



Reef Fish Extension Advisory Panel

Proceedings of the Second Annual Meeting

October 17th, 2023

Authors

Amanda E. Jargowsky, Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium
J. Marcus Drymon, Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium



MASGP-24-023

Acknowledgments

This publication was prepared by the Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium using federal funds under award NA21OAR4170268 from the National Sea Grant Office, NOAA, U.S. Department of Commerce. The statements, findings, conclusions and recommendations are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Sea Grant Office, NOAA, U.S. Department of Commerce.



Many thanks to the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission for providing resources for this meeting, including a meeting room, audio/visual services, and refreshments. Most importantly, thank you to the 11 reef fish fishery representatives who participated in our meeting.

Project Team

Marcus Drymon, Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium
Amanda Jargowsky, Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium
Ana Wheeler, Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium
Alena Anderson, Mississippi State University
Danielle McAree, Mississippi State University
Laura Picariello, Texas Sea Grant
Pamela Plotkin, Texas Sea Grant
Alexis Sabine, Texas Sea Grant
Kristina Alexander, Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi
Julie Lively, Louisiana Sea Grant
Haley Gambill, Louisiana Sea Grant
Jeff Plumlee, Louisiana Sea Grant
Dominique Seibert, Louisiana Sea Grant
Angela Collins, Florida Sea Grant
Savanna Barry, Florida Sea Grant
Nick Haddad, Florida Sea Grant
Brittany Hall Scharf, Florida Sea Grant
Shelly Krueger, Florida Sea Grant
Michael Sipos, Florida Sea Grant
Ana Zangroniz, Florida Sea Grant
Ed Camp, University of Florida
Bryan Fluech, Georgia Sea Grant
Jocelyn Juliano, South Carolina Sea Grant
Matthew Gorstein, South Carolina Sea Grant
Scott Baker, North Carolina Sea Grant
Steven Scyphers, University of South Alabama
Sarah Gibbs, University of South Alabama
Savannah Swinea, Northeastern University
Emily Muehlstein, Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council
Christina Wiegand, South Atlantic Fishery Management Council
David Hugo, South Atlantic Fishery Management Council
Marcos Hanke, Caribbean Fishery Management Council
Helena Antoun, Caribbean Fishery Management Council
Diana Martino, Caribbean Fishery Management Council
Alida Ortiz, Caribbean Fishery Management Council

Table of Contents

Meeting Report.....	5
Morning Session	5
Afternoon Session.....	27
Meeting Effectiveness	37
Appendices	38
Appendix A: Meeting Agenda	39
Appendix B: Meeting Attendees	40
Appendix C: Meeting Photos	41

Meeting Report

This report summarizes the second annual meeting of the Reef Fish Extension Advisory Panel. For information about the first annual meeting, please refer to *Reef Fish Extension Advisory Panel: Proceedings of the First Annual Meeting*, available [here](#).

The meeting took place in conjunction with the annual Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission (GSMFC) meeting at the Hilton New Orleans Riverside in New Orleans, Louisiana on October 17th, 2023. A total of 17 project team members and 11 reef fish fishery representatives attended the meeting, with 26 attending in person and two attending virtually. The project team members spanned Texas to North Carolina, and included personnel from Sea Grant programs, the University of South Alabama, and the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic Fishery Management Councils (GMFMC, SAFMC). The reef fish fishery representatives also spanned Texas to South Carolina, with participation from Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Five fishery representatives identified with the commercial sector, five with the charter sector, and one with state government.

The full-day meeting was divided into a morning session and an afternoon session, as detailed below.

Morning Session

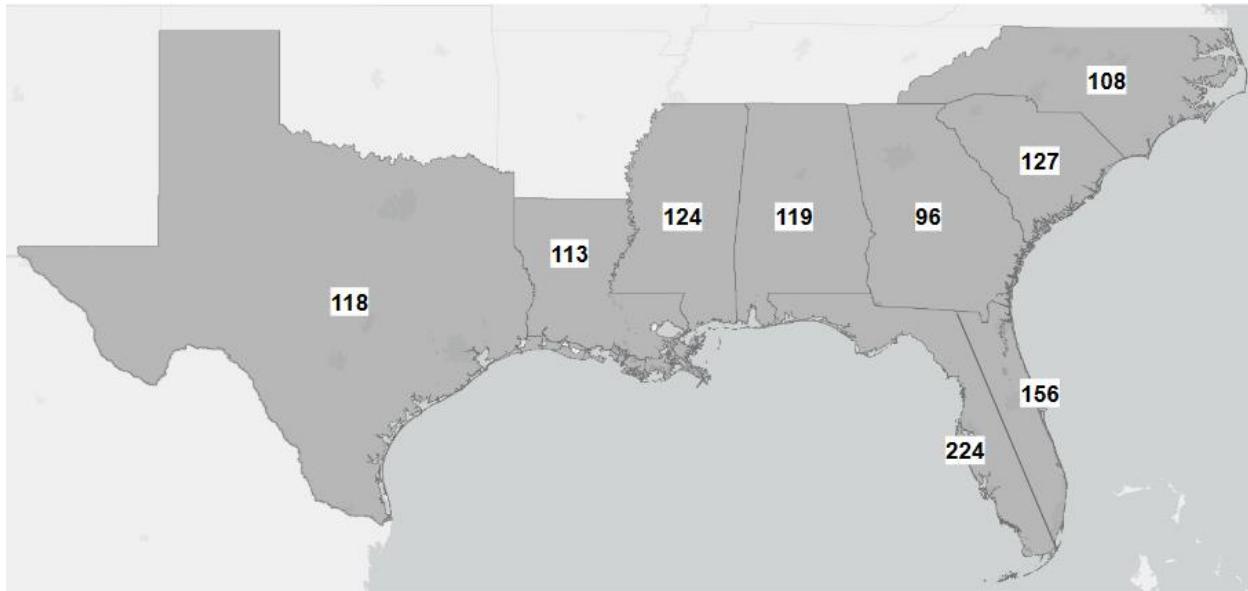
Marcus Drymon began the meeting with a brief presentation about the Reef Fish Extension project, “Extending Our Reach,” which is a multi-state collaborative funded by the National Sea Grant Office. He explained that there is a disconnect between the results of federal stock assessments and fishermen’s on-the-water observations for reef fish species. This disconnect erodes stakeholder faith in scientists and managers. Congress attempted to rectify this via the Great Red Snapper Count, a \$10M project. While this and similar projects (Greater Amberjack Count, South Atlantic Red Snapper Research Program) function to bridge the gap between stakeholders and scientists/managers, funds were lacking to effectively communicate the results from those projects.

Therefore, the National Sea Grant Office allocated funds to this project, the Reef Fish Extension Project, with the understanding that we need to share the findings of large-scale projects with stakeholders *and* we need to be collecting feedback from our stakeholders. In this way, we are building upon the conventional one-directional flow of information. We have Sea Grant representation here from the Gulf of Mexico, the Caribbean, and up through North Carolina; we have management representation as well. The goals of our project are exceedingly simple; the first is to gather information, the second is to refine information, and the third is to communicate information. When it comes to gathering information, we have been using surveys to ask about satisfaction with reef fish populations, regulations, etc. At the end of the Great Red Snapper Count, we asked stakeholders how satisfied they were with red snapper populations and regulations; most respondents were either somewhat or very satisfied. However, this survey is

only a static representation (a snapshot). It was conducted when the states assumed responsibility of red snapper management. People's opinions tend to change over time. Therefore, as part of the current project, we (*Steven Scyphers, Sarah Gibbs*) are conducting longitudinal surveys to understand how responses vary and thus track how people are interacting with the reef fish fishery. For the current project, we are asking the same general "universe" of people, year after year, questions about many reef fish species. The surveys fall under the "gathering information" umbrella. For this year (2023), we have gathered our information, and today, we will refine it. Sarah will present results from the survey; also, each Sea Grant program will present on how they have been incorporating feedback from stakeholders into their programming. The broadest and most diverse objective of our project is to communicate, wherein each Sea Grant program communicates with their stakeholders in the ways that work best for them.

Sarah then began presenting the results from the second longitudinal survey, noting that the results are preliminary, and we may not have the fine-scale resolution desired at this point. We are doing three annual surveys for this project; the first "limited scope" survey was launched in June 2022 in synergy with the Greater Amberjack Count survey, and the second was launched in August 2023 (recreational and commercial/charter sectors). The goals of the surveys are to understand reef fish stakeholder attitudes and beliefs, perceptions of reef fish populations and management, and general satisfaction with reef fish fisheries. She first shared the recreational survey results (North Carolina to Texas), then the commercial and charter survey results (North Carolina to Texas), and lastly some results from a survey conducted at the Alabama Deep Sea Fishing Rodeo where similar questions were asked.

The recreational survey involved a sample size of 1,185, as shown below.



The demographics of those respondents are shown below.

Mean Age	40			
Gender	Total Household Income 2022			
Male	37.1%	\$25k or less	16.6%	
Female	61.8%	\$25,001 to \$35k	16.6%	
Race/Ethnicity				Environmental Dependence
White	64.6%	\$35,001 to \$50k	13.8%	Not at all 36.7%
Black or African American	23.4%	\$50,001 to \$75k	18.7%	Only a little 15.4%
Hispanic or Latino	2.95%	\$75,001 to \$100k	12.3%	A fair amount 26.6%
Other	3.21%	\$100,001 to \$150k	9.70%	A great deal 21.3%
Multiracial	4.28%	More than \$150k	9.79%	
Highest Level of Education				Closest Related Industry
Less than high school	1.94%	Very liberal	12.2%	Fisheries and Seafood 21.8%
High school diploma or GED	28.1%	Somewhat liberal	12.2%	Coastal Tourism 17.9%
Some college or 2 year degree	36.2%	Moderate/Middle of the road	38.0%	Real Estate 13.9%
Bachelor's degree	20.9%	Somewhat conservative	18.1%	Not applicable 51.7%
Master's degree	8.61%	Very conservative	15.4%	
PhD, Law or MD	3.29%	Other/Prefer not to answer	4.22%	

Shane Cantrell stated that the demographics are not what he would expect. *Marcus* said that ideally, each state would provide contact information for their licensed anglers; however, that cannot actually happen. Therefore, we use Qualtrics and pay them for survey responses, as this is the next best approach. This explains the differences between actual and expected demographics. *Julian Magras* asked if these responses came via email. *Sarah* explained that the responses came through the website. *Julian* also asked what percentage of the targeted folks actually responded; *Sarah* replied that Qualtrics does not provide that information. *Angela Collins* asked how the number of responses compares from last year to this year. *Sarah* answered that we had 1,591 responses last year and 1,185 this year. This reduction occurred because we doubled up with the Greater Amberjack Count survey last year to increase the number of responses. *Marcus* added that we tell Qualtrics how many responses we want per state, and they ask as many people as needed to get that many responses. Then, *Sarah* uses a quality assurance / quality control process to remove some responses; this is why there are fewer than 200 responses per state.

Sarah then showed the results of a question about the importance of offshore fishing for reef fish, as shown below.

In the context of all of your saltwater fishing, how important to you is offshore fishing for reef fish?

	%	Count
Extremely important	26.7%	316
Very important	29.3%	347
Moderately important	31.1%	369
Slightly important	12.9%	153
Total	100%	1185

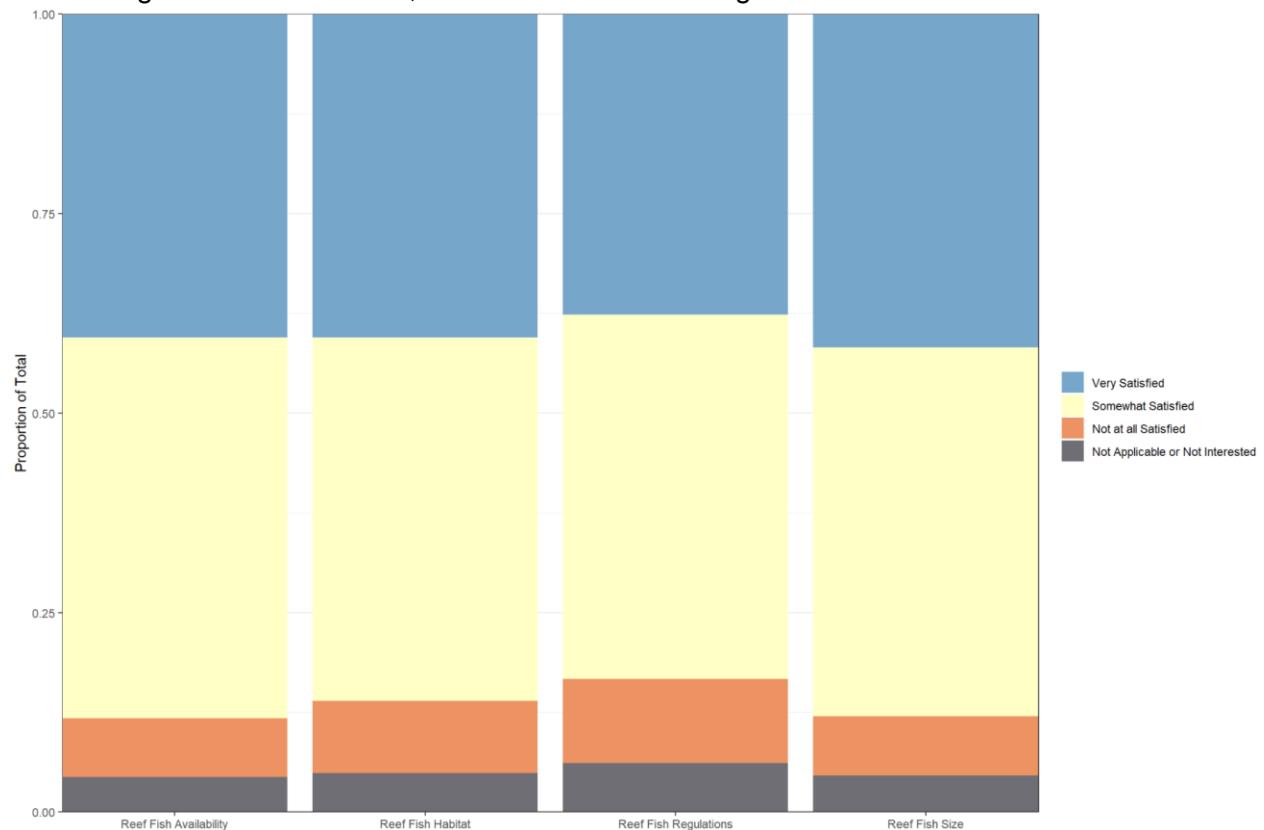
Average Years Reef Fish Fishing 8

Average Times Reef Fish Fishing in the last year 5

This question was a screener; people who responded “not at all important” did not continue with the survey. There is probably some bias here, as some fishermen might fish for reef fish very infrequently (e.g., tourists). *Amy Dukes* asked if folks may have said “not at all” because of the phrasing of the question (“reef fish,” “offshore”)? *Sarah* said that is a good point, and *Marcus* replied that we had not defined offshore or fully explained the reef fish complex yet. *Eric Schmidt* asked if there was a question about fishing in federal versus state waters. *Sarah* said that we asked questions about the number of days spent fishing inshore versus offshore in the past year. *Sarah* mentioned the importance of consistency in question phrasing from one year to the next.

