- Age of the respondent
Gender	- Gender of the respondent
Ethnicity	- Ethnic background
Total Annual Household Income	- Total annual household income
Number of Household Individuals Involved in Commercial Fishing	- Total number of household individuals involved in commercial fishing (including respondent)
Percent of Annual Household Income from Commercial Fishing	- Percent of household income that is generated through commercial fishing or support activities
County of Residence	- County of residence
Years in Community	- Years in county of residence
Fishing Activity Information	
Fishermen status	- Fishermen status (e.g. full time, part time, not actively fishing)
Years in Commercial Fishing	- Number of years participating in commercial fishery
Permits held	- fishing permits held (by permit type)
Permit use	- Were all permits used within the last year
Reason for Latency	- Reason for not using permit within the last year
Primary Species Landed by Month	- Primary species landed by month
Primary Gears Used by Month	- Primary gears used by month

*Vessel Identifier is needed to link trip-level data to survey results



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This list includes dates for fiscal year 2022, including ACCSP committee meetings, relevant dates of the funding cycle, as well as meetings or conferences ACCSP typically attends or which may be of interest to our partners. If you have any questions or comments on this calendar please do not hesitate to contact the ACCSP staff at info@accsp.org.

Feb 1-3:	NEFMC Meeting – Portsmouth, NH
Feb 7:	Recreational Technical Committee – Webinar
Feb 8-10:	MAFMC Meeting – Durham, NC
Feb 9:	Biological Review Panel Annual Meeting – Webinar
Feb 9:	Bycatch Prioritization Committee Annual Meeting – Webinar
Feb 22:	Atlantic Coast FHTS Training– Webinar
Feb 23-24:	Atlantic Coast APAIS Training– Webinar
Mar 1:	Start of ACCSP FY22
Mar 2:	Information Systems Committee Annual Meeting – Webinar
Mar 3:	Commercial Technical Committee Annual Meeting – Webinar
Mar 7-11:	SAFMC Meeting – Jekyll Island, GA
Apr 5-7:	MAFMC Meeting – Galloway, NJ
Apr 12-14:	NEFMC Meeting – Mystic, CT
Week of April 11:	Operations and Advisory Committees Spring Meeting – Webinar
Week of April 11:	Recreational Technical Committee – Webinar
May 2-5:	ASMFC/Coordinating Council Meeting – Arlington, VA
May 11:	ACCSP issues request for proposals
Late May:	APAIS Wave 2 Meeting – Webinar
Jun 7-9:	MAFMC Meeting – Riverhead, NY
Jun 13-17:	SAFMC Meeting – Key West, FL
Jun 15:	Initial proposals are due
Jun 22:	Initial proposals are distributed to Operations and Advisory Committees
Jun 28-30:	NEFMC Meeting – Portland, ME
July 6:	Any initial written comments on proposals due
Week of Jul 11:	Review of initial proposals by Operations and Advisory Committees – Webinar
July 20:	If applicable, any revised written comments due
Week of Jul 25:	Feedback submitted to principal investigators
Late July:	APAIS Wave 3 Meeting – Webinar
Aug 1-4:	ASMFC Meeting/Coordinating Council Meeting – Arlington, VA

Aug 8-11:	MAFMC Meeting – Philadelphia, PA
Aug 17:	Revised proposals due
Aug 24:	Revised proposals distributed to Operations and Advisory Committees
Week of Sep 5: Webinar	Preliminary ranking exercise for Advisors and Operations Members –
Sep 12-16:	SAFMC Meeting – Charleston, SC
Sep 20-21:	Annual Advisors/Operations Committee Joint Meeting (in-person; location TBD)
Sep 27-29:	NEFMC Meeting – Gloucester, MA
Late October:	APAIS Wave 4 Meeting – Webinar
Oct 4-6:	MAFMC Meeting – Dewey Beach, DE
Oct 19-21:	ASMFC Annual Meeting/Coordinating Council Meeting – Webinar
Dec 5-9:	SAFMC Meeting – Wrightsville Beach, NC
Dec 6-8:	NEFMC Meeting – Newport, RI
Dec 12-15:	MAFMC Meeting – Annapolis, MD

Ranking Guide - Maintenance Projects:

Primary Program Priority	Point Range	Description of ranking consideration
Catch and Effort	0-10	Rank based on range within module and level of sampling defined under Program design. When considering biological or bycatch funding rank according to priority matrices.
Biological Sampling	0-8	
Bycatch/Species Interactions	0-6	
Social and Economic	0-4	
Metadata	+2	Additional points if metadata collected and supplied to Program defined within the proposal.

Project Quality Factors	Point Range	Description of ranking consideration
Multi-Partner/Regional impact including broad applications.	0-5	Rank based on the number of Partners involved in project OR regional scope of proposal (e.g. geographic range of the stock).
> yr 2 contains funding transition plan and/or justification for continuance	0-4	Rank based on defined funding transition plan away from Program funding or viable justification for continued Program funding.
In-kind contribution	0-4	1=1%-25% 2=26%-50% 3=51%-75% 4=76%-99%
Improvement in data quality/quantity/timeliness	0-4	1=Maintain minimum level of needed data collections. ↓ 4=Improvements in data collection reflecting 100% of related module as defined within the Program design.
Potential secondary module as a by-product (In program priority order)	0-4, 0-3, 0-2, 0-1	Rank based on <u>single</u> additional module data collection and level of collection as defined within the Program design of individual module.
Impact on stock assessment	0-3	Rank based on the level of data collection that leads to new or greatly improved stock assessments.

Other Factors	Point Range	Description of ranking consideration
Properly Prepared	0-5	Meets requirements as specified in funding decision document Step2b and Guidelines

Ranking Guide - New Projects:

Program Priority	Point Range	Description of ranking consideration
Catch and Effort	0-10	Rank based on range within module and level of sampling defined under Program design. When considering biological or bycatch funding rank according to priority matrices.
Biological Sampling	0-8	
Bycatch/Species Interactions	0-6	
Social and Economic	0-4	
Metadata	+2	Additional points if metadata collected and supplied to Program defined within the proposal.

Project Quality Factors	Point Range	Description of ranking consideration
Multi-Partner/Regional impact including broad applications.	0-5	Rank based on the number of Partners involved in project or regional scope of proposal (e.g. fisheries sampled).
Contains funding transition plan / Defined end-point	0-4	Rank based on quality of funding transition plan or defined end point.
In-kind contribution	0-4	1=1%-25% 2=26%-50% 3=51%-75% 4=76%-99%
Improvement in data quality/quantity/timeliness	0-4	1=Maintain minimum level of needed data collections. ↓ 4=Improvements in data collection reflecting 100% of related module as defined within the Program design.
Potential secondary module as a by-product (In program priority order)	0-4, 0-3, 0-2, 0-1	Rank based on <u>single</u> additional module data collection and level of collection as defined within the Program design of individual module.
Innovative	0-5	Rank based on new technology, methodology, financial savings, etc.
Impact on stock assessment	0-3	Rank based on the level of data collection that leads to new or greatly improved stock assessments.

Other Factors	Point Range	Description of ranking consideration
Properly Prepared	0-5	Meets requirements as specified in funding decision document Step2b and Guidelines

Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program

2022 Data Accountability Report



Vision: To be the principal source of fisheries-dependent information on the Atlantic coast through cooperation of all program partners

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Data Accountability Work Group would like to thank everyone who participated in the surveys and provided feedback during this project. Additionally, thanks are extended to the members of the Commercial Technical Committee who provided feedback on this report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A Data Accountability Work Group (AWG) was formed in 2020 to address several tasks from the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) Coordinating Council in regard to fisheries data quality, accountability, verification, and use for the US Atlantic Coast. The AWG was tasked with evaluating the practices and procedures currently in use and reviewing and updating the ACCSP standards as needed. The AWG established the goals of defining data accountability, inventorying and evaluating current practices and procedures, defining the gaps between provided data and data needed by consumers, and documenting and developing best practices. For the purposes of this report, data accountability was defined as fisheries data that included some QA/QC procedure and was complete, accurate, accessible, trusted, and timely. Additionally, accountability meant that uncertainty in data is acknowledged and defined and metadata is documented and available.

The AWG circulated two surveys, in addition to an original survey circulated by ACCSP staff, to meet several of the listed objectives. The first survey was to establish methods in use by partner agencies, the second was for data managers, and the third was for data consumers. The results of these surveys were compiled and described in detail in this report. The three primary validation methods in use are audits, dealer and fishermen report comparisons, and negative reporting. In general, data managers are aware of a variety of issues affecting data quality. This varies by jurisdiction and sector, but the impacts to data quality and the inadequate communication of such impacts are substantial, particularly when working with regional or coastal datasets that span multiple jurisdictions. The responses to the data consumer survey helped identify several issues, most of which were likely communication and not data issues.

Based on comments collected from data managers and consumers and the discussion within the AWG, a number of recommendations are proposed to improve communication of data limitations and provide opportunities for jurisdictions and sectors to expand and streamline processes.

- Begin a multijurisdictional effort to document metadata and caveats to be easily interpreted similarly by all data consumers.
- Create a regular and ongoing Best Practices Workshop to discuss and share automation and technical advances that improve data quality.
- Consider a Best Practices Workshop as part of Fisheries Information System (FIS) projects for fiscal year 2023 for data providers to compare data collection programs, audits, and trips/dealer reports.
- Work with ACCSP to develop automated auditing and data validation tools, particularly for their data entry tools, but also for any data validations conducted by partners.
- Identify and share funding resources for development and implementation of technological advances.
- Develop a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document to increase communication and outreach to data users.

- ACCSP and data providers should review data element/field definitions to make sure they are as comprehensive as possible, including indicating the reliability of each field, and consider including data definitions as part of the data download as a tab or a row.
- Expand and simplify the language on the ACCSP website to better describe the federal laws regarding data confidentiality and data sources and possible affects that may have on a data query.
- Continue the communication between ACCSP and Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) staff and among state and federal partners about data timing for stock assessments, management documents, and compliance reports.

The AWG successfully achieved all of its original objectives with the exception of the development of best practices. Instead, the AWG made several recommendations about coordinating a series of best practices workshops among data providers to accomplish this task.

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1 BACKGROUND

1.1 Charge from Coordinating Council

The idea of accountability was first raised during the May 1, 2018, meeting of the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) Coordinating Council by the Chair at the time, Lynn Fegley (Maryland Department of Natural Resources). The concept was based on a forward thinking approach toward data quality and maximizing the value of the investment of ACCSP and partner staff time and resources in data warehousing. The idea of data accountability was to have a standardized mechanism or approach to verify that data reflect what is happening on the water and at the docks. The Council felt that data clerks entering paper data provided an initial check of data. While there are advantages to the shift to electronic forms, the loss of the data entry clerk presents a need for additional data verification and auditing. The group consensus was to pass this charge to ACCSP staff, who performed the initial data accountability survey and passed on the charge to the ACCSP Commercial Technical Committee (ComTech).

1.2 Commercial Technical Committee Discussion

ComTech was presented with the results of the Data Accountability Survey (Appendix A) and the charge from the Coordinating Council from their March 12, 2019 meeting. The group discussed the need to define audit and validation. Discussion was held concerning partner resources to meet standards and the differences in various stock assessment approaches. The group members decided that a small group of state and federal partners should be formed to address the definition issues and address the tasks related to the charge from the Coordinating Council.

The Data Accountability Work Group (AWG) members found that the charge from the Coordinating Council was not specific enough to direct work and asked that ACCSP staff coordinate with Coordinating Council members and provide a more specific charge. The following was established and passed on to the AWG.

Problem: *Data validation and accountability issues can compromise data quality and reduce their utility for stock assessments, compliance reports, and other management activities.*

- 1. Data validation – How are Partners validating data? Are there potential impacts for data use?*
- 2. Data accountability - Does ACCSP receive data in a timely way? Are there gaps that could be closed by better coordination?*

Solution: *Direct Commercial Technical committee to...*

- 1. Evaluate current validation practices used by the Program Partners.*
- 2. Evaluate current procedures for providing/updating data for various uses (stock assessments/compliance reports/FMPs)*

3. Review Atlantic Coast Data Standards and updated as needed to reflect current best practices for both data validation and provisioning.

1.3 AWG Objectives

The AWG held their first meeting on January 17, 2020, and established monthly meetings. The objectives of the AWG were to:

1. Define accountability.
2. Inventory current practices and procedures.
3. Define the gaps between provided data and data needed for science and management.
4. Evaluate the practices and procedures.
5. Document and develop best practices.

1.4 Accountability Definition

The AWG discussed internally what “accountability” meant among the different interest groups for fisheries data, e.g., the Coordinating Council, Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) and Regional Council staff, Agency leadership, NGOs, academia, general public. The definition for the purpose of this project applies to agencies that collect, audit, and/or process data as well as to stakeholders, the public, and data users. The AWG agreed that data accountability meant data integrity where fisheries data included some quality assurance/quality control (QA/QC) procedure and was complete, accurate, accessible, trusted, and timely. Additionally, accountability meant that uncertainty in and limitations of data are acknowledged and defined and metadata is documented and available.

1.5 Survey Development

The original survey was developed by ACCSP staff in response to the charge from the Coordinating Council prior to the formation of the AWG (Section 2). The results of this survey served as a basis for understanding the various approaches used by partners to address accountability. However, it was realized that the broader nature of the original survey did not address the more detailed approaches and did not provide clear enough definitions of some procedures to adequately determine their use across partners. Additionally, the AWG recognized the need to identify the gap between current practices and the definition of accountability established by the group as their first task. Two additional surveys were developed in order to address these knowledge gaps. The Data Manager Survey (Section 3) was focused on collecting information on the current practices and procedures in use and the perspectives of the data managers. The Data Consumer Survey (Section 4) was directed at scientists, managers, and the public. The survey collected information on the successes and deficiencies of current data preparation and dissemination as it relates to accountability as defined by the AWG. The data collected in these two surveys, in addition to the background and groundwork of the first survey and the establishment of an accountability definition, provided

enough information for the AWG to perform an evaluation and make recommendations. See Figure 1 for a summary of the process.

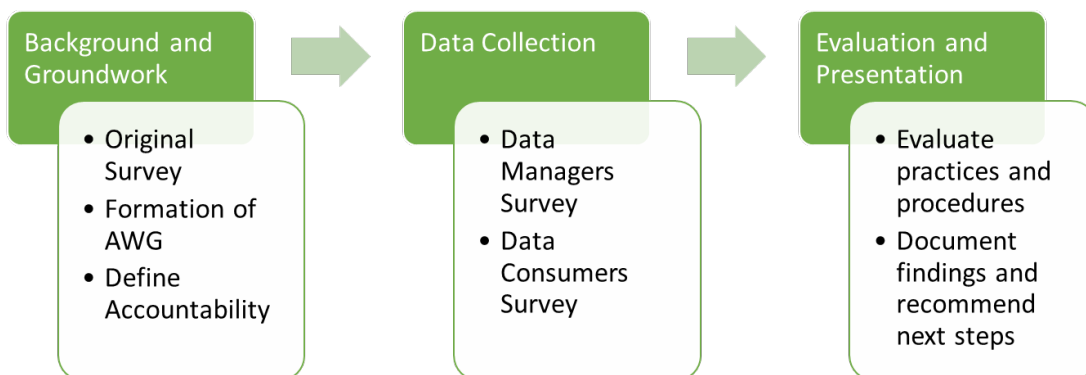


Figure 1. Summary of Data Accountability Work Group process.

2 DATA ACCOUNTABILITY SURVEY

2.1 Background

The Data Accountability Survey was circulated in January, 2019, to partner data contacts and members of the ComTech. This initial survey asked respondents if their agency used each of 12 identified accountability measures and, if yes, to describe how the measure was implemented and what percentage of data are covered. The purpose was to establish basic information on accountability and the survey was distributed prior to the formal formation of the Accountability Work Group (AWG). See Appendix A for a full list of the survey questions.

2.2 Results

This section summarizes the results of original survey by question and discusses suggestions from the AWG to address the issues identified.

2.2.1 Demographics

Nineteen individuals representing 18 agencies responded to the survey. The responses were well distributed along the coast and represented both state and NOAA Fisheries partners (Figure 2).

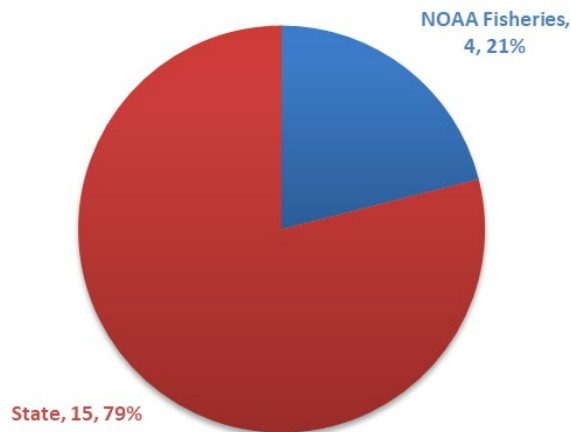


Figure 2. What agency do you represent? Responses were categorized into state and NOAA Fisheries (federal).

2.2.2 Does your agency use onboard observers to validate trip data?

Most respondents indicated that they do not use observers to validate trip data (Figure 3). The AWG observed that all 3 affirmative answers were from federal respondents. In the comments, there were a few states that indicated that, while they do have an observer program, those data are not used to validate the landings. However, the respondents indicated that they do collect biological data, and all data are used to inform management and support stock assessments.

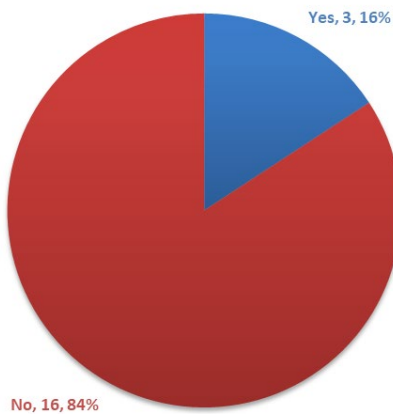


Figure 3. Does your agency use onboard observers to validate trip data?

2.2.3 Does your agency use dockside monitoring/sampling to validate landings data?

Approximately half of the participants in the survey (47%) indicated that dockside sampling data are used to validate landings (Figure 4). All of the partners that responded in the negative

were states, many of which noted in the comments that, while their agency or an associated law enforcement agency do perform dockside sampling/monitoring, those data are not being used to validate landings. This sampling is specifically geared toward biological sampling, bycatch monitoring, and/or law enforcement and is not designed to validate landings.

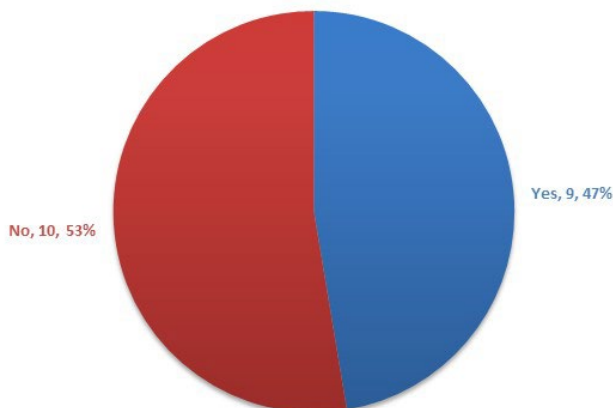


Figure 4. Does your agency use dockside monitoring/sampling to validate landings data?

2.2.4 Does your agency compare fishermen trips to dealer reports to validate landings data?

The majority of responders indicated that that comparison of multiple data streams was used to validate landings data (84%; Figure 5). Among the three responders that responded “No,” indicating this method of validation was not used, all three were state agencies. Responses from these states indicated that a comparison was not used as a validation tool due to use of a one-ticket system or a lack of trip level information from either the fishermen or the dealer. Aside from data audits, which are reviewed in Section 2.2.9, the comparison of dealer reports to validate landings data was the most common form of accountability measure being employed by respondents. It is important to note that the responses to this question indicate that the comparison or matching of dealer reports to fishermen reports is more difficult at the state level. Many states indicated that while comparisons do occur, they are not comprehensive and, in some cases, are limited to a single species or fleet.

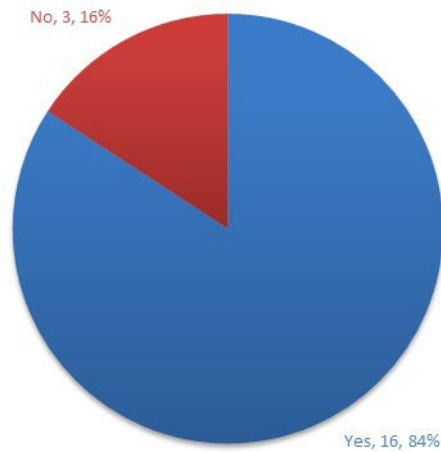


Figure 5. Does your agency compare fishermen trips to dealer reports to validate landings data?

2.2.5 Does your agency conduct interagency comparisons to validate landings data (i.e., comparing a state report to a federal VTR)?

Interagency comparisons to validate landings data are employed by over half of respondents (63%; Figure 6). The AWG observed that a number of the yes responses to this question are comparisons between fishermen trips and dealer reports, which is a positive response to the previous question and two streams of data rather than duplicative streams of data. Highly Migratory Species (HMS) was the only federal partner that does extensive comparison to state data reported in the ACCSP Data Warehouse. In many cases, there were not two data streams to compare as duplicative data reported to multiple jurisdictions are discouraged due to the burden on the industry.

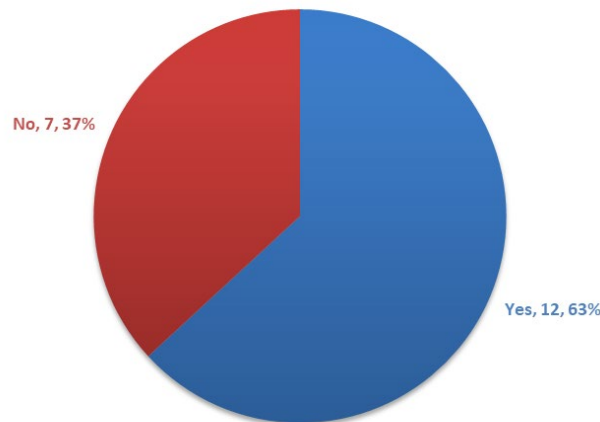


Figure 6. Does your agency conduct interagency comparisons to validate landings data (i.e., comparing a state report to a federal VTR)?

2.2.6 Does your agency use VMS to validate reported trip data?

Most respondents indicated that vessel monitoring system (VMS) is not used to validate trip data (74%; Figure 7). The majority of positive respondents were federal and almost all indicated that the VMS data were used on a portion of landings rather than as a comprehensive approach. It should be noted that with the exception of some pilot projects that are currently underway, all VMS is currently federal.

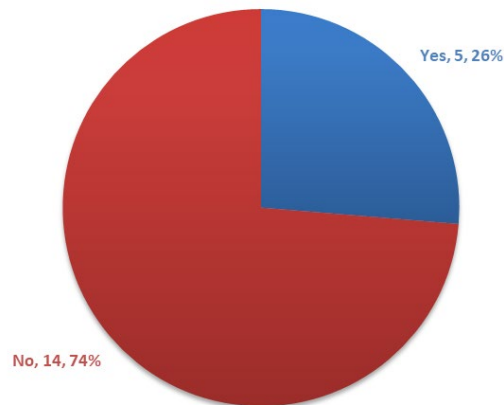


Figure 7. Does your agency use VMS to validate reported trip data?

2.2.7 Does your agency require pre-trip notifications or hail outs to validate landings data?

Slightly under half of respondents to the survey indicated the use of pre-trip notifications or hail outs to validate landings data (47%; Figure 8). The AWG noted that pre-trip notifications or hail outs are more predominantly used at the federal level and that they are not comprehensive in all cases at both the state and federal levels.

