



Governance Survey Results

August 2020

Our vision is to be the principal source of fisheries-dependent information on the Atlantic coast through the cooperation of all program partners.

Survey Background and Objectives

- In October 2016, the ACCSP Coordinating Council and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission agreed to alter the governance structure of ACCSP.
- New governance structure
 - Full integration of ACCSP into ASMFC
 - ACCSP comparable to Science or ISFMP
- Objectives
 - evaluating the impacts of governance changes and see if additional adjustments are warranted, and
 - reporting to the Coordinating Council if ACCSP has been invigorated, renewed engagement from State Directors and the Program is advancing in its mission.



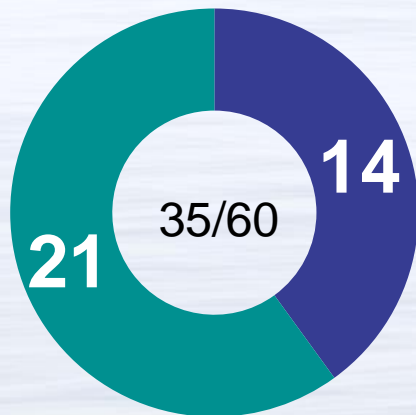
Survey Design



- Initial distribution to all 60 Coordinating Council and Operations Committee members
- Reminders sent only to those that hadn't already responded

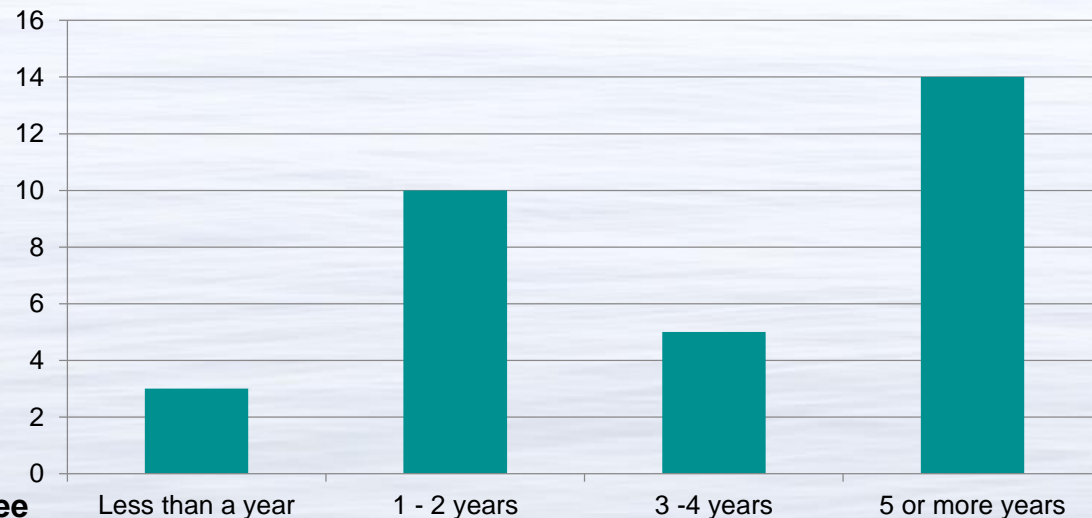
Response Rate and Demographics

Respondents by Committee



■ Coordinating Council ■ Operations Committee

How long have you served on your current ACCSP committee?