Sarah then showed the responses to several survey questions.

How would you describe your satisfaction with availability of reef fish to catch, reef fish habitat, current regulations for reef fish, and size of reef fish caught?



Sarah explained that respondents were generally somewhat or very satisfied with reef fish characteristics. *Eric* said that he has difficulty believing this. *Charlie Phillips* asked if we got different results from the South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico because of the different targeted species and different regulations. *Sarah* replied that she did not separate the regions for this question, and *Marcus* said that she certainly can. *Charlie* also said that the commercial opinion would differ from the recreational, and *Sarah* mentioned that the commercial and charter sectors had very different opinions than the recreational sector (and said she will go into more detail later). *Laura Picariello* asked if we had asked respondents if they had participated in a charter trip or if they were making their own trips, as they would probably have very different experiences. *Sarah* replied that we asked a question about frequency of fishing by mode; we have not split the data by those modes, but we can do so. *Shane* added that lots of variables could be skewed by fishing mode. *Wayne Conn* asked about the distributions of responses by state, and *Sarah* revisited that slide. *Bill D'Antuono* said that the regulations are changing so rapidly now (e.g., cobia went from two per person to two per boat, but gag was chopped), which will affect responses. In southwest Florida, everything is getting shut down. *Marcus* explained that this is the main thing we are trying to capture via these longitudinal surveys; people's perceptions of the fishery will change over time, primarily due to regulations. *Julian* asked if "availability of reef fish to catch" involves the bag limit. *Sarah* explained that it is basically asking how easy it is to catch fish you are interested in on any given day; there is diversity in interpretation. *Eric* said that red grouper are very abundant; retention is the issue, as regulations

do not allow us to catch them. *Wayne* said that satisfaction is high; the industry is crazy strong financially; he has never seen people so excited to catch basically nothing (different expectations compared to the past). He wonders if SeaQualizers make a difference on release due to sharks. *Sarah* agreed that there are differing expectations with respect to fishing; she could incorporate that into the survey for next year. *Eric* said that people used to want to catch wheelbarrows full of fish, coolers full of fish; now, they are happy with a small bag of fish. The regulations have gotten very restrictive; people do not want to spend \$2,500 on a trip to catch grunts. *Bill* wonders which species captains will have to target next to provide customer satisfaction. *Shane* said that you are capturing a long-term shift to experience-based tourism. Atlantic spadefish are becoming popular for experience-based anglers. People have a lot more species to target in the eastern Gulf of Mexico than in the western Gulf of Mexico. *Wayne* said that in the Florida Keys, dolphin have changed; people now fish for sharks and tarpon. *Eric* has started a movement to rename remoras “Asian cobia.” *Charlie* is selling species that he used to not be able to sell; he thinks that shark fishing will become more popular. *Wayne* said that great barracuda are becoming popular.

What species do you consider to be the single most important for your offshore fishing for reef fish?

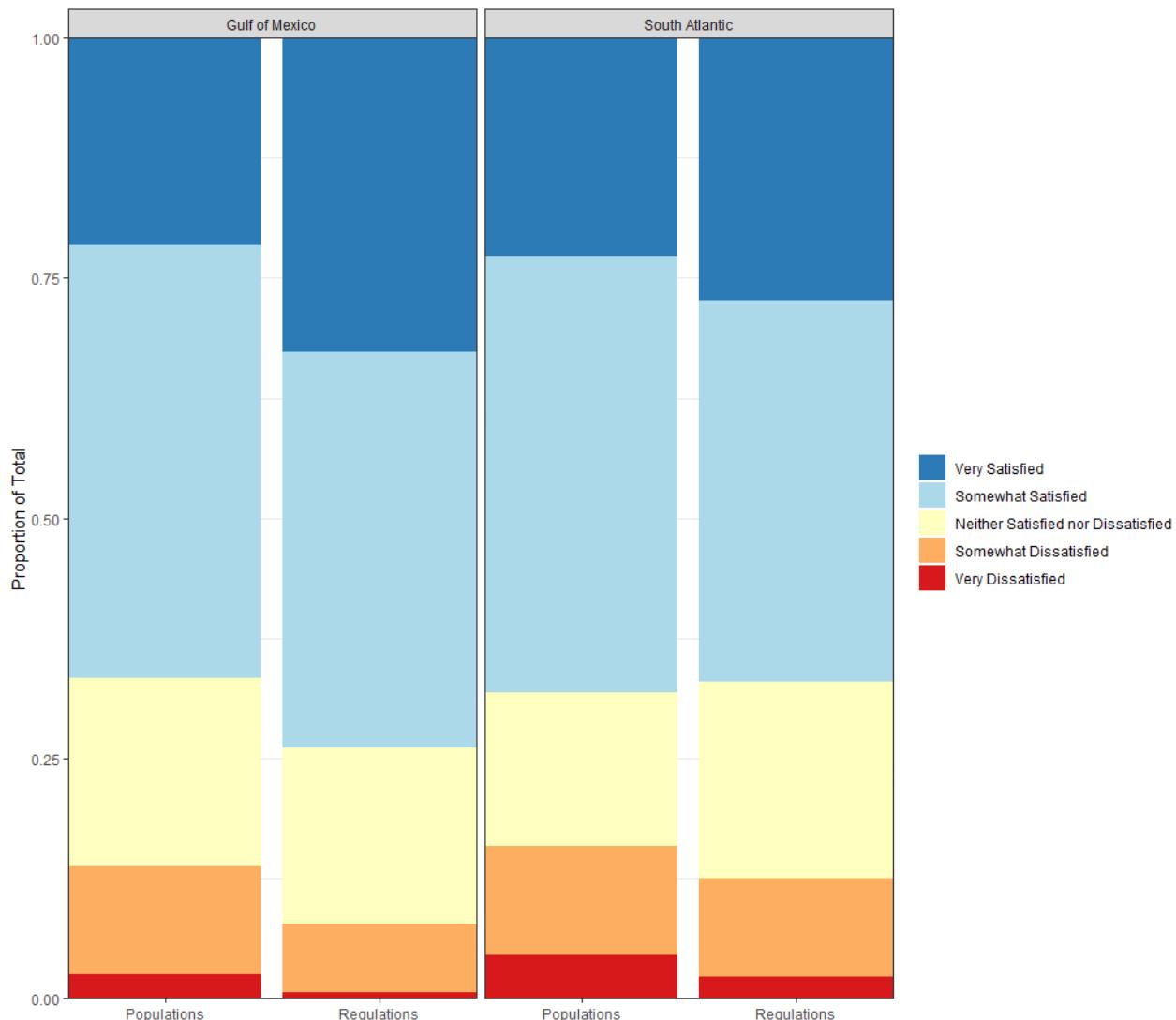
Gulf of Mexico			South Atlantic		
	%	Count		%	Count
Red Snapper	46.9%	327	Red Snapper	18.0%	83
Red Grouper	6.03%	42	Black Sea Bass	12.1%	56
Yellowtail Snapper	3.16%	22	Yellowfin Grouper	8.44%	39
Yellowfin Grouper	3.01%	21	Hogfish	6.28%	29
Yellowmouth Grouper	2.73%	19	Yellowtail Snapper	4.76%	22
Queen Snapper	2.73%	19	Rock Sea Bass	3.90%	18
Blackfin Snapper	2.73%	19	Red Grouper	3.25%	15
Hogfish	2.44%	17	Bank Sea Bass	2.81%	13
Yellowedge Grouper	2.30%	16	Yellowedge Grouper	2.60%	12
Black Grouper	2.15%	15	Yellowmouth Grouper	2.38%	11
Gray Snapper	2.01%	14	Mutton Snapper	2.38%	11
Greater Amberjack	2.01%	14	Blackfin Snapper	2.16%	10
Atlantic Goliath Grouper	1.87%	13	Banded Rudderfish Jack	2.16%	10
Warsaw Grouper	1.87%	13	Black Grouper	2.16%	10
Gray Triggerfish	1.43%	10	Greater Amberjack	2.16%	10

Sarah explained that these are the 15 most important species for the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic. *Shane* said that it is interesting that red snapper is nearly 50% in the Gulf of Mexico. *Eric* said that it is only open about 70 days per year; in June and July, he was booked every day

for snapper trips, but he is not running many snapper trips in August (“snapper fatigue”). *Shane* said it tells him how important each species is where it exists. *Eric* wonders about yellowfin grouper; he has only caught three in 40 years; it is an exceptionally rare fish. *Wayne* has only seen three as well, in 50 years. *Sarah* said it is possible that people were confused about identification; we did not show photos of the fishes; notably, only 21 respondents chose it out of 500 people (relatively low percentage). *Jason DeLaCruz* said the whole Gulf side is sketchy other than red snapper because there is no gag, but there is yellowfin and yellowmouth grouper (people cannot tell yellowmouth grouper from scamp). *Shane* said that he struggles to get people to distinguish between red drum and red snapper. *Eric* said that there is a directed fishery for hogfish in the Florida Keys. Someone must have not known what a yellowfin grouper is. *Ryan Bradley* was surprised that greater amberjack is so low. *Charlie* finds it hard to believe that red snapper is so important despite only having a couple of days to fish for them; meanwhile, there is bank sea bass on the list. *Marcus* summarized that there are a lot of issues with these responses. *Wayne* said most people just want to catch fish; they do not care so much about the species caught. A lot more people are using electric reels now, just to catch any fish to eat. *Emily Muehlstein* said that angler avidity may be an issue here; recreational anglers could be conflating their experiences with fishing versus eating fish. Red snapper and red grouper are probably the most popular commercial species found at markets and restaurants; when asked this question, perhaps the casual recreational angler may have been conflating the two issues as they may have more experience with fish on a table than going fishing. *Amy* asked if people were able to skip this question (counts do not seem to equal participation), and echoed Charlie’s concerns about the South Atlantic list. There are a lot of deepwater grouper species even though there is such a small subset of fishermen who target those; she is surprised that gag is absent from the list. *Sarah* answered that people were not allowed to skip questions, but there was an option to select “none of the above,” which a lot of people did choose (it is just unlisted here). *Angela* asked if the species were grouped by family in the response choices. *Sarah* said yes, they were. *Angela* was surprised that things were listed as choices yet not selected. *Shane* said he thinks this is the difference between being a fisherman and going on fishing trips. *Jason* said the Gulf of Mexico side does not add up; the first three are probably in the correct order, but otherwise, it cannot be correct. *Wayne* said that mutton snapper must be part of this; we are catching more of them now than ever before. *Bill* said that mangrove snapper should be part of the Gulf of Mexico side as well, above red grouper. *Marcus* summarized that we are hearing that there are a lot of red flags. *Wayne* asked what the end goal is, and *Shane* replied that we want to know the single most important species. *Sarah* said that some people really do not care what they catch; a follow-up question asked why they fished for these species. *Julian* suggested including photos of the species.