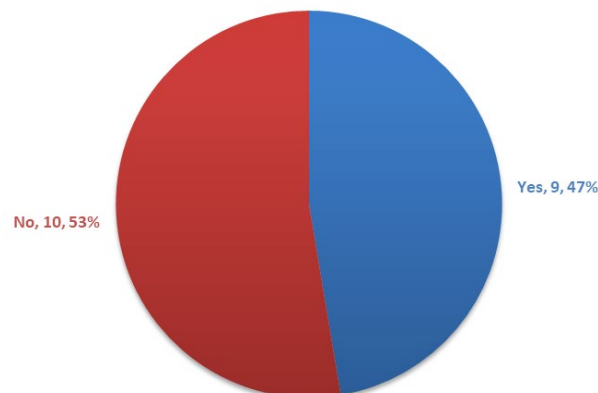


Figure 8. Does your agency require pre-trip notifications or hail outs to validate landings data?

2.2.8 Does your agency require negative trip reports?

Negative trip reports are the third most popular form of accountability measure in the survey, with 79% responding in the affirmative (Figure 9). The AWG noted that numerous states were using negative reports because timely and reliable matching of dealer and fishermen trips was not available at the state level. In addition, it was observed that Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office (GARFO) decided to drop negative reporting, but that they have quite a robust and timely system for matching dealer and fishermen reports. The responses to this question, in conjunction with Section 2.2.4 demonstrate that the two primary approaches to accountability are employed differently at the state and federal level.

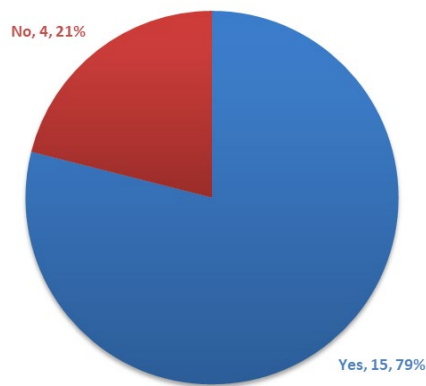


Figure 9. Does your agency require negative trip reports?

2.2.9 Does your agency conduct data audits?

The conduct of data audits was the most popular accountability method amongst those surveyed with 89% of respondents answering in the affirmative (Figure 10). The AWG noted that there was a wide variety of responses in the comments portion of this question indicating that the two negative responses to this question were due to the interpretation of the word “audit.” Two conclusions were drawn from these responses. First, the group became aware of the need to provide definitions for both “audit” and “accountability” during future surveys. Second, the variation in audits and the realization that, in fact, all partners are performing some sort of audit makes this the most employed and difficult method to standardize. Variance in audit procedures and policies stems from the specific needs of the partner and dissimilarity may not necessarily be a negative.

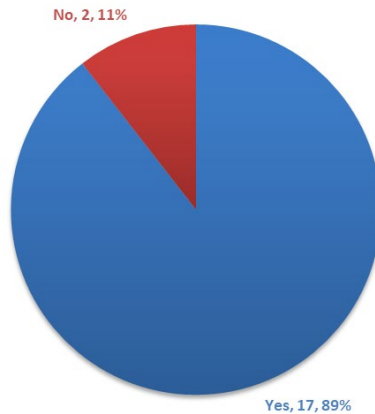


Figure 10. Does your agency conduct data audits?

2.2.10 Does your agency use law enforcement to validate landings data (i.e., boardings/inspections by Natural Resources Police)?

While over half (58%) of respondents indicated the use of law enforcement to validate landings (Figure 11), the AWG observed that the comments indicate that this method is rarely employed in a comprehensive fashion. Use of law enforcement is in many cases limited to certain species or fleets. It was also reported that law enforcement in some agencies did not have access to landings data and so validation was only done upon request or when a vessel or fisher was intercepted for violations.

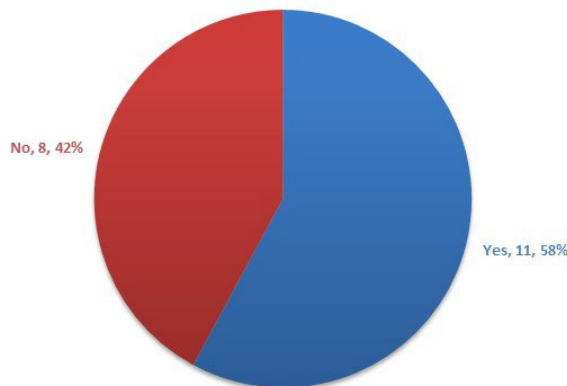


Figure 11. Does your agency use law enforcement to validate landings data (i.e., boardings/inspections by Natural Resources Police)?

2.2.11 Please briefly describe any validation methods used by your agency that were not previously included. Briefly explain your process, the percentage of landings data covered by this method, and how you resolve any data discrepancies.

Approximately a third (32%) of respondents provided an answer to this question that described an additional method (Figure 12). These methods included species specific reviews of data for stock assessment or management purposes, weigh stations, weight out sheets, quota monitoring, and validations built into electronic reporting (ER) software. This last was specifically reported as SAFIS eTRIPS software, but the group recognizes that the majority of ER software includes some validation. Additionally, it was noted that limited landing times were employed to increase the opportunity for law enforcement validation. As this validation was surveyed, this was considered valuable information, but not as an additional method.

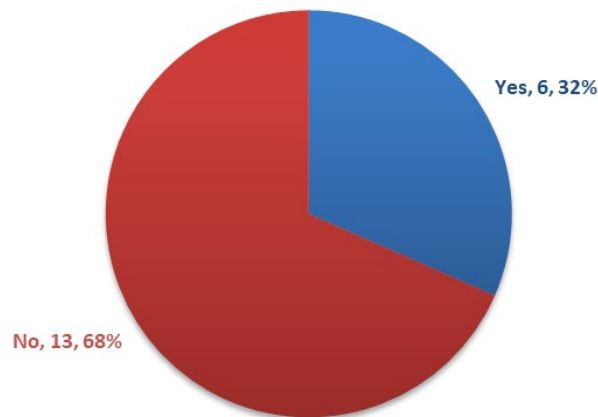


Figure 12. Please briefly describe any validation methods used by your agency that were not previously included. “Yes” indicates a response that provided a methodology not surveyed in a previous question.

2.3 Conclusions and Recommendations

Overall, the AWG found that the responses to the data user survey helped identify the primary methods of accountability that were being employed on the Atlantic coast. The information collected allowed the group to create a definition for accountability and provide clarity for respondents during the following two surveys. The recommendations from this survey were limited as its purpose was to serve as a foundation. Primarily, it helped to identify those methods that have differing patterns of use in state and federal partners due to differences in resources and/or specific constraints of the data. Specifically, the group was able to determine that the top three methods of accountability in use on the Atlantic coast were, in order, audits, comparison of fishermen reports and dealer reports, and negative reports. Audits of some form are used by all the respondents and, to the knowledge of the group, all state and federal partners on the Atlantic coast. The use of dealer/fishermen comparison and negative reports

was somewhat inversely correlated where the latter was employed specifically where the timeliness and comprehensiveness of the former was lacking.

3 DATA MANAGER SURVEY

3.1 Background

The ACCSP Data Manager Follow-Up Survey was circulated in September 2020, to 52 data managers including federal partners, state partners, and council and commission staff. See Appendix B for a full list of the survey questions.

3.2 Results

This section summarizes the results of Data Manager Survey by question and discusses suggestions from the AWG to address the issues identified.

3.2.1 Demographics

Thirty-four data managers participated in this survey from 13 different agencies. Of these, two indicated they were not data managers and did not fill in the rest of the survey. The MAFMC representative, three federal respondents, and three state respondents indicated they managed data but did not answer the remaining questions. These nine records were removed from analysis. The final tally of respondents by jurisdiction can be seen in Figure 13.

All managers were asked to identify the sector(s) in which they manage data, commercial, recreational, and/or for-hire. Eleven managers indicated they only manage a single sector with the remaining managing at least two sectors. Those eleven were predominately focused on the commercial sector with one in the for-hire, and three in the recreational. The percent of responses by sector can be seen in Figure 13.

Eighteen state partners responded and of those, five were commercial only, seven for-hire/recreational, and six with some combination of commercial and for-hire/recreational sector management (Table 1). There was one ASMFC respondent for the recreational sector. Six federal partners responded and of those, two were commercial only, one was for-hire only, and three were some combination of commercial and for-hire/recreational sector management.

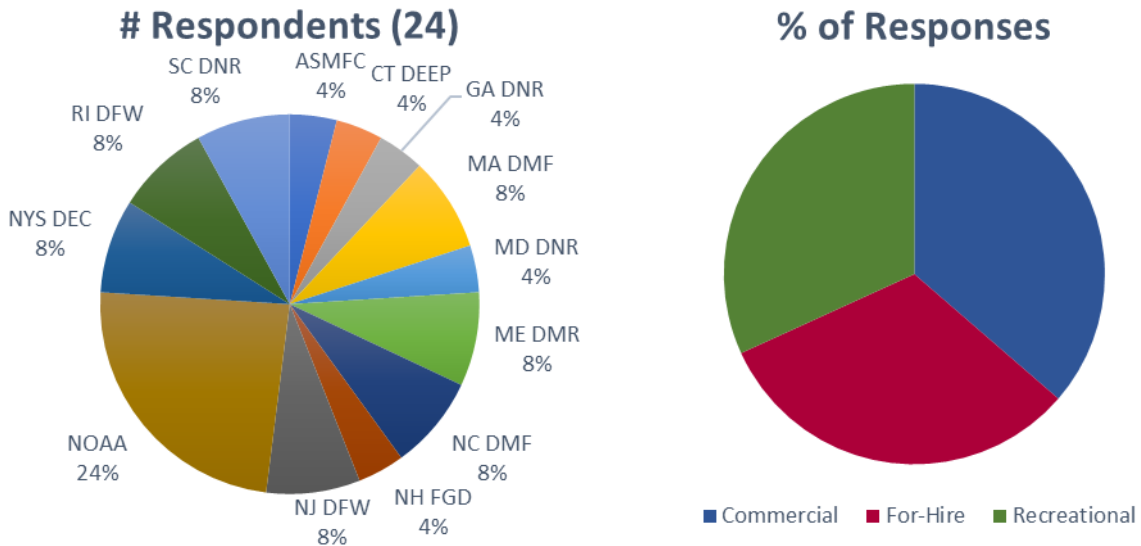


Figure 13. Percent of responses by jurisdiction (left) and by sector (right).

Table 1. Participation by sector and jurisdiction in the Data Managers Follow-up Survey.

Participation by Sector and Jurisdiction				
Jurisdiction	Sector			Total
	Commercial	For-Hire	Recreational	
State	11	11	12	18
Federal	5	3	1	6
ASMFC	0	0	1	1
Total	16	14	14	25

3.2.2 Caveats

While participants could select multiple sectors when asked for which they manage data, they could not split their answers between sectors, which led to a sector analysis with some caveats. Those who manage multiple sectors may have responded for one or the other more consistently, or even differently per issue. Moreover, if an issue was primarily intended for a specific sector, the responses were still assigned to all sectors the individual manages. For example, reconciling trip reports and dealer reports, is primarily a commercial issue. If someone managed both commercial and recreational data, their response will show up for both sectors, even though the response is geared towards commercial management.

Additionally, the response options "Never Occurs" and "N/A" were offered as a single response. The few times that this response was selected could mean the individual was uncertain of the process ("N/A") or indicating the issue never happens. Where possible, this was factored into the discussion of each issue.

3.2.3 Overall Trends

In general, all named issues (i.e., 1 through 6, Table 2) appear to impact all jurisdictions at a significant frequency. In all issues except number 7, more than 60% of responses indicated the issue sometimes or frequently occurs, while in half of the issues that percentage reaches over 70% of the responses (Figure 14). This indicates that data managers frequently encounter issues impacting data quality, but may not have the resources, either in time, staff, or technology, to create and maintain extensive accountability practices. The best practices of one jurisdiction may not be feasible in another for a wide variety of reasons resulting in difficulties categorizing and/or broadly defining accountability metrics.

Table 2. Issue codes used for the responses in the Data Managers Survey Follow-up.

Issue Number	Issue Description
1	Lack of metadata and caveats
2	Lack of credibility with particular fields (e.g., gear reported by dealers) or sources (e.g., entities knowingly providing inaccurate information) where the data being collected are not considered particularly reliable. If yes, in the comments please describe any documentation.
3	QA/QC is a manual process with little automation and is time consuming for staff resulting in less timely data
4	Reconciling vessel trip reports with dealer data is difficult and time consuming
5	Confirming corrections with industry members is necessary for trust with industry but can cause delays or data remaining incorrect.
6	Understaffing and/or lack of resources necessary to properly review data in a timely manner leads to delays or data remaining incorrect.
7	Other factors that have not been mentioned above

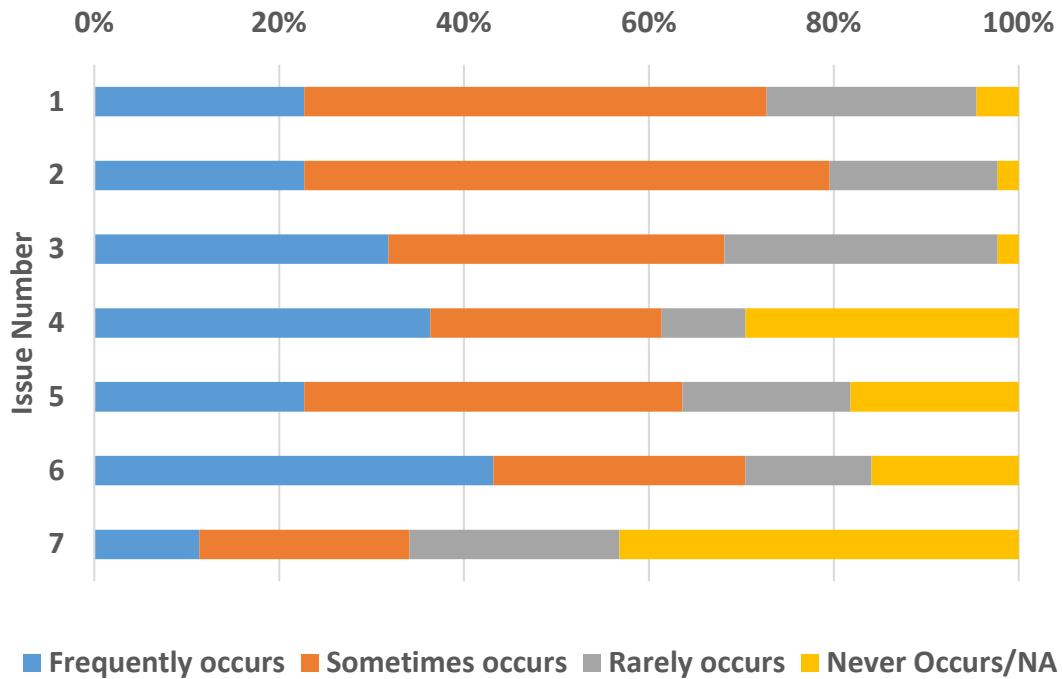


Figure 14. Percent of responses by issue and frequency of occurrence.

3.2.4 Issue 1: Lack of Metadata and Caveats

Documenting metadata and caveats is clearly important to understanding data from a consumer point of view. While managers across jurisdictions agree that this is missing in many cases, there is a disconnect between this acknowledgement and implementation. Additionally, as evidenced by some comments on this issue, managers may be interpreting the question of metadata resources and needs from different perspectives. From the perspective of the consumer, metadata are necessary due to a need for interpretation of data for end products, while from the perspective of those involved in data entry or data quality procedures, they are necessary for understanding how to enter and process data or flag anomalous data. At times, the latter may need more clarity on database specifics than their consumer counterparts.

In all three sectors, this issue of lack of metadata and existing caveats appears to be more prevalent among state partners than federal partners, although the sample size for the federal pool is a third that of the state pool (Figure 15 - Figure 16). The exception to this is the recreational sector under the federal jurisdiction. However, this pool is limited to a single individual who also manages the commercial sector and, in general, their responses tend to skew towards the commercial sector in their comments. However, this question does appear to apply to both sectors and will remain in the analysis. The single response sample size should be noted, however, when interpreting the magnitude of the issue in the recreational sector.

Ultimately, all partners and sectors agree on the importance of metadata and caveats and it is likely a multijurisdictional effort should be undertaken to produce such documents.

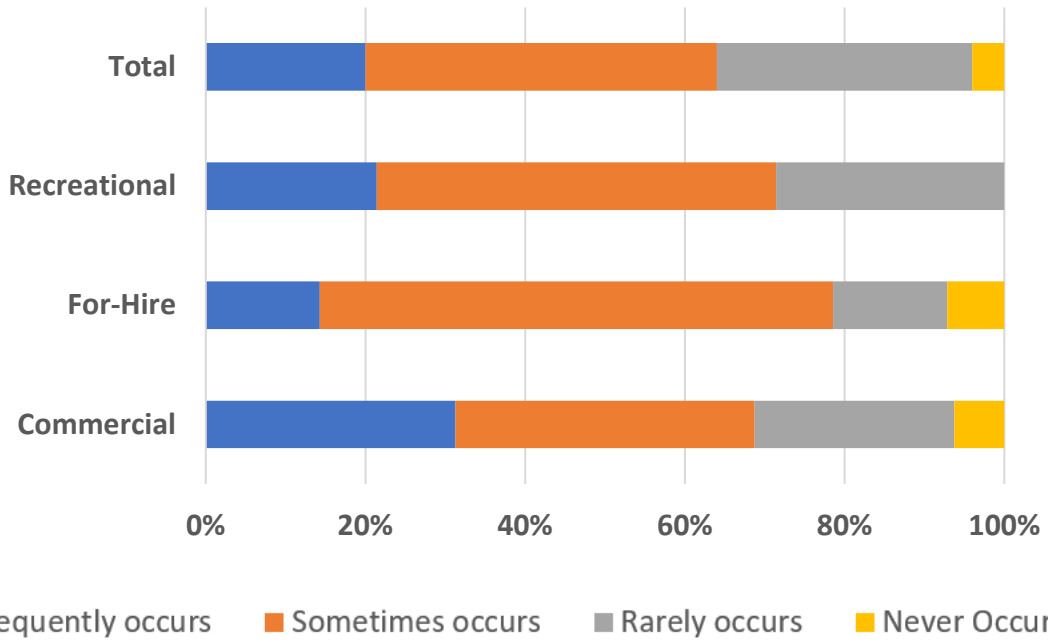


Figure 15. Percent of responses to the “lack of metadata and caveats” problem by sector and frequency of occurrence from all responders.

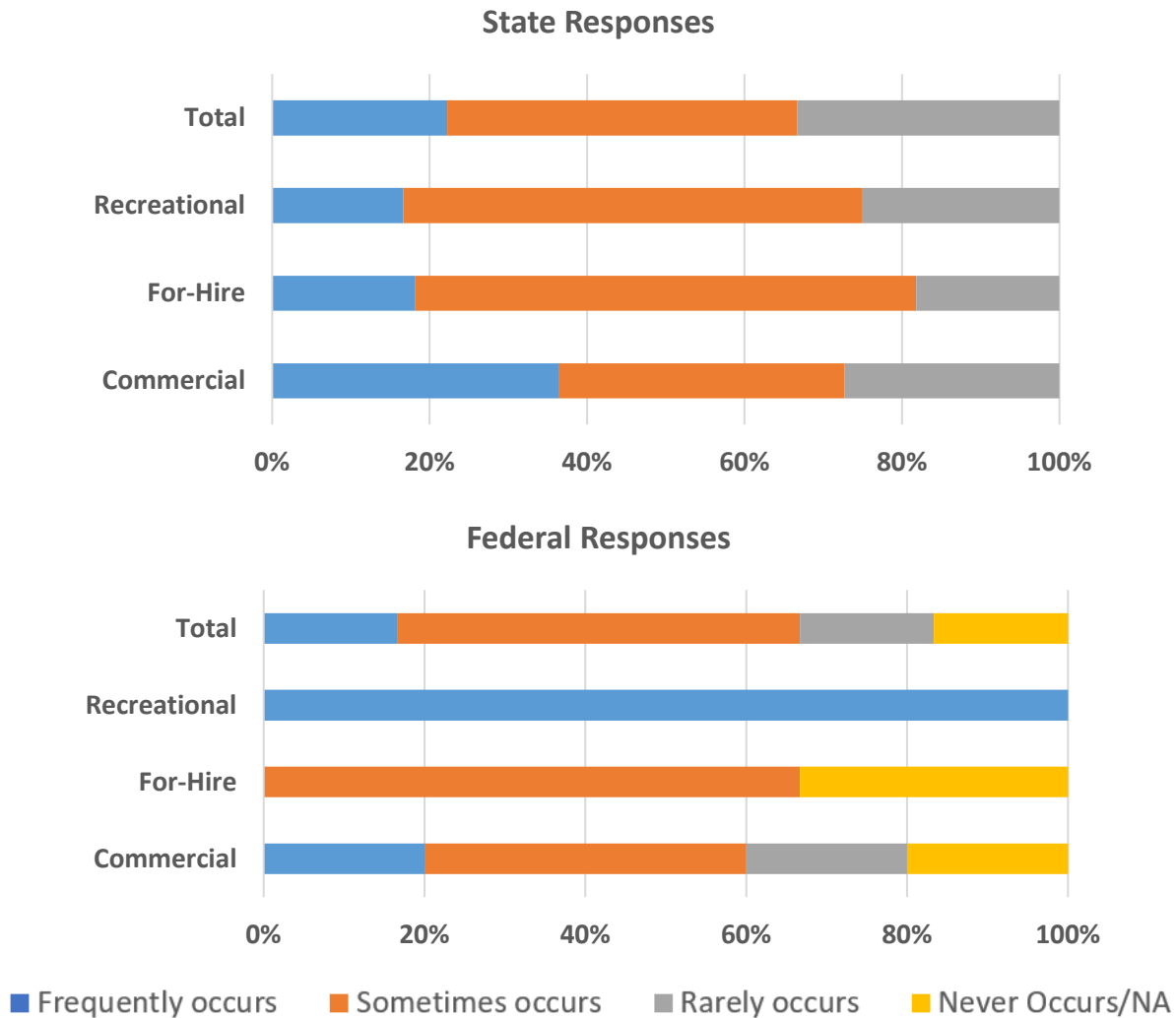


Figure 16. Percent of responses to the “lack of metadata and caveats” problem by sector, jurisdiction, and frequency of occurrence.

3.2.5 Issue 2: Field Credibility

When asked to respond regarding known credibility in certain fields, the issue appeared to be greater for states and in the for-hire sector (Figure 17 - Figure 18). For instance, the “gear code” field is a required field on electronically submitted dealer reports but is widely understood among data managers to be unreliable due to lack of compliance, dealers entering of “unknown” values, and for lack of validation. Gear code is not a required field for some federal and state partners, but it is for others. Data collection applications were originally designed to accommodate the most restrictive partner requirements, and as such, dealers from any jurisdiction are often required to fill out the gear code on their dealer reports, regardless of a regulatory requirement.

In some federal jurisdictions, there are reconciliation processes where federal vessel trip reports are compared to the federal dealer reports, and, in some fisheries, federal dealer

reports have gear information added based on the federal vessel trip reports. Other federal and state partners do not have timely vessel trip report and dealer report reconciliation processes. Due to these differences in how those data are reviewed and updated (i.e., either through reconciling with vessel reports or relying solely on dealer data entry), there are concerns with the accuracy of gears as reported on dealer reports. These concerns are more prominent for state compared to federal counterparts, most likely depending on fishery (Figure 18). That may, in part, be due to some federal data managers having greater confidence in gear codes reconciled from vessel reports rather than gear codes solely reported by dealers. However, data consumers (e.g., stock assessments scientists) still use the dealer reported data as the originally reported data more often persist in the publicly available ACCSP dataset.