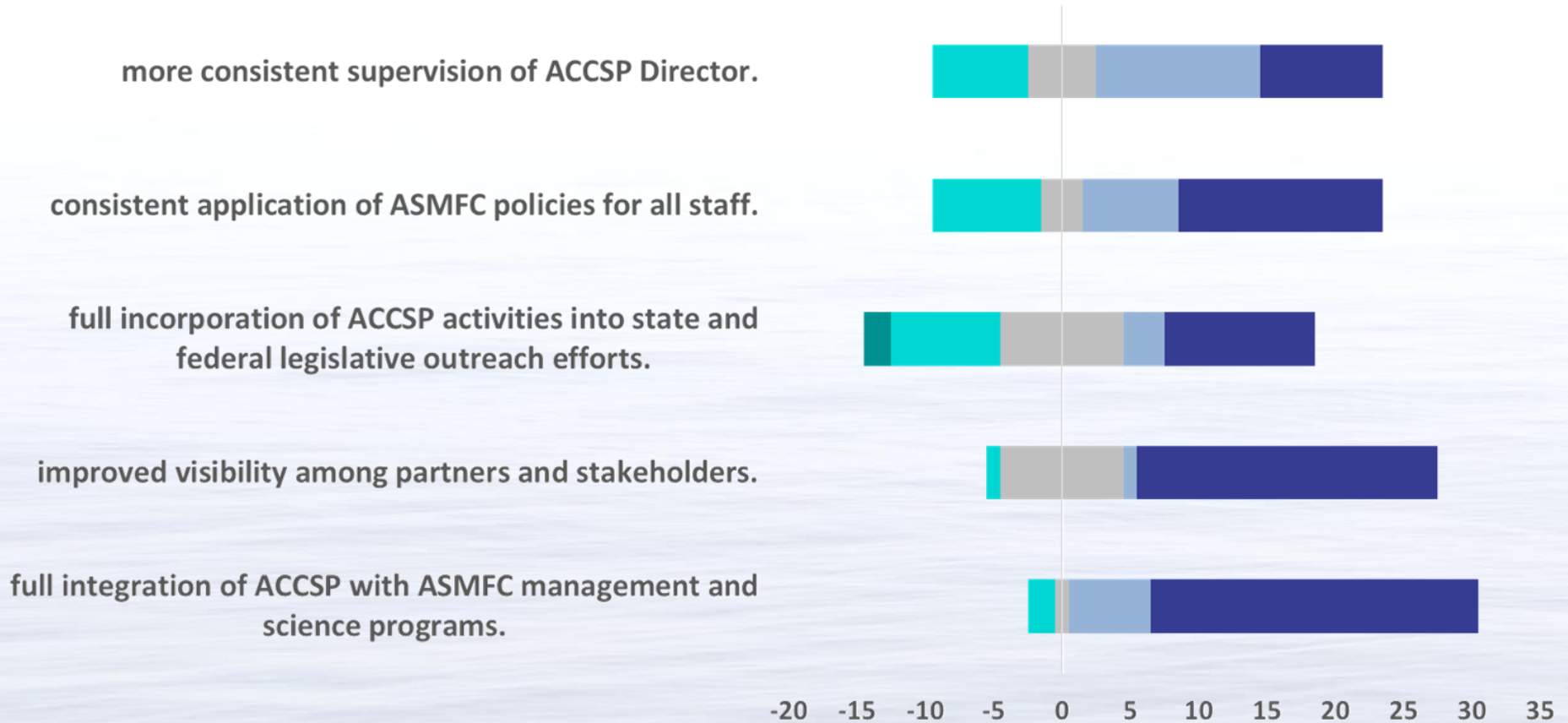


Agencies that didn't respond: NEFMC, CT DEEP, DC FWD, PRFC



Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements. The ACCSP governance change has allowed for:

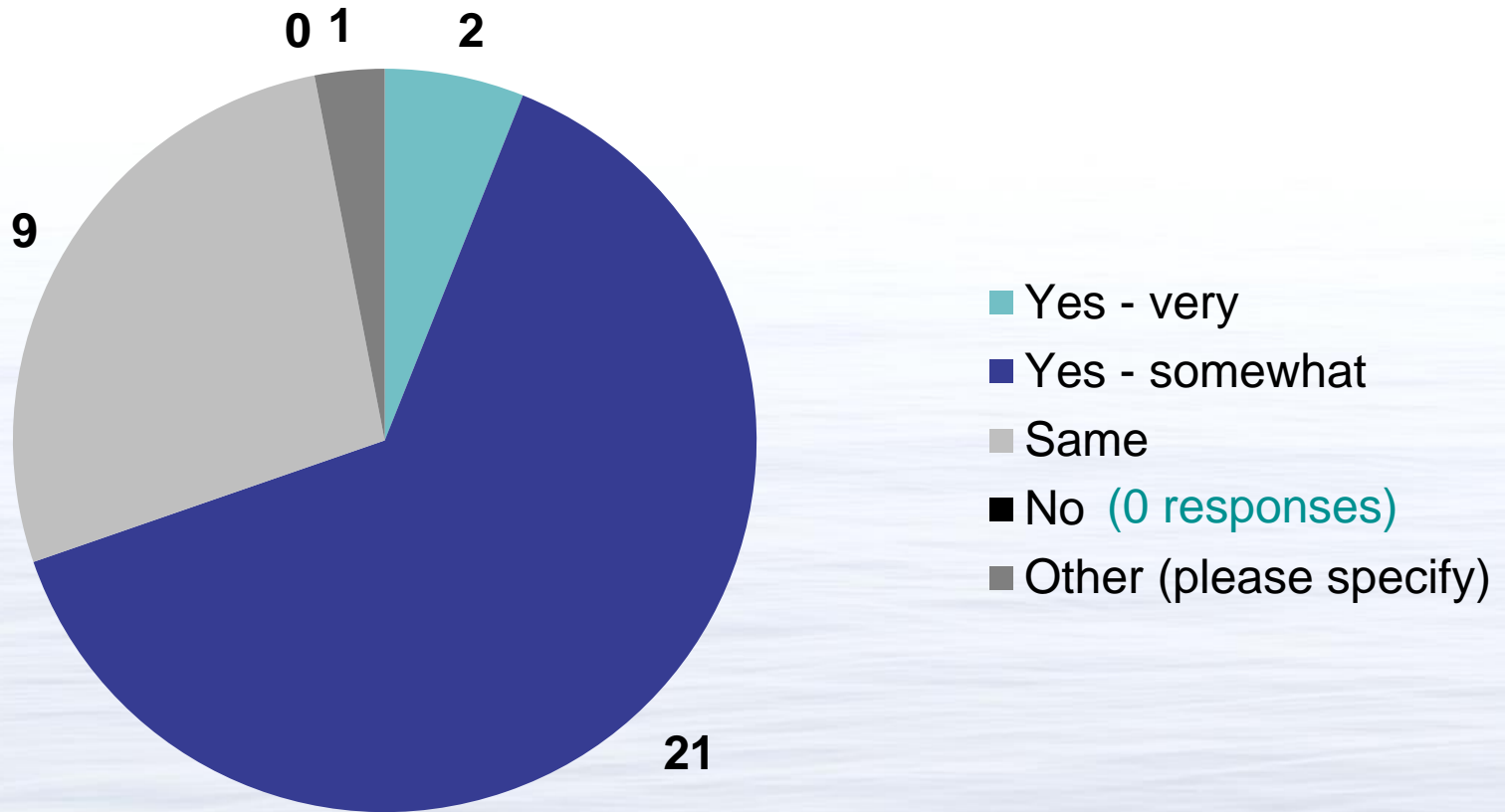
■ Strongly Disagree ■ Unsure ■ Neutral ■ Agree ■ Strongly Agree