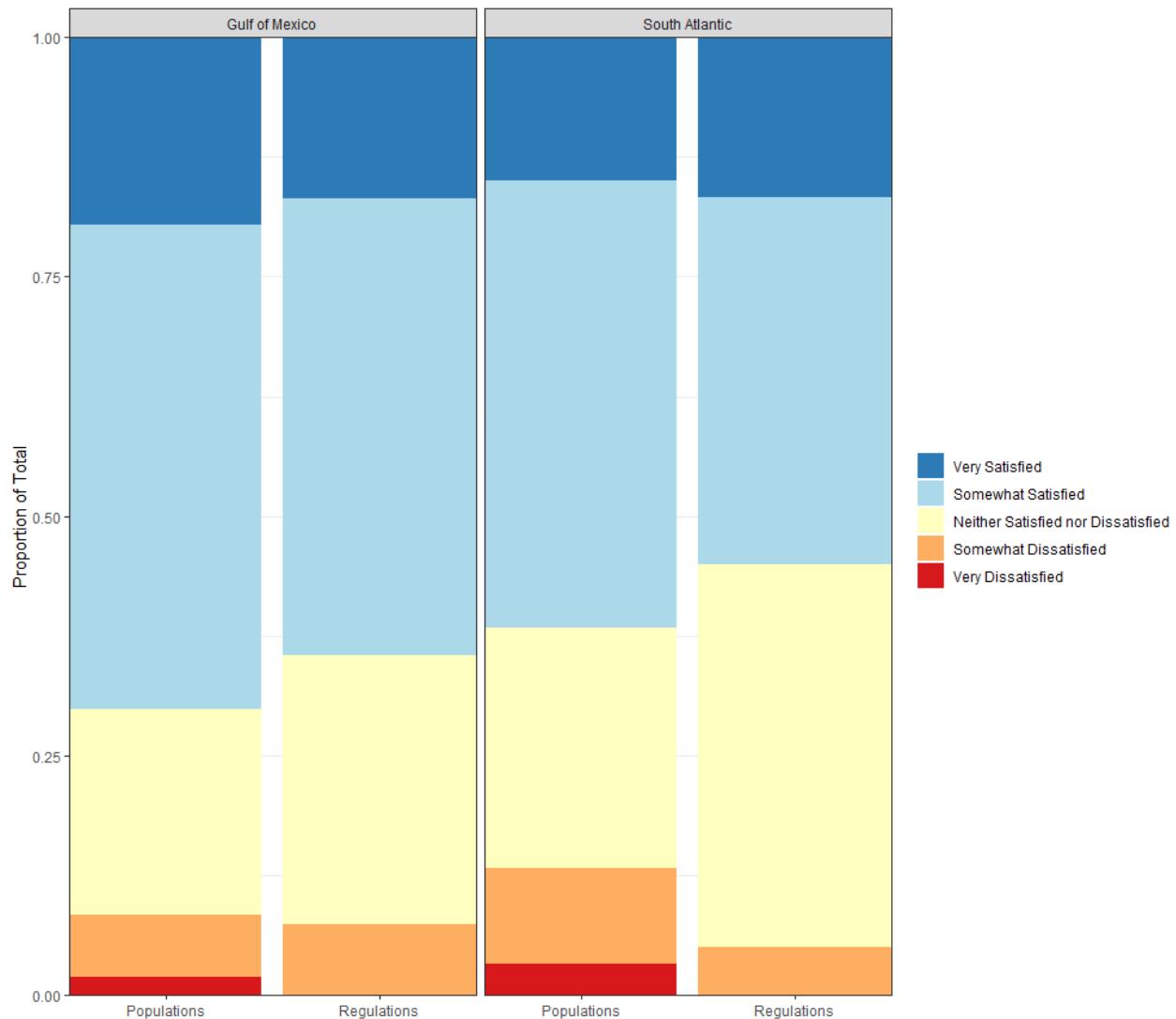
Sarah moved on; the next few questions asked about people’s satisfaction with regulations and population levels of their most important species; for the sake of time, she will show red snapper and greater amberjack today.

How would you describe your overall level of satisfaction with red snapper population levels and current fishing regulations for red snapper?



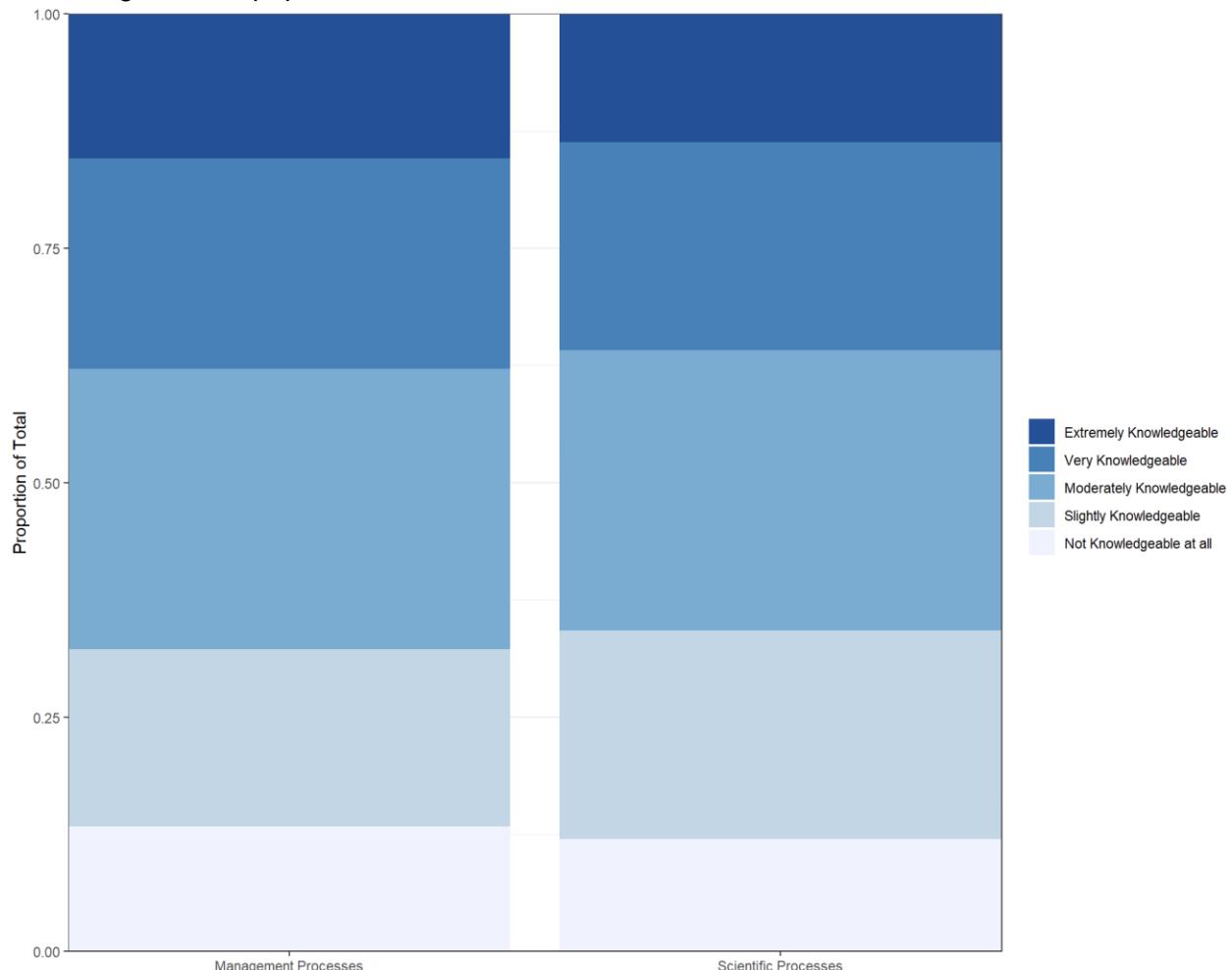
Sarah said that for red snapper in both regions, most respondents were somewhat or very satisfied with populations and regulations. *Shane* said the Gulf of Mexico makes sense. *Sarah* said that it is possible that people who only fish a few times per year are not really familiar with these situations or are disinterested; as mentioned before, the commercial and charter results are very different from these. *Jason* said it would be interesting to know how many people Qualtrics had to poll to get the number of responses we wanted; that would tell us how deep we had to dig. *Amy* mentioned that state versus federal management may impact the responses to these questions.

How would you describe your overall level of satisfaction with greater amberjack population levels and current fishing regulations for greater amberjack?



Sarah said that for greater amberjack in both regions, most respondents were somewhat or very satisfied with populations and regulations, but satisfaction was lower in the South Atlantic than the Gulf of Mexico. *Eric* said it is surprising that people are so satisfied; we had only a month-long season in the Gulf of Mexico and recreational anglers do target them. *Sarah* said that we asked the same questions at the Alabama Deep Sea Fishing Rodeo in July and people were very unhappy with amberjack.

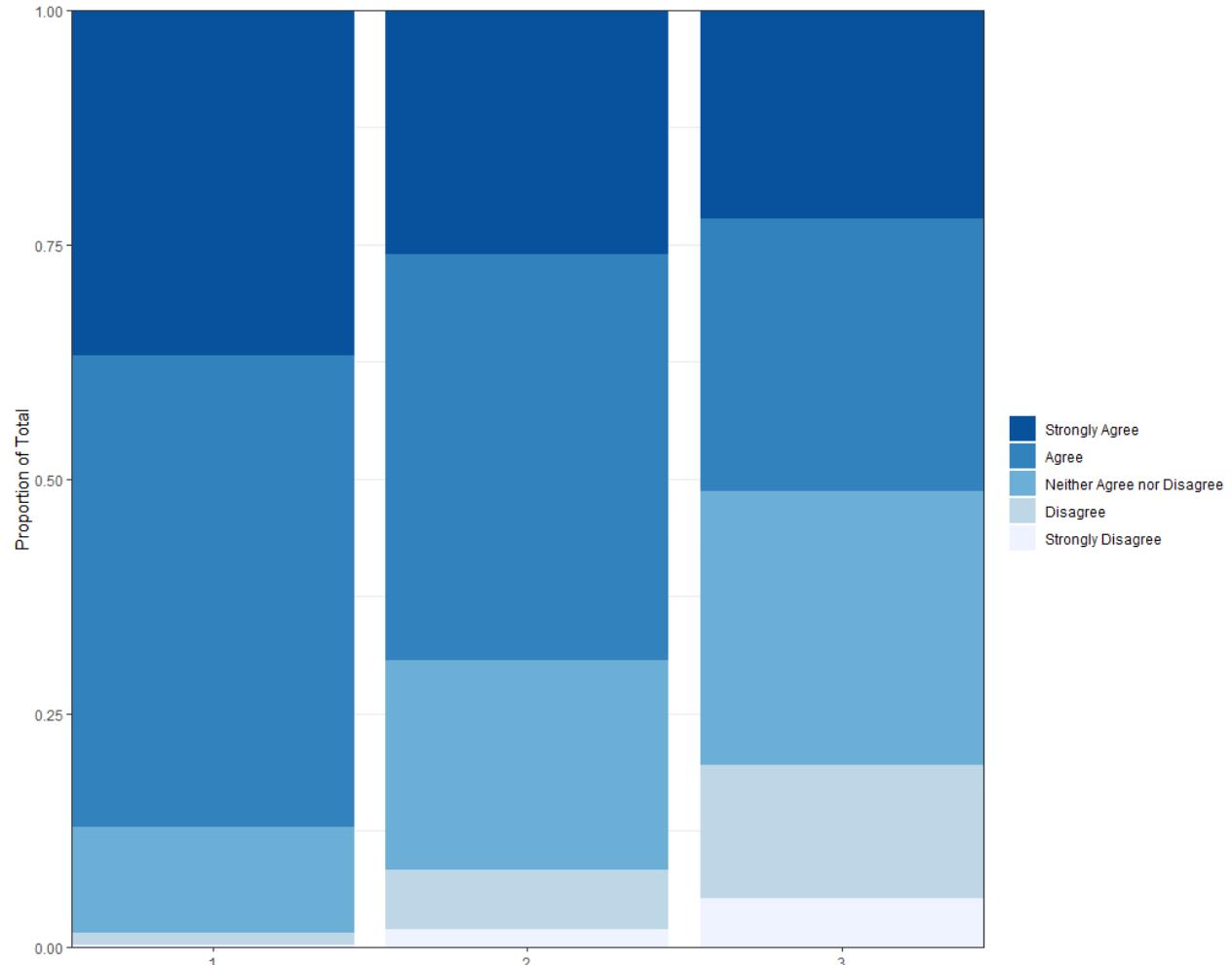
How would you describe your overall level of knowledge on the management processes involved with setting regulations for reef fish fisheries and the scientific processes involved in assessing reef fish populations?



Sarah said that overall, there is a high level of self-reported knowledge, but again, we did not ask any follow-up questions (e.g., questions about stock assessment). The similarity between the two distributions, which we saw last year as well, indicates that respondents do not perceive a big difference between management processes and scientific processes. *Marcus* mentioned that *Shane* noted that last year; it is very nuanced.

How much do you agree with the following statements?

