

**Southeast Region Implementation Plan Action Items (FY10 and FY11) and Accomplishments (FY08 and FY09)**

\*Action Category: 1 = Monitoring; 2 = Bycatch reduction engineering and other research;  
3 = Management (including international efforts); 4 = Education/outreach.

<b>*Action Category</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Status/Specific Accomplishments as of September 30, 2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>How Progress Will be Measured and/or Monitored</b>	<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Milestone Completion Date</b>
1	Enhance observer programs in the Gulf of Mexico shrimp trawl fishery.	The Final Rule for Shrimp Amendment 13, which established standardized reporting methodology, was published on September 26, 2007, and was implemented on October 26, 2007.	Monitor bycatch with available funds.	Monitor bycatch with available funds.	Documentation of number of observer days completed with available funds.	Complete as many observer days as possible with available funds.	September 2009 and September 2010
3	Provide better bycatch estimates for red snapper and other species for the shrimp fishery with respect to season, depth, and location.	Observer program.	Monitor bycatch with available funds.	Monitor bycatch with available funds.	Agency approval of regulatory amendment. Documentation of any work that was done to provide better bycatch estimates.	Agency takes final Action on Regulatory Amendment.	Ongoing activity
1	Enhance observer programs in the Gulf of Mexico bottom longline reef fish fishery.	Observer program at baseline level, subject to annual finding.	Monitor bycatch with available funds.	Monitor bycatch with available funds.	Documentation of number of observer days completed with available funds.	Complete as many observer sea days as possible with available funds.	September 2009 and September 2010
1	Enhance observer programs in the South Atlantic shrimp trawl fishery.	Shrimp Amendment 6 (approved) specifies that 20% of annual observer funds will be used to monitor bycatch in the South Atlantic shrimp fishery.	Monitor bycatch with available funds.	Monitor bycatch with available funds.	Documentation of number of observer days completed with available funds.	Complete as many observer sea days as possible with available funds.	September 2009 and September 2010
4	Enhancement of education and outreach efforts. Continue partnership with fishermen and industry groups to research and develop effective bycatch reduction techniques.	Distribution of new Bycatch Reduction Device (BRD) designs to Southeast fishers. Developed and distributed instructional materials for new BRD construction.	Continue to distribute new BRD designs to fishers. Stage industry workshops to promote new BRD designs. Work with industry groups to involvement in new BRD development.	Continue to distribute new BRD designs to fishers. Stage industry workshops to promote new BRD designs. Work with industry to solicit involvement in new BRD development.	New BRD designs developed in cooperation with industry. Increased use of new BRD design by fishers.	Provide status report on BRD development and industry outreach efforts.	September 2010 and September 2011

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3	Continue the use of time/area closures for fisheries that have high bycatch of fishes, marine mammals, and sea turtles.	Existing time/area closures were maintained.	Ongoing	Ongoing	Maintain bycatch reduction provided by time/area closure.	Documentation of time/area closures.	September 2009 and September 2010
1	Provide better bycatch estimates for red snapper, vermilion snapper, and other reef fishes in the commercial and for-hire snapper-grouper fishery with respect to season, depth, and location.	Reef Fish Amendment 22 (approved) implements a standardized reporting methodology through the development of an observer program for the snapper-grouper fishery and use of Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey (MRFSS). Reef Fish Amendment 23 applies standardized bycatch reporting methodology to the entire reef fish complex.	Monitor bycatch with available funds and with MRFSS.	Monitor bycatch with available funds and with MRFSS.	Documentation of the number of observer sea days and number of intercepts by MRFSS.	Complete as many observer sea days as possible with available funds.	September 2009 and September 2010
1	Monitor and assess bycatch in the South Atlantic (SA) snapper-grouper fishery; minimize the impacts of incidental take on sea turtles and smalltooth sawfish.	SA Snapper-Grouper Amendment 15B implemented interim programs to monitor and assess bycatch in the SA snapper-grouper fishery until the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program Release Discard and Protected Species Module can be fully funded. It also included an action to minimize the impacts of incidental take on sea turtle and smalltooth sawfish.	Monitor bycatch with available funds. Require use of gear to minimize bycatch of sawfish and turtles.	Monitor bycatch with available funds. Require use of gear to minimize bycatch of sawfish and turtles.	Amendment 15B approved on November 16, 2009.	Implement amendment.	Implemented December 16, 2009
3	Reduce bycatch of red porgy and black sea bass in the South Atlantic.	The Final Rule for Reef Fish Amendment 13C was implemented 10/23/06. The amendment increased the allowable harvest of red porgy, required a 2" mesh back panel in black sea bass	Monitor bycatch with available funds.	Monitor bycatch with available funds.	Estimate magnitude of red porgy and black sea bass bycatch.	Complete as many observer sea days as possible with available funds.	September 2009 and September 2010