Overall, comments indicated a variety of issues by sector. Comments by federal staff generally focused on commercial sector and one comment indicated difficulty in measuring the degree to which such an issue exists. Solutions for credibility issues might be sector or jurisdiction dependent, but perhaps such detail is best served in conjunction with issue 1 (metadata) and should be accommodated as part of “caveats.” There was no suggestion by the AWG or by respondents regarding ways to increase reliability of such fields, and in those cases, the only remedy is documentation, or a larger discussion and agreement on how to change remove fields with very low credibility. Generally, if extensive auditing and fishermen and/or dealer contact does not resolve a greater pattern of error, there is little managers can do to remedy such data quality issues other than initiate a broader discussion of altering a field definition or removal of a field altogether.

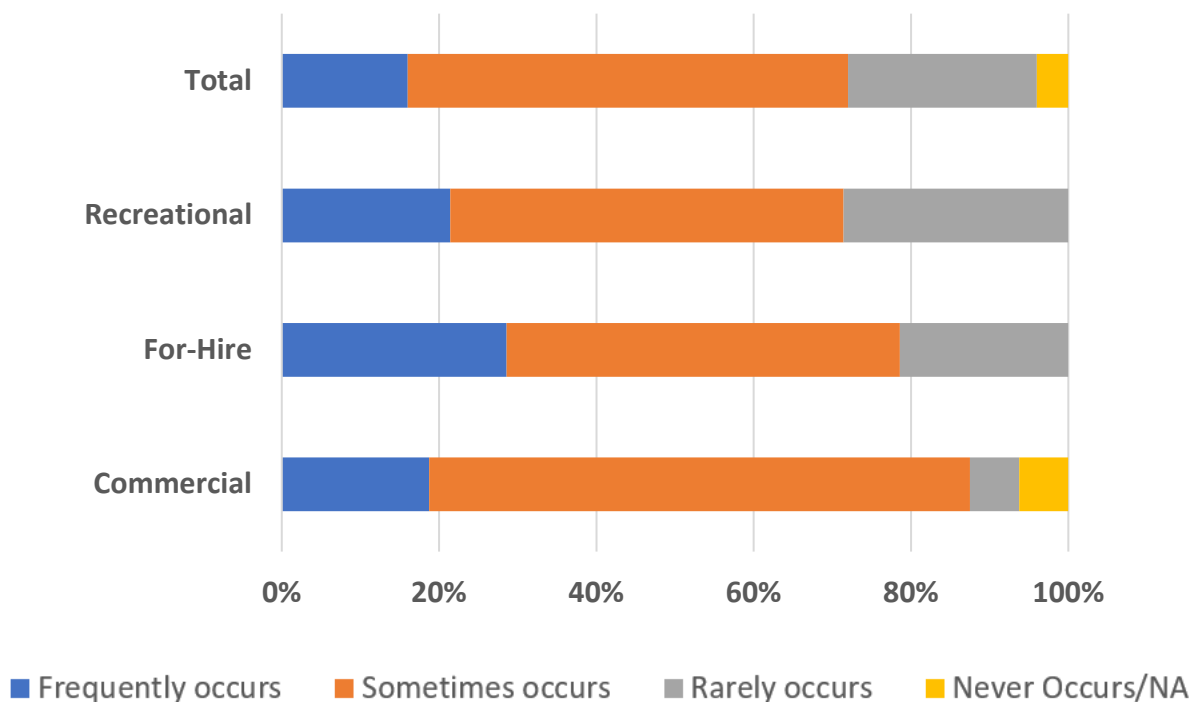


Figure 17. Percent of responses to the “field credibility” problem by sector and frequency of occurrence from all responders.

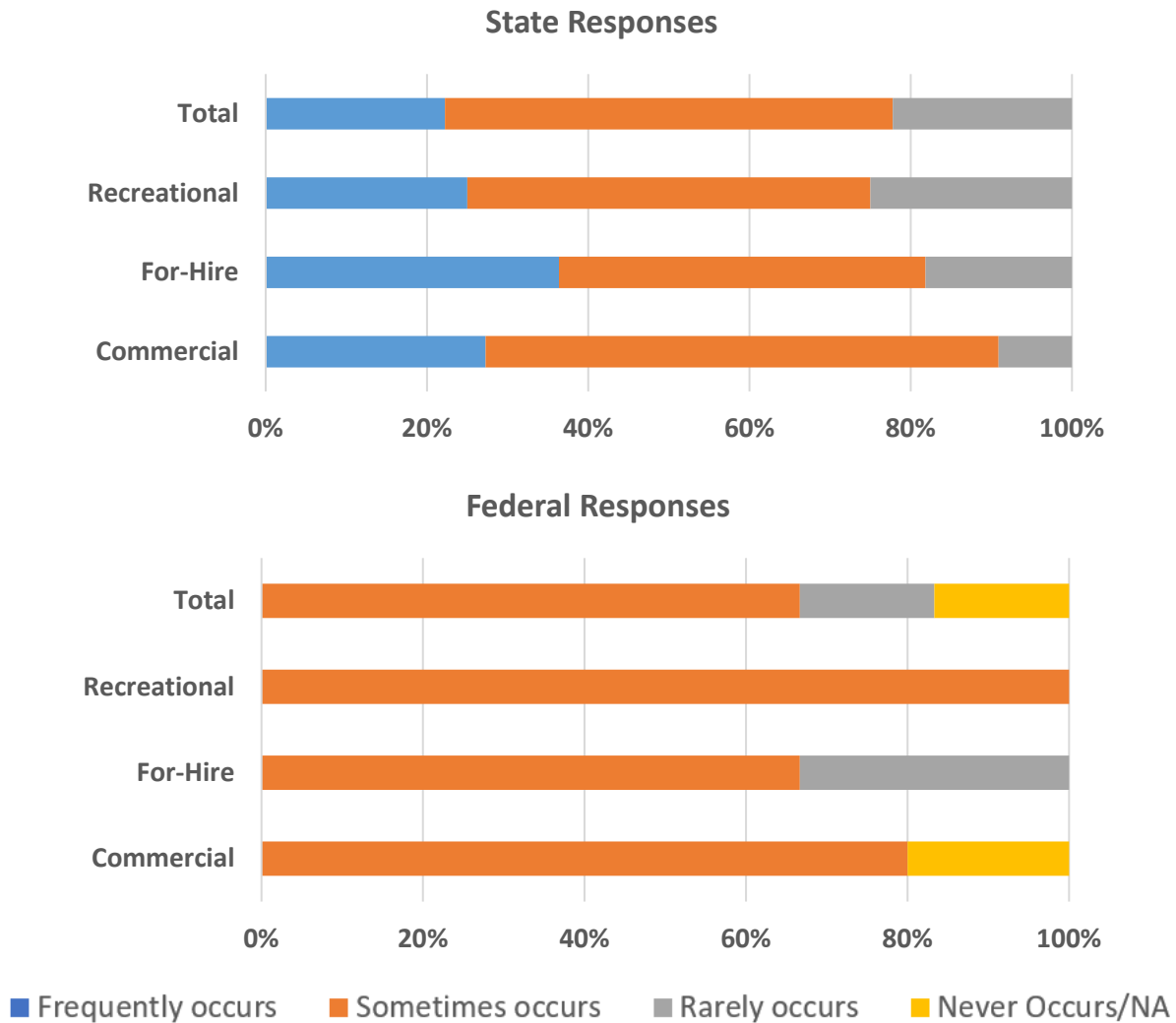


Figure 18. Percent of responses to the “field credibility” problem by sector, jurisdiction, and frequency of occurrence.

3.2.6 Issue 3: QA/QC Automation and Timeliness

Most respondents agreed this is a major time commitment from staff, and many must balance data quality with data entry (Figure 19 - Figure 20). This appears to be a much larger issue overall in the commercial sector, and this could be a function of the number of fields collected. In additions, in the Northeast, a two-ticket system (dealer and vessel reporting) is in place allowing for comparisons among data streams. While all sectors require intensive review due to the inherent error-prone nature of self-reported data, the collection of commercial data is the most detailed, thus requiring more specific intensive review. However, though this review is more intensive, such standardized data have been collected longer than the recreational sector data. Therefore, more time and effort have been spent developing methods for data review resulting in more established protocols available for the commercial sector at this time. Despite

this longer-term effort, automation for many jurisdictions is not available yet, and timeliness of finalizing datasets can still be an issue. Creating new processes takes time and additional effort.

One federal comment in the for-hire sector indicated an automated process that made things easier for QA/QC processes. However, much of the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) and for-hire survey data QA/QC processes are removed from the data managers as they are conducted by ACCSP. While data managers collaborate with their constituents and ACCSP to resolve discrepancies and fix any entry related issues, some of the more pattern-based analyses may not be conducted at the data manager level directly. This may bias such responses for this question in this sector. Such processes and implementation plans could benefit other partners. A multi-jurisdictional group dedicated to sharing uses of available technology could help partners reach milestones and goals otherwise thought to be unattainable.

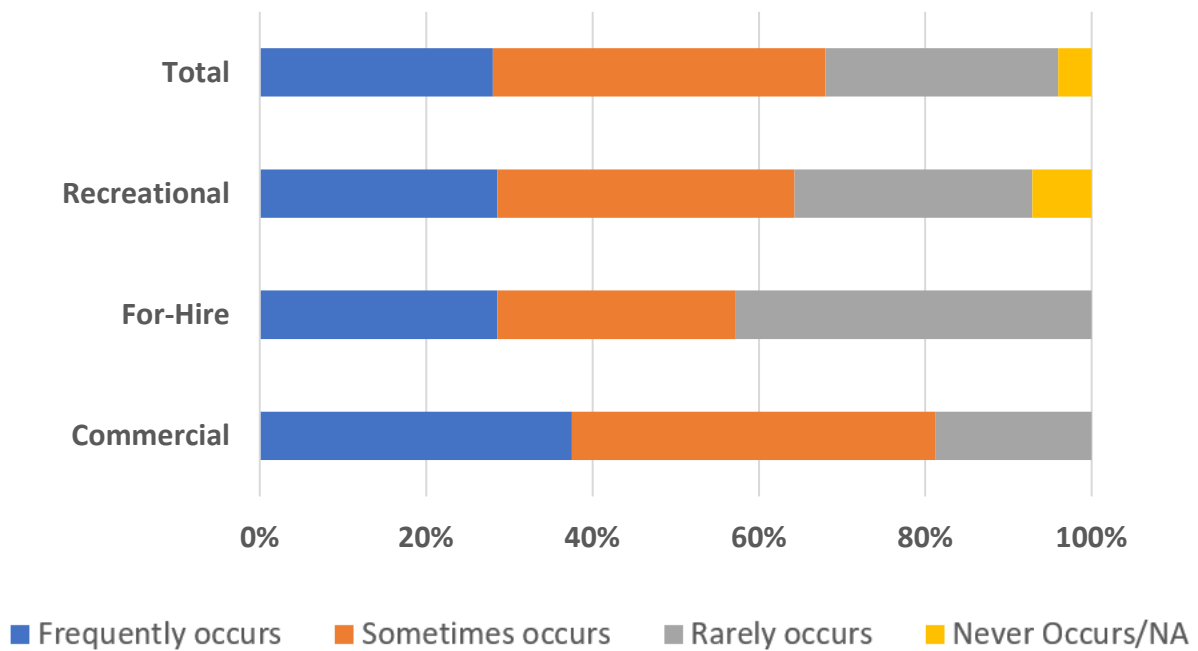


Figure 19. Percent of responses to the “QA/QC” problem by sector and frequency of occurrence from all responders.

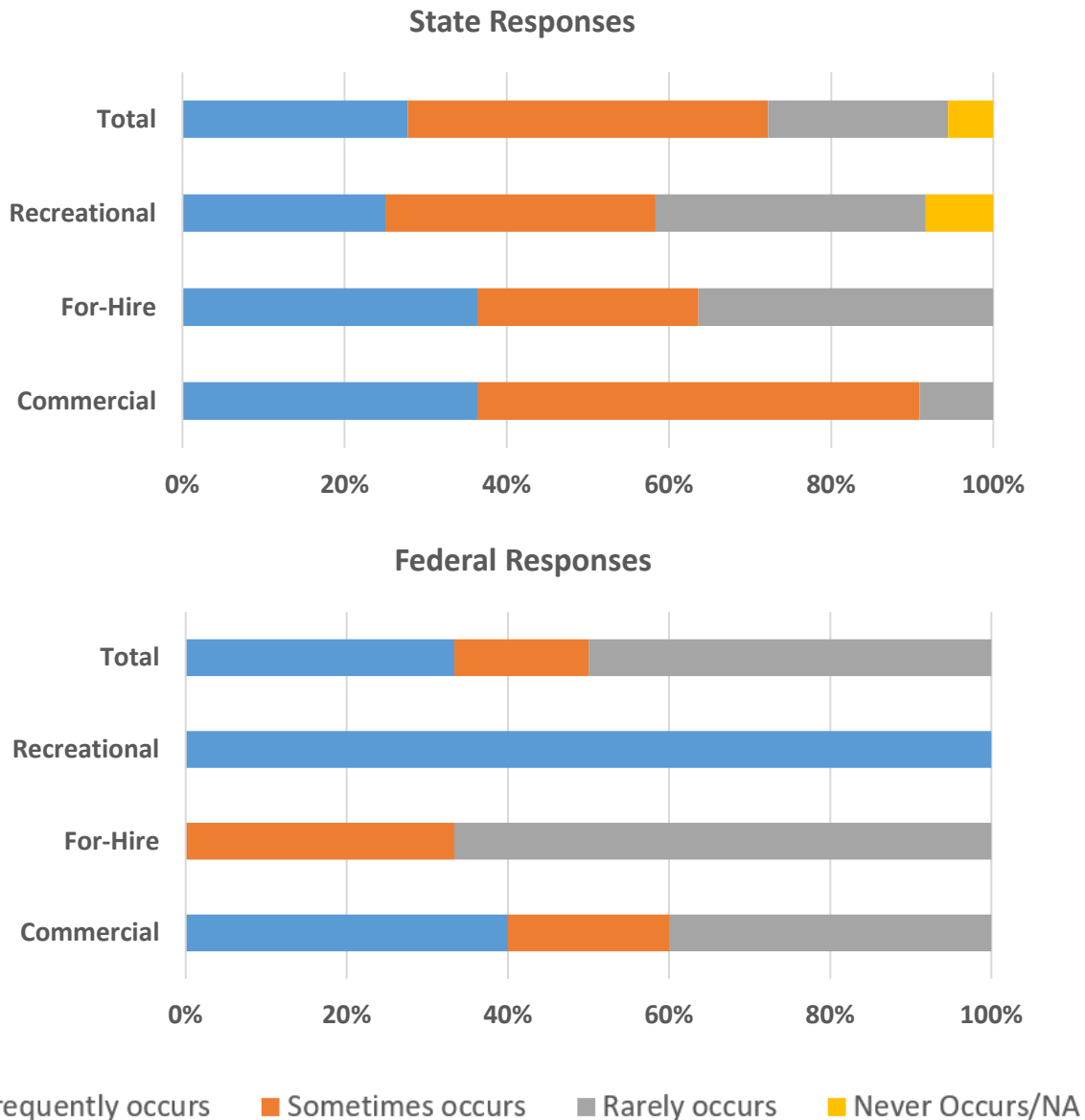


Figure 20. Percent of responses to the “QA/QC” problem by Sector, Jurisdiction, and Frequency of Occurrence

3.2.7 Issue 4: Reconciling Vessel/Harvester Trip Reports with Dealer Reports

By design, this question is geared towards the commercial sector as it is the only one with a dealer report component. Therefore, recreational and most for-hire responses should likely be ignored (Figure 21 - Figure 22). Often matching these two data streams exactly is not possible and inevitably results in a complicated matching process. Comments pertaining to matching issues cite differences between data collection systems, lack of complete/correct data, frequency of submission, and late reports hinder matching processes. Comments pertaining to

reconciliation indicate that sufficient/significant time is needed for following up with identified issues.

This issue is really a specific subset of issue 3 (QA/QC Automation and Timeliness) and part of the QA/QC process for commercial data. Similar to issue 3, sharing best practices/ideas/methods between jurisdictions may benefit all managers moving forward. When feasible, given a jurisdiction’s infrastructure and funding, technological advances should be capitalized upon for improving and expanding a jurisdiction’s ability to conduct such matching exercises.

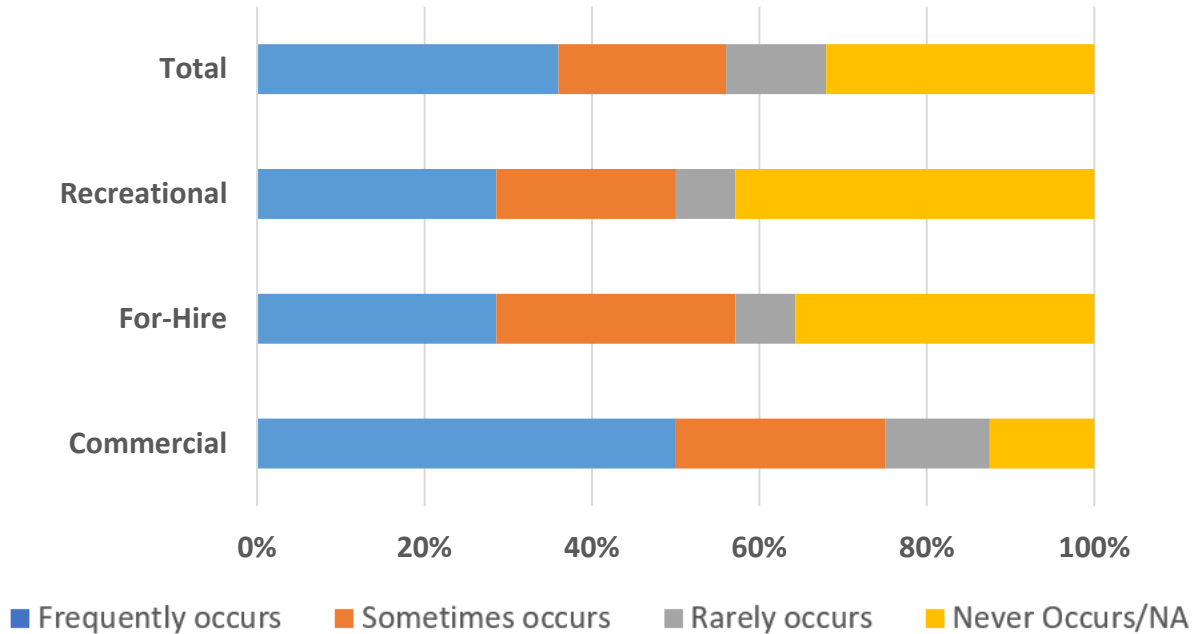


Figure 21. Percent of responses to the “reconciliation of trip and dealer reports” problem by sector and frequency of occurrence from all responders.

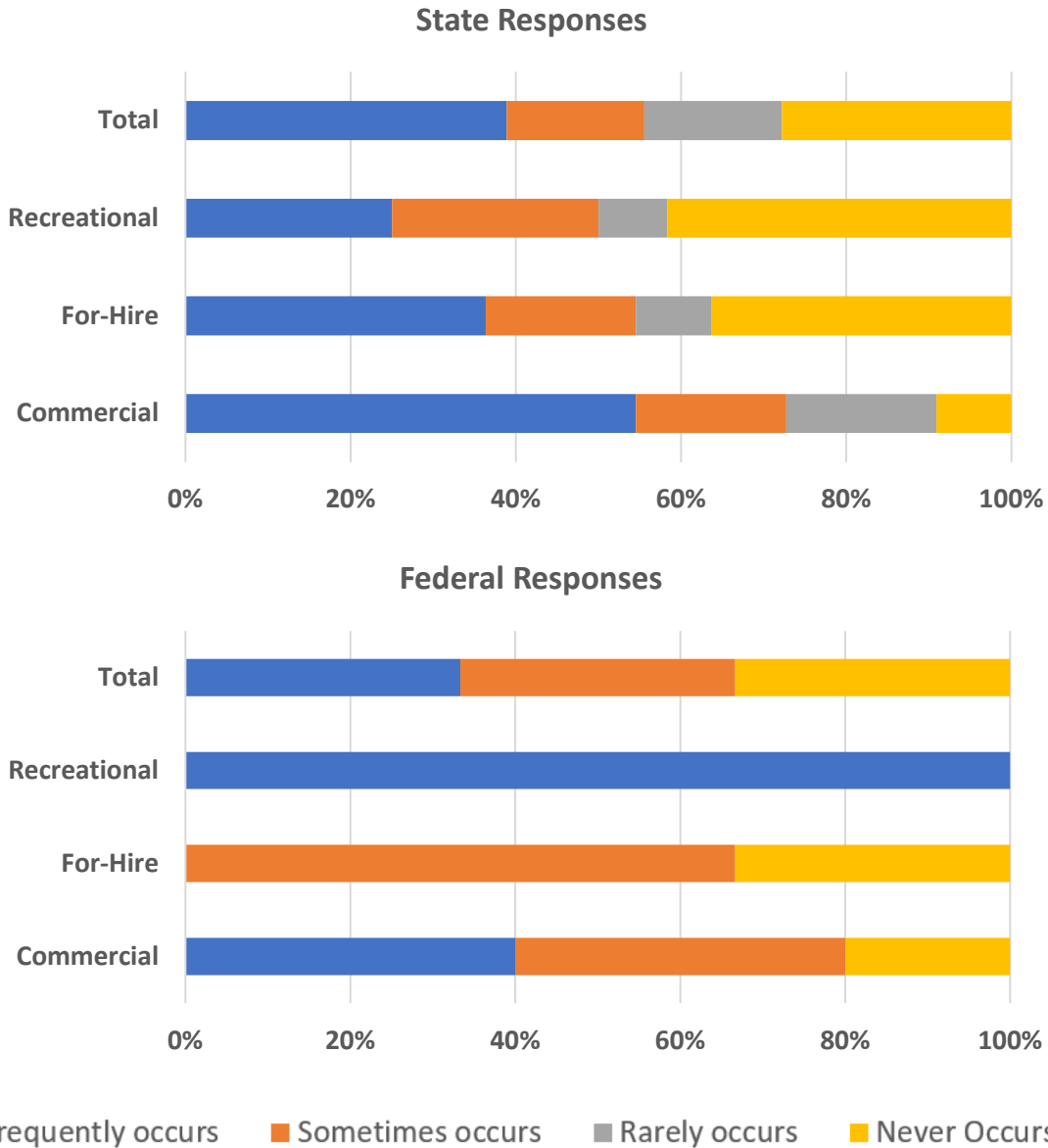


Figure 22. Percent of responses to the “reconciliation of trip and dealer reports” problem by sector, jurisdiction, and frequency of occurrence.

3.2.8 Issue 5: Confirmation of Corrections Impacting Timeliness and Quality

Once again, this issue appears to be a significant commercial issue; however, partners do not appear to agree on the extent of delays or inaccuracies that affect timeliness and quality. For example, when broken by sector and jurisdiction, the federal respondents indicated that this happens frequently with recreational data.(Figure 23 - Figure 24).