32 responses



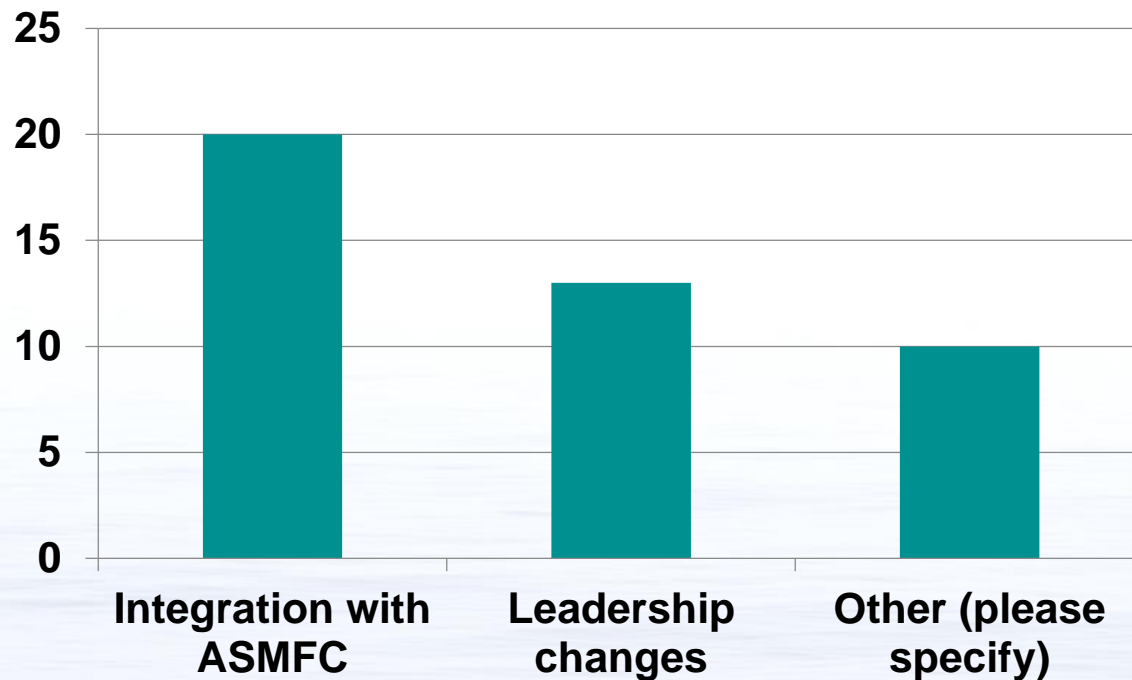
Do you feel better informed, engaged, and invigorated?