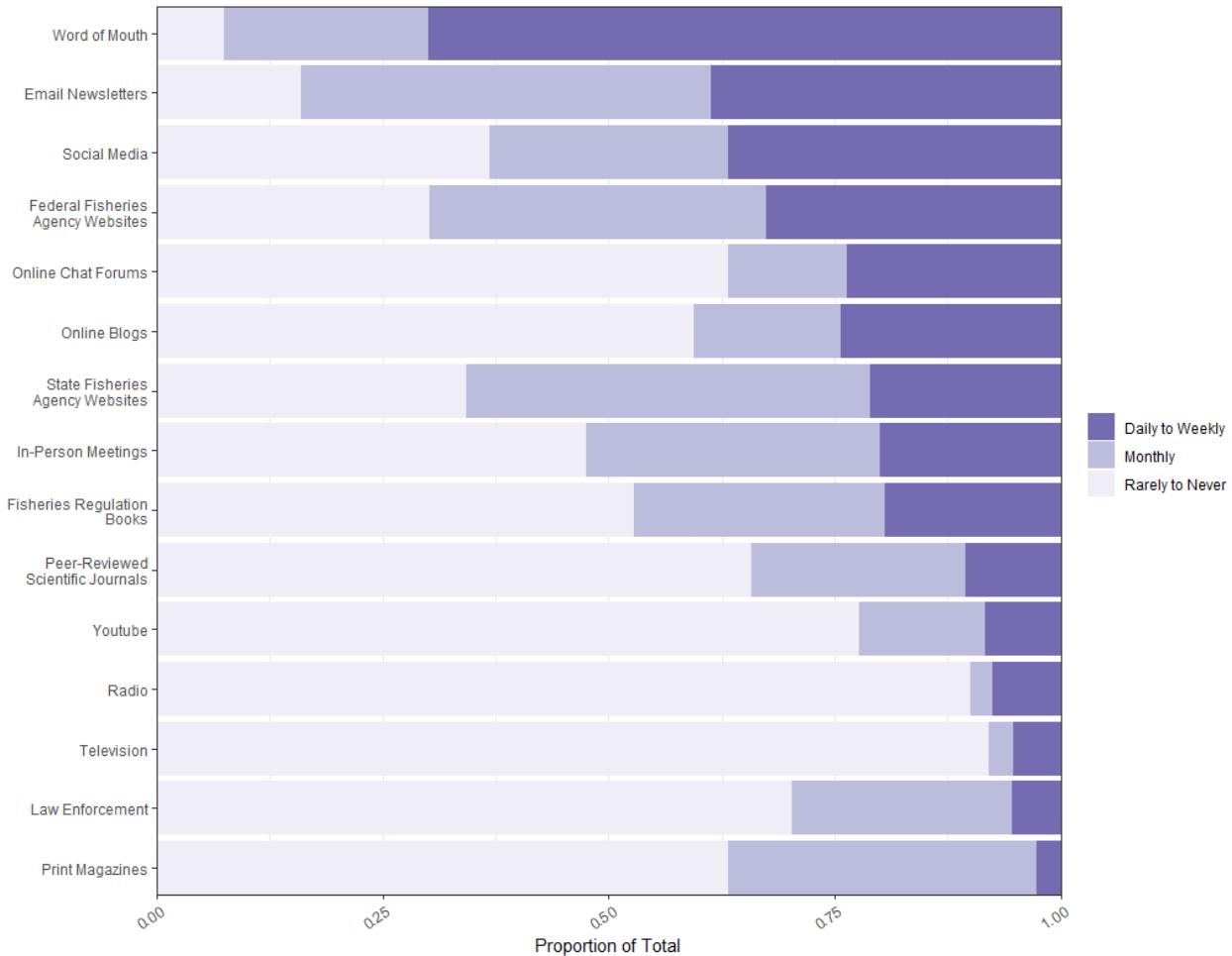
1. I am confident that I can adapt to changes if necessary.
2. I often talk to other fishers about how they handle or prepare for and handle bad fishing years.
3. I feel that I am able to influence the decisions of fisheries managers.



Sarah said that people agreed the most with being able to adapt to change, and they agreed the least with being able to influence decisions of fisheries managers (but still, nearly 50% agreed or strongly agreed with that statement). The results are different for the commercial and charter survey. *Shane* said that this is recreational tourism dollars going somewhere; the money will be spent doing something. *Wayne* asked how we are supposed to foster interest in fishing among kids. The industry is changing in a good way; there is a lot of money in it. *Angela* asked if there is a way we could determine how confident the respondents are with respect to species identification. *Sarah* said we could quiz them after they identify their most important species (e.g., if the respondent chooses gag, show a test set of photos and ask, “which is the gag?”). *Amy* asked if there is an opportunity for an additional outreach component to this survey; e.g., directing respondents to Fish Rules. *Sarah* said we cannot pursue that with the recreational

survey because it is anonymous (no contact information provided), but we could pursue that for the commercial and charter survey.

For information on reef fish fisheries, how often do you get information from each of the following sources?



Sarah explained that respondents were only shown four of the options at random and were permitted to write in a fifth. The majority obtain information by word of mouth, then email newsletters, then social media. *Eric* said it is interesting to see print magazines at the bottom; it must be a reflection of how society derives its information now. *Jason* wonders if some of these might be lumped together (e.g., online chat forums and social media – both involve people talking to each other). *Shane* said that this indicates that the fishing community is a social community. There are also generational differences.

Sarah said that the last two presentation slides focus on Great Red Snapper Count follow-up.

How familiar are you with the Great Red Snapper Count (GRSC)?

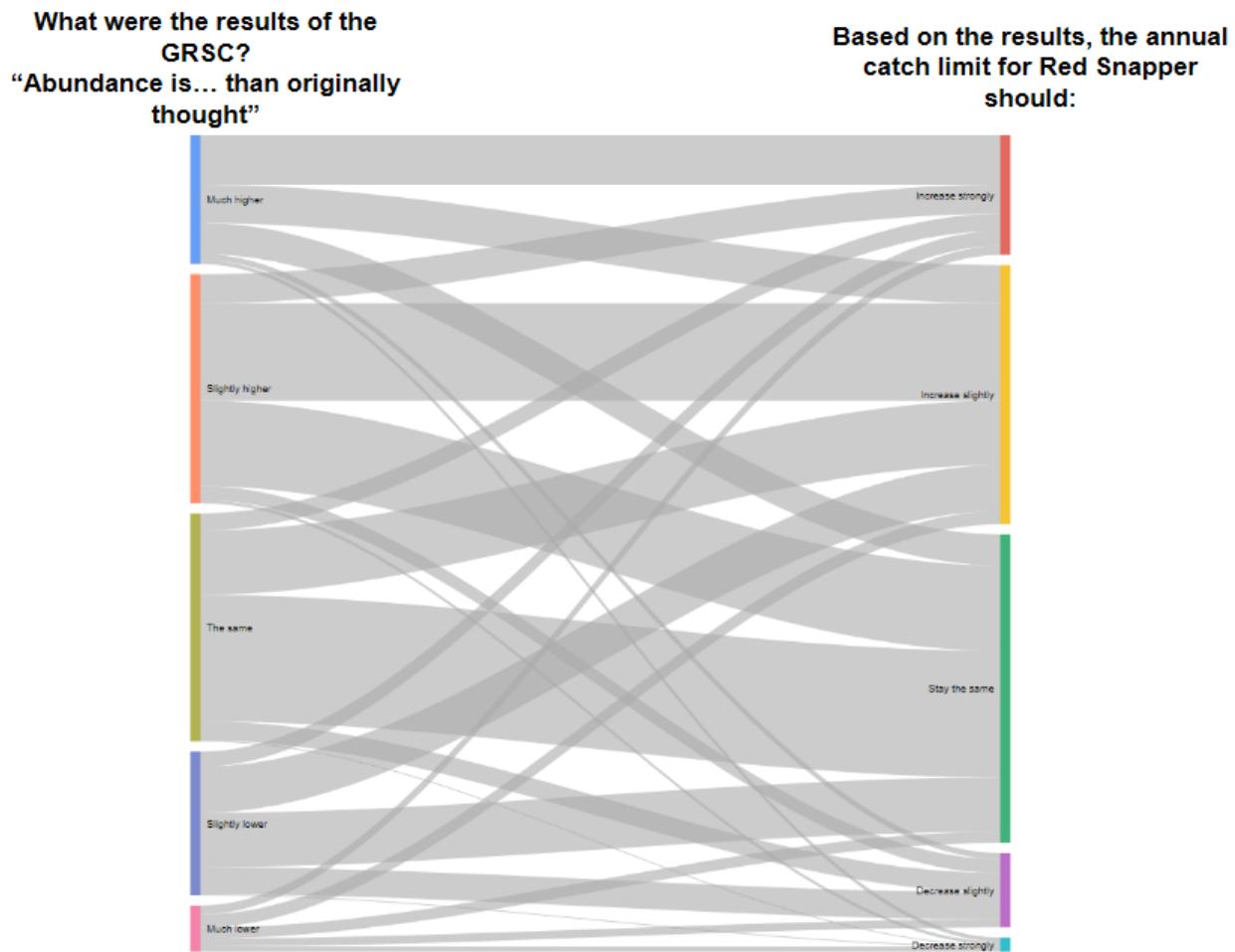
	%	Count
Extremely familiar	9.70%	115
Very familiar	14.7%	174
Moderately familiar	27.0%	320
Slightly familiar	25.7%	305
Not familiar at all	22.9%	271
Total	100%	1185

How much do you trust the results of the GRSC?

	%	Count
5 - Complete Trust	19.9%	182
4	29.2%	267
3	41.4%	378
2	7.11%	65
1 - No trust	2.41%	22
Total	100%	914

Sarah said that overall, people were not too familiar with the Great Red Snapper Count, with nearly a quarter not familiar at all. People who were not familiar were not shown the subsequent question. Among those who were familiar with the project, they had high levels of trust in the results. *Amy* asked if this question was only shown to the Gulf of Mexico respondents. *Sarah* said yes, and for the South Atlantic, we asked questions about the ongoing South Atlantic Red Snapper Research Program. *Wayne* has never heard about the Great Red Snapper Count even though he cares a lot about these types of projects. *Marcus* said there was not a clear plan for how to share information about the project; we could have done better. We will talk more about that project this afternoon. *Kindra Arnesen* asked what the numbers 2, 3, and 4 represented in the second question. *Sarah* responded that they did not have values; it was a scale of 1 to 5. Notably, these two questions did not contain any information about the project's actual results.

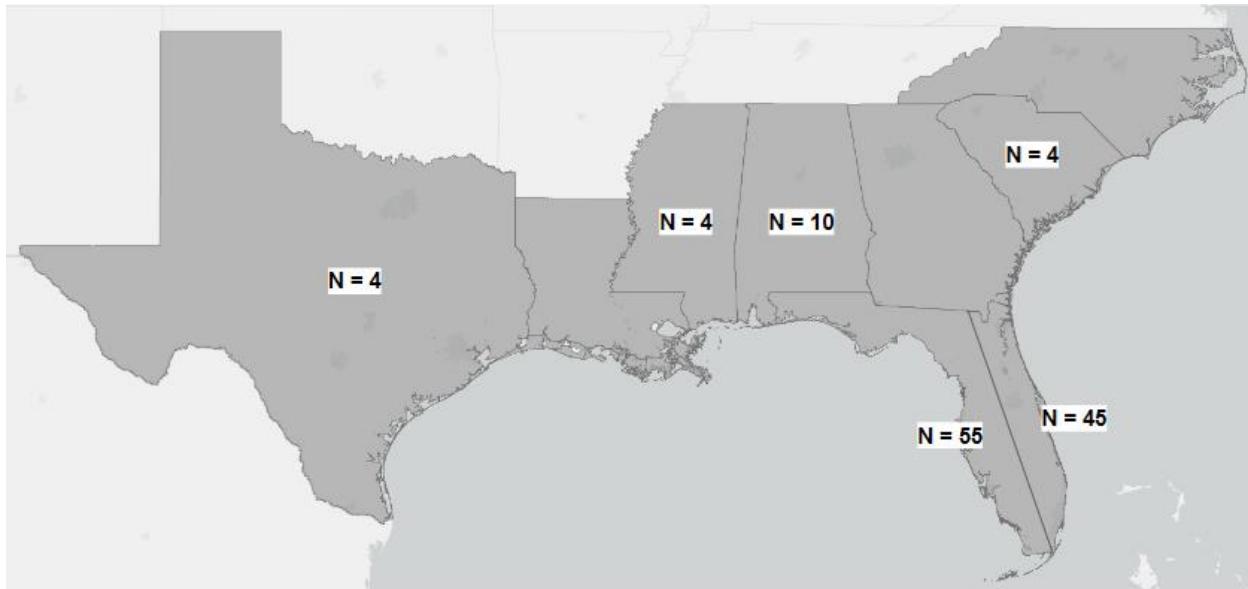
We wanted to see what people thought the abundance of red snapper actually is, and then based on that, what should happen to catch limits. The figure below (a Sankey diagram) displays the responses.



Sarah explained that regardless of abundance, people thought catch limits should stay the same.

Sarah then presented the commercial and charter survey results.