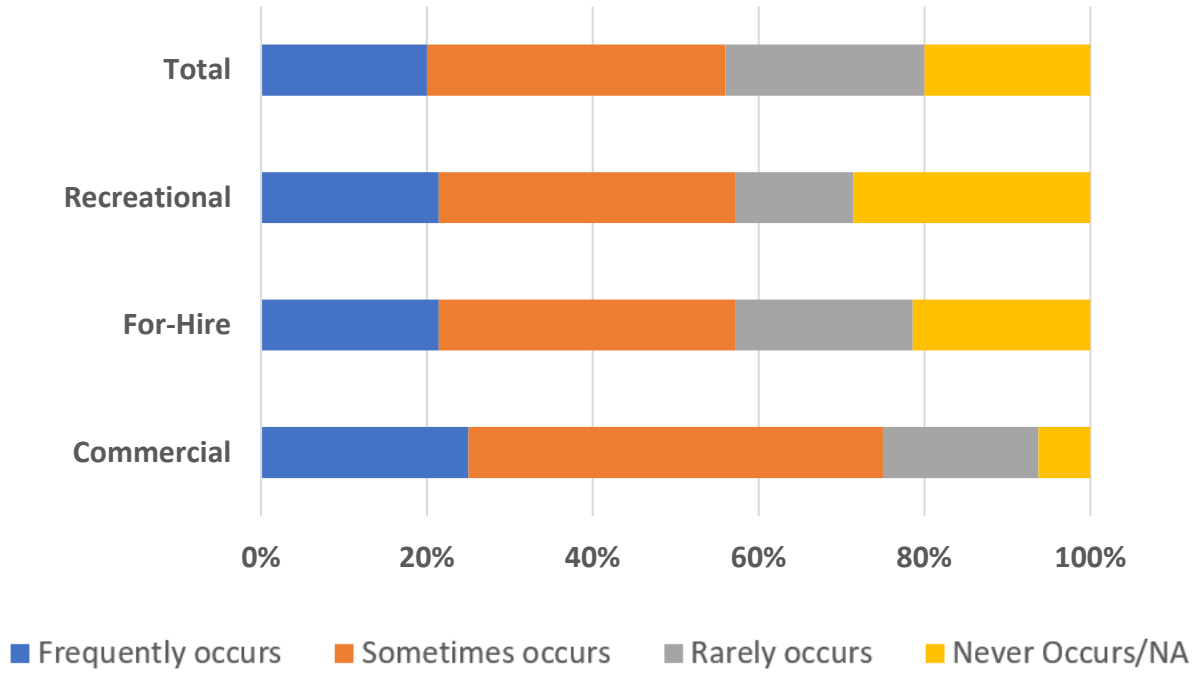


Figure 23. Percent of responses to the “confirming data corrections” in regard to data delays/correctness by sector and frequency of occurrence from all responders.

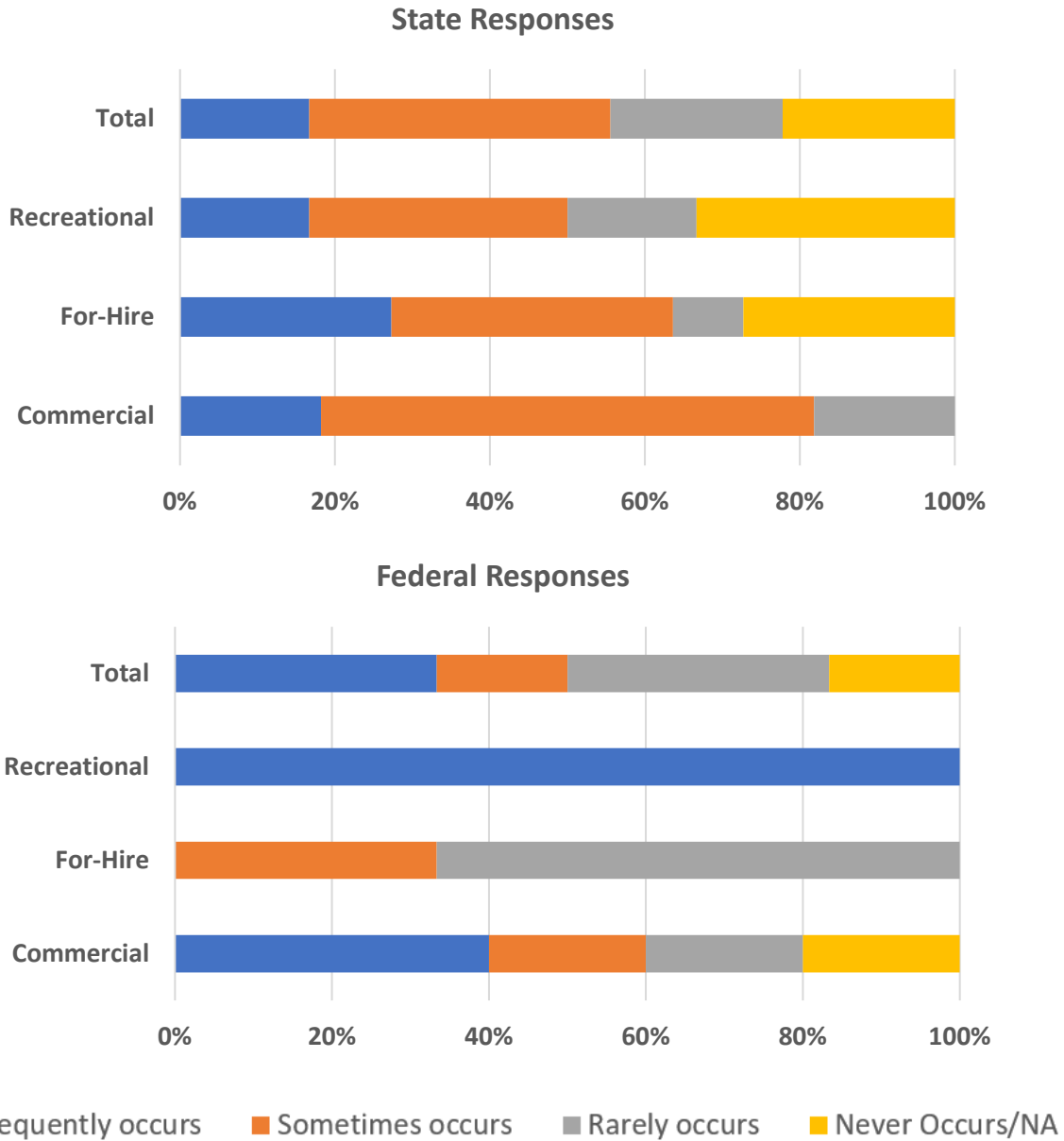


Figure 24. Percent of responses to the “confirming data corrections” in regard to data delays/correctness by sector, jurisdiction, and frequency of occurrence.

3.2.9 Issue 6: Understaffing and Lack of Resources

This issue is seemingly a larger issue among states, but still a large federal issue as well. In states, it is a larger commercial issue; however, among federal responses there is a stronger response from recreational/for-hire managers (Figure 25 - Figure 26).

Sharing practices among jurisdictions may help leverage limited resources too.

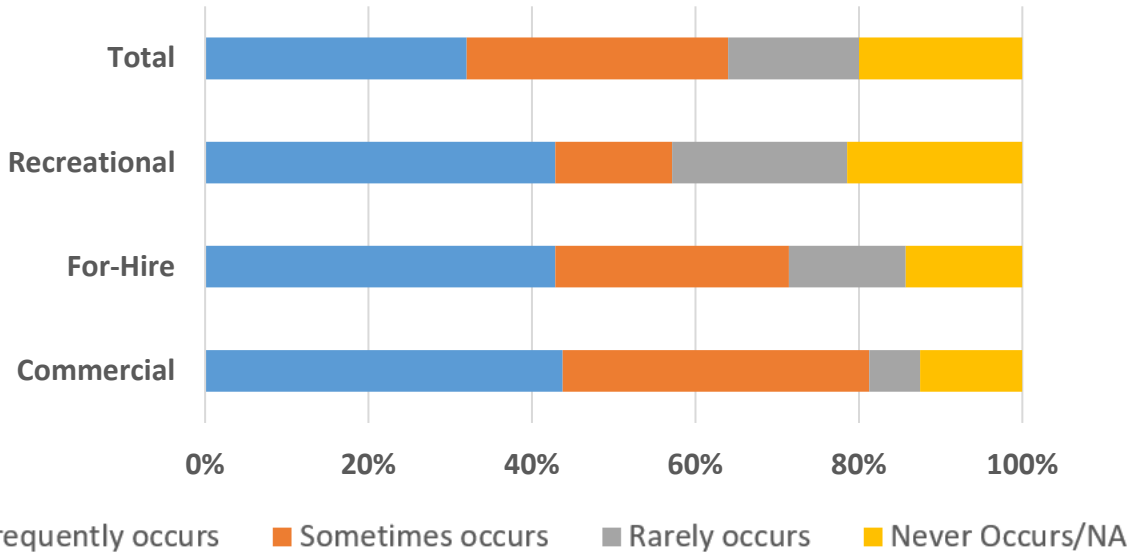


Figure 25. Percent of responses to the “understaffing and lack of resources” problem by sector and frequency of occurrence from all responders.

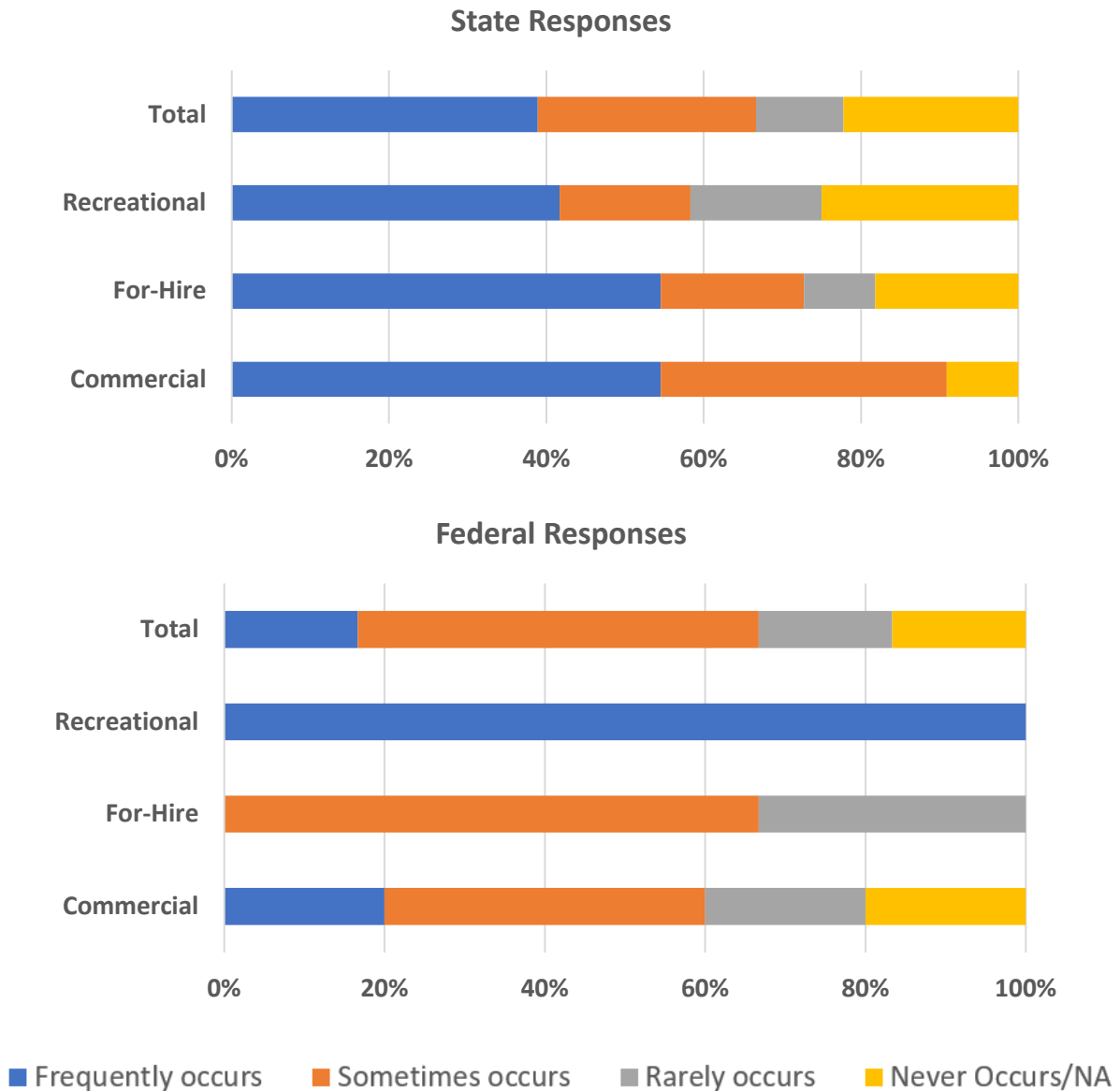


Figure 26. Percent of responses to the “understaffing and lack of resources” problem by sector, jurisdiction, and frequency of occurrence.

3.2.10 Issue 7: Other issues not mentioned above

There were varied answers to this question, and some solutions were suggested. Issues included: the lack of two ticket systems in recreational/for-hire industries that result in unverifiable data and the inability to use commercial QA/QC methods in these sectors; vessel data issues impacting reporting; reporting compliance issues; and individual errors impacting manager’s abilities to pull out larger trends.

A suggested solution to some data quality issues was improving front end validations in data entry, which in turn would likely decrease error propagation over time and by users.

3.3 Conclusions and Recommendations

In general, data managers are aware of a variety of issues affecting data quality. This varies by jurisdiction and sector by a fair amount, but regardless of such variability, the impacts to data quality and the inadequate communication of such impacts are substantial. This is particularly true when working with regional or coastal datasets that span multiple jurisdictions.

Based on comments collected from data managers and discussion within the AWG, a number of recommendations are proposed to improve communication of data limitations and provide opportunities for jurisdictions and sectors to expand and streamline processes. Some of these recommendations have already been highlighted above but are summarized here.

- Begin a multijurisdictional effort to document metadata and caveats to be easily interpreted similarly by all data consumers.
- Create a regular and ongoing Best Practices Workshop to discuss and share automation and technical advances that improve data quality.
- Work with ACCSP to develop automated auditing and data validation tools, particularly for their data entry tools, but also for any data validations conducted by partners.
- Identify and share funding resources for development and implementation of technological advances.

4 DATA CONSUMER SURVEY

4.1 Background

The ACCSP Data Consumer Survey was circulated in May, 2021, to over 300 data users including federal partners, technical committee members, state partners, and Council and Commission staff. See Appendix C for a full list of the survey questions.

4.2 Results

This section summarizes the results of Data Consumer Survey by question and discusses suggestions from the AWG to address the issues identified.

4.2.1 Demographics

Forty-seven people responded to the survey from 17 different agencies (Figure 27). The responses were well distributed among agencies although the highest response rates were from Maryland Department of Natural Resources (8 responses or 17%), Georgia Department of Natural Resources (6 responses or 13%), and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC; 4 responses or 9%). The AWG was satisfied with the distribution of the agencies as representative of data users. Additionally, the majority (66%) of survey responders have been in their current position working with fishery-dependent data for 10 years or more (Figure 28). Most of the participants in the survey indicated that they are using the data for stock assessment or biological analyses (49%; Figure 29) or for management (38%). Only a small

number of responses indicated that the data was being used for socioeconomic analyses (8%) or other purposes (5%).

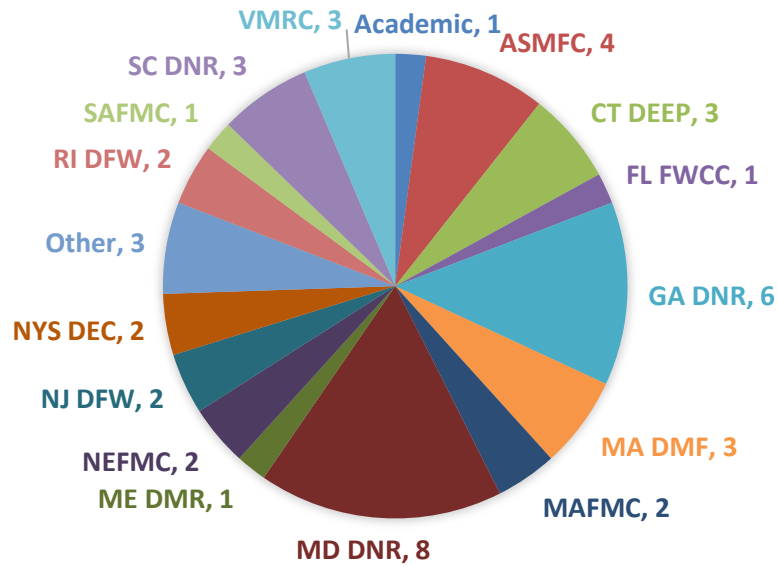


Figure 27. Distribution of 17 agencies represented in the 47 responses.

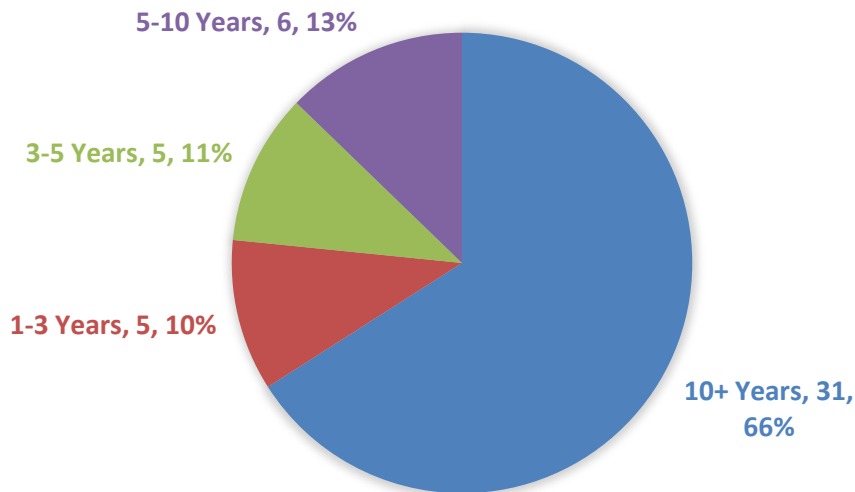


Figure 28. The number of years responders have been in their current position working with fishery-dependent data. The number of responders and percentage indicated in label.

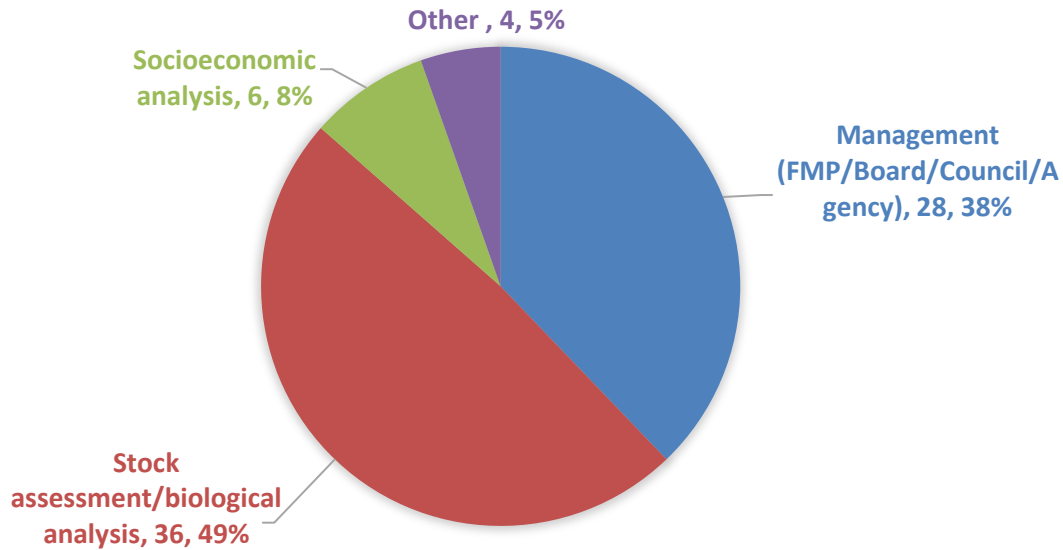


Figure 29. Purpose for using fishery-dependent data as indicated by survey respondents. Multiple options could be checked and sample size and percentage is indicated on the figure.

4.2.2 Is there a lack of metadata? Which of the following situations describes to your experience with metadata and caveats?

A slight majority of respondents indicated that there is a lack of metadata and caveats (Figure 30). When asked about their experience with metadata, most respondents said they were unaware of any available metadata or they did not know where to find it (Figure 31). The AWG members suggest this identifies a communication issue rather than a metadata issue. Metadata is available in the ACCSP warehouse, but the results of the survey clearly show that many users are either unaware of it or do not know where to find it. It was suggested that “Metadata and Caveats” might need its own link on the ACCSP website or a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document could be developed that would address where to find metadata and caveats.

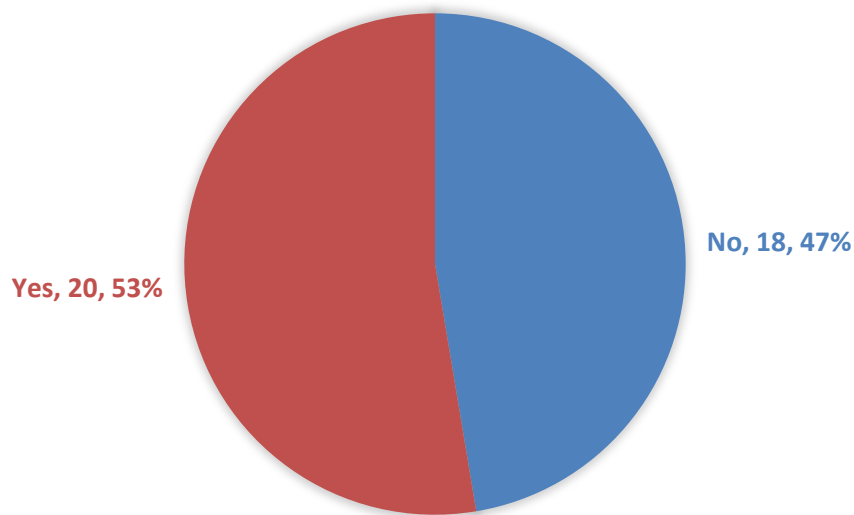


Figure 30. Responses to the survey question, “Is there a lack of metadata and caveats?” with number of respondents and percentages.

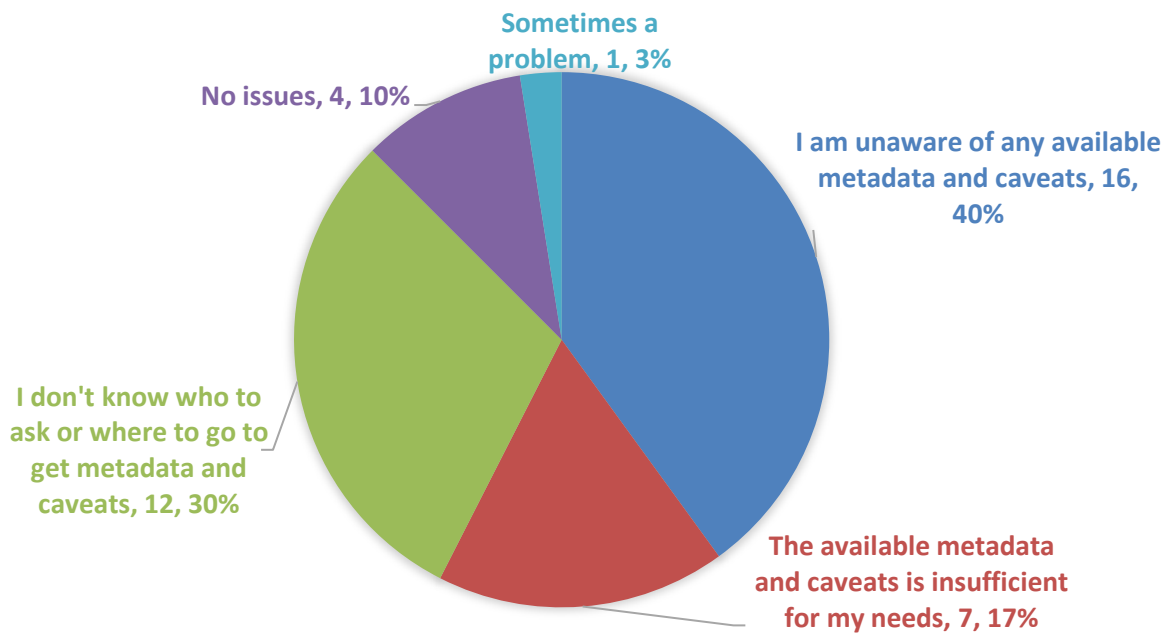


Figure 31. Responses to the survey question, “What describes your experience with metadata and caveats?” with number of responses and percentage.

