

Port Meetings
Key Largo, FL – Key Largo Fisheries
4/1/2014, 4-6 p.m.

1) DATA/SCIENCE - LACK OF PRIVATE RECREATIONAL DATA; LACK OF CURRENT DATA; LACK OF STOCK ASSESSMENTS

Issues--

- Need more science
- Concerns with data collection
- Recreational management; concerns with MRFSS/MRIP data
- Stock assessments – not enough, lack of current data

Solutions--

- Electronic logbook/reporting online (recreational and commercial sectors)
- REGIONAL stock assessments
- Recreational reporting online
- Readdress MRIP sampling design/sample frame; need better methodologies; individual mentioned political polling
- Prioritize stock assessments regionally and by economic importance; important species should be assessed every 5 years minimum (also in #3)
- Group noted need for more than best available science; need to use current data for management and assessment; should be minimum standards/requirements for data to be used in assessments and management
- SEDAR stock assessments should be the goal; stock assessments need to be more timely

2) NOT ENOUGH ENFORCEMENT

Issues--

- Problems with the East Hump MPA (Law Enforcement issues)
- Council makes regulations that are not enforceable
- Lack of enforcement on recreational sector (primarily private recreational sector)

Solutions--

- **Open East Hump area MPA;** only commercial guys can't use this area because of VMS; recreational fishermen regularly fish in MPA
- **Increase law enforcement funding;** need more officers
- **Use permit fees to help fund enforcement**
- **MPA is self-regulated;** too far offshore for many to use

3) ONE SIZE FITS ALL MANAGEMENT VS. REGIONAL MANAGEMENT

Issues--

- Uniformity of regulations and rules; confusion when GMFMC, SAFMC, and FL regulations are different
- Magnuson, state, and federal management
- Regional management effects and affects; fisheries in South FL are different than NC, doesn't make sense to manage the same way

Solutions—

- **Regional stock assessments on economically important species**
- **Prioritize stock assessments regionally and by economic importance;** important species should be assessed every 5 years minimum (also in #1)
- **Regional quotas**
- **Regional closures;** change shallow water grouper closure; group noted Jan. – April is the only time able to catch grouper in Monroe County; spawning closure should match the spawn for specific areas; consider setting spawning closure annually and basing timing of closure in part on water temperatures
- Individual expressed concerns about turning over management of federally managed species to the state of FL

4) SECTOR CONFLICTS

Issues—

- Recreational boats coming too close to commercial boats when fishing

Solutions—

- **Create regulation to keep distance away from commercial boats while fishing**
- **Consider using commercial flag (similar to diver flag) for spatial limits**
- May be education issue too?

5) CLOSURES ARE NOT WORKING

Issues—

- Trip limit for snowy grouper too low
- Grouper spawning closure too long
- No snapper closures – keep size and bag limits
- Concern with discards; killing fish you can't keep doesn't make sense (also in #6)

Solutions—

- **Open closed areas** (specifically mentioned East Hump MPA)
- **Enforcement of all sectors in closures;** don't discriminate by sector; need to be fair to all sectors
- **Increase communication between Council, Biscayne Bay National Park, and National Marine Sanctuaries;** Council needs to work with National Marine Sanctuaries and National Park Service on additional proposed closures

- Council using closures as a tool and not really working; rolling spawning closures for areas when fish are actually spawning; closures should affect all sectors the same
- **Bycatch allowance during closures**

6) TOO MANY DISCARDS

Issues—

- Concern with discards; killing fish you can't keep doesn't make sense (also in #6)

Solutions—

- **Bycatch allowance**; suggested bycatch allowance for black grouper, species affected by closure during the closure, deepwater species that will likely not survive if released, warsaw
- **Explore/study descending devices; research discard mortality**; (whole group not supportive of this idea; many people noted they do not believe that descension tools would work in South FL)

7) CONCERNS ABOUT CATCH SHARES

Issues—

- Too much management
- Threat of catch shares (one individual noted their support of catch shares and his belief that they have worked for golden crab and spiny lobster)

Solutions—

- **No catch shares**
- **No use it or lose it**
- Concerns about using historic landings to divide up catch shares; impact of catch shares on ability of young guys to join fishery; catch shares effect on fishing culture, fleet reduction, and job loss; environmental NGO's buying shares in fishery, etc.

8) NEED FOR PEST MANAGEMENT (LIONFISH / GOLIATH)

Issues—

- Lionfish predation of juvenile snapper/grouper
- Lots of goliath but need to have strict regulations or will fish out
- Too many sharks – specifically bull and spinner sharks; eating lots of snapper grouper species before can bring fish on boat

Solutions—

- **Recreational harvest permit for Goliath**; suggestion to have permit lottery for recreational fishermen run through state of FL; also mention of for-hire sector
- **Develop a fishery for lion fish**
- **Support lionfish trap testing / research projects**
- **Diver education** (net harvest)
- **Support commercial lionfish trap program based on studies**

- **Improve communication between HMS and Council** (shark 'problem')

9) Other Issues

- Think amberjack should not be in Snapper Grouper complex
- Lack of unified outreach approach in the community; need more coordinated efforts in marine, tackle shops, etc.; mention apps as a good outreach tool
- Need for coordinated outreach between National Marine Sanctuaries, National Park Service, and recreational anglers
- Too many sharks; open commercial shark fishing
- Add artificial reef modules
- Supportive of king mackerel management (use of regional zones)
- Concern over Biscayne Bay National Park and FR National Marine Sanctuary pending closures; SAFMC needs to be aware of Biscayne Bay National Park closure and communicate with NPS
- Concern over water quality; SAFMC needs better communication with agencies in charge of water quality
- Support for cooperative research program