**ACCSP BYCATCH PRIORITIZATION COMMITTEE**

**Date: February 18, 2021**

**Time: 9:00AM-3:00PM**

**Webinar Information:**   
<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8001687487480367887>   
Phone: 1(562)-247-8422

**DRAFT MEETING Minutes**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Partner** | **Phone** | **Email** |
| Lee Benaka | NOAA |  | lee.benaka@noaa.gov |
| Lisa Bonacci | NY DEC |  | lisa.bonacci@dec.ny.gov |
| Chris Bradshaw (Chair) | FL FWCC | 727-896-8626 | [chris.bradshaw@myfwc.com](file:///C:\Users\heather_k.ACCSP\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\Content.Outlook\7B22OZ71\chris.bradshaw@myfwc.com) |
| Christopher Davis |  |  |  |
| Steve Doctor | MD DNR |  | steve.doctor@maryland.gov |
| Mike Errigo | SAFMC | 843-571-4366 | [Mike.errigo@safmc.net](file:///C:\Users\Elizabeth_W.ACCSP\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\ILUJK0JZ\Mike.errigo@safmc.net) |
| Jared Flowers | GA DNR | 912-223-0030 | [jared.flowers@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:jared.flowers@dnr.ga.gov%09) |
| Russell Hudson | FL – R/C | 386-239-0948 | [dsf2009@aol.com](mailto:dsf2009@aol.com) |
| Jennifer Lee | NOAA |  | jennifer.lee@noaa.gov |
| Nicole Lengyel Costa | RI DEM | 401-423-1940 | nicole.lengyel@dem.ri.gov |
| Jerry Morgan (Advisor) | CT – REC | 203-245-8665 | [b8ntackle@aol.com](mailto:b8ntackle@aol.com) |
| Sarah Murray | ASMFC |  | [smurray@asmfc.org](mailto:smurray@asmfc.org) |
| Conor O’Donnell | NH FGD | 603-868-1085 | [conor.o'donnell@wildlife.nh.gov](mailto:conor.o'donnell@wildlife.nh.gov) |
| David Player | SC DNR | 843-214-0831 | [playerd@dnr.sc.gov](file:///C:\Users\Elizabeth_W.ACCSP\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\ILUJK0JZ\playerd@dnr.sc.gov) |
| Chad Power | NJ DEP |  | chad.power@dep.nj.gov |
| Jason Rock | NCDENR |  | jason.rock@ncdenr.gov |
| Bradley Schondelmeier | MA FWE | 978-282-0308 | [BRAD.SCHONDELMEIER@STATE.MA.US](mailto:BRAD.SCHONDELMEIER@STATE.MA.US) |
| Chris Uraneck (Vice Chair) | ME DMR | 207-350-6040 | [chris.b.uraneck@maine.gov](mailto:chris.b.uraneck@maine.gov) |
| Greg Wojcik | CT DEEP | 860-434-6043 | gregory.wojcik@ct.gov |

Committee Members Not in Attendance:

Staff Members in Attendance: L. Aubart (Data Coordinator), H. Konell (Senior Fisheries Data Coordinator), J. Myers (Senior Data Coordinator), M. Powell (ACCSP Program Assistant).

**Welcome/Introduction**

B. Schondelmeier welcomed the group.

**Approval of Agenda**

B. Schondelmeier made a motion to approve agenda. N. Lengyel Costa moved to approve, C. Bradshaw seconded.

**Approval of February 2020 Meeting Minutes**

B. Schondelmeier made a motion to approve agenda. C. Power moved to approve, S. Murray seconded.

**Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

**Update Bycatch Priority Sampling Matrix for FY 2022**

H. Konell noted they are only looking at commercial scores. H. Konell reminded the group this matrix is intended for commercial data not recreational. Focusing on coast wide changes not region or individual state issues. Needs to come up with a score that represents the entire coast. These scores are based on the last two years of management changes. H. Konell noted everything has to be by consensus to approve any measures. H. Konell reminded the group scores are based on the last 2 years H. Konell noted because there is not a Vice Chair the group needs another note taker. C. Uraneck volunteered.

B. Schondelmeier went over the suggested changes.

South Atlantic Otter Trawl

The discussion began on whether this is the correct designation. The question was about collecting aquarium species with otter trawl. S. Murray noted primary species landed are marine life fin fish, and bycatch species, small coastal sharks, blue crab. H. Konell noted it was created off of two fleets the SE fish otter trawl and the mid-Atlantic otter trawl. L. Benaka noted he looked at NOAA fisheries, and stated the South Atlantic otter trawl targets Butterfish and Squid previously called the SE fish trawl. N. Lengyel Costa noted she remembers adding aquarium species because they do collect aquarium species.