33 responses



To what do you attribute this change or lack thereof? (check all that apply)



Other

I don't see a change on this particular question because I always felt well informed and engaged with ACCSP. (5)

Personal role/position (2)

SAFIS redesign (1)

Commitment to improved communication by leadership. (1)

Unsure (1)

32 responses

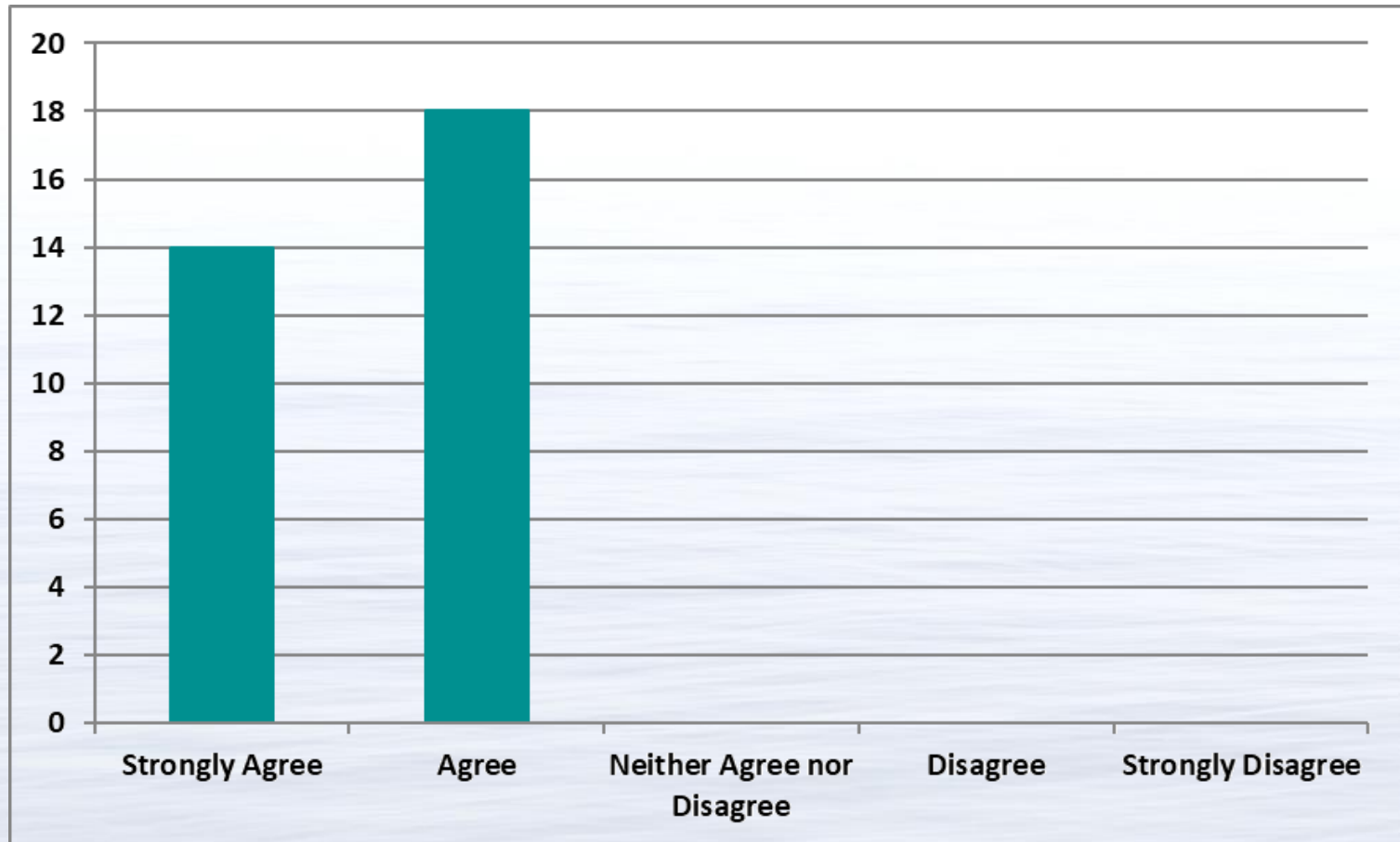


Do you feel the Operations Committee/Coordinating Council members are better informed, engaged, and invigorated?

- High percentage of uncertainty ~45% from both groups in regard to the other.
- Attributed to both integration with ASMFC and leadership changes.



Do you agree the ACCSP is advancing in its mission to produce dependable and timely marine fishery statistics for Atlantic coast fisheries that are collected, processed and disseminated according to common standards agreed upon by all program partners?