4.2.3 Is there a lack of clearly defined data elements/fields?

Most participants in the survey (63%) indicated that a lack of clearly defined data fields is sometimes an issue (Figure 32). There was also some support (19%) for this occurring but not being an issue. There were no responses indicating that a lack of defined data fields is frequently an issue, which was encouraging to the AWG. Regardless, the survey identified that there is a need for more clearly defined data fields and the AWG recommends that ACCSP and data providers should review data element/field definitions to make sure they are as comprehensive as possible. Additionally, identifying the location of a data dictionary could be added to a FAQ page. The AWG also discussed that a data definition could be incorporated into the data download as a tab or a row.

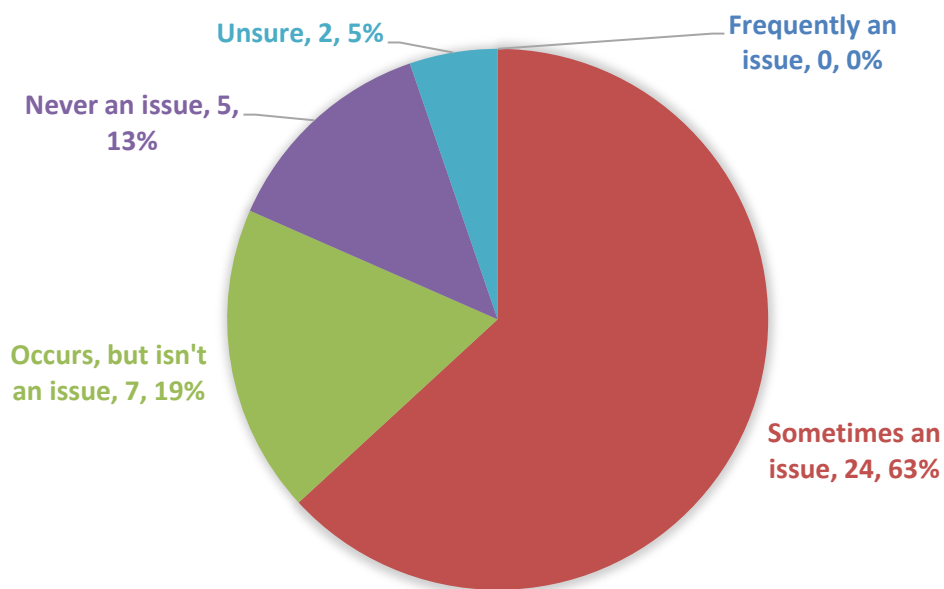


Figure 32. Responses to the survey question, "Is there a lack of clearly defined data elements/fields?" with number of responses and percentage.

4.2.4 Is there a lack of credibility with particular fields or data sources?

The majority of responders indicated that a lack of credibility with data fields is sometimes an issue (32%; Figure 33) or that they are unsure if this is an issue (26%). The AWG discussed that when ACCSP reviews data element/field definitions (a recommendation from Section 4.2.3), it could be an opportunity to clearly identify which fields have more credibility and address the issue identified by this question. The revised definitions or data dictionary could also note the lack of reliability for some fields or note when there is a better source in the warehouse. For example, the gear data field on a dealer report may be a less reliable field and the data field definition could explain why it may be better to find this information on fisherman trips.

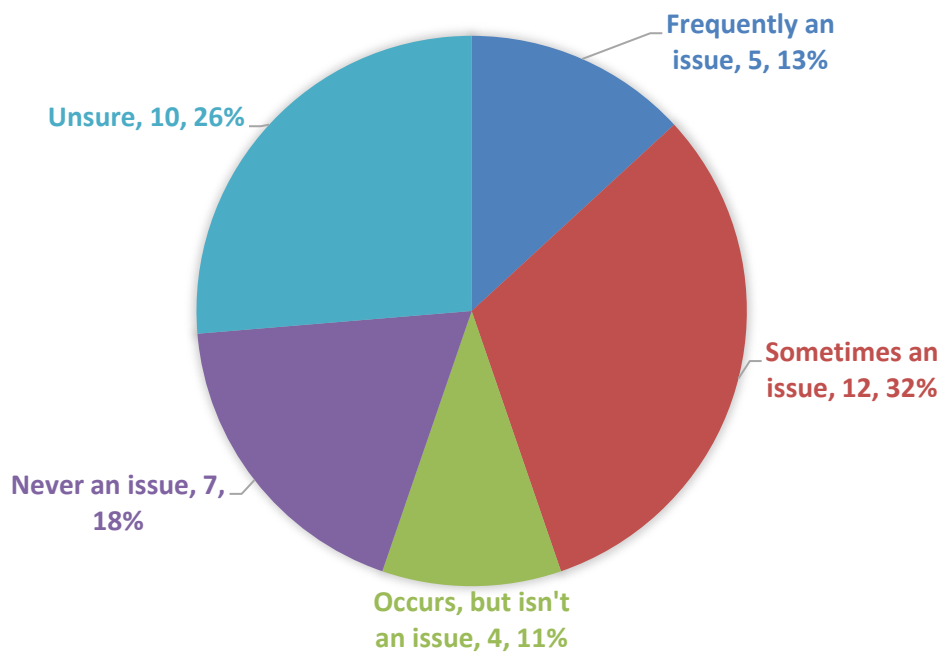


Figure 33. Responses to the survey question, "Is there a lack of credibility with particular fields or data sources?" with number of responses and percentage.

4.2.5 Is the timing of data availability an issue?

The AWG anticipated that the timing of data availability could be an issue for data users when doing a stock assessment, compliance report, or management document. The responses in the survey supported the hypothesis that this is sometimes (39%; Figure 34) or frequently (18%) an issue. There were some (32%) that indicated that the timing of data availability is never an issue. For the last few years, ACCSP and ASFMC staff have worked together to line up the timing of stock assessments or management documents with data availability which may have contributed to resolving some timing issues. ASFMC should continue to include an ACCSP representative in the early planning stages of a stock assessment or management document to ensure data will be ready when needed and formalize this process with staff. Additionally, a workshop could be organized between ACCSP and ISFMP staff to ensure that species' compliance report deadlines match up with data availability. It was also noted by the AWG that the caveats and timing of the spring and fall data loads for commercial data as well as the timing of recreational, biological, and socioeconomic data could be better communicated and possibly included in a FAQ. Additional outreach to the Councils, Regional Offices, Science Centers, and NOAA Highly Migratory Species group could also improve the communication of data timing.

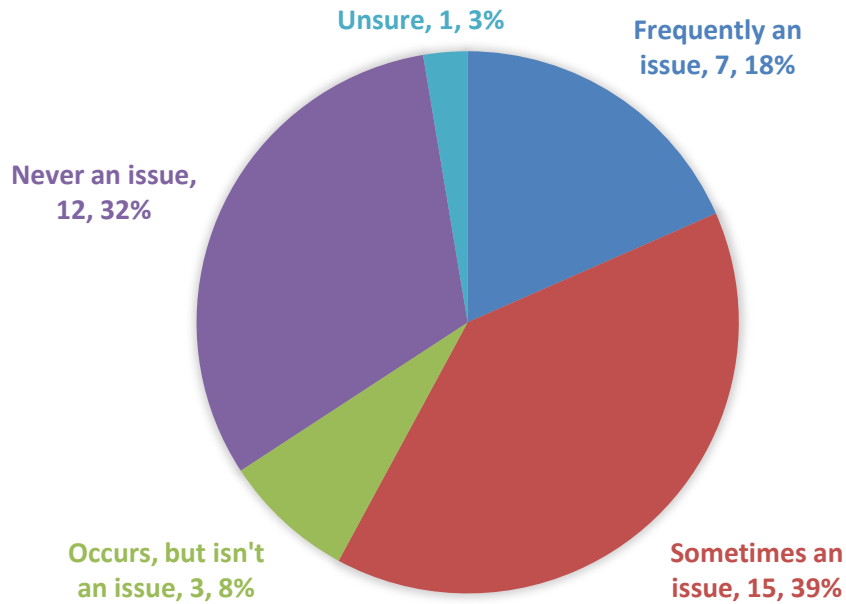


Figure 34. Responses to the survey question, "Is the timing of data availability an issue?" with number of responses and percentage.

4.2.6 Is inconsistency between data sources an issue?

Most respondents indicated that inconsistency between data sources is sometimes an issue (58%; Figure 35) or frequently an issue (21%), making this one of the bigger problems identified by the survey. The AWG discussed how data users have expressed frustration about queries resulting in different answers between a user's warehouse query and data provided by ACCSP staff. Additionally, this can be compounded by different data across sources, for example, a data pull from Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) Area Allocation (AA) tables or data pulled from the ACCSP warehouse. Again, the AWG identified this as a potential communication issue. A communications document, whether a FAQ, webpage, or expanded metadata document, could include information about why different data sources have different data and why different queries may result in different data. Additionally, all data repositories should indicate the source of the data so that time and effort are not wasted in identifying differences that would be readily explained by knowing the source of the data.

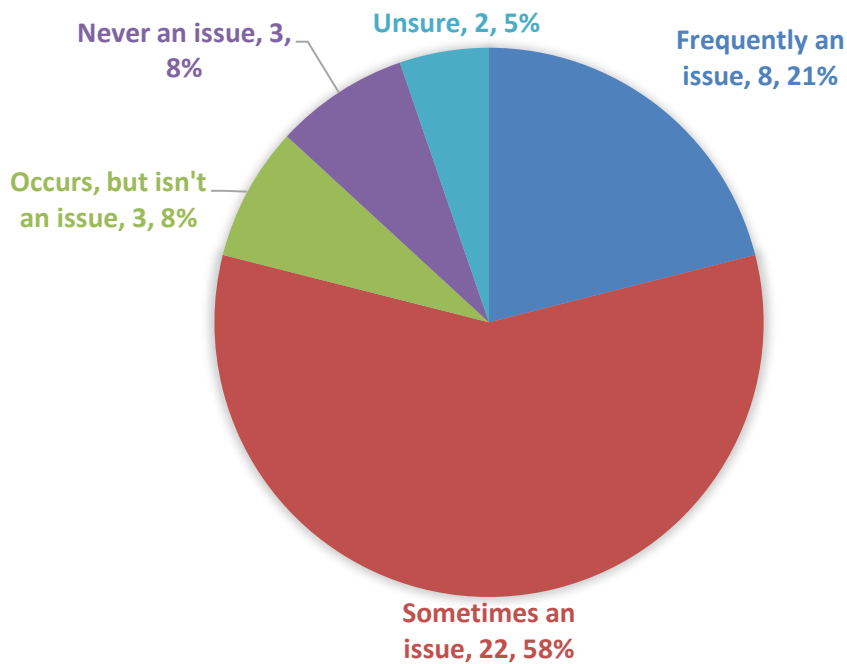


Figure 35. Responses to the survey question, "Is inconsistency between data sources an issue?" with number of responses and percentage.

4.2.7 Are differences in data collection approaches between agencies an issue?

Respondents to the survey indicated that differences in data collection approaches is sometimes an issue (55%; Figure 36) although the remaining responses were mixed between frequently an issue (11%), never an issue (13%), occurs but isn't an issue (8%), and unsure (13%). Much like the previous question, the AWG believes that communicating differences in data collection programs between partners and agencies to data users should be a priority. The AWG discussed outreach materials to explain each data collection approach with links provided to other pages and data contacts. An additional approach that the AWG discussed was organizing a Best Practices Workshop for data providers to compare data collection programs, audits, and trips/dealer reports. This was identified as a potential Fisheries Information System (FIS) project for FY2023.

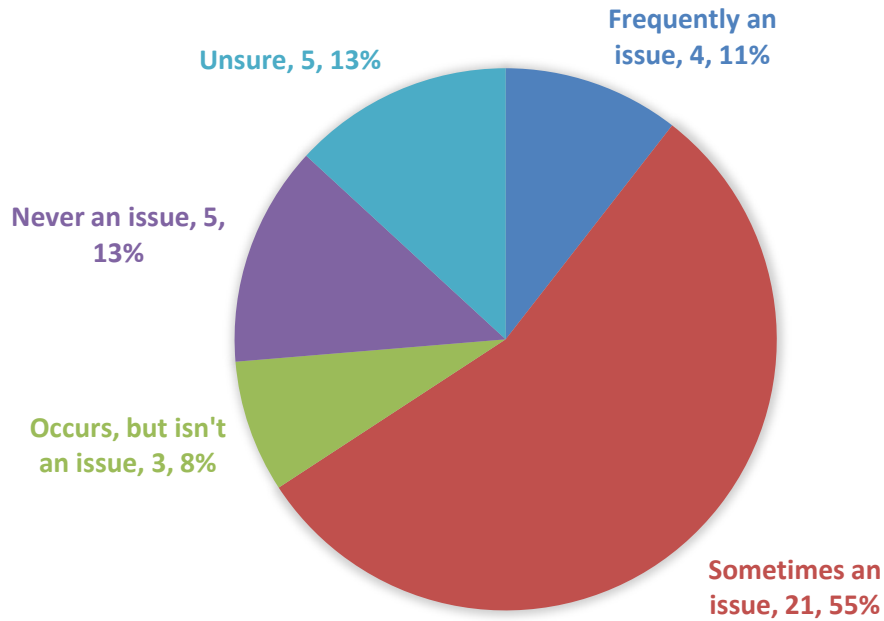


Figure 36. Responses to the survey question, "Are differences in data collection approaches between agencies an issue?" with number of responses and percentage.

4.2.8 Is accessibility to data an issue?

Accessibility to data is sometimes an issue (45%; Figure 37) for many data users or never an issue for data users (42%). The AWG attributed these responses to data confidentiality issues and the varying level of access and understanding that data users have regarding confidential data. Most data users are likely familiar with data confidentiality laws and understand how this might affect data warehouse queries depending on their access. However, some data users might not, and the AWG discussed possible solutions to this problem including publishing non-confidential summary data and providing more explicit explanations about federal laws regarding confidentiality on the ACCSP website.

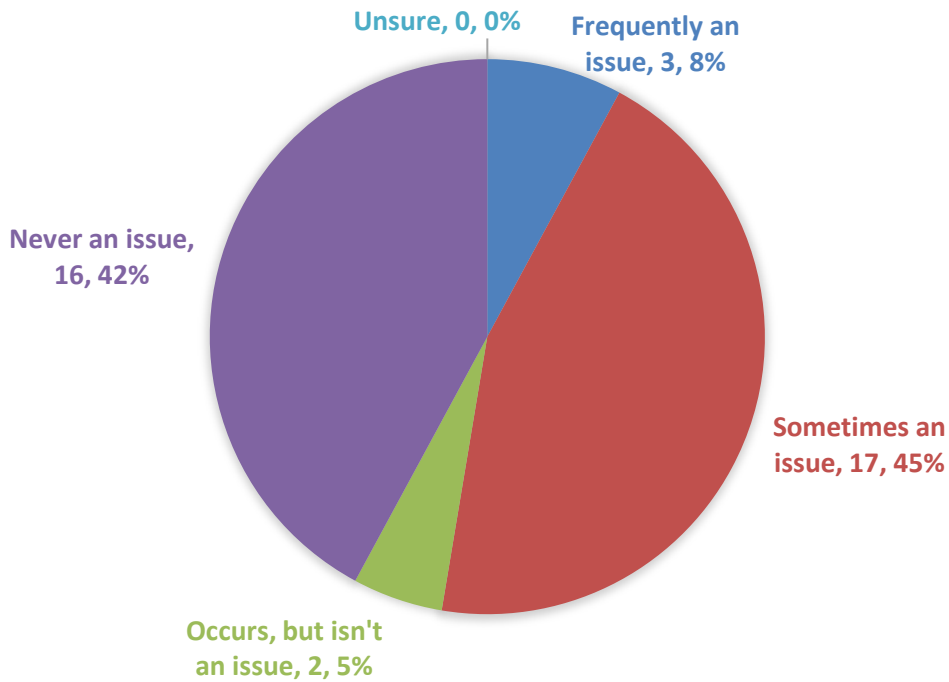


Figure 37. Responses to the survey question, “is accessibility to data an issue?” with number of responses and percentage.

4.2.9 Do you have a hard time finding answers to questions about data?

Most data users indicated that finding answers to data questions is sometimes an issue (46%; Figure 38) or never an issue (33%). Again, this appears to be a communication issue and many of the solutions already discussed are relevant including instructions on finding answers on an FAQ page, making the list of data contacts more readily available, or increasing awareness of the data warehouse and data fields for data users.

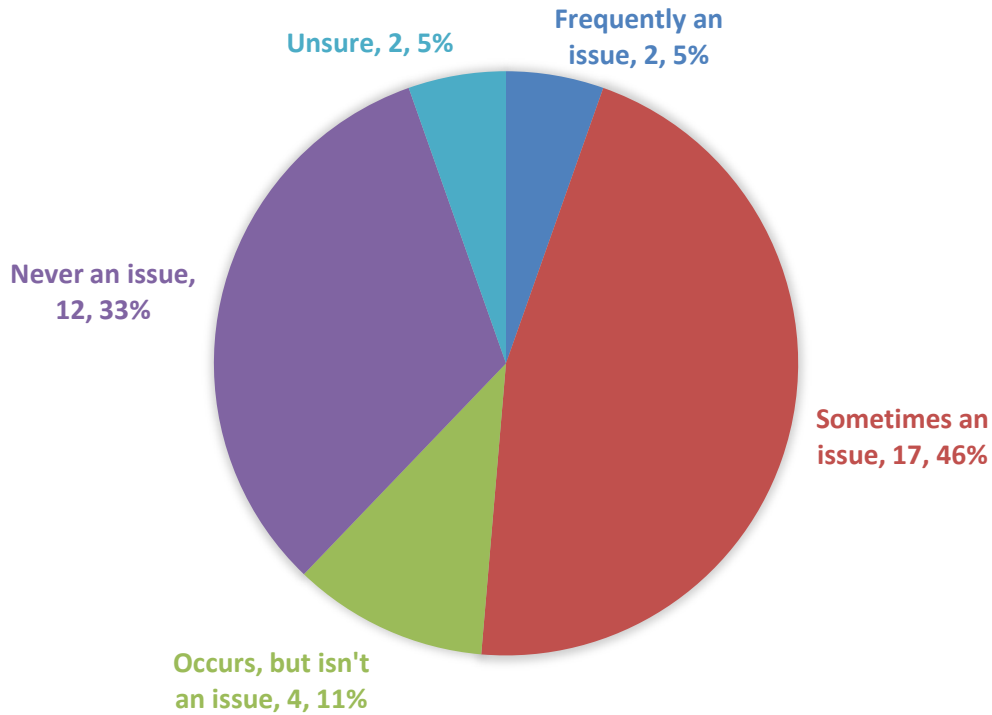


Figure 38. Responses to the survey question, "Do you have a hard time finding answers to questions about data?" with number of responses and percentage.

4.3 Conclusions and Recommendations

Overall, the AWG found that the responses to the data user survey helped identify several issues, most of which were likely communication and not data issues. These generated productive discussions about possible resolutions. The following recommendations were made from the AWG based on the survey's responses.

- Develop a FAQ document to increase communication and outreach to data users
- ACCSP and data providers should review data element/field definitions to make sure they are as comprehensive as possible, including indicating the reliability of each field, and consider including data definitions as part of the data download as a tab or a row
- Consider a Best Practices Workshop as part of FIS projects for FY2023 for data providers to compare data collection programs, audits, and trips/dealer reports
- Expand and simplify the language on the website to better describe the federal laws regarding data confidentiality and data sources and possible affects that may have on a data query
- Continue the communication between ACCSP and ASMFC staff about data timing for stock assessments, management documents, and compliance reports

5 CONCLUSIONS

Overall, the AWG found that the responses to the surveys provided a comprehensive enough inventory of the primary methods of accountability to identify issues and potential gaps. From the initial survey, the group was able to identify differing patterns of use of accountability methods in state and federal partners, and even within federal partners. Based on the comments of the initial survey, responses to the follow-up surveys, and the experience of the AWG group, it is believed that this is due to differences in resources among jurisdictions and/or specific constraints of the data collected by different partners/jurisdiction. This was evident in the inversely correlated use of dealer/fishermen report comparisons and negative reporting.

Data managers are aware of an assortment of issues affecting data quality that vary by jurisdiction. There are substantial impacts to data quality which are not adequately communicated, particularly with respect to multi-jurisdictional datasets. The AWG developed recommendations geared toward improving communication of data limitations and providing opportunities to expand and streamline processes.

The responses from the data user survey helped the AWG to identify several issues. Examination of these issues led to the belief that the core of the issue was not the data, but rather communication between the data providers and users. Recommendations were developed by the group aimed at improving communication between these two groups.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following is a summary list of the recommendations developed by the AWG.

- Begin a multijurisdictional effort to document metadata and caveats to be easily interpreted similarly by all data consumers.
- Create a regular and ongoing Best Practices Workshop to discuss and share automation and technical advances that improve data quality.
- Consider a Best Practices Workshop as part of Fisheries Information System (FIS) projects for fiscal year 2023 for data providers to compare data collection programs, audits, and trips/dealer reports.
- Work with ACCSP to develop automated auditing and data validation tools, particularly for their data entry tools, but also for any data validations conducted by partners.
- Identify and share funding resources for development and implementation of technological advances.
- Develop a FAQ document to increase communication and outreach to data users.
- Review of data element/field definitions to make sure they are as comprehensive as possible, including indicating the reliability of each field, and consider including data definitions as part of the data download as a tab or a row.

- Expand and simplify the language on the ACCSP website to better describe the state and federal laws regarding data confidentiality and data sources and possible affects that may have on a data query.
- Continue the communication between ACCSP and ASMFC staff about data timing for stock assessments, management documents, and compliance reports.

7 APPENDICES

7.1 Appendix A: Data Accountability Survey

The purpose of this survey is to document how ACCSP Program Partners currently validate their commercial landings data. Please indicate whether your agency currently employs each of the validation methods listed.

For each validation method used, please explain: your process, the percentage of landings data covered by this method, and how you resolve any data discrepancies which may be identified. If you have existing documentation you would like to submit, please email it to support@accsp.org.

1. What agency do you represent? (Open-ended)
2. Does your agency use onboard observers to validate trip data? (Yes/No)

If yes, please briefly explain your process, the percentage of landings data covered by this method, and how you resolve any data discrepancies. (Open-ended)

3. Does your agency use dockside monitoring/sampling to validate landings data? (Yes/No)

If yes, please briefly explain your process, the percentage of landings data covered by this method, and how you resolve any data discrepancies. (Open-ended)

4. Does your agency compare fishermen trips to dealer reports to validate landings data? (Yes/No)

If yes, please briefly explain your process, the percentage of landings data covered by this method, and how you resolve any data discrepancies. (Open-ended)

5. Does your agency conduct interagency comparisons to validate landings data (i.e., comparing a state report to a federal VTR)? (Yes/No)

If yes, please briefly explain your process, the percentage of landings data covered by this method, and how you resolve any data discrepancies. (Open-ended)

6. Does your agency use VMS to validate reported 6 trip data? (Yes/No)

If yes, please briefly explain your process, the percentage of landings data covered by this method, and how you resolve any data discrepancies. (Open-ended)

7. Does your agency require pre-trip notifications or hail outs to validate 7 landings data? (Yes/No)

If yes, please briefly explain your process, the percentage of landings data covered by this method, and how you resolve any data discrepancies. (Open-ended)

8. Does your agency require negative trip reports? (Yes/No)

If yes, please briefly explain your process, the percentage of landings data covered by this method, and how you resolve any data discrepancies. (Open-ended)

9. Does your agency conduct data audits? (Yes/No)

If yes, please briefly explain your process, the percentage of landings data covered by this method, and how you resolve any data discrepancies. (Open-ended)

10. Does your agency use law enforcement to validate landings data (i.e., boardings/inspections by Natural Resources Police)? (Yes/No)
11. Please briefly describe any validation methods used by your agency that were not previously included. Briefly explain your process, the percentage of landings data covered by this method, and how you resolve any data discrepancies. (Open-ended)

7.2 Appendix B: Data Accountability Survey Follow-up

The ACCSP Coordinating Council recognized the issue that data validation and accountability issues can compromise data quality and reduce their utility for stock assessments, compliance reports, and other management activities. A small group from the Commercial Technical Committee has been tasked with inventorying and identifying the gaps in the current practices and procedures for data validation. This short survey is a follow-up to the January, 2019 Partner Data Accountability Survey completed by the Commercial Technical Committee that collected current partner data validation practices and procedures. It is an integral part of the process for the small group and your time and considered responses are greatly appreciated. The survey should take approximately 5 minutes to complete.

