

Fisheries Information Network

A State/Federal Cooperative Program for the
Collection, Management and Dissemination
of Commercial and Recreational
Fisheries Data

Commercial Fisheries Information Network (ComFIN)

Recreational Fisheries Information Network [RecFIN(SE)]

Goals and Objectives

- Plan and manage a State/Federal data collection program
- Implement a State/Federal data collection program
- Establish and maintain a data management system
- Support development of national program

Recent Activities

- Collection of recreational data
- Implementation of trip ticket programs
- Biological sampling
- Operation of FIN Data Management System

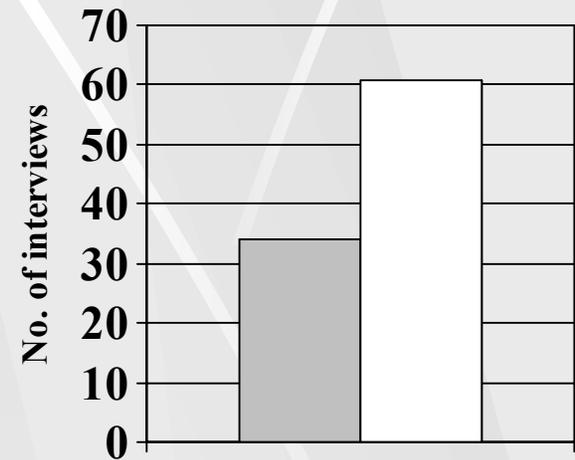
Recreational Catch/Effort

- Utilizing the Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey (MRFSS) methodology
- Gulf States are collecting data in field
- Data elements collected:
 - Mode of fishing
 - Gear and area fished
 - Targeted species
 - Hours fished
 - Species caught – discarded and retained

Recreational Catch/Effort

- Increased sampling
 - Exceeded quota by 45% in 2002
 - ~50,000 fish measured in 2002 (300% increase)
- Add question regarding artificial reef use
 - Determine importance of reefs to fishing in Gulf

Thousands



■ Quota □ Int. obtained

For-Hire Catch/Effort

- Vessel Directory Telephone Survey (VDTS) implemented in TX, LA, MS, AL & FL
 - Uses directory of all active charter boats
 - Each week randomly telephone 10% of the charter boat operators
 - Collect fishing effort data for the prior week
 - Texas focusing on offshore vessels only
 - Will stop in August 2003 – evaluate method and make decision
 - States also conducting economic add-on
 - Collect operating costs and earnings data on a trip basis
 - Scheduled through June 2003

For-Hire Catch/Effort

- Head boat sampling
 - Data collected via NMFS Logbook Survey
 - FIN exploring collecting data via VDTs
 - States will begin collecting data via VDTs in May 2003
 - Also conduct limited at-sea sampling in 2003
 - FIN will compare data from both methods and determine best way to collect head boat data

Commercial Catch/Effort

- Trip ticket programs implemented in states except Mississippi and Texas
 - Mississippi – implemented oyster and bait shrimp; will be working on other aspects in future
 - Texas – still evaluating effectiveness of trip ticket program to collect commercial data
- Electronic trip ticket reporting
 - Working with dealers in TX, LA, MS, AL, & FL
 - Allows electronic reporting of data
 - More efficient and less time consuming
 - Beneficial to dealers
 - Could have as many as ~120 dealers on-line by December 2003

Biological Sampling

- Began in Jan 2002
- Both commercial and recreational sampling
- Targeting red snapper, king mackerel, gulf and southern flounder, and amberjack
- Collection and analysis of otoliths and lengths

Otoliths Collected (2002)					
	King mackerel	Red snapper	Gulf flounder	Southern flounder	Greater amberjack
FL	344	1109	43	53	117
AL	127	1928	100	794	51
MS	33	272	n/a	152	n/a
LA	227	1021	n/a	1575	57
TX	91	1618	14	1483	10

FIN Data Management System

- System currently on-line (since July 2002)
 - System open to confidential and non-confidential users
- Have commercial data (trip ticket) in system
 - FL - 1985 to 2002
 - AL – 2002
 - MS - 2001 to 2002 (oyster only)
 - LA - 2000 to 2002
 - Historical data (from NMFS)
- Recreation data - 1981-2001
- Menhaden data - 1987-1990 and 1993-1999
- Biological data in system (2002)
- SEAMAP data in system (1982-2000)

Future Activities

- Development of bycatch module
 - Two components – qualitative and quantitative
 - Existing recreational and commercial port sampling
 - Use programs to id fisheries that need additional data
 - At-sea sampling
 - Provides detailed data about discards and bycatch for priority commercial and for-hire fisheries
- Registration tracking
 - Allows tracking of vessels, dealers and fishermen through time and location
 - Developed data elements – agencies need to implement collection of necessary information

Future Activities

- Using recreational fishing licenses as sampling frame
 - Provide for more precise estimate of fishing effort
 - Criteria needed to use licenses:
 - all fisheries in jurisdiction need to be licensed (finfish, shrimp, shellfish, etc.)
 - all exemptions need to be identified
 - license systems needs to be computerized
 - license databases need to be updated on routine basis
 - name, address and phone number need to be collected
 - Various states need to modify recreational systems before licenses can be used as sampling frame

Closing

- Much progress has been made in improving commercial and recreational data collection and management
 - Worked with Pacific (RecFIN and PacFIN) and Atlantic (ACCSP) to ensure compatibility and comparability
 - Regional programs part of national FIS
- Will continue to develop programs to provide best data for management of resources in Gulf of Mexico, Atlantic and Pacific