32 respondents



Conclusions

- Respondents agree that new governance structure has allowed for
 - ✓ Improved visibility among partners and stakeholders
 - ✓ Full integration of ACCSP with ASMFC management and science programs
- Respondents agree, but have a higher level of uncertainty that new governance structure has allowed for
 - ✓ More consistent supervision of ACCSP Director
 - ✓ Consistent application of ASMFC policies for all staff
 - ✓ Full incorporation of ACCSP activities into state and federal legislative outreach efforts
- Coordinating Council and Operations Committee members, in large part, were uncertain of the feelings of their counterparts



Conclusions (cont.)

- ✓ **Majority of respondents feel better informed, engaged, and invigorated.**
- ✓ **This change is due to both ASMFC integration and ACCSP leadership.** It should be noted that 5 respondents previously felt informed and engaged.
- ✓ All respondents **agree that ACCSP is advancing in its mission** to produce dependable and timely marine fishery statistics for Atlantic coast fisheries that are collected, processed and disseminated according to common standards agreed upon by all program partners.



Discussion



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program Coordinating Council

Committee Status

Since the last Council meeting, the ACCSP has published three monthly newsletters on Committee Activities. The newsletter was designed to keep all ACCSP Committee members informed of the Program's activities and accomplishments.

- 1) May 2020
- 2) June 2020
- 3) July 2020

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May 2020 Committee Newsletter

This newsletter is intended to keep all committee members aware of the activities and accomplishments of ACCSP committees and staff. These updates will be monthly to ensure timely communication and keep each issue brief but informative. ACCSP staff welcomes feedback on all content.

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Upcoming Events

- **May 11th 11AM-12PM:** SAFIS Redesign working group
- **May 14th 2PM-3PM:** Recreational Technical Committee Call
- **Early June:** Recreational Technical Committee Call

Highlights

- The Operations and Advisory Committees met on April 15th. They reviewed the FY2021 ACCSP RFP, approved changes, and forwarded to the Coordinating Council.
- The Coordinating Council met on May 5th and approved the FY2021 ACCSP RFP as submitted in a consensus vote.

[ACCSP Releases FY 2021 Request for Proposals!](#)

Coordinating Council

- Convened during May 5th ASMFC Spring Webinar.
- Approved the FY2021 ACCSP RFP.
- Reviewed materials on Committee and Program updates.
- Considered an MRIP draft report to Congress on State Partnerships. Comments are due to G. White by May 20th, 2020.

Operations Committee & Advisory Committee

- Webinar was held on April 15th.
- Reviewed FY19 Funding Status and Project Expenditures.
- The Committees were presented an MRIP draft report to Congress on State Partnerships.

Commercial Technical Committee

- The Conversion Factor small working group is developing a proposal on commercial sampling for top 5 priority fish and crustacean species. The group has solicited the full committee for participation, and the number of participating agencies is increasing.

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- Atlantic Sharpnose Shark
- American Eel
- Blue Crab
- Snowy Grouper
- ACCSP staff are reviewing marine aquaculture data within SAFIS and the Data Warehouse with the NOAA Office of Aquaculture. This review will help inform NOAA's approach to future comprehensive standardization and consolidation of Atlantic aquaculture data. Next steps may include increased collection of aquaculture harvest data via SAFIS applications, along with data stream coordination among state, regional, and federal partners.

Informational Systems Committee

- The SAFIS Redesign Working Group was created to inform the Information Systems committee of progress on the redesign. It is comprised of members of the Information Systems Committee. The intent is to review progress of the new SAFIS Management System (SMS) Switchboard features.
- Switchboard will provide flexibility for partners in managing attributes for trips/dealer reports.
- The attributes will be provided to the mobile application and to the redesigned eTRIPS/online attribute.
- A beta of eTRIPS/online will be available for review/testing June 30th.

Recreational Technical Committee

- Next meeting on May 14th at 2PM
- Follow-up meeting on June 4th at 1PM
- Highest priority goals for addressing recreational data needs in 2020 include:
 - Improve PSE (increase precision) of MRIP catch estimates to better meet fisheries management needs.
 - Continue development of comprehensive for-hire data collection and monitoring program to combine distinct data collection methodologies for effort and catch with a validation component.
 - Update the ACCSP Atlantic Coast MRIP Implementation Plan to better respond to regional recreational fishery needs of the Atlantic coast.