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		pots, and required black sea bass pots be removed from the water when a quota is met.					
3	Establish Marine Protected Areas in South Atlantic to eliminate bycatch in closed deep water areas and protect a portion of deep water fish population from fishing pressure.	South Atlantic Snapper-Grouper Amendment 14 established eight MPAs from northern South Carolina to southern Florida.	Monitor MPAs with available funds.	Monitor MPAs with available funds.	Amendment 14 was approved on January 13, 2009.	Implement Amendment 14.	Implemented February 12, 2009
3	Reduce reef fish bycatch in the Gulf of Mexico.	Shrimp Amendment 14 and Reef Fish Amendment 27 to reduce reef fish bycatch in the Gulf of Mexico was published in 2008.	Monitor bycatch with available funds and with MRFSS.	Monitor bycatch with available funds and with MRFSS.	Estimate reef fish bycatch.	Reports of reef fish bycatch.	September 2009 and September 2010
3	Reduce bycatch of snapper-grouper species in the South Atlantic.	South Atlantic Snapper-Grouper Amendment 16, which is now complete, requires dehooking devices.	Monitor bycatch with available funds. Require use of gear to reduce bycatch of snapper-grouper species.	Monitor bycatch with available funds. Require use of gear to reduce bycatch of snapper-grouper species.	Amendment 16 was partially approved on March 24, 2009.	Implement Amendment 16.	Implemented July 29, 2009
1	Reduce and monitor bycatch in Caribbean fisheries.	The Caribbean Comprehensive Sustainable Fisheries Act/Essential Fish Habitat Amendment was implemented during 2006.	Monitor bycatch with available funds.	Monitor bycatch with available funds.	Documentation of the number of observer sea days.	Complete as many observer sea days as possible with available funds.	September 2009 and September 2010
2	Enhance funding for bycatch studies.	FY07 priorities for the Marine Fisheries Initiative (MARFIN) and Cooperative Research Program (CRP) were revised to better reflect research needs for stock assessments and bycatch as identified in the Region's Bycatch Implementation Plan.	Fund new proposals related to bycatch.	Fund new proposals related to bycatch.	Progress will be monitored through the funding and successful completion of bycatch related proposals.	MARFIN and CRP Annual Reports.	September 2009 and September 2010

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1	Develop and implement rule to reduce sea turtle bycatch in trawl fisheries.	Working with Northeast Regional Office (NERO) and Headquarters (HQ) to develop Trawl Gear Rule.	The Sea Turtle Strategy Team, Regions, and HQ will draft proposed Trawl Gear Rule for Phase I fisheries.	Publish proposed and final rules for Phase I fisheries and start a similar information gathering and rulemaking process for Phase 2 trawl fisheries.	Publication of the Trawl Gear Rule for Phase I fisheries.	Implementation of Trawl Gear Rule for Phase I fisheries.	January-2010 for Phase I proposed rule publication, April-2010 for Phase I final rule publication
1	Implement regulations to reduce leatherback sea turtle bycatch.	Working with NERO and HQ to develop Trawl Gear Rule that will require the use of a flounder Turtle Excluder Device (TED) capable of releasing leatherback sea turtles and a flynet TED.	Schedule workshops with affected fishers on the use of these TEDs. Incorporate new gear designs into regulations.	Continue workshops and monitor the effectiveness of new requirements.	Completion of Trawl Gear Rule. Monitor compliance with these new TED requirements.	Implementation of Trawl Gear Rule.	April 2011
2	Research new gear and fishing methods to reduce bycatch of sea turtle species, led by Southeast Fisheries Science Center (SEFSC) Pascagoula Lab with observer evaluation from SEFSC Galveston and guidance from Southeast Regional Office (SERO).	Developed and tested several TED designs. Draft rule package is being developed that will amend TED regulations to allow new designs and materials for the shrimp and summer flounder fishery.	Continue to research methods to reduce sea turtle bycatch in fisheries by other gear types.	Continue to research methods to reduce sea turtle bycatch in fisheries by other gear types.	Continued evaluation of new gear types and fishing methods to reduce bycatch of sea turtles. Gather feedback from fishermen on the effectiveness of changes.	Draft rule package will be prepared during 1st half of 2010.	September 2010 and September 2011
1	Amend the Bottlenose Dolphin Take Reduction Plan (BDTRP) based on the Bottlenose Dolphin Take Reduction Team's (BDTRT) consensus recommendations to reduce serious injury and mortality of bottlenose dolphins.	Reconvened the BDTRT for a full team meeting in 9/09 to monitor the BDTRP's effectiveness at meeting its goals. The BDTRP provided consensus recommendations to help reduce bottlenose dolphin serious injuries and mortalities to help meet required goals. Regulatory recommendations include gear requirements for the Virginia Pound Net fishery and continued gear	Draft proposed rule to amend the BDTRP per the BDTRT's consensus recommendations.	Finalize requirements modifying the BDTRP, and continue to monitor the plan's effectiveness.	Monitor fishery takes, especially related to the Virginia Pound Net fishery, to assess whether mortality and serious injury has been reduced to below stock's Potential Biological Removal level within 6 months of implementation of	Draft proposed rule to implement regulatory and non-regulatory components of the plan.	September 2010