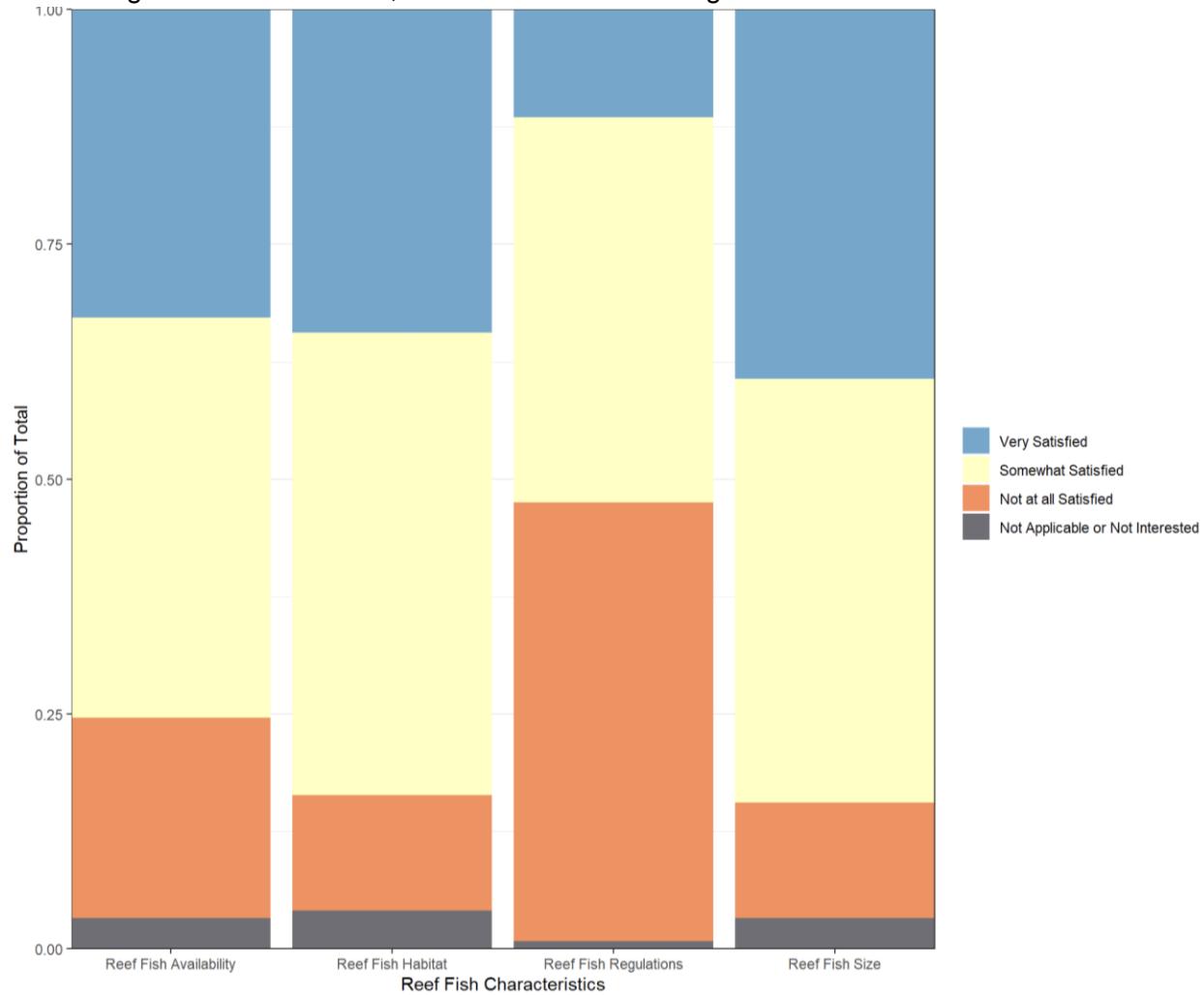
The recruitment process was different; there was no random recruitment through Qualtrics. The turnout was not great (total sample size of 122); most respondents were from Florida (many thanks to *Angela* and *Michael Sipos*), and none were from Louisiana, as shown below.



Marcus said that we could really use help from folks with boots on the ground in these areas. *Kindra* asked about the breakdown of commercial versus charter respondents, and when the survey was administered. *Sarah* said she has not presented the breakdown yet, and the survey was administered from August to October. *Sarah* mentioned that there is a lot of survey fatigue; we did not incentivize the respondents. *Kindra* said that there is definitely a lot of survey fatigue and also a lack of trust (agencies will use the information provided by respondents against them). *Julian* agreed; they have the same issue in the Caribbean. People would like to be paid for taking the survey, but the most important aspect is the trust with respect to what will be done with the information provided (e.g., will the information harm the way we fish?). Outreach and education are necessary. If the fishermen do not have a spokesperson who encourages them to do the surveys, it will not happen. *Amy* asked about the contacts that the Advisory Panel provided last year; were those folks contacted about the survey? It is concerning and disappointing that we only had four responses from South Carolina. *Sarah* replied that she personally emailed every contact the Advisory Panel provided; she feels that the issue is a lack of social capital (i.e., the fishermen do not know Sarah). *Wayne* asked if we could mandate participation in the survey (e.g., must complete the survey to get a fishing license). *Marcus* said it would be difficult to attain consistency across the Gulf of Mexico. it would be good to hear about *Angela* and *Michael's* success. *Angela* does not think she did a particularly good job; they just had a lot of contacts and access to their contact information; the other states do not have that. *Kindra* said that things should be refined before sending yet another survey to commercial fishermen, as they are already under many mandates and reporting requirements. *Julie Lively* asked if the survey is still open; Louisiana could have sent commercial contacts but were only asked for charter contacts. *Sarah* said it is not open, but they could reopen it.

Sarah said that a lot of the questions are asked the same way in both surveys, and began showing the results.

How would you describe your satisfaction with availability of reef fish to catch, reef fish habitat, current regulations for reef fish, and size of reef fish caught?



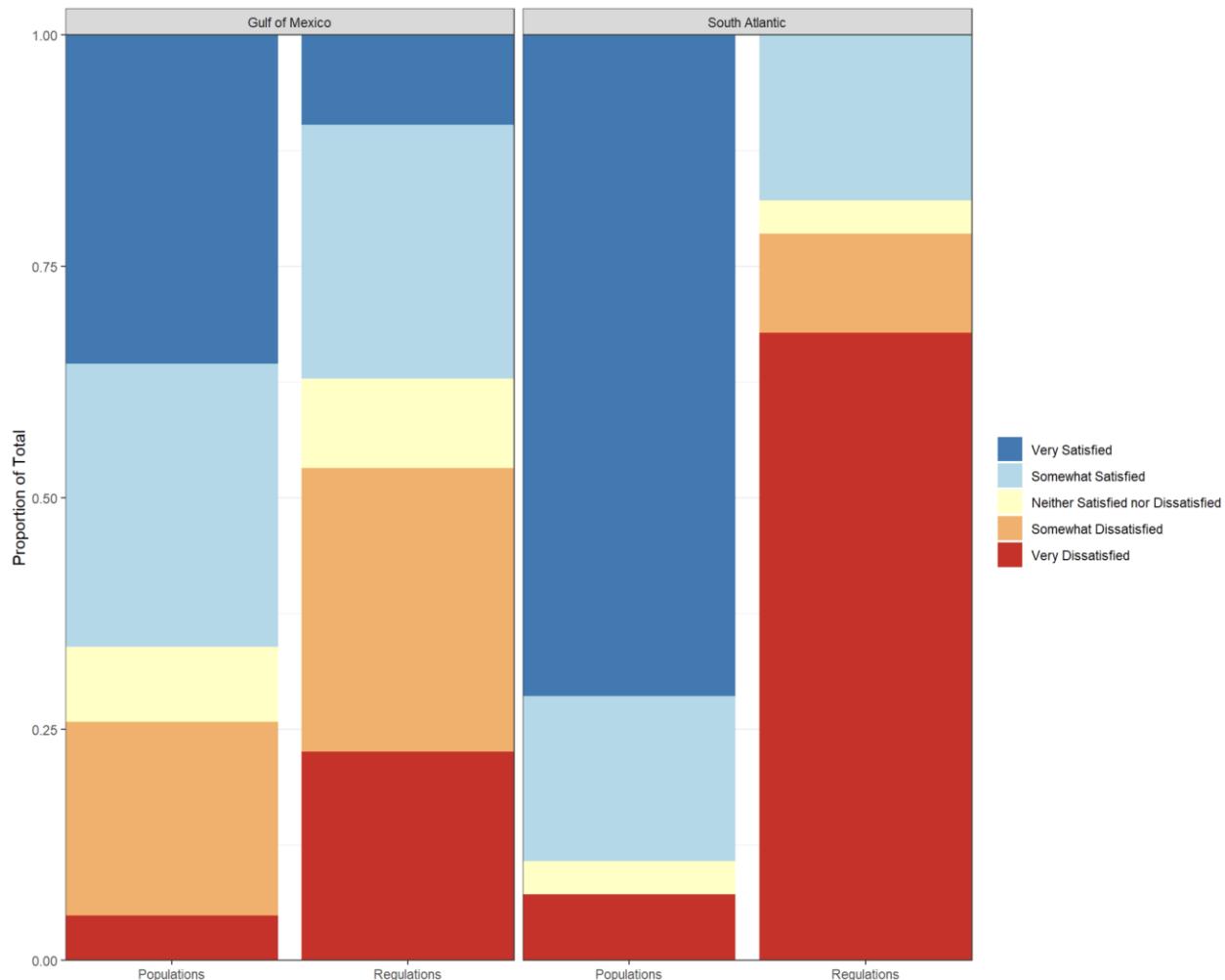
Sarah said that respondents were generally somewhat or very satisfied with reef fish characteristics; however, people are very unhappy with current regulations.

What species do you consider to be the single most important for your offshore fishing for reef fish?

Gulf of Mexico			South Atlantic		
	%	Count		%	Count
Red Snapper	47.89%	34	Gag Grouper	17.02%	8
Red Grouper	18.31%	13	Black Grouper	14.89%	7
Gag Grouper	11.27%	8	Red Snapper	14.89%	7
Vermillion Snapper	7.04%	5	Mutton Snapper	10.64%	5
Gray Snapper	4.23%	3	Gray Snapper	6.38%	3
Yellowtail Snapper	2.82%	2	None of the Above	6.38%	3
Almaco Jack	1.41%	1	Yellowtail Snapper	6.38%	3
Black Grouper	1.41%	1	Greater Amberjack	4.26%	2
Greater Amberjack	1.41%	1	Hogfish	4.26%	2
Lane Snapper	1.41%	1	Snowy Grouper	4.26%	2
Mutton Snapper	1.41%	1	Vermillion Snapper	4.26%	2
None of the Above	1.41%	1	Black Sea Bass	2.13%	1
			Golden Tilefish	2.13%	1
			Red Grouper	2.13%	1

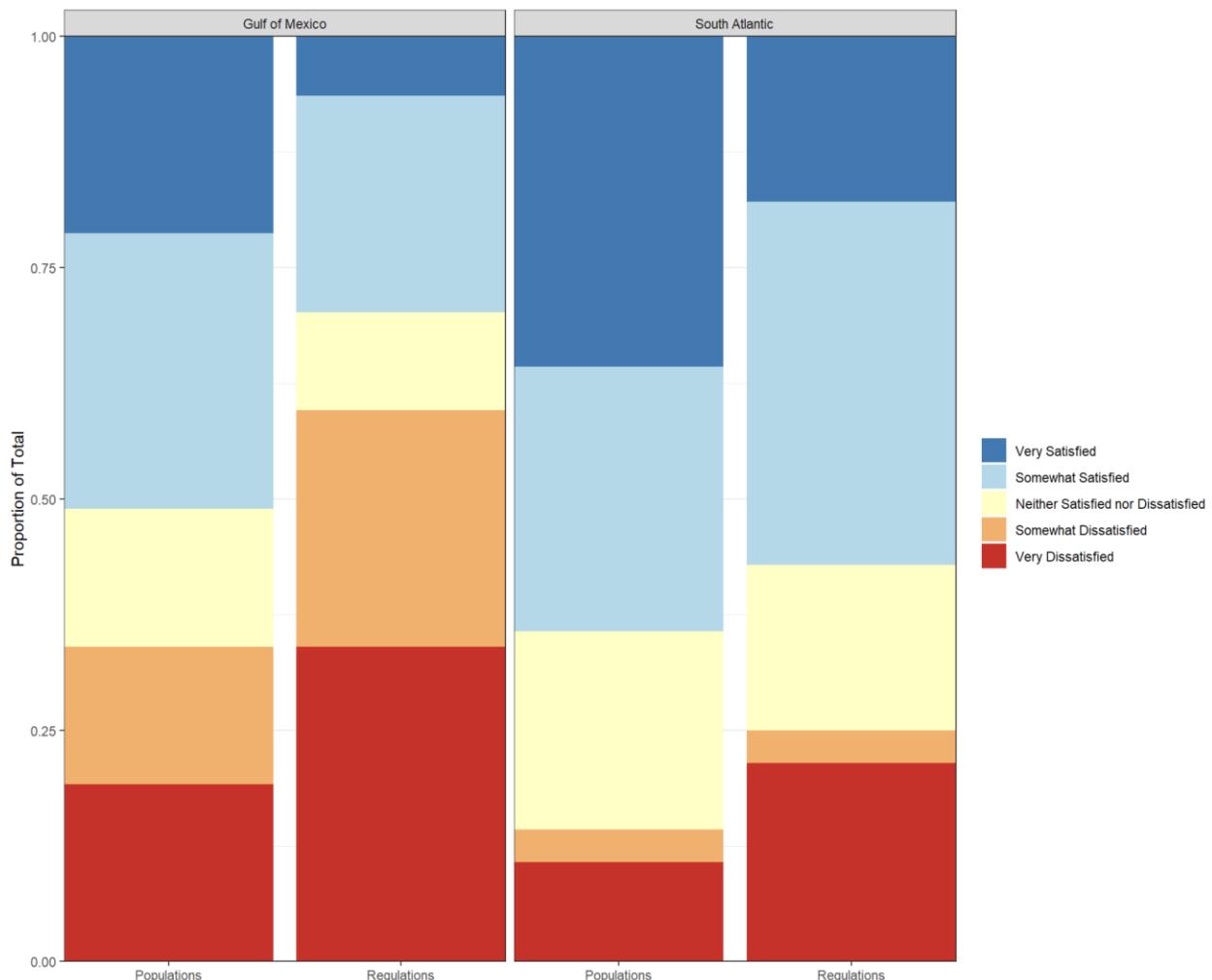
Sarah said that these are all the species that were mentioned; none were cut. Some were only mentioned once. In the Gulf of Mexico, red snapper were at the top; in the South Atlantic, it was gag. *Angela* (and others) said this looks more accurate/representative. *Wayne* said that mutton snapper is up there; it is one of the most frequently caught when bottom fishing. *Eric* said that it is regional; in the Carolinas they catch a lot of gag. *Charlie* said we used to.