Standard Codes Committee

- Review the appropriateness of the "762 - WEEDWHACKER, SEAWEED" gear name.
- Request for the addition of a new "Length of Float Line" gear attribute for Long Line

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June 2020 Committee Newsletter

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Upcoming Events

- **June 22nd - June 25th:**
Regional calls to discuss data for-hire comprehensive plan for Atlantic Coast:
- **July 16th:**
Operations/Advisors Committee Initial Proposal Review Meeting
- **August 3-6th:**
Convene Coordinating Council during ASMFC Meeting week (online only)

Highlights

The ACCSP Data Team worked with state and federal partners to deliver the 2019 data a few days before the official deadline in April. Thank you to everyone for all of the hard work.

"Despite the difficulties associated with the COVID outbreak, ACCSP beat the data deadline for the Spring Data Load and the data are exceptionally clean."
- *Michael Lewis (NMFS Office of Science and Technology)*



Coordinating Council & Operations Committee

- A survey designed to determine our progress in achieving the long-term goals of the governance transition plan has been distributed to all Coordinating Council and Operations Committee members.
- If you have not already completed the survey, you will have recently received an email. Your time, attention, and thoughtful responses are greatly appreciated.
- Survey results will be summarized across all agencies and presented at the Coordinating Council meeting in August. Please respond to the survey by **July 15**.

Commercial Technical Committee

- The Conversion Factor small working group has submitted an initial proposal for the continued validation and development of conversion factors for priority fish and crustacean species. Species of interest include:

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- American Eel
- Blue Crab
- Snowy Grouper
- An Electronic Monitoring working group has formed in order to coordinate EM standards and protocols amongst Atlantic coastal partners. The group is comprised of state and federal experts from the commercial and for-hire sectors.

Informational Systems Committee

- Switchboard has been incorporated into SMS and is available in production. This will allow partners flexibility in turning on/off additional attributes for gears, trips, effort, catch, species, and offload properties.
- SAFIS Redesign prototype of eTRIPS/online will be presented for demo on June 30th and available Fall 2020 for testing.
- eTRIPS/mobile v2 will be available late June 2020 and will incorporate the switchboard.

Recreational Technical Committee

- Regional calls to discuss data for-hire comprehensive plan for Atlantic Coast:
 - June 22nd at 1pm – North Atlantic
 - June 23rd at 2pm – South Atlantic
 - June 25th at 1pm – Mid Atlantic
- Full committee call in mid-July (specific date TBD)
- Addressing highest priority goals of Atlantic implementation plan
 - Improving PSE of MRIP catch estimates
 - NOAA Fisheries and state partners will allocated ~1,700 additional site assignments, specifically targeting sites with more off-shore interviews to target off-shore and reef species groups
 - Advance coastwide comprehensive for-hire plan documentation for eventual submission to MRIP for certification

Standard Codes Committee

- Reviewing Fish Length Bins as Market Codes, in order to capture the necessary information for HMS discards.

Editor: Marisa Powell

Please contact us if you have any questions or feedback at info@accsp.org.

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July 2020 Committee Newsletter

This monthly newsletter is intended to keep all committee members informed of the activities and accomplishments of ACCSP committees and staff. ACCSP staff welcomes feedback on all content.

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Upcoming Events

- **August 3 (10:30AM-Noon):** Coordinating Council convenes during ASMFC Meeting week (online only)
- **Weeks of August 3rd and 25th:** Recreational Technical Committee Calls
- **See [ACCSP Calendar Link for more information](#)**

Highlights

The first half of 2020 has included many unexpected challenges. I extend my appreciation of ACCSP and Partner staff successes during these times to support each other, and maintain project schedules to the best of everyone's ability. Our combined efforts to safely continue - and improve - fisheries data collection and dissemination directly supports the ACCSP Mission.

–Geoff White



Coordinating Council & Operations Committee

- In response to the FY2021 RFP, ACCSP received 9 maintenance proposals, 6 new proposals, and one administrative proposal for a total \$3.6 million in funding request.
- On July 16, the Operations and Advisory Committee met via webinar. The committees discussed status of previous funded project expenditures, and reviewed the Preliminary Proposals for FY21 providing feedback to the primary investigators. Final proposals will be ranked in September.
- Council and Operations Committee members have responded to a survey on our progress in achieving the long-term goals of the 2017 governance transition plan. Results will be discussed during the August 3rd Coordinating Council Meeting.

Biological Review Panel

- A small group was created to finalize the Resilience Factor scores for the Biological

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finalization of this project will add a quantitative score to the resilience field of the Biological Review Panel Matrix. Adding this analysis improves the process identifying the top biological species of concern for ACCSP project funding.