M. Errigo noted otter trawls have been prohibited in the South Atlantic for years. They are damaging. H. Konell brought up N. Lengyel Costa’s point that otter travels can collect aquarium species. N. Lengyel Costa asked does M. Errigo have any evidence of otter trawls collecting aquarium species for research. M. Errigo noted he does not. M. Errigo noted it was also concerning they would trawl Black Sea Bass in Florida he did not think it would be that much to trawl. R. Hudson noted rock shrimp are trawled, but does not understand Black Sea Bass. H. Konell followed up and noted the shrimp trawls are with mid-Atlantic trawls, but not otter trawls. H. Konell suggested to refer to gear codes. S. Murray noted it can be confusing because we are looking at Florida and Gulf of Mexico.

**The group decided to table South Atlantic Otter Trawl for the future look at what species are being landed, and what gears are being used for this fleet, and will and will address after there is clarification.**

Mid Atlantic Extra Large Mesh Gill Net

B. Schondelmeier asked if anyone wanted to approve or reject the change. L. Benaka agreed with the change. Significant change in management from 3 to 1 was approved.

Mid-Atlantic Eel Trap/ Pot

B. Schondelmeier went over the suggested changes the Maine suggested to change fleet name to Atlantic Eel trap/pot. B. Schondelmeier asked if the fleet name were to change. H. Konell noted most changes would expand the region, and have an explanation in the fleet name. C. Power noted he suggests to create it as separate. N. Lengyel Costa noted these fleets are based on data with gear codes and area codes. The mid Atlantic has specific area codes. So it might be proper to make a New England fleet separately. H. Konell noted this type of change would not be applicable right now. However, it can be completed for the next matrix review in 2023. B. Schondelmeier noted he thinks changing the Maine suggested to change fleet name to Atlantic Eel trap/pot should be an action item. **The group agreed to consider splitting into two different fleets, a mid-Atlantic Eel trap/pot and a New England Eel trap/pot**.

Mid Atlantic Water Otter Trawl

Significant change in landings, decrease to a 3 was accepted.

Mid Atlantic Sea Scallop Dredge

Primary bycatch species of concern. The suggested change to add Horseshoe crab to Primary Bycatch Species of concern was accepted.

Mid Atlantic Inland Gill Net

Proposed No significant changes in management and change from a 3 to 1. C. Davis from Virginia noted he has concerns with this change. Due to concerns about River Herring and Shad in state waters. C. Power noted is the concern with the change due to management. C. Davis noted the dredging as still been a major concern overall. C. Davis noted they have seen increase Shad and River Herring discards. There had been a change in mesh size for their Striped Bass Gill net fishery and this was a significant change. B. Schondelmeier asked the group the about adding this change. S. Murray recommended looking at the fleet tab for reference. B. Schondelmeier noted the species Weakfish, Striped Bass, Atlantic Menhaden, Southern Flounder, American Shad, Red Drum, and River Herring are effected by the Mid-Atlantic Inland Gill Net. H. Konell noted all the gill nets Mid-Atlantic large mesh gill net, mid Atlantic small gill net and the inland gill net all effect each other. S. Murray asked a clarifying question if the suggested change refers to Mid Atlantic Inland Gill Net. Should we be evaluating all the gill net types for the change? H. Konell noted yes, if they make a change to the Mid Atlantic inland gill net it will affect all the other gill nets. C. Davis noted he does not see how we can make the suggested change from 3 to 1. This was agreed upon and the score was left at 3.

A note was made that going forward old Fleet names were going to be removed to avoid confusion.

Mid Atlantic Clam/ Quahog Dredge

B. Schondelmeier asked the group about this suggested change to added horseshoe crab as a Primary Bycatch Species of concern. C. Power moved to accept the primary bycatch species of concern and add horseshoe crab to primary bycatch species of concern.

New England Bottom Longline

B. Schondelmeier asked the group about this suggested change. For primary species landed to include Atlantic Halibut. This change was accepted.

New England Mid-Water Otter Trawl

Amount of Regulatory Discards. Changed from 4 to 2 due to reduced landings in the Herring and Mackerel fisheries. The change was approved.

New England Purse Seine

B. Schondelmeier asked the group about this suggested change. Primary bycatch species of concern to add Menhaden, Whiting and Squid. N. Lengyel Costa noted in Rhode Island they do not see this. Just in Maine. B. Schondelmeier asked the group about making this suggested change an action item for the future to split menhaden from this fleet**. The group agreed to split Menhaden from New England Purse Seine fleet.** H. Konell noted based on what the group decided on this New England purse seine fleet to reevaluate all New England Purse seine fleets as action items. N. Lengyel costa agreed due to management in Maine being different now. The inshore fishery targets Menhaden and is quite different from the offshore fleet which target Atlantic Herring.