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		restrictions for medium mesh gillnet fishing in North Carolina during the winter to reduce bottlenose dolphin interactions.			the plan (short term goal) and to insignificant levels approaching a zero rate within 5 years of implementation of the plan (long term goal).		
1	Implement regulations to reduce pilot whale and Risso's dolphin bycatch.	Established an Atlantic Pelagic Longline Take Reduction Team (PLTRT) to develop a draft plan to reduce mortality and serious injury of marine mammals (specifically pilot whales and Risso's dolphins) incidental to the Atlantic pelagic longline (PLL) fishery. Proposed rule to implement the Atlantic Pelagic Longline Take Reduction Plan (PLTRP) published in <i>Federal Register</i> on June 24, 2008 (73 FR 35623) and provided a 90-day public comment period, ending on September 22, 2008. One PLTRT meeting was also conducted during the public comment period (73 FR 51446, September 3, 2008). The PLTRT did not reconvene in 2009 as there were no stock structure updates available. The PLTRT will reconvene in 2010.	Reconvene the PLTRT in a teleconference to provide updates on stock structure, research, and to monitor the Plan's effectiveness.	Continue monitoring plan's effectiveness and modify as necessary based on team comments.	Monitor fishery takes to assess whether mortality and serious injury of marine mammals has been reduced to insignificant levels approaching a zero rate within 5 years of implementation of the plan.	Implement regulatory and non-regulatory components of the PLTRP. Reconvene the team to provide updates and assess the effectiveness of the plan and determine need for modification.	September 2010

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2	Award and initiate research priorities for projects to reduce bottlenose dolphin, pilot whale, and Risso's dolphin serious injuries and mortalities.	Cooperate with Sea Grant to review and award grants to conduct research supporting research priorities recommended by the BDTRT and PLTRT to help reduce serious injury and mortalities related to various fishing gear with which they interact.	Continue to cooperate with Sea Grant to award grant(s) and continue research on modified gear/fishery operations to reduce bycatch of bottlenose dolphins, pilot whales, and Risso's dolphins.	Continue research on fishery operations to reduce bycatch and implement new gear requirements, as appropriate, in coordination with the BDTRT and PLTRT.	Successful completion of awarded gear research studies; and presentation of information to Bottlenose Dolphin and Pelagic Longline Take Reduction Teams, respectively, to determine feasibility of incorporating gear modifications into the plan to further aid in reducing serious injury and mortality-related gear types.	Continue research on new grants issued in 2010 and present relevant gear research information at BDTRT and PLTRT meetings.	September 2010
4	Provide information to fishermen and public on regulatory and non-regulatory components of the PLTRP.	Developed draft PLTRP and proposed rule. Developed presentations describing draft proposed measures for Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Protected Species Safe Handling, Release, and Identification Workshops required for all HMS shark and swordfish permit holders. Developed and distributed placard with marine mammal identification and safe handling/release guidelines for the pelagic longline fishery. Developed compliance guide for regulatory and non-regulatory measures of the PLTRP and distributed it to affected fishermen.	Continue to provide information to fishermen and public on regulatory and non-regulatory components of the PLTRP.	Continue to provide information to fishermen and public on regulatory and non-regulatory components of the PLTRP.	Monitor fishery takes to assess whether the bycatch reduction goals of the plan have been met.	Continue to provide information to fishermen and public on regulatory and non-regulatory components of the PLTRP.	Ongoing