1. Please indicate the sector for which you manage data. (Please check all that apply.)

- Commercial
- For-Hire
- Recreational
- Other (please specify)

2. Please choose your agency. (Drop down list of state and federal agencies)

3. For each of the potential issues related to accountability, please rate what you see when reconciling data provided by entities in your jurisdiction.

a. Lack of metadata and caveats

- Frequently occurs
- Sometimes occurs
- Rarely occurs
- Never Occurs/NA
- Occurs, but isn't an issue

Comments (open-ended)

b. Lack of credibility with particular fields (gear reported by dealers) or sources (entities knowingly providing inaccurate information) where the data being collected are not considered particularly reliable. If yes, in the comments please describe any documentation.

- Frequently occurs
- Sometimes occurs
- Rarely occurs
- Never Occurs/NA
- Occurs, but isn't an issue

Comments (open-ended)

c. QA/QC is a manual process with little automation and is time consuming for staff resulting in less timely data

- Frequently occurs
- Sometimes occurs
- Rarely occurs
- Never Occurs/NA
- Occurs, but isn't an issue

Comments (open-ended)

d. Reconciling vessel trip reports with dealer data is difficult and time consuming

- Frequently occurs
- Sometimes occurs
- Rarely occurs
- Never Occurs/NA
- Occurs, but isn't an issue

Comments (open-ended)

e. Confirming corrections with industry members is necessary for trust with industry but can cause delays or data remaining incorrect.

- Frequently occurs
- Sometimes occurs
- Rarely occurs
- Never Occurs/NA
- Occurs, but isn't an issue

Comments (open-ended)

f. Understaffing and/or lack of resources necessary to properly review data in a timely manner leads to delays or data remaining incorrect.

- Frequently occurs
- Sometimes occurs
- Rarely occurs
- Never Occurs/NA
- Occurs, but isn't an issue

Comments (open-ended)

g. Other factors that have not been mentioned above

- Frequently occurs
 - Sometimes occurs
 - Rarely occurs
 - Never Occurs/NA
 - Occurs, but isn't an issue
- Comments (open-ended)

7.3 Appendix C: Consumer Data Accountability Survey

The ACCSP Coordinating Council recognized the issue that data validation and accountability issues can compromise data quality and reduce their utility for stock assessments, compliance reports, and other management activities. A small group from the Commercial Technical Committee has been tasked with inventorying and identifying the gaps in the current practices and procedures for data validation. This short survey is a follow-up to the January, 2019, Partner Data Accountability Survey completed by the Commercial Technical Committee that collected current partner data validation practices and procedures. It is an integral part of the process for the small group and your time and considered responses are greatly appreciated. The survey should take approximately 5 minutes to complete.

1. Please choose your agency. (Drop down list of state and federal agencies)
2. About how long have you been in a position that works with fisheries dependent data?
 - < 1 Year
 - 1-3 Years
 - 3-5 Years
 - 5-10 Years
 - 10+ Years
3. Please indicate the sector for which you now and/or previously worked with data. (Please check all that apply.)
 - Commercial
 - For-Hire
 - Recreational
 - Other (please specify)
4. Please indicate the option(s) that describes your role in when using data. (Please check all that apply.)
 - Management (FMP/Board/Council/Agency)
 - Stock assessment/biological analysis
 - Socioeconomic analysis
 - Other (please specify)
5. Please indicate what you experience when working with data provided by entities on the Atlantic Coast.
 - a. Lack of clearly defined data elements/fields
 - Frequently an issue
 - Sometimes an issue
 - Never an issue

- Occurs, but isn't an issue
- Unsure
- b. Lack of credibility with particular fields or data sources
 - Frequently an issue
 - Sometimes an issue
 - Never an issue
 - Occurs, but isn't an issue
 - Unsure
- c. Timing of data availability
 - Frequently an issue
 - Sometimes an issue
 - Never an issue
 - Occurs, but isn't an issue
 - Unsure
- d. Inconsistency between data sources
 - Frequently an issue
 - Sometimes an issue
 - Never an issue
 - Occurs, but isn't an issue
 - Unsure
- e. Differences in data collection approaches between agencies
 - Frequently an issue
 - Sometimes an issue
 - Never an issue
 - Occurs, but isn't an issue
 - Unsure
- f. Accessibility to data
 - Frequently an issue
 - Sometimes an issue
 - Never an issue
 - Occurs, but isn't an issue

- Unsure
 - g. Hard time finding answers to questions about data
 - Frequently an issue
 - Sometimes an issue
 - Never an issue
 - Occurs, but isn't an issue
 - Unsure
 - h. Other factors that have not been mentioned above
 - Frequently an issue
 - Sometimes an issue
 - Never an issue
 - Occurs, but isn't an issue
 - Unsure
6. If you answered "Frequently an issue" or "Sometimes an issue" to "Lack of credibility with particular fields or data sources" in Question 5, please expand. Enter NA if not applicable. (Open-ended)
7. Do you feel there is a lack of metadata and caveats available? (Yes/No)
8. Which of the following situations describes to your experience with metadata and caveats? (Please check all that apply)
- I am unaware of any available metadata and caveats
 - The available metadata and caveats is insufficient for my needs
 - I don't know who to ask or where to go to get metadata and caveats
 - Other (please specify)
9. Please describe anything that you feel is relevant and has not yet been covered by this questionnaire. (Open-ended)

Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program

Coordinating Council

May 2, 2022

ACCSP Atlantic Recreational Implementation Plan – 2023-2027

Summary: This DRAFT document is provided to the Coordinating Council for awareness of progress, opportunity to discuss or direct development, and plan to bring a final document to the Council for approval in October, 2022. Staff requests a review of the major priorities (page 8) which have been updated based on Coordinating Council comments and re-ranked by the Recreational Technical Committee.

Background: Regional Recreational Implementation plans are developed for MRIP with ACCSP functioning as the Atlantic Coast Regional partner, and MRIP uses the 5-6 regional plans to set national priorities. These plans should be updated when a major change in regional priorities occurs, or every five years. As part of the MRIP Regional Implementation Council, ACCSP gathers input from our Partners (Commission, Councils, and states) on priority areas to direct resources. MRIP and ACCSP request that Partner priorities for recreational data collection are properly reflected in the Atlantic Regional Implementation Plan.

An example of how the current 2017-2022 Implementation plan was used is the work by MRIP to address Atlantic Priority 1 – Reduce PSE. Over the last 5 years, MRIP has developed data and survey standards for public presentation of MRIP data where cumulative estimates are intended to increase sample size and reduce the confidence intervals around point estimates. MRIP also secured additional funding via the Modern Fish Act resulting in \$900,000 per year to increase dockside sampling assignments for Maine to Georgia. Those sampling efforts became fully active in 2021. The overall sampling assignment increase was ~30%, with variability along the coast. MRIP, ACCSP, and the states worked together to allocate funds and assignments by APAIS sampling season length, species diversity, and fishing mode (Charter, Private-Rental, Shore).

ACCSP Atlantic Recreational Implementation Plan – 2023-2027

The Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) is a state-federal cooperative program to collect, manage, and disseminate statistical data and information on the marine and estuarine commercial and recreational fisheries of the Atlantic Coast. The ACCSP has provided coordination and data collection standards for recreational data collection efforts from Maine to Florida since 2004 and has been identified as an appropriate group to develop a regional implementation plan for the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) of NOAA Fisheries. The MRIP was developed in 2008 out of the need to modify survey methods for collecting saltwater recreational fishery data for estimating fishery catch and effort for use by stock assessment scientists and marine fishery managers. Improvements to the quality and coverage of recreational data collections were initiated following a critical review of then-current survey methods by the National Resource Council (NRC) in 2006. As the MRIP evolved, ACCSP members have played a more active role in assisting with these improvements, including active roles in MRIP pilot research projects to test new data collection techniques. The MRIP Access Point Angler Intercept Survey (APAIS) transitioned to Atlantic state conduct of field data collection with central administration, coordination, and data processing for Maine through Georgia provided by ACCSP staff in 2016 and the MRIP For-hire Telephone Survey (FHTS) and Large Pelagics Telephone (LPTS) Add-on followed in 2020. The survey on the Atlantic Coast of Florida is also conducted by the state, but is coordinated along with the Gulf of Mexico coast by the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission (GSMFC). As the MRIP continues the transition from research and development of new data collection methodologies to implementation of new surveys, the ACCSP's Recreational Technical Committee (RTC) of state, council, Commission, and federal partners has developed this implementation plan in response to regional needs on the Atlantic Coast. This plan will guide MRIP in allocating resources to further improve its program to best address data needs of fishery assessors and managers in the Atlantic Coast region.

Baseline Assessment of Current Regional Data Collection Programs and Data Needs

MRIP General Survey

The MRIP is a data collection program that uses several regionally designed sampling surveys to collect representative data and produce statistically robust estimates of recreational fishing effort and catches. Complementary surveys covering recreational fishing for finfish in marine and estuarine waters by shore, for-hire and private boat anglers comprise the general survey design of the Atlantic Coast MRIP. The Fishing Effort Survey (FES) and For-Hire Telephone Survey (FHTS) provide data to produce angler effort estimates (trips per angler) and the Access Point Angler Intercept Survey (APAIS) provides individual angler catch data to produce average catch rates by anglers. The two survey products are used to produce total catch and effort estimates by shore, for-hire and private boat anglers. This general survey design is conducted through a combination of the ACCSP, GSMFC, Atlantic States, and federal contractors in Maine through Florida.

The main products of the MRIP general survey are bi-monthly catch estimates of all species encountered in the APAIS by state. Precise annual estimates of landings and discards are adequate for stock assessments of managed species for commonly encountered fishes. However, annual estimates at state and regional levels may lack adequate precision for species that are rarely intercepted in the general survey. For example, deep water fishing trips which target less common fish such as Tilefish, offshore of southeastern states, are rarely intercepted by the APAIS and so consistently precise catch estimates may not be available

over a long time series. These bi-monthly and annual catch estimates may not be timely nor precise enough for monitoring and management of recreational fisheries with Annual Catch Limits (ACLs); however, bi-monthly estimates may be used to predict whether an ACL will be met before the end of a fishing year. Although the MRIP surveys are not intended or designed to provide in-season quota monitoring, more precise estimates on a shorter time scale (both sampling and production of estimates from data) would provide higher certainty in managing fisheries with established ACLs.

For-Hire Recreational Fishing Components of Atlantic MRIP

In addition to shore and private/rental boats, the APAIS is a dockside survey of anglers who had fished from for-hire charter boats. Surveys of headboats (i.e., party boats) are conducted at sea, not dockside. The Atlantic APAIS includes at-sea headboat angler interviews to obtain the standard APAIS angler interview data and detailed discarded fish data. The APAIS interviewer rides the headboat, observes anglers while they are fishing, and identifies, counts, and measures discarded fish. This protocol was adopted on the Atlantic Coast in 2005 following a year of preliminary testing and a pilot study in South Carolina.

Both sectors of the for-hire recreational fishery (i.e., charter and headboats) have angler effort estimates produced from a list-directed weekly telephone survey of the for-hire vessel operators, the For-Hire Telephone Survey (FHTS). This telephone survey replaced the Coastal Household Telephone Survey (CHTS) for these sectors in 2004 and provides precise estimates of angler-effort by the same bi-monthly sampling periods, by state. In the Southeastern States (NC to FL), the headboat sector of the FHTS is replaced by a special survey program of NOAA Fisheries, the Southeast Regional Headboat Survey (SRHS). The SRHS utilizes a census logbook reporting method to produce bimonthly estimates of catch and effort for this portion of the for-hire fishing fleet.

MRIP General Survey Components – Issues for Future Attention

APAIS coverage of for-hire fishing sector: charter and headboats

Current APAIS sampling levels are adequate to produce precise annual regional catch estimates of many state managed species based on recommended levels of precision identified as standards by the ACCSP. For specific state fisheries, some states conduct additional assignments not funded through the MRIP to reduce variances of the catch estimates (as measured by Percent Standard Error (PSE)), including Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Delaware, North Carolina, and South Carolina. The ACCSP had historically funded additional at-sea headboat assignments from New Hampshire to Florida since 2015; however, this ended for all states other than Florida beginning in 2020. Several states also conduct additional headboat assignments, including New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, Maryland, North Carolina, and Georgia. Beginning in 2021, Atlantic states from Maine to Georgia increased the number of APAIS assignments sampled by 30% with the target of improving estimate precision for all species but mainly targeting offshore ones. Analyses to quantify effectiveness of these additional assignments may be beneficial in future years.

Currently in the modes sampled by the APAIS dockside survey, catch per unit effort (CPUE) information for discarded catch is based on angler recall of the number of each species released by each angler intercepted, and the accuracy of that recall at the dock is unknown. Furthermore, dockside intercept surveys

are inadequate for collecting information about the size and condition of fish released at sea, which are critical data needs for stock assessments. APAIS protocols for at-sea sampling are adequate for headboats but, due to small fleets and higher costs, the number and variety of vessels eligible for at-sea observations of discards is small. APAIS protocols do not allow for at-sea sampling observations from charter and private boats. Without adequate data from those sectors on areas and depths fished, it is unknown whether the length frequency of discards observed from headboats is representative of the entire recreational boat fishery.

Fishing Effort Survey (FES)

Fishing effort for shore and private boat mode angling from Maine to Florida was historically collected through the CHTS. However, it was determined that the CHTS was potentially biased and inefficient due to low response rates and response bias. As more people abandoned landlines for cellphones, a growing number of potential respondents became unreachable. For this reason MRIP transitioned to the extensively tested FES in 2018. The FES is a mail survey that utilizes state recreational saltwater fishing license databases to target licensed anglers and the U.S. Postal Service address database to distribute surveys to unlicensed anglers.

For-Hire Telephone Survey (FHTS)

The FHTS replaced the CHTS of the MRIP and focuses specifically on estimating the numbers of angler trips in the charter boat and headboat fishing modes. The FHTS has resulted in improved effort estimates for charter and headboat modes of fishing, which has improved overall precision of catch estimates for the charter fleet. However, non-response rates in the FHTS remain a concern and mandatory federal vessel trip reports (VTRs) in the North Atlantic are used for the effort component of the final MRIP estimates at the end of the year for the part of the fleet that reports via VTRs. The time lag of annual inclusion due to data availability contributes to potentially inaccurate preliminary for-hire catch estimates for some species.

Atlantic states from Maine to Florida maintain the MRIP online Vessel Directory. Maine to Georgia complete calls via the ACCSP-hosted Assignment Tracking Application (ATA) which houses a Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing system (CATI) and Florida conducts the FHTS in coordination with the GSMFC.

If current FHTS survey methodology meets data monitoring needs for sector management options in for-hire fisheries, it could be possible for for-hire fisheries to be managed as a distinct sector with their own allocation. Tracking ACLs requires timely and precise data and an ability to monitor catch at the individual vessel level. For this reason, the ACCSP has identified increased timeliness of catch and effort estimates as a high priority. Electronic logbooks have the capability to produce more timely catch and effort data with dockside validation. The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC) implemented mandatory electronic logbook reporting options for federally permitted charter and headboat vessels in 2018 and the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (SAFMC) and New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC) followed in 2021. These changes increase the overlap with the current FHTS. Modifications to the FHTS may be necessary to reduce reporting burden in overlapping data collection programs.

Special Surveys and Data Collection Programs

Highly Migratory Species

Highly Migratory Species (HMS) are federally managed billfish, tuna, and sharks that range along the entire Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico regions. NOAA Fisheries directly manages these species since they range

across regional boundaries in US waters. A summary of the HMS-targeted data collection programs along the Atlantic Coast is provided below.

MRIP Large Pelagic Survey (Large Pelagic Intercept, Telephone, and Biological Surveys)

The Large Pelagic Survey (LPS) began in 1992 as a specialized survey program of rare event HMS species in support of domestic management and international treaties. The LPS includes several surveys: a targeted angler intercept survey, the Large Pelagic Intercept Survey, which is similar to the APAIS but only intercepts recreational and for-hire fishing trips which targeted HMS species; the Large Pelagic Telephone Survey, which is a list-frame sampling survey to produce angler effort estimates in the HMS/LPS fisheries; and the Large Pelagic Biological Survey, used to obtain biological samples for life-history parameter estimation, such as age, size, and sex distribution, as well as reproduction parameters. The collective surveys collect information to identify fishing effort and catch (harvest and discard) from vessels holding HMS permits, and is conducted from Maine to Virginia during the months of June through October.

HMS Catch Card Census – Maryland and North Carolina

Highly Migratory Species Catch Card Census programs began in 1998 to improve reporting compliance required of for-hire licenses or HMS permits, and to identify catch (harvest and discard). Two states have chosen to implement these census programs and are essentially the same in each state. The programs include private anglers as well as for-hire charter and headboat operators from Maryland and North Carolina holding a Charter/Headboat HMS permit. All recreationally landed Bluefin tuna, billfish, and swordfish must be reported via a catch card, regardless of waters fished (state or federal). Reporting of Bluefin tuna dead discards is also required, while the Maryland Catch Card program also collects data on shark landings.

HMS Catch Reporting Program

The HMS Catch Reporting program is used to identify harvest and dead discards of Bluefin tuna, as well as harvest of billfish and swordfish. This program operates from Maine through Texas and the Caribbean territories, covering private anglers as well as for-hire headboats and charter vessels holding Atlantic HMS permits for fishing in federal waters. Any vessel landing one of the species listed above is required to report their catch within 24-hours after the end of the trip via an online reporting system on the HMS permits website, the HMS Catch Reporting Smartphone App, SAFIS eTrips, or telephone.

Atlantic HMS Tournament Registration and Reporting System (ATR)

All tournaments offering rewards or prizes for the catch or landing of Atlantic HMS are required to register with NMFS within 30 days of the start of the event, and must report all catch and the number of participating vessels for each day of the event within seven days of the completion of the event. Registration and reporting may be done via the online ATR portal, or via paper forms provided for download on the NMFS website. Data collected via the ATR system is used for ICCAT reporting purposes, and is one of the primary data sources for tracking the 250 billfish limit (included blue and white marlin and roundscale spearfish) imposed on the U.S. Atlantic recreational billfish fishery by ICCAT.

For-hire Logbook Programs

The following items provide additional information on ongoing for-hire data collection programs along the Atlantic Coast associated with logbook reporting requirements.

These data collection programs utilize logbooks for reporting details of individual recreational fishing trips in the for-hire fishery on the Atlantic Coast. Federally required (mandatory) reporting is linked to specific fishery management plans (FMPs) and permits to participate in the specific fisheries (e.g., groundfish through the Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office (GARFO)). Individual state logbook reporting programs may be comprehensive in scope or limited to fishery-specific data collections.

GARFO Vessel Trip Reporting For-hire Logbooks

Commercial and for-hire operators participating in New England and Mid-Atlantic fishery FMPs are required to report results of all fishing trips via VTR, a mandatory trip-reporting logbook data collection program administered by NOAA GARFO. Trip reports are required to be submitted within 48 hours. VTR data are incorporated into the final estimated effort, by wave, after year-end and have been incorporated into preliminary MRIP bi-monthly effort/catch estimates since 2017.

Southeast Region Headboat Survey (SRHS)

The SRHS was implemented in the South Atlantic in 1972 and extends from North Carolina through east Florida. The survey focuses on producing landings and effort estimates from the federally permitted headboat fishery targeting offshore reef fishes. This data collection program includes mandatory electronic trip reporting by headboats on a weekly basis along with a dockside intercept program to validate reporting and obtain biological samples for age, growth, and reproductive parameters used in stock assessments. Federal regulations require only federally permitted boats to report to the SRHS so headboats without federal permits are not included. Headboats which do not have a federal permit are also not included in the FHTS and so there is a potential gap in coverage.

The APAIS headboat at-sea sampling component is conducted in the same region as covered by the SRHS although MRIP does not produce landings estimates for use by stock assessment or management for this fishery sector. The primary objective of the APAIS headboat sampling in the South Atlantic is to obtain live discard size and species composition from observed fishing, rather than species composition and number from logbook reported data with no information available on size or condition of discards. These two data collection programs overlap but the trip reporting in logbooks and voluntary participation in the at-sea APAIS headboat sampling does not constitute duplicative reporting burden.

Maryland Charter Fisheries Logbook

The Maryland DNR charter logbook began in 1995 as a mandatory weekly reporting program for charter boats fishing for Striped Bass in Chesapeake Bay only. This program was modified to include reporting by vessels and/or captains holding several recreational fishery permits in MD: The Chesapeake Bay & Coastal Sport Charter Boat License, the Maryland Commercial Fishing Guide License, and/or the Maryland Unlimited Tidal Fish License. These permits and reporting requirements cover all species in the Chesapeake Bay and

coastal Maryland waters. This program collects variables to determine fishing effort, and harvest, including weights from landed fish and catch disposition (e.g., released, landed, kept, regulatory release, etc.). Vessel operators are required to submit trip level reports on a weekly basis.

Maryland DNR provides the trip data to MRIP for those vessels selected in the FHTS to be used for effort estimation in lieu of telephone survey responses by Maryland vessel operators (who are not called by the FHTS). Maryland ocean-side for-hire vessel operators holding a federal for-hire vessel permit are required to submit VTRs to NOAA as well as the state reporting requirements. Hence, there is the likelihood of duplicative reporting by Maryland for-hire vessels fishing in coastal Atlantic waters.

Other State For-Hire logbook programs

The following state logbook programs cover for-hire vessels in varying scope of vessels and fisheries in paper or electronic reporting forms. They are referenced here as areas for future coordination and possible integration if later certified by MRIP. Currently (2022), none of these are used in MRIP estimation:

- Rhode Island DFW via SAFIS eTrips and eLogbook
- Connecticut Party and Charter Vessel Black Sea Bass Program
- New York State Vessel Trip Reports via SAFIS eTrips
- New Jersey Striped Bass Bonus Program
- Virginia Cobia Permit Reporting Program & February Black Sea Bass Reporting Program
- South Carolina For-hire Logbook

Other logbook programs

- MAFMC Recreational Tilefish Permitting and Electronic Reporting

Other Recreational Data Collection Programs

State Reef Fish Survey (SRFS)

The SRFS is a specialized recreational fishing survey, certified by MRIP, which provides data needed to manage and assess reef fish stocks in Florida. The SRFS has an in-person interviewing and mail components which provide information and is required for recreational anglers and spear fishers who intend to fish or harvest a specific list of reef fishes¹ from private boats.

Southeast For-Hire Integrated Electronic Reporting (SEFHIER) Program

[Pending addition from SERO staff]

¹ Mutton Snapper, Yellowtail Snapper, Hogfish, Red Snapper, Vermillion Snapper, Gag, Red Grouper, Black Grouper, Greater Amberjack, Lesser Amberjack, Banded Rudderfish, Almaco Jack, and Gray Triggerfish

Atlantic Regional Implementation Priorities to Meet Data Needs

The ACCSP RTC developed a prioritized list of regionally important data needs, which were reviewed and approved by the ACCSP Coordinating Council.