**The group created an action item. To change fleet name of the New England Purse Seine and separate into NE inshore PS and NE PS or by permit type, states versus federal.**

New England Shrimp Pot

B. Schondelmeier asked the group about this suggested change. Magnitude of fishery to change from blank to 0 was accepted.

B. Schondelmeier asked the group about this suggested change. Significant change to management within the past 36 months to change from 1 to 0. The group accepted this change.

New England Shrimp Trawl

B. Schondelmeier asked the group about this suggested change. Amount of regular discards to change from 4 to 2. The group accepted this change.

C. Uraneck noted Rainbow Smelt is a species of concern in Maine now. N. Lengyel Costa asked is the species a recent concern. C. Uraneck noted it has been for 10 years. B. Schondelmeier noted this fishery does not collect Rainbow Smelt. H. Konell noted if there is no fisheries for it there will be no bycatch. It will not affect the utility of the matrix. The change to add Rainbow Smelt as a bycatch species of concern was accepted.

B. Schondelmeier asked the group about this suggested change. Significant change to management in the past 36 months change from 1 to 0. The change was accepted.

New England small mesh gill net

**The group agreed to split New England Gillnet fleet. This includes the New England small mesh gill net.** **Primarily targets menhaden, inshore, and New England large mesh gill net (primarily targets groundfish, offshore).**

Atlantic Menhaden

B. Schondelmeier asked the group about this suggested change. Stock assessment needs currently conduct studies on bycatch and discard in other fisheries is low priority. The group accepted this change.

Horseshoe Crab

B. Schondelmeier asked the group about this suggested change. Stock assessment needs currently improve measures to characterize landings. The group accepted this change.

North Atlantic General Category Tuna

B. Schondelmeier asked the group about the suggested change to add blue, porbeagle, shortfin mako and thresher sharks to the Primary Bycatch Species of Concern. The group accepted this change.

Florida Spiny American Lobster Fishery of Puerto Rico and the U.S Virgin Islands Trap Pot

B. Schondelmeier asked the group about this suggested change. To change landings to 3 to 0. The group rejected this change. This is managed by ACCSP.

B. Schondelmeier asked the group about this suggested change for protected species interaction to 3 to 1. H. Konell noted the group cannot change the interaction for protected species. This change was rejected.

B. Schondelmeier asked the group about this suggested change for turtle interaction to 3 to 1. The Fishery Science Center said any vertical lines in the water are considered bad for turtles and mammals. C. Bradshaw asked why turtles are a 3 and birds and mammals and fish are 1. Why do turtles seem to have more interactions versus all the other species? L. Benaka noted he will research this. N. Lengyel Costa noted any vertical line interaction counts. S. Murray noted there is evidence there can be an adverse effect on Sea Turtles. L. Benaka noted the Caribbean council will have to reconvene. J. Lee noted there is a new Caribbean buy up with the level of take of turtles that are captured in trawl lines. H. Konell asked would you say Turtles have a higher interaction then birds and fish. J. Lee noted yes. The group agreed by consensus to reject the change and leave it at a 3.

South Atlantic S/G Diving/ Spearfishing Fleet

B. Schondelmeier asked the group about this suggested change for significant change in management from 3 to 0. No change in Florida. D. Player noted South Carolina made it legal to fish with explosive spear tips. The group agreed by consensus to change from 3 to 1.

South Atlantic Snapper- Grouper bottom longline

B. Schondelmeier asked the group about this suggested change for change in landings from 3 to 0. The group agreed to reject the change.

B. Schondelmeier asked the group about this suggested change for protected species interactions. J. Lee noted she would have to check the bird interactions, but there are turtle interactions. The group agreed to reject the protected species interaction change from 3 to 1.

B. Schondelmeier asked the group about this suggested change for bird interactions. B. Schondelmeier noted birds do come down to the landings, and dive after hooks with bait on deployment and retrieval of longline gear. A Georgia or South Carolina representative commented that fishers have to use wire line which sinks fast. There is a short quota and low interactions with birds.

L. Benaka noted he will check National Fish reports. L. Benaka noted he has reports from 2010-2015 on Loggerhead sea turtles. 2014-2015 showed some interactions. However, he did not find evidence of bird interactions. R. Hudson noted with South Atlantic Snapper- Grouper bottom longline, Golden Titlefish are mainly effected.