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3	Assess impacts of fisheries and gear types on marine mammal species.	Assessed levels of marine mammal mortalities and serious injuries in all state and federal commercial fisheries in the Southeast and provided recommendations for revising annual List of Fisheries (LOF) to categorize fisheries according to level of marine mammal bycatch.	Provide Fisheries/Protected Resources (F/PR) with recommended revisions to LOF based on previous year serious injury and mortalities in fisheries/gear, and respond to public comments on proposed changes. Establish local database of marine mammal mortality/injury reporting. Coordinate and standardize stranding, sighting, interaction, and mortality report databases in Protected Resources Division. Establish processes to obtain, enter, store, conduct appropriate analysis (to gear type/ impact) to use stored data.	Provide F/PR with recommended revisions to annual LOF categorization based on previous year serious injury and mortalities in fisheries/gear, and respond to public comments on proposed changes. Work with NER and others to establish tier analysis standard operating procedures for all gear-fishery interactions, and articulate process for establishing, changing, and dropping fisheries from yearly LOF.	Revised LOF will be published annually to determine whether various related management requirements are needed per the Marine Mammal Protection Act.	Develop and forward to F/PR recommended revisions to 2011 LOF. Databases will be created, standardized, and stored in common access folders. Processes for data management and tier analysis will be captured in written policy documents.	June 2010
2	Research new gear and fishing methods to reduce finfish bycatch, led by SEFSC Pascagoula Lab with observer evaluation from SEFSC Galveston and guidance from SERO.	Developed and tested several bycatch reduction device (BRD) designs.	Continue to research methods to reduce finfish bycatch in shrimp fishery.	Continue to research methods to reduce finfish bycatch in shrimp fishery.	Continued evaluation of new BRD designs to reduce finfish bycatch.	Developed new BRD design that will be incorporated into Shrimp Amendment 15.	September 2010 and September 2011

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4	Minimize the impacts of incidental take of sea turtles and smalltooth sawfish in the Gulf of Mexico.	Fisher workshops conducted in 8 Gulf of Mexico and 9 Southeast Atlantic ports. Information and training was provided on safe handling techniques for captured sea turtles including use of de-hooking devices and line cutters. Marine enforcement training on required gear was conducted for United States Coast Guard and state agencies.	Conduct outreach with fishers on measures to reduce incidental take impacts on sea turtles and smalltooth sawfish. Support fishery dependent studies to investigate sea turtle take mitigation measures on bottom longlines.	Continue to conduct outreach with fishers on measures to reduce incidental take impacts on sea turtles and smalltooth sawfish. Support fishery dependent studies to investigate sea turtle take mitigation measures on bottom longlines.	Monitor the adoption of release gear protocols and the number of vessels carrying and using required gear. Analyze results of mitigation studies to determine if measures could be effectively implemented in the fishery.	Document compliance with carrying the required gear. Provide status report on fishery dependent studies of mitigation measure research and implementation feasibility.	September 2010 and September 2011
2	Research new gear and fishing methods to reduce bycatch of sea turtle species, led by SEFSC Pascagoula Lab with observer evaluation from SEFSC Galveston and guidance from SERO.	Developed and tested TED designs for shrimp and non-shrimp trawl fisheries. Conducted targeted catch retention assessments of TED-equipped trawls for skimmer trawls and Atlantic sciaenid trawl fishery.	Continue to research methods to reduce sea turtle bycatch in fisheries by other gear types. Complete assessments of target catch retention and TED usability for skimmer trawls and Atlantic sciaenid fishery.	Continue to research methods to reduce sea turtle bycatch in fisheries by other gear types.	Continued evaluation of new gear types and fishing methods to reduce bycatch of sea turtles. Implementation of the Trawl Gear Rule.	Developed new TED design that was incorporated into Trawl Gear Rule. Final reports on target catch rates and TED usability for skimmer trawl and Atlantic sciaenid trawl fishery.	September 2010 and September 2011
2	Reduce bluefin tuna bycatch mortality in the Gulf of Mexico pelagic longline (PLL) fishery for yellowfin tuna.	Conducted a fishery dependent assessment of an experimental hook design to release bluefin tuna while retaining targeted yellowfin tuna.	Continue a fishery dependent assessment of an experimental hook design to release bluefin tuna while retaining targeted yellowfin tuna.	Distribute new hook designs throughout fishery and obtain industry feedback on usability and effectiveness.	Analyze results of experiment to determine if measures could be effectively implemented in the fishery. Fisher uptake of experimental hook design as more efficient method for target catch and reduction of bluefin.	Report results of two-year study. Implementation of hook requirement in PLL fishery.	September 2009 and September 2010

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1	Maintain appropriate observer coverage levels in the PLL, bottom longline (BLL) and shark gillnet (GN) fisheries.	Target coverage levels met for PLL and shark GN fisheries (on an annual basis). BLL coverage level identified (SEFSC). Implemented enhanced coverage of Gulf of Mexico PLL fishery from April 15 - June15.	Maintain observer coverage levels for PLL and shark BLL and GN fisheries.	Maintain observer coverage at or above target levels for each fishery.	Identify target observer coverage level by fishery. Document number of vessels, sets, and hooks observed by fishery.	Identification of fishery observer coverage levels. Document observer coverage levels by fishery.	Annually