How would you describe your overall level of satisfaction with red snapper population levels and current fishing regulations for red snapper?

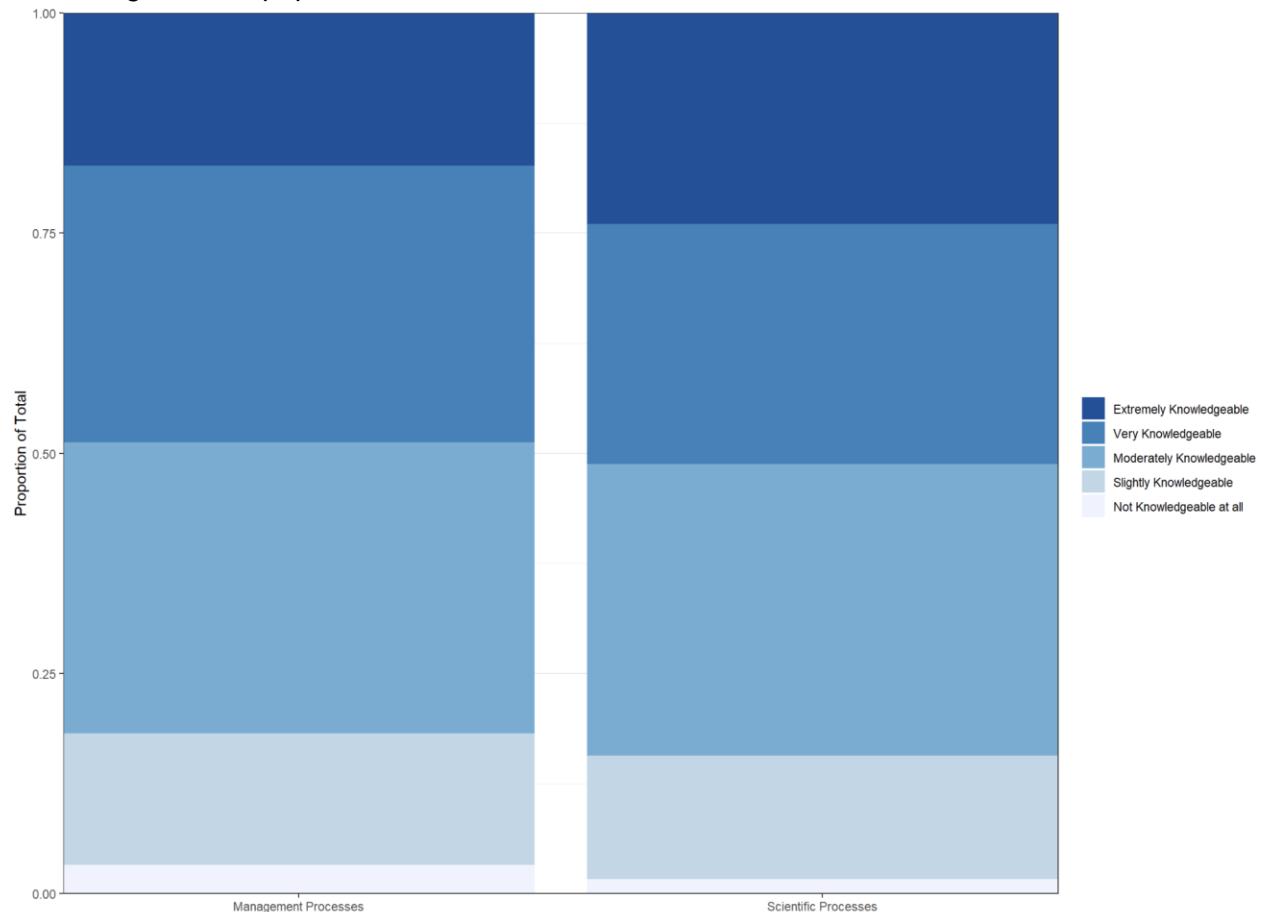


Sarah said that in both regions, most are satisfied with red snapper populations, but most are dissatisfied with red snapper regulations. *Eric* said that he would have thought that dissatisfaction with regulations in the Gulf of Mexico would have been higher given the issues with the individual fishing quota (IFQ), but your sample size is small. *Sarah* reminded him that this is commercial and charter combined. *Marcus* said that with so few responses, it is tough to draw conclusions with respect to populations and regulations for red snapper. *Eric* said it would be very different for commercial versus charter. *Kindra* asked if we could break that down by state; *Sarah* said yes.

How would you describe your overall level of satisfaction with greater amberjack population levels and current fishing regulations for greater amberjack?



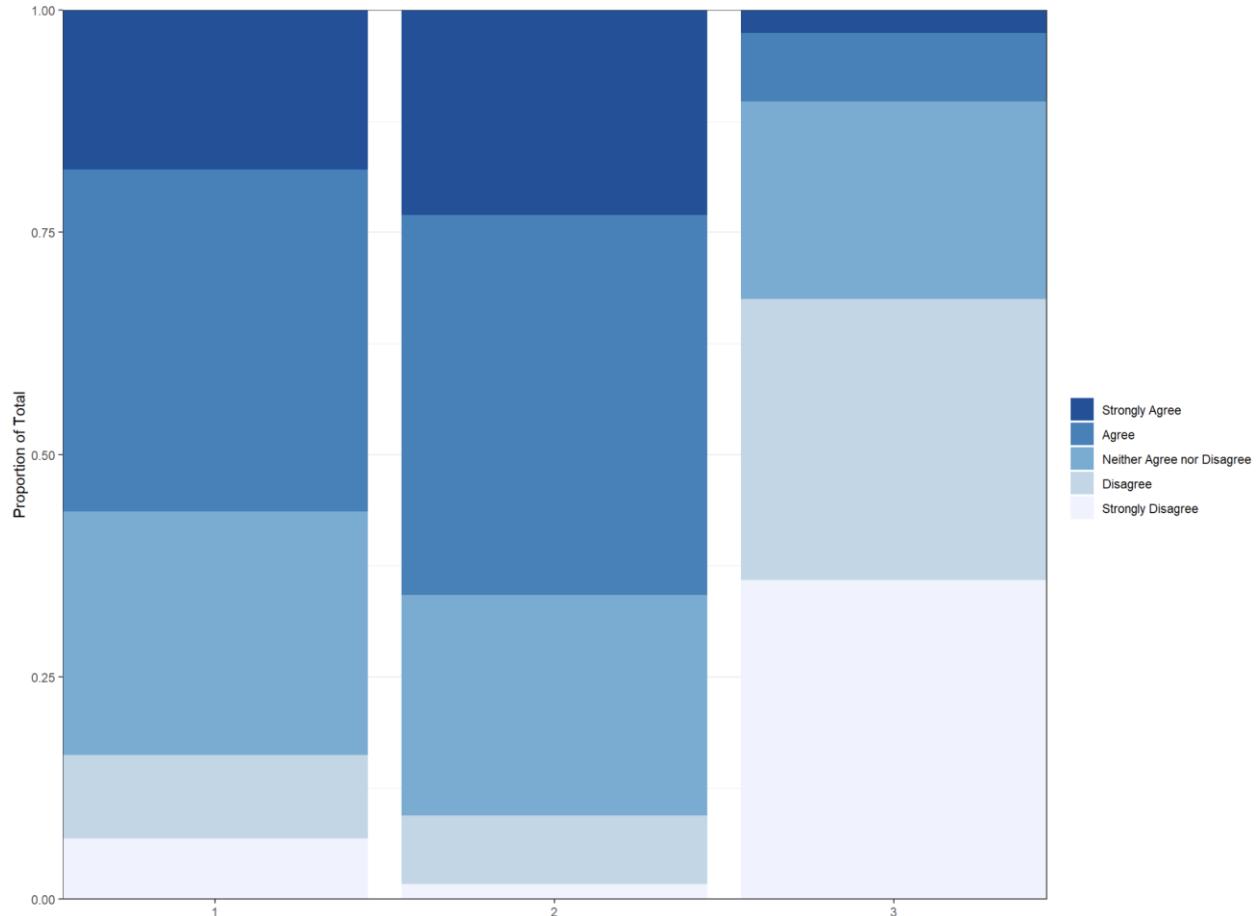
How would you describe your overall level of knowledge on the management processes involved with setting regulations for reef fish fisheries and the scientific processes involved in assessing reef fish populations?



Sarah said that again, people are showing high levels of self-described knowledge; we should probably follow up on this next year.

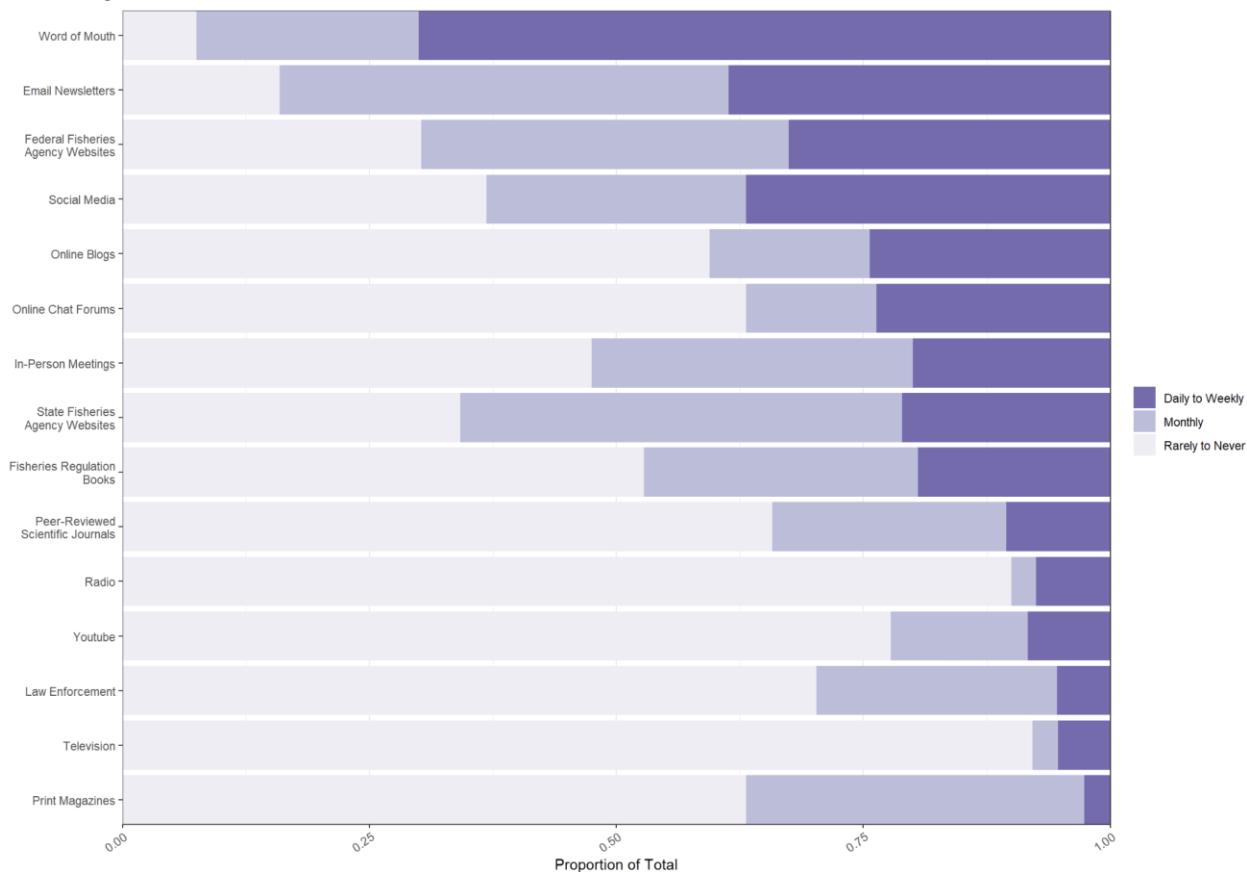
How much do you agree with the following statements?

1. I am confident that I can adapt to changes if necessary.
2. I often talk to other fishers about how they handle or prepare for and handle bad fishing years.
3. I feel that I am able to influence the decisions of fisheries managers.



Sarah said that nearly three quarters of respondents disagreed with the statement that they are able to influence management. *Shane* said that the agreement/disagreement with the three statements is a simple reflection of being engaged in the process. *Sarah* said it would be interesting to follow up next year on people's involvement in the scientific and management processes.

For information on reef fish fisheries, how often do you get information from each of the following sources?



Sarah said that the commercial and charter sectors get their information from federal agency websites; this is different from the recreational sector. *Shane* asked where Fish Rules would fit in; when you are out on the water, it is your only option aside from radio. *Marcus* said we take responsibility for the low sample sizes; we need to make better inroads for distributing the survey; it seems like these results are pretty “true.” *Eric* agreed that these are much better than the recreational results. *Shane* asked if YouTube registered on the recreational side. *Sarah* replied that it was fifth from the bottom there and fourth from the bottom here.

This concluded *Sarah*’s presentation about the reef fish surveys.