R. Hudson noted fishers are not allowed to process other fish, but Golden Titlefish. M. Errigo noted this change only applies to offshore longline with Golden Titlefish. L. Benaka noted without any additional information to accept the change. The group agreed by consensus to change from 3 to 1 for significant changes in management.

South Atlantic Gulf of Mexico Spearfishing

B. Schondelmeier asked the group about this suggested change for significant change in management from 3 to 0. C. Bradshaw suggested to change it to a 1 because there were some changes. The group agreed by consensus to change it from 3 to 1.

Deep water Shrimp Trawl

B. Schondelmeier asked the group about this suggested change for amount of non-regular discards from 1 to 2. B. Schondelmeier asked how does limited observer trips mean discards decrease. M. Errigo noted the data sent was less than the fleets available. It was a database change. The group moved to accept this change.

B. Schondelmeier asked the group about this suggested change for amount of regular discards from 2 to 4. The group moved to accept this change.

Florida Spiny American Lobster

B. Schondelmeier asked the group about this suggested change for fleet name to remove ‘American’. The group moved to remove ‘American’ and add Florida regionally by consensus.

Golden Crab Pot Fleet

M. Errigo noted there are no observer program for this fleet so the amount of non-regular discards goes from unknown to 3. B. Schondelmeier asked the group about changing all groups with no observer program to unknown. H. Konell noted what they are proposing is if there are no observer program for the fleets they would change non-reg discards from 3 to unknown. C. Uraneck noted for the fleet there is a spot to mark if there is not an observer program. N. Lengyel Costa noted she does not support that change due to history of matrix. This is quantitative because it is based on the partner coming up with the calculated amount. N. Lengyel Costa noted it is difficult for the committee member to calculate and it reduces biasness. In some cases partners disagree with what the observer says. B. Schondelmeier noted there are other programs that have expertise calculate quantitatively. H. Konell proposed to M. Errigo would he be okay if the amount of non-regulatory and regulatory discards change to bycatch program to reflect the lack of an observer program. B. Schondelmeier asked the group if it would be okay if the amount of non-regulatory and regulatory discards change to bycatch program to reflect the lack of an observer program. The group agreed.

Greenstick Trolling Fleet

B. Schondelmeier asked the group about this suggested change for amount of regulatory and non-regulatory discards. To change to bycatch program to reflect the lack of an observer program. The group agreed on this change by consensus.

The significant management change to 0 was approved.

Mid Atlantic Hand line

B. Schondelmeier asked the group about this suggested change for significant change in management from 1 to 3. S. Murray noted if it is just the amount of discards being evaluated it would not matter. If you are including amount of dead discards that would change things. N. Lengyel Costa noted maybe the amount of discards need to be clarified to know if we are including discards, or dead discards. H. Konell stated they never evaluated just dead discards. N. Lengyel Costa noted she would affect the change from 1 to 3 based on quota. The group agreed the significant change in management applies to reduced commercial quota. The group agreed to accept this change by consensus.

New England Hand line

B. Schondelmeier asked the group about this suggested change for significant change in management from 1 to 3. Due to requiring circle hooks when targeting striped bass and reduced quota. The group agreed the significant change in management applies to reduced commercial quota. The group agreed to accept this change by consensus.

**Break**

10:35am-10:45am

Pelagic H&L Fleet South

B. Schondelmeier asked the group about this suggested change for amount of regulatory and non-regulatory discards. To change to bycatch program to reflect the lack of an observer program. The group agreed on this change by consensus.

M. Errigo noted this is covering Mackerel, and the region would be South of Hatteras for hook and line. B. Schondelmeier asked the group about this suggested change for mammal interactions to be a 1. The group agreed.

Snapper Grouper H& L Fleet South

B. Schondelmeier asked the group about this suggested change for amount of regulatory and non-regulatory discards. To change to bycatch program to reflect the lack of an observer program. The group agreed on this change by consensus.

South Atlantic Black Sea Bass Pot

B. Schondelmeier asked the group about this suggested change for amount of regulatory and non-regulatory discards. To change to bycatch program to reflect the lack of an observer program. The group agreed on this change by consensus.

D. Player noted there is no bycatch program. D. Player noted there are some discards. H. Konell noted the amount of regulatory discards for this fleet is a 0. B. Schondelmeier asked the group about this suggested change for amount of regulatory and non-regulatory discards. To change to bycatch program to reflect the lack of an observer program. The group agreed on this change by consensus.

B. Schondelmeier asked the group about this suggested change for significant changes in management to 0.M. Errigo agreed.