- 1. Improved precision (PSE) and presentation of MRIP estimates**
- 2. Comprehensive for-hire data collection and monitoring**
- 3. Improved recreational fishery discard and release data**
- 4. Improved timeliness of recreational catch and harvest estimates**
- 5. Increased utility of citizen science**
- 6. Biological sampling for recreational fisheries separate from MRIP**
- 7. Improved in-season monitoring**

Each priority is described below in detail to provide justification for the regional importance along with the approach for implementation and where possible, the estimated annual costs. Some priorities have associated MRIP-certified methodologies and some are included for purposes of discussion and future research. ACCSP will continue to update this plan as new methods are certified or as regional priorities change. There may be a need to balance priorities with costs and therefore to address issues in a different order. Costs of implementation may come in a form of tradeoffs other than dollars. With the move to cumulate estimates via the MRIP Recreational Fishing Survey and Data Standards in 2020, cumulative estimates throughout the year (e.g., January – July) will generally have lower PSEs than that of a single month's estimates. That is, if focusing on cumulative estimates throughout the year, each additional month might result in lower PSE as the year progresses and so the trade-off between smaller sample size (and thus likely higher PSEs) for a single month may not be as relevant. However, if individual, monthly, estimates are desired, the trade-off between PSE and timeliness are still a concern.

Improved precision (PSE) of MRIP catch estimates

For many managed species on the Atlantic Coast, MRIP estimates are reasonably precise at the annual and regional scale for interjurisdictional stock assessments. Inshore species that are frequently encountered in the APAIS survey also have reasonably precise state-level estimates for use in single jurisdiction assessments. PSEs above 50% are not presented according to the 2020 MRIP Standards. Current estimates are not precise enough to meet fisheries management needs for some species.

Redefining sample strata spatiotemporally to better focus on species poorly represented using the existing survey methods would result in decreased PSE for rare event (e.g., Blueline Tilefish, Red Snapper, etc.) and pulse fisheries (e.g., Cobia, tuna, and billfish). Specialized surveys should also be considered, designed, and certified to address these particularly problematic species. For example, alternative catch and effort surveys are necessary to track the ACL for Red Snapper over the harvest season which occurs over a period of days. Also, LPS and HMS catch card programs are an alternative method implemented to address low precision estimates for billfish and tuna. Methods should be developed to collect data from private anglers on species not sufficiently encountered by APAIS to develop precise-enough estimates through other means. As the need for reliable estimates increases for managed species under quotas, alternative survey methods could be developed for MRIP certification with a regional framework that is scalable.

Managed species with chronically high PSEs and/or very small ACLs should be prioritized for improvements. Historically, attempts to reduce PSE have primarily focused on increasing sample size; however, ACCSP recommends that future resources be focused on investigating targeted sampling design changes, alternative estimation approaches, and methods to optimize sampling effort (with strategic allocation of samples at existing or increased levels) to reduce PSEs to acceptable levels. Beginning in Wave 5, 2020 for some states but fully implemented in 2021 due to a lag in deployment caused by COVID-19, the Atlantic APAIS was increased by 30% from funding provided via the Modern Fish Act (MFA).

Biological stock boundaries often do not coincide with state boundaries used to pre-stratify the MRIP APAIS and FES (e.g., the northern and southern Black Sea Bass stock split at Cape Hatteras, the Gulf of Maine and Georges Bank stocks of Atlantic Cod, the Long Island Sound management unit of Tautog, the Gulf and Atlantic stocks of many species separated at the Florida Keys). As a result, precise estimates of recreational removals for both input to stock assessments and annual quota monitoring would be beneficial to have at a finer scale and often with different boundaries than in MRIP's pre-stratified design.

There are several approaches to resolving this issue: (1) increase sample size to allow for more precise post-stratified estimates; (2) distribute base number of assignments to pre-stratified sub-state regions (as some states already do); and (3) further stratify the survey around important biological boundaries, which may require changes to the survey sampling schedule.

Post-stratification is the simplest approach, and methods to improve precision would also help improve the usability of finer spatial scale estimates. However, some boundaries cannot be resolved with post-stratification. For example, Monroe County (the Florida Keys) straddles two federal fishery management council jurisdictions and is a stock boundary for many assessments in the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic. Currently in MRIP, all effort and catch for this county is assigned to west Florida estimates regardless of waters fished (note: Monroe County, Florida estimates are post-stratified for Black Grouper, Gag, Greater Amberjack, Mutton Snapper, Yellowtail Snapper, Blueline Tilefish, Nassau Grouper, Goliath Grouper, Snowy Grouper, and Red Grouper). Although county-level estimates of landings and discards may be post-stratified to reassign to the Atlantic, there is often a need to develop estimates of removals from this county by area fished (Gulf and Atlantic), and this is not possible with the current MRIP design. A combination of methods may be required to fully resolve this issue for all recreationally important species.

A related issue is the development and presentation of post-stratified estimates. Currently, MRIP offers SAS template programs to allow users to define custom domains to post-stratify estimates along appropriate biological or management boundaries. Developing web tools to allow users to obtain custom estimates, or estimates for a standardized set of regions with standardized, pre-defined boundaries, with the appropriate calibration factors applied, would improve usability and transparency of these estimates for use in stock assessments and the management process. These could be provided to all users through the current MRIP interface, or to a subset of more advanced users through the ACCSP Data Warehouse interface.

Comprehensive for-hire data collection and monitoring

For-hire catch and effort estimates combine distinct data collection methodologies for effort (FHTS) and catch (APAIS) with a validation component. This provides adequate coverage for commonly encountered species on an annual basis. However, FHTS and APAIS overlap with other mandatory reporting requirements

vary by jurisdiction, such as federal VTRs, SRHS, and state or regional logbook programs. Some data streams are not fully integrated into MRIP estimates (preliminary and/or final). The current system has been criticized for increased reporting burden on captains, lack of integration of data collection to produce catch statistics, and under coverage of pulse fisheries and deep-water species.

Recent changes in fishery management practices have further strengthened the argument for the use of logbooks in the for-hire sector. The NEFMC, MAFMC, and SAFMC have implemented mandatory electronic for-hire reporting requirements to improve reporting. Federally permitted charter vessels are required to submit fishing activity via electronic logbooks within 48 hours of a fishing trip (NEFMC/MAFMC) or within 7 days of a fishing trip (i.e., weekly; SAFMC). These actions have allowed for logbook data collection to monitor both catch and effort data within the federally permitted for-hire sector.

ACCSP supports development of MRIP certified logbook programs with validation as one method to monitor catch and effort in the for-hire fishery. Logbook compliance with reporting requirements depends on effective outreach and enforcement mechanisms; however, logbook programs may not always be practicable due to legislative or regulatory hurdles or may not be preferred by fisheries managers, necessitating reliance on statistically-valid surveys instead. The critical need along the Atlantic Coast is to eliminate duplicative, often overlapping, for-hire fishery reporting programs. A Comprehensive For-hire Data Collection Program with full, but not duplicative, coverage of both federally and the many non-federally permitted boats needs to be implemented. Non-federally permitted boats includes vessels that fish exclusively in state waters or for fishes not currently regulated via permits that have reporting requirements.

To meet future data collection and fishery monitoring needs, data collection must be timely, precise, cost effective, and minimize the reporting burden on captains and anglers. The ACCSP recommends this Comprehensive For-hire Data Collection Program be developed to ensure minimal reporting burden and to leverage data sharing among federal and state programs. Coverage shall include headboats and charter boats fishing in both state and federal waters, and methods may include logbooks where feasible, and alternative approaches to data collections for fishery monitoring where logbooks are not feasible or practicable. The implemented program should follow MRIP certified designs for logbooks with validation or sampling surveys.

In an effort to draft an Atlantic Comprehensive For-hire Data Collection Program, the RTC updated the ACCSP Data Standards with a set of minimum data standards for for-hire reporting and, with consultation from NOAA Fisheries, created a document for eventual MRIP certification detailing the use of census logbook data with validation. This certification methodology was identified as the first step in working towards the ability for for-hire recreational estimates to be calculated either through survey or census logbook. The RTC and NOAA Fisheries will continue to update the data standards and to progress within the MRIP certification process.

Recognizing various federal logbooks are in development or being modified for implementation, the Atlantic region needs completion and certification of a method to validate logbooks and develop correction factors to utilize logbook effort and catch in MRIP estimates. The new program shall meet the needs of statistical estimation, stock assessment, and fisheries management.

Improved recreational fishery discard and release data

In response to stock declines, fishery managers have taken regulatory steps to reduce harvest in the recreational sector, including increased size limits, reduced bag limits, and reduced recreational fishing seasons to ensure harvest levels do not exceed management targets. This has translated into a growing portion of recreational catch that is released at sea and unavailable for direct observation in dockside surveys. Numbers of discarded fish and accurate species identification of discarded fishes are more difficult to obtain with precision than harvested catch, due largely to the fact that current methods rely on angler recall.

Proper identification of discarded species is a requirement for any type of estimation of released fish. Studies have shown anglers have varying ability to identify their catch, including a study on the Pacific Coast that demonstrated anglers could reliably recognize Pacific Halibut and Sand Bass (unique body morphs without similar conspecifics) but had difficulty with rockfishes which encompass many species which are very similar in appearance. The Atlantic Coast region has similar species identification issues with flounders, kingfishes, sharks, and some reef fishes. Lack of angler expertise in proper identification of species requires they be reported at family or genus level groups. These grouped discarded species must be delineated into their constituent species prior to stock assessment to provide accurate and complete counts of all discards of a particular species. There is no standard method and little supplementary information to aid in these delineations. Given the regulatory status and differential stock health within these species groupings, accurate identification is paramount for holistic management. Supplemental surveys to ascertain the makeup of species within these groups should not be the only method for improving discard identification. Distribution of taxonomic keys or other fish identification guides or tools for these species, and an increase in angler education and outreach about proper fish identification, should be a priority part of any improved program for discarded fish identification, enumeration, and biological data collection.

The Atlantic APAIS has included a protocol specific to for-hire headboat at-sea discard monitoring and angler interviewing since 2005 wherein state interviewers directly observe recreational anglers as they fish on headboats and collect information on the species composition, size, and release condition of discards. Based on the success of projects funded to date, the use of at-sea observers in the headboat fishery has proven to be a viable method for collecting accurate data on discards that fills important data gaps in stock assessments. However, headboat sampling could be improved with an expanded frame of active, eligible vessels participating (currently voluntary participation within the APAIS), and an increased number of headboat fishing trips sampled. The ACCSP supports and recommends improvements to the current headboat at-sea sampling program to include more robust sample sizes to support better precision of discard rates and composition, and improved outreach efforts to increase participation by eligible headboats throughout the Atlantic Coast.

Discard data from headboat mode is not necessarily representative of other modes. More information is needed for charter, private/rental and shore mode discards. While addition of observers might be too costly at this time, one modest improvement would be inclusion of depth fished in the intercept. The APAIS collects coarse trip-level data on the primary area fished (inland, state territorial seas up to 3 miles from shore, or federal waters greater than 3 miles from shore) but does not provide data on the depth fished. These data are critical for determining depth-dependent discard mortality for released portions of recreational catch.

Improved timeliness of recreational catch and harvest estimates

There are two aspects of timing to consider regarding recreational catch and harvest estimates: the unit of estimation (i.e., month, two-month wave, cumulative, annual) and how quickly estimates are

generated after an estimation period has ended. State and Commission managed species would benefit from monthly estimates to set seasons, especially in northern areas where fish may only be active during one month of a two-month wave, or for ephemeral fisheries where a species may pass through and be available for only one month (e.g., Cobia). This could be especially important to for-hire fishery captains as it could assist business planning. Also, even though MRIP was not designed to track ACLs, having more refined temporal estimates could help reduce gaps or buffers set between ACLs and Annual Catch Targets (ACTs), allowing anglers to harvest more fish by reducing uncertainty in landings. Both the 2016 and 2021 National Academy of Science (NAS) Review recommended additional evaluation of the cognitive properties of the two-month recall period, and a shorter estimation period would likely reduce any recall bias. APAIS data collection is already amenable to monthly recreational estimates and the FES was found to not have significant differences between one- and two-month recall periods (Andrews et al., 2018).

In terms of how quickly estimates are generated, currently annual estimates of catch and harvest are often not available until April of the following year and wave estimates are not available until 45 days after the completion of a wave. Improving the timeliness of recreational catch and harvest estimates could help fishery managers better predict when seasons need to be closed before landings are exceeded. Managers would also have more time to develop management options before decisions for an upcoming season must be made if a reduction in the lag time is achieved. Electronic data collection of both the APAIS and FHTS in 2019 and 2021, respectively, has allowed for quicker access to raw data for use in the estimation process and also improved the quality of data.

The trade-off between the additional cost of moving to monthly waves and/or faster turn-around time for generating estimates should be evaluated against budgeting for improved precision at the current two-month/annual levels and other recreational data priorities. Moving to one-month waves without additional sampling could result in monthly estimates of sufficiently low precision that having monthly estimates does not actually improve management. Andrews et al. (2018) discerned that, while there was no significant difference in effort estimates between a feasible one-month alternative to the FES and the current FES, multiple reference periods in a single survey may reduce bias for one-month estimates. In determining trade-offs of effort survey design, Andrews et al. (2018) recommend consideration be given to estimate precision, sampling requirements needed to support different levels of resolution, and also the impact of increased sampling on survey costs.

Biological sampling for recreational fisheries separate from MRIP

Fishery-dependent monitoring programs on the Atlantic Coast which collect vital statistics on catch and effort from the recreational fishery do not provide some of the critical data inputs needed for age-based stock assessments. The MRIP is the only dedicated large-scale fishery dependent program that monitors private and for-hire charter boat-based segments of the recreational fishery. The MRIP strives to provide a statistically valid sample of the size composition and biomass of harvested finfish that is representative of the spatial and temporal distribution of the recreational fishery. However, for many important managed species, the MRIP survey intercepts low numbers of landed fish, particularly for species with strict harvest limits, such as Red Snapper, or that are targeted by a small subset of participants in the overall recreational fishery, such as tilefishes and deep water grouper species. Furthermore, time constraints and strict interview procedures of the APAIS do not allow field interviewers to collect age structures or record sex from fish sampled.

Coast-wide methods to supplement data collected through the APAIS are needed to collect length, weight, age structures and sex ratios from managed species that are representative of current recreational landings. Supplemental survey(s) could be focused on intercepting trips with catch and maximizing biological samples, whereas the APAIS would continue to be the primary data source for catch-per-unit-effort. The supplemental survey(s) should also allow for the collection of trip-level data on area fished, depths fished, fishing methods, and characteristics of discards (numbers by species, proportions under legal size limits, immediate mortalities, and notable impairments).

Increased utility of citizen science

Angler-reported recreational fishing activity and catch continues to be an evolving aspect of engaging citizens in fisheries management and science and in helping to bolster the breadth of data collection for state, federal, council, and Commission partners. While productive for agency-public relationships, the vast majority of data collection tools (i.e., mobile applications) have not yet followed a standardized approach to data collection. A number of partners in the South Atlantic (e.g., 'Release' by the SAFMC and 'Catch U Later' by NC DMF) have collaborated with ACCSP to create these mobile-based applications on the Atlantic Coast and there are continued plans to further standardize data standards/elements. This could include the use of a 'switchboard' base application which can have a standard set of questions/responses to choose from for numerous partners – this would allow for different questions/responses to be submitted in the same format and data stream(s) but to be flexible depending on partner needs.

A more standardized approach to data collection via opt-in angler applications would provide more useful data for use in stock assessments by assuring data are collected in the same manner, regardless of where the data are being collected which in turn could allow for data users to potentially include opt-in angler reported information into the recreational fishery management process for estimation and management. Another major factor to be considered is the communication and outreach required to begin and maintain engagement from a broad segment of the angling public.

Improved in-season monitoring

Stock assessments may partition fishery removals into seasons or redefine calendar years into fishing years. Fishery managers also require precise estimates of landings and discards over time periods that better match the scale of the recreational fishery. For example, for federally managed species with an ACL that cannot be exceeded, recreational fisheries have demonstrated the capacity to exceed limits well before the end of a full year. Thus, annual seasons have been reduced and precise estimates are now needed over much shorter periods (in some cases weeks or days) to ensure that ACLs are not exceeded and overfishing is not occurring. Increasing precision of estimates within waves may be necessary for species where the unit of analysis has a temporal scale less than a year.

The MRIP is intended to be a general survey and is therefore not designed for the purposes of in-season management of recreational fisheries with ACLs. Improving timeliness of estimates is one feasible method to improve ability to monitor in-season estimates but the cost of increasing sample sizes to produce precise enough estimates is high. Additionally, it's possible that a different approach to management, rather than data collection method and/or supplemental surveys, would be more useful for species with small seasons and/or rare occurrences.

The 2021 NAS review of MRIP yielded several suggestions to assist with improving in-season monitoring including: using raw data streams of MRIP data, mode-based projecting and/or forecasting, further implementation of new technologies to better collect data, and using supplemental and ancillary data. Additionally, new recreational surveys and survey methods could be implemented but partners should anticipate the need for possible inter-calibration and continued survey development, ensuring that these needs are also clearly communicated to anglers, managers, and stakeholders. It will also be beneficial to continue pilot testing new approaches including possibly the use of harvest tags used to track the harvest of individual fish or private recreational fisheries license endorsements to identify a subset of licensed anglers to better target managed species.

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Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program

Coordinating Council

May 2, 2022

Methodology for Logbook Estimates of Catch and Effort with Dockside Validation

Summary: This document is provided to the Coordinating Council for awareness of progress and opportunity to comment. It was developed through the Recreational Technical Committee and will be submitted to MRIP for their consideration, and response under the process to certify new methodologies. Note the certification process is iterative, and the process can take significant time. Also, ACCSP understands that logbook programs currently collecting data may not exactly fit the proposed design. It is expected that changes to the design will be made as needed to support the statistical, logistical, and other considerations are discussed. This document builds on a pilot study in SC (2016) and the Atlantic implantation of APAIS tablets in 2019.

Background: Priority 2 in the Atlantic Recreational Implementation plan is to develop a comprehensive For-hire data collection program. The desire for a new methodology would be to use For-hire logbooks to the greatest extent possible, at the same time maintaining data compatibility for fishing activity by vessels with a certified trip report (logbook) and those vessels and fishermen that do not have a logbook reporting requirement. The current For Hire Survey methodology is not included in this document, as it is already implemented and is expected to continue. The new methodology proposes extending the use of logbooks for both effort and catch information, dockside validation via the MRIP APAIS, and new estimation procedures. The vision of the comprehensive for-hire data collection program is to have each vessel as part of either the certified logbook frame, OR the for-hire survey (FHS) frame, and the catch totals from the logbook and survey frames can be combined for a robust estimate of for-hire fishing across state and federal jurisdictions. The design is intended to be flexible enough for jurisdictions to implement logbook data collection at different points in time, or not at all.

The MRIP design certification is a significant step in working toward implementation of data collection, parallel data collection with existing methods, transition plans and eventual use of the data from a new design. MRIP core surveys also follow this process, including APAIS new design implemented in 2013 and FES new design implemented in 2018. More information on the MRIP design certification process can be found here:

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/recreational-fishing-data/recreational-fishing-survey-design-certification>

Methodology for Logbook Estimates of Catch and Effort with Dockside Validation
Preparation for MRIP Certification

Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program:
Recreational Technical Committee

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References

- Dukes, A., Floyd, B., Hiltz, E., and G. White. 2017. Use of APAIS Intercepts to Validate Logbooks and Calculate Combined Estimates of Catch, SC For-Hire Logbook Validation Project, Final Report, Charleston.
- Breidt, F.J., Huang, C.M. and Opsomer, J.D. 2017. South Carolina Charter Boat Validation Estimation Progress Report. Slides presented to South Carolina Charter Validation Workgroup.

Logbook Data Collection: Design and Standards

Data Submission

Each vessel and every for-hire trip will be recorded in order to achieve the goal of capturing a mandatory census survey (as close to complete for-hire information from the logbook frame as possible). Data collection must be electronic (with paper forms as backup) and all logbook data will be collected via a dynamic user interface such that all required data elements for the permitted program(s) are presented to the respondent.

To assure observational independence, a trip start designation will be required before leaving the dock and a trip stop designation required before offload. Designations are electronic timestamps which are not editable by data collectors. To end and submit a trip, data collectors will be required to use a 'trip stop' option which can only be selected once all relevant data elements are finalized. Once submitted, trip and catch data elements cannot be edited. Trip information would remain on data collection tool (i.e., tablet, phone) to allow data submitters to review data post-submission and requests for changes could be made to relevant partners for editing. Data will be submitted at least weekly and up to 48-hours after the end of the week (e.g., due Tuesday after a Monday-Sunday week). Did Not Fish (DNF) reports would be mandatory for active vessels with daily-level detail, submitted at least weekly. Inactive vessels would be able to identify periods of inactivity seasonally/annually.

Logbook Frame

Vessel Directory

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) maintains the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) Site Register (<https://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/msd/html/siteRegister.jsp>) real-time website which houses public access sites along the U.S. Atlantic Coast and, for designated state representatives, a Vessel Directory (VsD) of an extensive list of for-hire vessels. Vessels are added, edited, and retired by federal and state representatives while being routinely updated. These updates include the matching of fishing permits with existing vessels and/or the addition of new vessels to match new permits. Currently, this is limited to HMS and GARFO Federal VTR permits; however, additional partner permit could be added at a later time.

The VsD requires all vessels have a status, used to determine if a vessel is currently eligible/active, retired, or in draft, and are assigned a unique vessel identification number (Vessel ID) to prevent duplication. Each vessel must also have a number (State Registration Number or U.S. Coast Guard Documentation Number) and for-hire designation as either charter or headboat. To be approved within the VsD, vessels must also have at least one active site (or site placeholder if trailered), activity in at least one month within a year, a primary contact person, and a phone number of the primary contact. In addition to required fields, the VsD houses broader information about the vessel, the access site(s), contact(s) information, registration(s), and federal for-hire and HMS permits.

Frame Definition

The logbook frame will be populated with vessels which have permits associated with a certified program design. Permits are or would be housed within the VsD and used, together with the permit's dates of activity, to determine if a vessel would have its logbook data used for the entirety of a sample Wave.

Within a given Wave, a distinct vessel can only occur within a single frame, either the logbook or survey frame. For-hire vessels within the survey frame would consist of vessels without a certified mandatory logbook and would report their activity through existing MRIP surveys of fishing effort (For-Hire Survey (FHS)) and catch (Access Point Angler Intercept Survey (APAI)). Vessels may change between frames by wave. For instance, if a vessel's federal permit, which met certified program design, expired within a state that did not have a certified program design for state logbooks, it would be moved from the logbook to survey frame for that Wave. Changes cannot be applied on any finer scale than wave level to maintain the FHS survey design selection procedures.

Validation

Validation of logbooks (e.g., date, start/end location, vessel information) will be accomplished through independent observations of trip activity via a dockside component. Please see 'Dockside Catch Survey' section below for more information.

Reporting Compliance

Logbooks must have accountability measures in place and have compliance tracking procedures developed for missing reports and non-compliance rates; these metrics should be measured at least monthly to ensure a compliance rate of at least 70% is being met. These measures also extend beyond weekly reporting to the timing requirements of DNF reports which can vary in time based on vessel activity. Additionally, consequences for missing, incomplete, or late reports must be established and followed. The use of robust outreach plans is highly recommended to help attain as high of a compliance rate as is possible.

Dockside Catch Survey

Validation of logbook trips will be accomplished through independent observations of trip activity using a dockside catch survey, such as the APAIS. Dockside interviews can be used to validate logbook trip effort and catch information.

Summary of the APAIS and General Survey

The APAIS is a dockside survey of anglers fishing from shore, private/rental boats, and for-hire charter boats conducted on the Atlantic Coast from Maine through Georgia. Data collected includes trip level information, demographic and social information, as well as catch data. Maine through Virginia also perform at-sea sampling to capture for-hire headboat or party boat data on catch and discards. The APAIS is used to produce bi-monthly catch estimates.

The for-hire recreational fishery for charter and headboats sectors have angler effort estimates produced from the FHS, a list-directed weekly telephone survey of for-hire vessel operators. This survey operates from Maine through Mississippi. The FHS is paired with data collected through charter and headboat APAIS intercepts to estimate total for-hire catch. This estimate along with the combination of APAIS and the Fishing Effort Survey (FES), used for private boat and shore recreational estimates, is known as the MRIP general survey.