Commercial Technical Committee

- An Aquaculture working group is being formed in coordination with the NOAA Office of Aquaculture. The group will be comprised of ComTech committee members, state and regional aquaculture representatives, and NOAA staff. The first step is administering a questionnaire developed by the NOAA Office of Aquaculture in order to understand current reporting requirements and compatibility with harvest/dealer modules in SAFIS.
- ACCSP staff are reviewing the Confidential Access application with developers to update and improve the user process. Per an action item from the March 2020 meeting, staff are considering a new feature to split database accounts from non-disclosure agreements, facilitating a more straightforward process for 1-time data access requests.

Informational Systems Committee

- Staff and partners have made significant progress on SAFIS eTRIPS applications to adjust to multiple partner requirements and align data collection fields and processing across ACCSP software mobile and online platforms.
- SAFIS eTRIPS/mobile v2 has undergone three 'tests in production', a new process that supports review of new features incorporating the switchboard prior to end user release. This robust testing has improved the quality of the application in development to meet partner needs. Scheduled production release date is 14-Aug-2020.
- SAFIS eTRIPS /online development to include requirements of American Lobster by Jan 2021 continues with a SAFIS Redesign prototype presented to RI and MA on June 30th. 2020 milestone dates are:
 - August 24th, 2020 – work group demo
 - October 1st, 2020 – beta testing including CARRING, e-1ticket
 - November 13th 2020 – available to all partners for testing
 - January 4th 2021 – available in production
- SAFIS electronic Dealer Reports (eDR) will undergo redesign work in 2021

Recreational Technical Committee

- Held three Atlantic regional calls the week of June 22-26 and a full committee call

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interviews conducted on offshore anglers, for all states, based on regional data needs. This addresses the 1st priority of ACCSP Atlantic Implementation Plan by increasing the overall number of interviews (sample size), the catch component of total recreational catch estimates. Targeting offshore anglers increases the likelihood of recording catch data for typically rarer offshore species groups which will ultimately increase precision of estimates for these species.

- Development of data standards for the Comprehensive For-hire Data Collection Program to address the 2nd priority of ACCSP Atlantic Implementation Plan by moving toward standard, certified for-hire logbook data collection as part of the for-hire plan.
- Discussion of COVID-19 related APAIS field procedures to minimize the impacts on recreational fishing survey dockside interviewing from Maine to Georgia. Providing a forum to discuss best practices balancing interviewer/public safety with survey conduct was useful in maintaining coastwide standards

Standard Codes Committee

- Request for new Disposition Code: "Research, sub-legal size"
- ACCSP staff are coordinating with GARFO to develop code translations which would ensure that updated VTR records could be transmitted back to ACCSP without any loss of information detail.

ACCSP Program

- Ongoing collaboration and coordination with regional partners on eVTR data collection initiatives through GARFO, SERO, and HMS.
- ACCSP passed initial FISMA approval milestone, improving internal security and formal data sharing agreements with NOAA offices. Ongoing activities include continuous monitoring and quarterly reporting to the NOAA OCIO.
- Ongoing improvements to ACCSP website content, reference documents, and calendar functionality.

Editor: Marisa Powell

Please contact us if you have any questions or feedback at info@accsp.org.



Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program Coordinating Council

August 3, 2020

PROGRAM UPDATES

(Since May 2020)

1. Budget / Funding

- ACCSP Grant status – Final year of 5 year grant (no carryover past Feb 2021)
 - 2020 budget expenditures on track
 - Contracts are more expensive than planned, leading to seeking of future external funds
- MRIP Grant status – Starting year 2 of 5
 - Some savings during waves 1-3, states now submitting invoices by wave
 - Note MRIP \$3M increase (all regions) to support increased sampling identified \$900K through ASMFC. ACCSP Recreational Technical Committee engaged on process to use funds to strategically sample to reduce PSE where can (for all species, with focus on offshore). Initial split by state completed, now working on assignment distribution by wave/mode and starting dates for W5 or W6 2020
- FIS Quality Management: Tools to Improve Data Provision for ASMFC Stock Assessments
 - Start date 6/1/2020, project initiated and transitioned to virtual meetings

2021 External Funding Proposals

- FIS proposal (submission 1) Continued Development and Enhancement to the ACCSP Online Data Query Tool and the ACCSP Assignment Tracking Application
 - FIN development \$181,500 start 4/1/2021 for 11 months
- FIS proposal (submission 2) Atlantic Coast Project Scoping for Implementation of Automated Data Auditing and Validation for Electronic Logbooks
 - Quality Management \$58,448 start 3/1/2021 for 11 months
- NFWF proposal submitted for SAFIS Helpdesk (mobile applications)
 - SAFIS mobile application support for end users \$326K start 1Jan2021 14 months