South Atlantic buoy gear

B. Schondelmeier asked the group about this suggested change for amount of regulatory and non-regulatory discards. To change to bycatch program to reflect the lack of an observer program. The group agreed on this change by consensus. L. Benaka noted there could be a bycatch program. C. Bradshaw noted in Florida they fish with 40-50 buoys, but the number of hooks is less than 10. C. Bradshaw noted no one has a short enough line to have it vertical on the water column. The buoys are not the best quality. L. Benaka noted he was referring to buoys that reduce pelagic fisheries. L. Benaka stated the SAFMC has to revamp their rules by 2022 for fisheries gear. M. Errigo noted he is not sure how buoys would go with the revamp. B. Schondelmeier noted target species are large coastal Sharks, Yellowfin Tuna, Titlefish, and Bluefin Tuna etc. C. Bradshaw noted in the south Atlantic side there are grouper and snapper grouper behind affected. D. Player noted it is primary Tilefish and grouper.

South Atlantic Shrimp Trawl

M. Errigo noted the South Atlantic Skimmer trawls changed to have TED’s now. B. Schondelmeier asked the group about this suggested change for significant change in management from 0 to 1. C. Davis noted in Virginia on Virginia Beach they have a brand new bean trawl. They have seen an increase of out of state trawls fishing in out of state waters. There are also a large number of shrimp trawls.

South Atlantic shrimp trawl roller

B. Schondelmeier asked the group about this suggested change for significant change in management from 0 to1. The group agreed by consensus.

South Atlantic Skimmer Shrimp trawl

B. Schondelmeier asked the group about this suggested change for significant change in management from 0 to 3. For the South Atlantic Skimmer Shrimp Trawl the suggested change for significant management changes, changed from 0 to 3 due to the use of TED’s.

The group agreed by consensus.

South Atlantic Snapper – Grouper Bottom Longline

B. Schondelmeier asked the group about this suggested change for amount of regulatory and non-regulatory discards. To change to bycatch program to reflect the lack of an observer program. The group agreed on this change by consensus.

South Atlantic Spearfishing

B. Schondelmeier asked the group about this suggested change for amount of regulatory and non-regulatory discards. To change to bycatch program to reflect the lack of an observer program. The group agreed on this change by consensus.

B. Schondelmeier asked the group about this suggested change for primary bycatch species. H. Konell noted bycatch is not something you did not want to catch and accidently did. S. Murray noted how can you have bycatch spearfishing. H. Konell suggested reviewing the bycatch species list, and asked is there any species on the list that cannot be bycatch. S. Murray noted the species that do not have size limits could count. B. Schondelmeier asked the group does anyone have size knowledge for spearfishing species. M. Errigo noted to prevent discards they removed size limits for Red Snapper. H. Konell noted consistent with the matrix Red Snapper is a primary species not a bycatch species. S. Murray asked how are Sharks in the primary species, that can be spearfished. D. Player noted Sharks were added as a species of concern, because they are sometimes shot as an act of protection.

B. Schondelmeier asked the group about this suggested change for significant change in management to change to a 1. D. Player noted this change is okay. The group agreed by consensus to accept the change.

H. Konell thanked everyone and B. Schondelmeier for their work. H. Konell asked B. Schondelmeier to send the spreadsheet to her when ready.

**Hot Topic Item**

H. Konell noted she formally reached out for Hot Topic Items. There were none. H. Konell asked the group if they had any Hot Topics for this meeting. There were none.

**Elections**

H. Konell asked the group for any vice chair nominations. C. Uraneck nominated himself for the vice chair position. There were no objections. H. Konell noted this position is to take notes and get familiar with the Chair role. This meeting reconvenes every 2 years.

C. Bradshaw nominated himself for the chair position. There were no objections.

H. Konell noted Chairing this committee will be different as Bycatch Prioritization Committee as less action items.

**Other Business**

H. Konell noted G. White asked the Committee to start think of potential ideas and commitments for committee proposals due in June. H. Konell noted to email her with any suggestions or questions.

H. Konell noted they may have to have additional meetings in the next few years to review fleet changes.

**Adjourn**

**12:00pm**

**Action Items**

1. **The group decided to table South Atlantic Otter Trawl for the future look at what species are being landed, and what gears are being used for this fleet, and will and will address after there is clarification.**
2. **The group agreed to consider splitting into two different fleets, a mid-Atlantic Eel trap/pot and a New England Eel trap/pot**.
3. **The group created an action item. To change fleet name of the New England Purse Seine and separate into NE inshore PS and NE PS or by permit type, states versus federal.**
4. **The group agreed to split New England Gillnet fleet. This includes the New England small mesh gill net.** **Primarily targets menhaden, inshore, and New England large mesh gill net (primarily targets groundfish, offshore).**