Data Collected

The APAIS collects relevant data elements about trips (e.g., date, time, location, vessel specifics, etc.), effort (e.g., number of anglers, hours fished, gear), and harvested/discarded catch. On the Atlantic and Gulf coasts, interviews are conducted on and submitted via a custom application from hand-held tablets. This application presents exact, current for-hire vessel information (registration number and vessel name) and GPS and date/time snapshots for interviews, both of which help provide strong matching abilities to electronic logbook data. These criteria are used in trip matching methods described below.

Distinct Interview Use

Each distinct APAIS interview can only be used for logbook validation or for survey expansion (when used with FES/FHS). Since this delineation would potentially reduce the number of interviews used in the survey expansion, a more in-depth analysis of methodology to ensure adequate coverage is required. Table 1 illustrates that the use of APAIS as validation for logbooks would lower the sample size of APAIS used for expansion of FHS data by ~30% for the New England and Mid-Atlantic regions for APAIS sampling months (only through September in 2021) in each of the Atlantic states, Maine through Virginia (See Table 6 for months of APAIS sampling by state).

State	2019		2020		2021	
	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After
ME	52	37	27	25	50	42
NH	123	64	71	38	119	85
MA	341	269	248	191	239	210
RI	240	106	231	91	260	128
CT	103	61	38	30	98	86
NY	282	153	221	130	235	143
NJ	225	122	53	43	171	119
DE	83	48	70	55	102	86
MD	279	256	149	146	281	274
VA	145	87	34	29	114	100
Total	1,873	1,203	1,142	778	1,669	1,273

Table 1. Total raw counts of APAIS for-hire trips reported (before) minus vessels matched to VTR trips for total sample size of APAIS used for expansion of FHS data (after) for each state in months of sampling for the APAIS by year. 2019-2020 are full years while 2021 is only up through September.

Supplemental Components

Additional approaches to data collection, such as the State Reef Fish Survey (SRFS¹) in Florida, have been successfully integrated into the MRIP general survey to supplement sampling coverage. Another approach could also include the use of onboard observers which would allow for further validation of harvested and released alive/dead fish.

Methodology for Catch and Effort Estimates

Vessels in the logbook frame will have both catch and effort data collected and submitted. A portion of logbook data will then be validated to compare logbook data to intercepted trips and catch via difference-based estimation methodology, adapted from methodology from Dukes et al. (2017). This methodology uses the logbook as base data for both effort and catch, and dockside interviews as a correction factor.

Trip Matching

The calculation of effort and catch estimates is reliant on the ability to match self-reported logbook trips and dockside interviews, independent from vessel representatives. Therefore, data elements from both data streams will be used for matching distinct trips via a set of mandatory matching elements for a distinct vessel, via vessel registration or coast guard number. These matches are validated by requiring at least the trip date and location (state, county, and site).

While Dukes et al. (2017) used an algorithm to match data elements between logbook and dockside survey data streams, improvements to surveys (e.g., the APAIS) and existing logbook programs (e.g., NOAA Fisheries Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office (GARFO) Vessel Trip Report (VTR)) allows for better matching. The most important improvements to both logbooks and the dockside surveys is the transition from paper to electronic data collection and submission. This allows for cleaner data collection of real-time vessel information (i.e., exact name/number for a given sampling Wave) rather than manually filled-in data and also improves the timeliness of reporting.

The matching of metrics, shared between a logbook and dockside survey, helps to identify the likelihood of a trip matching within the difference-based estimation methodology (Breidt et al. 2017). Dukes et al. (2017) developed a set of seven weighted metrics (Appendix B); however, updates to data collection streams means more exact matching and,

¹ https://media.fisheries.noaa.gov/dam-migration/09_gulf-reef-fish-survey-decision-memo-with-attachments.pdf

while the matching is still likely not perfect, Table 2 outlines an updated recommendation of relevant matching metrics (note: the weighting has not been updated). These changes included the removal of Distance and Target Species and the adjustment of Trip End Time to a comparison of hours (\pm 30 minutes), not minutes. Additionally, the Date was removed since the matching of electronic data allows for an exact match. If trips do not match on date, they are removed from the analysis. Additionally, it is worth noting that distinct trips for that day can and will be identified so as to account for multiple trips per day for a given vessel.

Field	Dockside Survey Definition	Logbook Definition	Match Metric Weight
Start Site	Interview site	Site reported as the start site	0.30
Anglers	Number of individuals in the party	Number of anglers reported participating	0.30
Hours Fished	Mean total hours fished of interviewees	Total hours fished as reported	0.10
Trip End Time	Mean interview time	Estimated trip end time	0.01

Table 2. Fields used to compare dockside interviews and logbook trips, amended from Dukes et al. (2017).

Example Matching Rate

Using 2019-2021 federal VTR and APAIS data, we matched the total number of trips by year/month/day and state to compare the matching rate to that of the SC report. This analysis recognizes the reality that not all VTR trips would be intercepted by APAIS, and that not all APAIS intercepted for-hire angler-trips were required to submit a VTR. Summary results below:

State	2019		2020		2021	
	VTR	APAIS	VTR	APAIS	VTR	APAIS
ME	878	52	525	27	507	50
NH	1,154	123	1008	71	589	119
MA	2,521	341	2,322	248	1,834	239
RI	1,738	240	2,050	231	1,325	260
CT	1117	103	797	38	535	98
NY	6,714	282	5,771	221	4,793	235
NJ	6,752	225	6,050	53	4,562	171
DE	944	83	627	70	684	102
MD	717	279	548	149	617	281
VA	930	145	932	34	731	114
Total	23,465	1,873	20,630	1,142	16,177	1,669

Table 3. Total raw counts of VTR reported and APAIS trips intercepted for each state in months of sampling for the APAIS by year. 2019-2020 are full years while 2021 is only through September.

State	2019	2020	2021
ME	1.7%	0.4%	1.6%
NH	5.1%	3.3%	5.8%
MA	2.9%	2.5%	1.6%
RI	7.7%	6.8%	10.0%
CT	3.8%	1.0%	2.2%
NY	1.9%	1.6%	1.9%
NJ	1.5%	0.2%	1.1%
DE	3.7%	2.4%	2.3%
MD	3.2%	0.5%	1.1%
VA	6.2%	0.5%	1.9%
Average	3.8%	1.9%	3.0%

Table 4. Percentage of APAIS for-hire trips for each state which exactly matched VTR trips in months of sampling for the APAIS by year. 2019-2020 are full years while 2021 is only through September.

State	2019	2020	2021
ME	28.8%	7.4%	16.0%
NH	48.0%	46.5%	28.6%
MA	21.1%	23.0%	12.1%
RI	55.8%	60.6%	50.8%
CT	40.8%	21.1%	12.2%
NY	45.7%	41.2%	39.1%
NJ	45.8%	18.9%	30.4%
DE	42.2%	21.4%	15.7%
MD	8.2%	2.0%	2.5%
VA	40.0%	14.7%	12.3%
Average	37.6%	25.7%	22.0%

Table 5. Percentage of VTR trips for each state which exactly matched APAIS for-hire trips in months of sampling for the APAIS by year. 2019-2020 are full years while 2021 is only up through September.

Table 4 shows that the coastal average matching rate for a typical year (i.e., 2019 and 2021) was ~2% higher than the target matching percentage of 1% in the Dukes et al. (2017). Not only is the coastal average higher, but each state exceeds the minimum benchmark of 1% matching rate proposed by Dukes et al. (2017). Thus, each state's list of federal vessels could have adequate validation of logbook data. For the same timeframe, Table 5 shows that the matching rate of VTRs to APAIS trips was ~28% but this is not representative of a 'true' percentage as some of the vessels from APAIS trips do not have GARFO permits (and thus do not report via federal VTR). Figure 1 helps to illustrate how closely the matching of APAIS and logbook data can be, even at lower matching percentages.

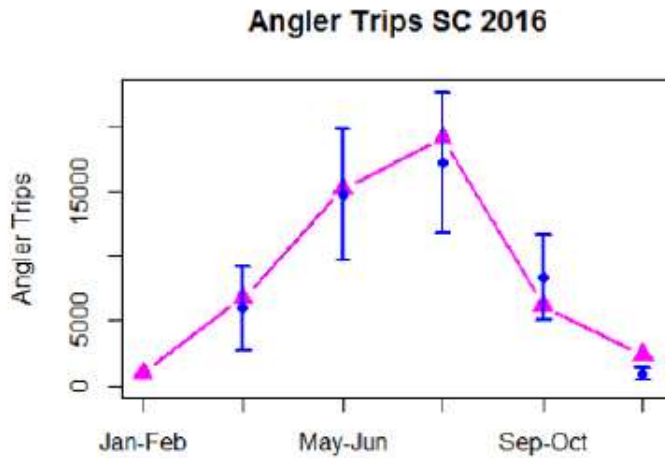


Figure 1. Example from Dukes et al. (2017) using estimated angler trips by Wave (blue dots) from the APAIS with 95% confidence intervals (blue verticals) compared to logbook reports (magenta triangles).

Since the analysis above did not take months outside of APAIS sampling into consideration (Table 6), it is worth noting that conducting APAIS in for-hire mode year round to use as validation for VTRs reported by state, is worth further consideration.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
ME					X	X	X	X	X	X		
NH					X	X	X	X	X	X		
MA				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
RI				X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
CT			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
NY			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
NJ			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
DE			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
MD			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
VA			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
NC	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
SC			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
GA			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Table 6. Months of APAIS coverage on the Atlantic Coast.

Effort and Catch Estimation

Using matched trips, estimates can be developed to combine logbook and survey data that account for underreporting (trips that occurred but were not reported), misreporting (trip specifics which are not correctly reported), or both simultaneously. Based on the findings of Dukes et al. (2017), a difference-based estimation (Breidt et al. 2017) is preferred to that of the capture-recapture methodology since it is less sensitive to small sample sizes and because it preserves additivity across domains (i.e., combined logbook estimates for all Waves sum to annual total). These combined estimates can be applied to both logbook and survey characteristics such as the angler/boat trips, overall catch, and harvested/discarded catch by species.

We propose the use of two distinct difference-based estimators (i.e., $T_{y,diff1}$ and $T_{y,diff2}$), used in Dukes et al. (2017) as estimation methods but with the understanding that only a single method will likely be used in the future. Further exploration of results amongst other states/years would help provide more real-world context but we recommend the use of mathematical equations used in an imperfect matching setting. For additional information and specifics, see Breidt et al. (2017).

The difference-based estimators are based on the survey-weighted intercept data, logbook data, and match metrics from a matching algorithm. Estimator calculations include standard error. In the difference-based estimation of catch specifically, the method is calculated as: logbook effort/catch, plus estimated unmatched effort/catch (on trips intercepted by dockside survey but with no logbook trip reported), plus the difference between logbook reported and survey observed effort/catch.

This analysis is reliant on the aforementioned match metrics. These metrics will be normalized as (1) high quality, (2) low-quality, and (3) non-match. This will inform the weighting of the effort and catch estimates from a trip – non-matches will be weighted as 0, low-quality matches will be weighted as 0.5, and high-quality matches will be weighted as 1. If a combination of high-quality, low-quality, and non-match values is observed for a given trip match, the weight normalized values between 1.0 and 0 will be attributed, based on that match value. Using an amended delineation from Dukes et al. (2017), we propose any normalized match metric value ≥ 0.5 to be considered a match and any value <0.5 to be not matched. Trips which are matched represent a sample of for-hire trips which are potentially reported but with uncertain matching. Therefore, non-matches represent a sample of trips that were likely not reported or misreported.

The same estimation process for effort will be used for catch: a combination of intercept records, logbook catch records, and match metrics from a matching algorithm will be used to develop difference based estimators. Kept and released records will be treated separately since released species are self-reported whereas kept records can be validated by the dockside interviewer. The combined estimators of the difference based estimation track logbook catch values closely if there is no MRIP-intercepted catch, and otherwise adjust catch upward to reflect unmatched (and presumably unreported) trips. The combined estimators tend to have standard errors no larger than the standard errors of MRIP-only estimators. When matching is good, MRIP and logbook catch values are consistent with one another, and the standard errors for the combined catch estimators can be much smaller than those of MRIP-only (Figure 2). Catch data is more difficult to match because logbooks record catch for the whole party while APAIS records have catch for each individual angler.

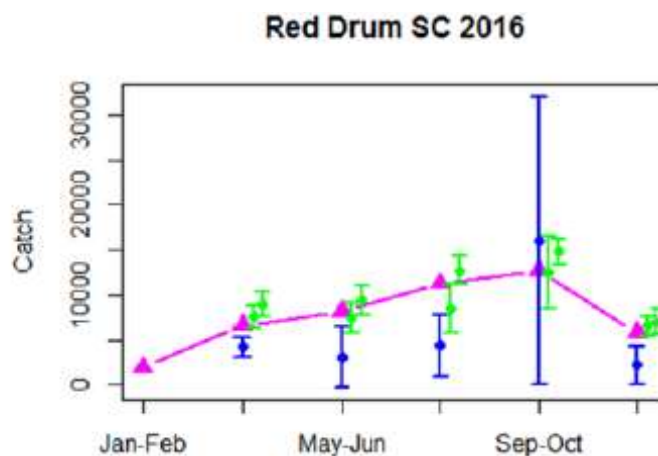


Figure 2. Estimated red drum catch by wave with approximate 95% confidence intervals, compared to logbook (magenta triangles). Estimators included are MRIP only (blue) and difference estimators $T_{y,diff1}$ and $T_{y,diff2}$ (green).

Appendix A: APAIS Questionnaire

2019 ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY FORM

FOR EMERGENCY USE ONLY

INTERVIEWER NAME: _____

COMMENTS: _____

1 ASSIGNMENT NO. [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []

1st INTERVIEWER [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []

2nd INTERVIEWER [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []

DATE: [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []

SITE GROUP (SH=1; PH=3; CH=5; HB=6) [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []

(JK ONLY: BB=1, MM=4) [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []

STATE [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []

COUNTY [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []

CONTROL NUMBER [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []

ASSIGNMENT INTERVAL: 1=0200-0800, 2=0800-1400, 3=1400-2000, 4=2000-0200, 5=1100-1700

ENCOUNTERED ANOTHER INTERVIEWER: 1=YES, 2=NO IF YES, SITE: [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []

IF SITE GROUP = 6, Complete Items in this Box:

Vessel Name & Registrations: []

HEADBOAT DOCK TO DOCK: []

HRS [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []

(round to nearest 15 minutes)

CLUSTER ID []

CLUSTER ID	TOURNAMENT WEIGH STATION:		COMPLETE		INTERVIEW STATUS		REASON FOR LEAVING SITE					
	1st SITE	2nd SITE	1=YES, 2=NO		Initial Refusal	Language Barrier	Refused Key Question	Not Done	Not Rec	Not Salt	Not Fin	Not U.S.
1st SITE	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []
2nd SITE	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []
TOTALS	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []

Anglers intercepted and included below should NOT be included in ANGLER TRIPS COUNTED above.

REASON FOR LEAVING SITE CODES:

00 - Could not find site 12 - Site closed, other hours (time in comments)

08 - Asked to leave 13 - Site closed, other (specify in comments)

11 - End of sampling time 14 - Site unsafe during sample period

TALLY BOX

SITE	Not Rec	Not Salt	Not Fin	Initial Refusal	Language Barrier	COUNTED
1ST	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []
2ND	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []
TOTALS	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []	[] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] []

REASON FOR LEAVING SITE (use codes listed above)

[] []

1. FORM

**FOR EMERGENCY
USE ONLY**

2. ASSIGNMENT NO.

1

3. INTERVIEWER ID

□ □ □ □ □ □

4. DATE: MMDD

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

5. INTERCEPT NO.

□ □

6. INTERVIEW TIME

(use 2400 clock)

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

Time this interview
was completed

7. STATE CODE

□ □

8. COUNTY CODE

□ □ □ □

9. SITE CODE

□ □ □ □ □ □

10. INTERVIEW STATUS (Key Item = *)

- 1 Questionnaire Complete
- 2 Refused Non-Key Item
- 5 Refused Key Item

READ PRIVACY ACT: This study is being conducted in accordance with the privacy act of 1974. You are not required to answer any question that you consider to be an invasion of your privacy.

*11. Would you say you were fishing from ...

SCORE

0 <input type="checkbox"/> Pier	1 <input type="checkbox"/> Dock
2 <input type="checkbox"/> Jetty, Breakwater	3 <input type="checkbox"/> Bridge, Causeway
4 <input type="checkbox"/> Other Man-made Structure (Specify) _____	5 <input type="checkbox"/> Beach or Bank (Additional hours required in Q16)

BOAT

6 <input type="checkbox"/> Headboat	7 <input type="checkbox"/> Charterboat
8 <input type="checkbox"/> Private Boat	9 <input type="checkbox"/> Rental Boat

*12. Was most of your (specify mode) fishing effort today in the ... (Select only one)

1 <input type="checkbox"/> Ocean/gulf	V <input type="checkbox"/> Cape Cod Bay
2 <input type="checkbox"/> Sound (Other than listed)	A <input type="checkbox"/> Narragansett Estuary
3 <input type="checkbox"/> River (Other than listed)	B <input type="checkbox"/> Buzzard's Bay Estuary
4 <input type="checkbox"/> Bay (Other than listed)	C <input type="checkbox"/> Long Island Estuary
5 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____	D <input type="checkbox"/> Hudson/Raritan Estuary
	E <input type="checkbox"/> Delaware Estuary
	F <input type="checkbox"/> Chesapeake Estuary
	G <input type="checkbox"/> Albemarle/Pamlico Estuary

*13. Was that ...

1 <input type="checkbox"/> Three Miles or Less From Shore
2 <input type="checkbox"/> More Than Three Miles
8 <input type="checkbox"/> Waterbody Does Not Apply

13a. Were you fishing an artificial reef today?

Yes No

If yes, enter Reef Code if "Don't Know" = 998 if "Refused" = 999

Name: _____

14. What type of gear was primarily used? (Select one only)

01 <input type="checkbox"/> Hook and Line	07 <input type="checkbox"/> Trap
02 <input type="checkbox"/> Dip Net, A-frame	08 <input type="checkbox"/> Spear
03 <input type="checkbox"/> Cast Net	09 <input type="checkbox"/> Hand
04 <input type="checkbox"/> Gill Net	10 <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____
05 <input type="checkbox"/> Seine	98 <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown
06 <input type="checkbox"/> Trawl	99 <input type="checkbox"/> Refused

15a. To the nearest half-hour, how many hours have you spent (specify mode) fishing today? That is, how many hours have you actually spent with your gear in the water?

□ □ □ □ □ No. of Hours if "Don't Know" = 99.8 if "Refused" = 99.9

15b. [If on boat] To the nearest half-hour, how many hours have you spent on the boat, away from the dock, today?

□ □ □ □ □ No. of Hours if "Don't Know" = 99.8 if "Refused" = 99.9

Not Applicable - SH mode

16. [Ask, only if "Beach" or "Bank"] How many additional hours do you expect to fish from shore today? That is, how many more hours will you actually have your gear in the water?

□ □ □ □ □ No. of Hours if "Don't Know" = 99.8 if "Refused" = 99.9

Not fishing from Beach or Bank

17. What species were you primarily fishing for today?

No Particular Species/Anything

1st Target

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

2nd Target

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

18. Not counting today, within the past 12 months, that is since (insert month) of last year, how many days have you gone saltwater sport finfishing in this state or from a boat launched in this state?

□ □ □ □ □ No. of days 998 Don't Know 999 Refused

19. Not counting today, within the past 2 months, how many days?

□ □ □ □ □ No. of days 98 Don't Know 99 Refused

*20. What is your state and county of residence? If county unknown, ask: What city or town do you live in?

□ □ □ State Code; Name: _____ if foreign country code = 97

□ □ □ County Code; Name: _____ if foreign country code = 997

21. What is the ZIP code of your residence?

□ □ □ □ □ □ 99997 Foreign Country 99998 Don't Know 99999 Refused

23a. Gender (observed, do not ask)

Male Female

23b. How old were you on your last birthday?

□ □ □ Age Refused

24. In the event that my supervisor wishes to verify that I have been conducting interviews here today, may I please have your name and phone number?

Angler Name

Phone Day or Night

(If name and/or phone number not given, Q10 = Status 2)
 Name and/or phone number not given
 Angler aged 16 years or younger (Check both boxes)

BOX B. [if headboat ride-along:] Is this one of the anglers you monitored for discard (Type 9) catch? Yes No Not a HB ride

*25. UNAVAILABLE CATCH Did you catch any fish that are not here for me to look at? For example, any that you may have thrown back or used for bait? **NOT GROUP CATCH** - Only catch from Angler being interviewed.

Disposition Codes for Q25			
1 - Thrown back alive	3 - Eat/plan to eat	5 - Sold/plan to sell	7 - Some other purpose
2 - Thrown back - not legal	4 - Used/plan to use for bait	6 - Thrown back dead/plan to throw away	

TYPE 2 RECORDS: (CATCH UNAVAILABLE IN WHOLE FORM; FILLETS ARE UNAVAILABLE CATCH.)

	Species Name	Species Code	# of Fish	Disp.
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				

*26. Did you catch any fish while you were fishing that I might be able to look at?

- 1 Yes
 2 No - Code Q27, Q28, Q29 as "Not Applicable"
 3 Yes, BUT fish on another angler's form - Record interview # where fish are listed
- Code Q27, Q28, Q29 as "Not Applicable"

*27. Did you catch these yourself or did someone else catch some of them?

- 1 All Caught by Angler - Code Q28, Q29 as "Not Applicable"
 2 Other Contributors Not Applicable

*28. Can you separate out your individual catch?

- 1 Yes - Code 29 as "Not Applicable"
 2 No Not Applicable

*29. How many anglers including yourself have their catch here? Please do not include anyone who did not catch fish. Only count those who have their catch here.

No. of Contributors 88 Not Applicable

BOX C. If Q11 is SH mode, code Q30 as "888," and Code Box D as "8."

*30. How many people fished on your boat today?

No. of People 888 Shore Mode

BOX D. If response to Q30 is 001, code as "Not Applicable." Otherwise, is this the first angler from this boat that I have interviewed?

- 1 Yes Not Applicable
 2 No - Record interview # of 1st angler in the fishing party.

BOX E: Is this charter/headboat on the Good List? Yes No

Vessel name or registration: _____

Check box if vessel has no name AND no registration number. If checked, Q10 (Status) = 5.

*31. AVAILABLE CATCH - ASK: May I look at your fish? What do you plan to do with the MAJORITY of the (species)?

Disposition Codes for Q31	
3 - Eat/plan to eat	5 - Sold/plan to sell
4 - Used/plan to use for bait	6 - Plan to throw away
	7 - Some other purpose

NOTES/COMMENTS:

TYPE 3 RECORDS: (INDIVIDUAL CATCH AVAILABLE IN WHOLE FORM)

	Species Name	Species Code	# of Fish	Length (mm)	Weight (kg)	Disp.
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						
5.						
6.						
7.						
8.						
9.						
10.						
11.						
12.						
13.						
14.						
15.						

Appendix B: SC For-Hire Logbook Validation Metrics

Fields used to compare APAIS interviews grouped by party and SC DNR charter logbook trip reports. Weights of the comparisons are based on importance and reliability.

Field	MRIP Definition	Logbook Definition	Match Metric Weight
Date	Date of interview	Date of reported trip	1.00
Start Site	Interview site	Site reported as the start site	0.30
Anglers	Number of individuals in the party	Number of anglers reported participating	0.30
Target Species	Species of fish being targeted	Species of fish being targeted	0.20
Hours Fished	Mean total hours fished of interviewees	Total hours fished as reported	0.10
Distance	Categorized distance from shore fished	Categorized distance from shore fished	0.10
Trip End Time	Mean interview time	Estimated trip end time	0.01