Next, *Nick Haddad* presented about the Return ‘Em Right program. This is a 7-year project funded from Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill money; Florida Sea Grant and University of Florida manage the education, outreach, and distribution of descending devices, while the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission manages the research and monitoring. The program report shows data through the end of last year. We distribute a package of gear after anglers complete the online training modules; it contains two descending devices (one pre-rigged). The program was launched to charter captains in October of 2021 as a pilot launch to refine the education materials. The program then launched to all Gulf of Mexico reef fish anglers in May of 2022.

We have trained more than 26,000 people, more than 25,000 of whom were eligible for free gear (i.e., they fish for reef fish in the Gulf of Mexico). There is typically a spike in the summertime that tapers off in the fall. Most anglers were from Florida (18.5 thousand). More than 400 federal for-hire permit holders and more than 400 state for-hire permit holders have completed the program. A map shows the distribution of devices across the Gulf of Mexico. *Ana Zangroniz* asked if this dashboard is publicly available; *Nick* said no, but some elements (e.g., the map) will be included on the website. The dashboard also shows the sources (where people heard about our program); the highest is word of mouth and the second highest is Facebook. Modern day anglers are using Facebook groups to communicate in a discussion forum format. We send follow-up surveys after 6 months. There has been a tremendous response from the fishing community; people are changing their behavior and recommending the program to others. *Nick* was concerned about the response from the community, simply because of the shark problem, but only about four people have told him that they lost their SeaQualizers to sharks. One had used his SeaQualizer about 200 times before losing it to a shark. *Tony Reisinger* said that headboats in Texas do not like using SeaQualizers because it takes too much time, and asked if this is the case in Florida as well. *Nick* said the headboat captains are the most difficult people to get onboard with the program. *Wayne* said he uses the ones with the larger lip grip to release several fishes at once; he can release two or three at a time. Also, he incorporates his customers into the process. *Eric* said he caught 125 red snapper at one site this year; he would have to carry two extra deckhands to descend that many fish. *Nick* agreed that there are situations wherein venting is preferable to descending. *Wayne* asked what they are supposed to do with a 100-pound goliath grouper. *Angela* and *Nick* are advising a project that is working on this; the venting tool breaks and you do not carry enough weight to use a SeaQualizer. *Angela* said there is some old information on goliath grouper healing from venting, but there is not much data; they are hardy based on acoustic tagging. *Shane* said that it is tough to know how much weight to use for bigger fishes; it takes some weight to get amberjack descended (about 25 pounds). *Nick* said that a pound of weight will descend about a 5- or 6-pound fish. Most survey respondents agree that 3 pounds is the appropriate amount of weight to include in the Return 'Em Right package, rather than 2 pounds or another option. Other metrics include more than 89,000 website users, a reach of over 700,000 people on social media, and monthly emails with a high open rate (60%, over 14,000 people). *Nick* plans to include captain ambassadors in the program next year and work more with tackle shops and fishing tournaments. *Eric* suggested Dogfish in Seminole, Florida.

Afternoon Session

Marcus began the afternoon session by explaining that each Sea Grant program will provide an update about their work, and then we will have some additional discussion time about refining the surveys.

Marcus started the Mississippi-Alabama presentation by showing the Reef Fish Extension website. He asked the other Sea Grant programs, "What have people asked you about the Great Red Snapper Count?" They said that people have generally asked, "What happened with

the Great Red Snapper Count?" This is why we created a product ([StoryMap](#)) to explain what happened with the project. This resource is available on the website; feel free to share it. The StoryMap is both simple and complex; the reader can choose by clicking on hyperlinks to read more details. It talks about the project's results, the review process, and SEDAR 74. It conveys that the count is a snapshot estimate, but the process still has not been completed. Another species-specific project is the Greater Amberjack Count. It is tough to say if anglers are identifying jacks correctly. Therefore, we also created a Guide to Jacks about banded rudderfish, lesser amberjack, greater amberjack, and almaco jack. This resource is also available on the website and is shown below.

You Don't Know Jacks!

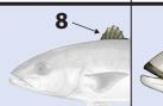
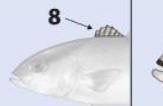
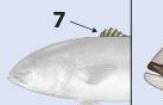
A guide to Gulf of Mexico *Seriola* jacks

You don't know jacks—or do you? Below are some useful hints to help you correctly identify your fish.

- Is it larger than 3 feet? If so, it's a greater amberjack.
- Is it deep-bodied with a tall dorsal fin? If so, it's an almaco jack.

If not, the number of spines and position of the eyes will help you determine the species.

For a more comprehensive and interactive identification guide, scan the QR code in the bottom left. For up-to-date fishing regulations, scan the QR code in the bottom right.

Full Body	First Dorsal Fin Spine #	Maxilla-Eye Alignment	Key Characteristics
 <p>Banded Rudderfish</p>	 <p>8</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bony keel by tail • white-tipped tail • flat-edged mouth • max. fork length: 2'3"
 <p>Lesser Amberjack</p>	 <p>8</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • blunt mouth • stripe not to first dorsal fin • proportionally larger eye • max. fork length: 2'2"
 <p>Greater Amberjack</p>	 <p>7</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • slender body • stripe to first dorsal fin • corner of mouth upturned • max. fork length: 3'7"
 <p>Almaco Jack</p>	 <p>7</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • deep body • tall dorsal and anal fins • max. fork length: 2'7"

Dashed lines in the first column indicate position of anal fin relative to second dorsal fin.

Publication 3852
MASGP-22-038

Scan for an interactive ID guide. 

MISSISSIPPI STATE
UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

Sea Grant
Mississippi-Alabama

Illustrations copyrighted by Diane Rome Peebles.
Mississippi State University is an equal opportunity institution.

Scan to download the "Fish Rules" app. 

There is a one-page identification guide, but there are also interactive photos that we created using the ThingLink program. Feel free to share this as well. Additionally, be sure to visit the Publications and Products page for all the products from the Reef Fish Extension project. *Tony* said that another frequently asked question is, "How do the Great Red Snapper Count estimates compare to past estimates by NOAA?" *Marcus* responded that this is a bit of an apples to oranges comparison; we did address it in the StoryMap (in a frequently asked questions section near the end). The Great Red Snapper Count found roughly three times more fish, but this needs appropriate context for interpretation. *Ryan* asked if Congress mandated involvement from the fishing industry (commercial and recreational sectors) in the Greater Amberjack Count, and if so, how that happened. *Marcus* answered that stakeholders were involved in survey

design (“visioning”), led by a team in Florida. The project also used commercial and recreational vessels for field sampling. *Ryan* asked if commercial and charter vessels were used for field sampling. *Shane* replied that he assisted with tagging. Putting tags out in a well-dispersed way (stratified area) rather than in a concentrated area, and across size/age classes, was challenging. He managed to tag about 40 fish. *Ryan* asked if the data that went into the Greater Amberjack Count and Great Red Snapper Count were all collected during the project rather than prior. *Marcus* said yes, it is meant to be a timeshot rather than a timeseries. *Ryan* asked how many vessels we contracted with for each Count project. *Marcus* replied that it was several per state; *Shane* knows of 5 in Texas and Louisiana; fishermen were very much involved.

Alexis Sabine gave the Texas Sea Grant presentation. Texas Sea Grant has held four educational workshops in various coastal locations. They focused on sustainable fishing practices, releasing reef fish with barotrauma and Return ‘Em Right, environmental stewardship, marine debris, and disaster preparedness for fishing guides and anglers. Photos from the workshops are shown below.



Texas Sea Grant plans to have two more workshops in the future. They attended three major outreach events; the Houston Fishing Show, Earth Day Bay Day, and the Port Mansfield Fishing Tournament; they reached about 1,000 people total. They created the *Angler Ethics & Etiquette* brochure in English and Spanish; it contains best practices for anglers to interact responsibly and sustainably with fisheries and other fishermen. They also created the *Sustainable Fishing and Environmental Stewardship Checklist* and *Fishing Guide 101* products. *Shane* provided input on these and helped design them. Texas Sea Grant is working on creating fish rulers (stickers), a *Catch and Release of Reef Fish* brochure, and whiteboard videos in collaboration with Louisiana Sea Grant, as there are many shared priorities and interests among stakeholders in the western Gulf of Mexico. The videos will focus on environmental concerns and fisheries

management and science pertaining to the reef fish fishery. *Kindra* asked about languages of the audio in the videos (e.g., Spanish request); *Alexis* said we can definitely look into audio translation. The first whiteboard video will be about “How to Get Involved with Fisheries Management.” This is because, at the first Advisory Panel meeting in 2022, we learned that the first longitudinal survey indicated that only about 25% of respondents rated themselves as very or extremely knowledgeable about management and scientific processes associated with reef fisheries, and only about 17% strongly agreed that they are able to influence decisions made by managers. Other topics under consideration for whiteboard videos include fisheries and the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary, and state versus federal fisheries management in Texas. We are also seeking suggestions for future topics. *Eric* suggested the shrimp industry; it is hanging on by a thread; prices are low, and shrimpers are tied to the docks in Louisiana. *Alexis* and *Laura* agreed and are happy to chat more about this. *Kindra* asked if we will discuss how federal management will influence state management in the state versus federal fisheries management video. *Alexis* said that yes, we will be doing that. *Alexis* said that next steps for the recreational and charter sectors involve a fishing guide and angler education certification program. Topics for the program are based on a needs assessment and include fisheries management and science, barotrauma and release practices, stewardship and sustainability, disaster preparedness, business management (fishing guides), safety at sea, and other priority areas and emerging issues. Texas Sea Grant welcomes input on their plans for future work. *Shane* said that getting the latest speckled trout regulations will be key; there are changes coming on that. Also, translating into Vietnamese is important and would be really helpful; Spanish has been very beneficial; he sends the *Fishing Guide 101* to a lot of people. *Tony* suggested updating old artificial reef publications.

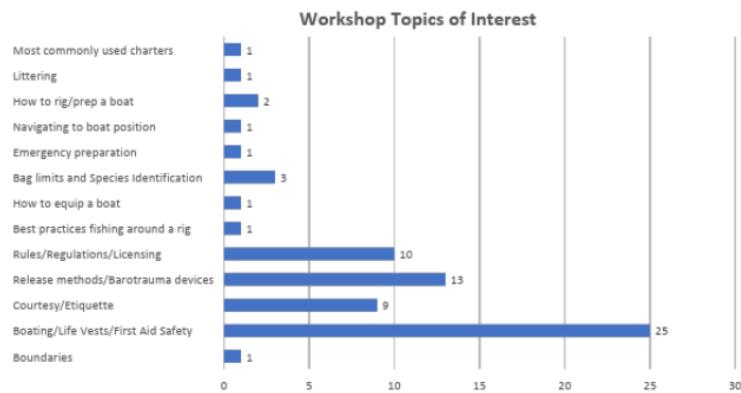
Dominique Seibert and *Haley Gambill* gave the Louisiana Sea Grant presentation. Louisiana Sea Grant used Texas Sea Grant’s template to create their own *Angler Ethics & Etiquette* brochure. Additionally, they created a *Marine Emergency Numbers* magnet for boaters and a *How to Vent a Fish* fact sheet. They also conducted a needs assessment survey consisting of 80 interviews at the Louisiana Sportsman Show to identify topics of interest to reef fish fishermen (mostly recreational and charter) in order to better develop and implement educational workshops and determine locations.

The results of the assessment are shown below.

Needs Assessment Survey

A needs assessment was conducted to identify topics of interest for reef fish fishermen in order to better develop and implement educational workshops and determine locations.

Eighty interviews were conducted at the Louisiana Sportsman Show.



Louisiana Sea Grant conducted a Reef Fish Workshop in July 2023 featuring Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries regulation updates, U.S. Coast Guard emergency on the boat, safety on the boat, the Return 'Em Right program, and descender gear demonstration. Louisiana Sea Grant followed the workshop with a survey. The attendees represented the recreational and charter sectors, said that venting is the preferred method when returning reef fish, suggested topics for the next workshop, and expressed interest in a fishing guide certification program. Louisiana Sea Grant is creating a video about hypoxia and reef fish (the Dead Zone), along with the video in collaboration with Texas Sea Grant about state versus federal management. The Seafood Processing Demonstration Lab is testing smoked reef fish. Louisiana Sea Grant is seeking feedback regarding next steps. *Kindra* wants to make sure that materials are accessible to people of all educational backgrounds; they should be translated into audio and written with ease of comprehension as a priority. Others asked questions about the fishing guide certification program; *Dominique* clarified that it would be like other states' programs, not required but nice to have. *Julian* asked if there are associations in Louisiana communities focused on reef fish. *Dominique* said that they have a finfish task force. *Julian* said in Puerto Rico, they bring seminars to the different villages. *Dominique* said she tries to hold meetings as close in proximity to the fishing communities as possible. *Kindra* said that she is happy to help foster fishermen involvement and participation in any way. *Julian* said that fishermen listen to the leaders, but not necessarily to others.

Angela gave the Florida Sea Grant presentation. There are 18 Sea Grant agents across Florida; saltwater fishing is a huge industry in Florida, with 4,000,000 recreational anglers, and about half of saltwater trips target reef fish. Stakeholder input, education, and investment are critical to the sustainability of the resource and are an ongoing effort across Florida via presentations, online blogs, magazine/newspaper articles, podcasts, radio interviews, and tabling at events. The Florida Friendly Fishing Guide program has certified 120+ guides; they get free stuff and are listed on the website. A survey has indicated that guides have enacted about 30 new best fishing practices. Ohio Sea Grant has mimicked the Florida Friendly Fishing Guide program. *Amy* asked about integrating this with the Southeast For-Hire Integrated Electronic Reporting (SEFHIER) program. *Marcus* pointed out that SEFHIER is only active in the South Atlantic, so that would be tricky. *Angela* also mentioned the Florida Friendly Angler program; it is much

shorter and has about 1,500 completions so far; there is a Spanish version coming soon. They have also partnered with Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to print fish rulers that have logos and QR codes for the programs. Summaries of the two programs are shown below.

Florida Friendly Fishing Guide

Preserving The Future of Florida's Fisheries

The Florida Friendly Fishing Guide Certification Program, established by UF/IFAS, Florida Sea Grant and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, recognizes fishing guides who are committed to preserving the future of Florida's fisheries through sustainable boating and fishing techniques.

120+ guides have completed the program

Scholarships (given away 50 in 2023)

Survey indicated guides enacted ~30 new best fishing practices (79 taught)



Florida Friendly Angler

[Enroll at FLFriendlyAngler.com](#)

Participation in the FFA course is completely voluntary. [Enroll for free](#) to help ensure quality fishing experiences in Florida are here to stay.



COURSE Topics



Environmental Ethics

Learn about fishing pressure, how to reduce impacts on ecosystems and biodiversity, and how to practice catch-and-release fishing.



Catch & Release

Learn what guides can contribute to measureable and positive practices that help reduce fishing impacts and ensure the long-term health of our fisheries.



Intro to Fisheries Management

Learn who manages Florida's fisheries, the science behind management decisions, and how anglers can contribute to fisheries research.



- Partnership with FWC
- Free online course
- ~1,500 completions
- Spanish translation *Coming soon!*

Ed Camp has been working on angler travel and targeting reports. He uses Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) data to get locally specific information about how people are fishing. He has been doing this for Florida for several years, and he is working on Alabama as

well as a modification for Texas and Louisiana (states without MRIP) and the South Atlantic. Specific information includes where anglers are coming from, what species they are fishing for, and changes in fishing effort over time. These products are being distributed to tourism agencies. Florida Sea Grant continues to work on other projects; *Angela* thinks of it as an “impacts multiplier” because a lot of work (e.g., Return ‘Em Right, Great Goliath Grouper Count, Depredation on Descender Devices) is in parallel to the Reef Fish Extension project. There was some discussion about barotrauma varying across fish species, time of year, temperature, etc. In Florida, only about 60% of anglers know about venting and 35% know about fish descender devices, which underscores the need for Sea Grant to continue communicating with anglers on best release practices. *Angela* requested any feedback from the Advisory Panel. *Eric* mentioned that we need to be better prepared financially for hurricanes so that relief funds can be distributed immediately; everything moves at a snail’s pace. We also need to deal with the elimination of working waterfronts. *Angela* agreed with the issues that gentrification presents; it seems like there should be some federal protection. *Charlie* said that we cannot depend on the government; we have to help ourselves if possible. *Kindra* said that Plaquemines Parish in Louisiana has the largest commercial fishing fleet in the lower 48 states; it is all government-owned property; it is up to us to self-sustain. Stronger America Through Seafood has devalued our shrimp fishery in favor of open-water aquaculture. We need to push our government agencies and apply for funds now.

David Hugo gave the South Atlantic Sea Grant programs presentation. He works closely with the SAFMC on their Best Fishing Practices project, the goal of which is to improve reef fishing sustainability by leveraging best fishing practices as an acquired habit. He has conducted tackle shop outreach in coastal South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. He has additional tackle shop outreach planned for North Carolina, South Carolina, and Florida.

He has made several observations from this outreach; these are shown below.



TACKLE SHOP OBSERVATIONS

- General acceptance of BFP regardless of council beliefs
- Universal willingness to display materials
- Year-to-year consistency in interactions
- Skepticism surrounding the value of public input and angler data
- Limited descending device inventory
- Non stainless-steel hooks are unclear
- Red Snapper hot spots
- Inshore/nearshore focus in SC and GA

David listed some outcomes from tackle shop outreach. These include seminar venues in Charleston, South Carolina and Marathon, Florida; public comment opportunities; SAFMC Release sign-ups; and angler appreciation of in-person efforts. He has given seminars at Coastal Scuba in North Myrtle Beach, South Carolina; the Jacksonville Offshore Sport Fishing Club in Jacksonville, Florida; SeaCoast Anglers in North Myrtle Beach; the West Palm Beach Fishing Club; and the South Dade Anglers Club. *David* has also conducted some (and is planning additional) media trips; the goal of these is for media personnel to document a bottom fishing trip and ultimately share the story of best fishing practices and descender devices through a public-facing platform. Finally, he gained some fisheries-independent surveying experience on the R/V Palmetto. *Amy* noted that these types of relationships between state agency personnel and Sea Grant are very valuable. She is interested in trying to start a certification program (like other Sea Grant programs are doing) for South Carolina to encourage sustainability outside of current regulations. *Kindra* asked if it would be cost-effective to have a screen display in tackle shops that shows information about descender devices, etc., to reduce the amount of in-person tackle shop outreach. *David* said that is a good idea that we have not yet tried. *Marcus* said that the South Atlantic Sea Grant programs' approach with the Reef Fish Extension fellow has worked out very well.

Marcus wrapped up the meeting by asking for final feedback from the Advisory Panel about the surveys, the Sea Grant programs' presentations, or anything else from today. *Amy* said she is disappointed about the lack of responses from the commercial and charter sectors in South Carolina. We need to build allies. The federal permit database is public. Is there room in the budget to mail each fisherman a letter with a link or QR code to the survey? Also, cc'ing the state representatives could help for all states. *Sarah* said she would have to figure out the

budget. *Charlie* said he agrees; bank sea bass as a top species means we talked to the wrong people. *Sarah* said part of this has to be a species identification issue that we can try to fix for next year. *Jason* said he is not a fan of the survey company (Qualtrics) because they will not give us some of the information we want. *Marcus* and *Sarah* said they wish we had a good alternative. *Kindra* said in Louisiana, they only have a few docks that buy reef fish; we need to make sure we connect with dock owners (e.g., Jensen Tuna) to bridge to the commercial fishermen. *Bill* said we need a way to see the data that were submitted to SEFHIER. *Marcus* said we will follow up on that.

Marcus asked every Advisory Panel member to identify their single biggest issue or concern facing the reef fish fishery and what we can do about it (if anything). *Eric* said he is concerned about regulation; on the charter side, he has nothing left that he can catch; he cannot make a living operating 5 or 6 months out of the year. On the commercial side, he gave the boat back because the owner did not own shares and it is difficult to find shares, not to mention the prices of the shares have gone up. He cannot take the uncertainty anymore. *Ryan* said that amberjack was on the bottom of our list in terms of recreational importance; it is interesting that the GMFMC has moved to shift more allocation from the commercial sector to the recreational sector; we have seen a lot of amberjack in Mississippi this year; the amberjack surveys should consider all of the structure that has been removed off of Louisiana, as this has probably displaced fish. The catch share program is the biggest fraud ever; it is biased and is putting people out of business; someone needs to submit a proposal investigating the socioeconomic impacts of IFQs. *Charlie* said assessments and regulations, because the assessments drive the regulations, yet people on the water do not agree with the assessment results. Fishermen need a business plan and money, and the public needs access to the fish. It is putting undue hardships on the whole ecosystem. *Julian* said that managers need to work with fishers from the top to the bottom. There is talk that this is going to happen, but it is not happening; the best information that can be gathered is from the fishermen. This will lead to better outcomes. *Bill* said that regulations are an issue; he does not have anything to fish for sometimes. They want to close vast amounts of open waters for Rice's whale and build 2,000 offshore wind turbines. There are a lot of things going on that we do not have control over; where is the accountability for mistakes that cost us our livelihoods? *Wayne* said state and federal management of red snapper are issues; you are not managing a fishery, you are managing a boundary. The fish should be managed equally. He wants to see some regulations get bumped up an inch or two. He has a passion for educating kids; who is educating the next generation? *Kindra* said lack of access and being priced out of our own fishery are big issues. Graying of the fleet is another issue. *Shane* said that he wants to learn how we can connect environmental factors and climate change to our fisheries in terms of downstream effects from *Sargassum*. The largest area of *Sargassum* was coming to attack the Gulf of Mexico but never made it. *Jason* agrees with *Julian*, but with a slightly different context. The one thing IFQ does do is provide a real-time understanding of fish availability to an extent. The NOAA Fisheries Southeast Fisheries Science Center should use this to try to understand the fisheries. The situations with red grouper and gag are bad; these could have been predicted. Money and research should be put toward looking at the relationship between allocation cost and stock status. *Amy* said that the biggest issue is what to do with all of this information, as information overload is a real problem. We

need to figure out what to focus on and deliver information in an efficient and simple manner. *Marcos* said the biggest issue is *Sargassum* influx during the summer, particularly during the past 11 years. During the past 7 years, it changed bait and forage availability and seasonality. This issue is underestimated in terms of a driver of habitat changes, and is definitely the new driver of the Caribbean fishery. It affects the larval recruitment of many species during the summertime, which is the main spawning time. *Kindra* mentioned that we need to have an honest conversation about oil spills and their lasting impacts.

Marcus closed the meeting by acknowledging the tremendous amount of knowledge and experience shared today.

Meeting Effectiveness

At the conclusion of the meeting, six of the 11 attending fishery representatives completed a brief survey to evaluate the utility and effectiveness of the meeting. Overall, fishery representatives rated the meeting highly, with most agreeing or strongly agreeing that the meeting's purpose was clear (100%), the meeting achieved the stated objectives (83%), the meeting was a valuable use of their time (100%), and the meeting fostered active participant involvement and interaction (100%). With respect to meeting duration, most fishery representatives agreed or strongly agreed that the meeting was the right duration (83%). The fishery representatives appreciated the ability to interact and share input, the valuable perspectives, and the informative presentations.

Appendices

Appendix A: Meeting Agenda

Reef Fish Extension 2023 Advisory Panel Meeting

AGENDA

Tuesday, October 17th, 2023

9 AM - 4 PM

Hilton New Orleans Riverside
Two Poydras Street
New Orleans, LA 70130



Morning (Compass Room)

8:00 AM - 9:00 AM	GSMFC registration & meeting sign-in (All)
9:00 AM - 9:30 AM	Welcome (All) & Introduction to Reef Fish Extension (<i>Marcus Drymon</i>)
9:30 AM - 10:45 AM	Results of second Reef Fish Extension survey (<i>Sarah Gibbs</i>)
10:45 AM - 11:00 AM	<i>Coffee Break</i>
11:00 AM - 11:25 AM	Feedback on second Reef Fish Extension survey (<i>Advisory Panel</i>)
11:25 AM - 11:50 AM	Return 'Em Right Program (<i>Nicholas Haddad</i>)
11:50 AM - 12:00 PM	Question/answer period (All)

Mid-Day

12:00 PM - 1:30 PM	<i>Lunch (on your own)</i>
--------------------	----------------------------

Afternoon (Compass Room)

1:30 PM - 1:55 PM	Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant's Reef Fish update (<i>Marcus Drymon</i>)
1:55 PM - 2:20 PM	Texas Sea Grant's Reef Fish update (<i>Laura Picariello</i>)
2:20 PM - 2:45 PM	Louisiana Sea Grant's Reef Fish update (<i>Julie Lively</i>)
2:45 PM - 3:00 PM	<i>Coffee Break</i>
3:00 PM - 3:25 PM	Florida Sea Grant's Reef Fish update (<i>Angela Collins</i>)
3:25 PM - 3:50 PM	South Atlantic Sea Grant's Reef Fish update (<i>David Hugo</i>)
3:50 PM - 4:00 PM	Wrap up (All)
4:00 PM	<i>Adjourn</i>

Evening (Port/Starboard Rooms)

5:30 PM - 7:30 PM	Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission Reception (<i>optional</i>)
-------------------	---

Appendix B: Meeting Attendees

Project Team

Marcus Drymon, Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium
Amanda Jargowsky, Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium
Laura Picariello, Texas Sea Grant
Alexis Sabine, Texas Sea Grant
Julie Lively, Louisiana Sea Grant
Haley Gambill, Louisiana Sea Grant
Jeff Plumlee, Louisiana Sea Grant
Dominique Seibert, Louisiana Sea Grant
Angela Collins, Florida Sea Grant
Nick Haddad, Florida Sea Grant
Michael Sipos, Florida Sea Grant
Ana Zangroniz, Florida Sea Grant
Bryan Fluech, Georgia Sea Grant
Jocelyn Juliano, South Carolina Sea Grant
Scott Baker, North Carolina Sea Grant
Sarah Gibbs, University of South Alabama
Emily Muehlstein, Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (*attended virtually*)
David Hugo, South Atlantic Fishery Management Council

Reef Fish Fishery Representatives

Shane Cantrell, Texas
Kindra Arnesen, Louisiana
Ryan Bradley, Mississippi
Wayne Conn, Florida
Bill D'Antuono, Florida
Jason DeLaCruz, Florida
Eric Schmidt, Florida
Charlie Phillips, Georgia
Amy Dukes, South Carolina
Marcos Hanke, Puerto Rico (*attended virtually*)
Julian Magras, U.S. Virgin Islands

Other Attendees

Chris Mace, Texas Parks & Wildlife Department
Tony Reisinger, Texas Sea Grant

Appendix C: Meeting Photos