2. External Coordination

- FIS Monthly Coordination Meetings and participated in RFP proposal reviews.
- GARFO - Monthly ACCSP ⇔ GARFO coordination meetings increasing awareness of shared initiatives. One Stop Reporting (OSR) project delayed and moved virtual due to travel restrictions
- GULFFIN – Supporting their deployment of MRIP tablets and centralized database and cross-involvement on technical committees.
- MRIP Reginal Implementation Council – Supported development of MFA reports to congress, implementation plans for next year, and spend plan for increased APAIS sampling. ACCSP increased participation in MRIP Regional Communications Groups
- NEFMC, MAFMC, GARFO – Participating in outreach and training for 2021 eVTR regulations
- SAFMC – Contributed to COVID article at SAMFC; coordinated on Citizen Science projects; participated in SEDAR scheduling
- SERO - Bi-weekly ACCSP ⇔ SERO coordination meetings supporting SEFHIER development and implementation

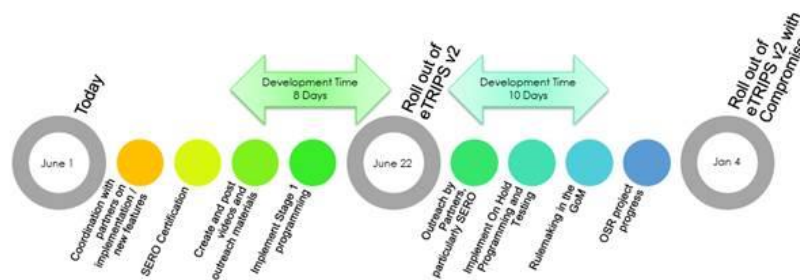
3. Staffing

- ASMFC COVID telework maintaining commitments and successful staff coordination
- Filled open positions, ACCSP currently at 14 staff:
 - Program: Geoff White, Julie Simpson, Marisa Powell
 - Data: Jennifer Ni, Joe Myers, Heather Konell, Mike Rinaldi, Lindsey Aubart
 - Rec: Alex DiJohnson, Trevor Scheffel, Sarah Hylton, (Coleby Wilt on leave)
 - Software: Karen Holmes, Nico Mwai, Ed Martino
- Held workshop to ‘Actualize MBTI’ on communication within ACCSP.
- Focused on successfully meeting external deadlines, and recognize the ongoing need to rebalance workload and timeline expectations.

ACCSP Vision: To be the principal source of fisheries-dependent information on the Atlantic coast through cooperation of all program partners

4. ACCSP Project Highlights

- Data Warehouse / Data Requests
 - Spring Data load follow-up: updated HMS Bluefin tuna data, VA merge, participant ID updates, and MRIP final 2019 data
 - Fall load schedule of 2019 data announced - target release is September 25, 2020
 - Data Requests – Participated in multiple SEDAR’s, assessment data requests, and COVID related requests for both data and contact information for surveys. ACCSP staff coordinated with partners on appropriate data for release
- FISMA
 - ACCSP granted NOAA Authority to Connect on June 9, 2020. This is a grand accomplishment for ACCSP and federal partnership completing a 2018 commitment
 - ISA agreements signed with GARFO, NEFSC, S&T, HMS, and SEFSC. SERO connection waiting on NOAA Privacy Office approval of sharing permit PII (birthdates). SERO ⇔ ACCSP staff have prepared the ISA and technical connections
 - Completed updates to internal network to improve security on-site, over VPN, and between ASMFC and ACCSP computing resources
 - Ongoing general monitoring and completion of some documentation items. This includes quarterly reports to the OCIO, and annual 3rd party audits
- MRIP
 - Coordination of sampling during COVID-19: APAIS resumed by July 1 for all but CT (Aug 1), VA (Jul 18)
 - Wave 1 data released for catch and effort, Wave 2 effort data released and ACCSP distributed by email as support and access in alignment with MRIP approach
 - State conduct of FHTS going strong. Submitted Wave 2 FHTS report (a first!)
- Outreach / Communications
 - Improvements to website pages, links, document & project postings for 2018 forward
 - Monthly ACCSP committee update email has received positive feedback
 - Integrating communications schedule with ASMFC (newsletters, notices, tweets)
- SAFIS application updates
 - Addressing alignment of ACCSP tools so that what is possible in eTRIPS/mobile is also possible in eTRIPS/online and properly connects to eDR/online & mobile. Includes complexities of multiple federal permit holders seeing the right questions and codes in all cases, and addition of HMS questions when species caught.
 - New evening testing method in production – amazing coordination and improved process to identify and quickly fix items before product release. Resulting in MAJOR benefit to partners and fishermen as better application product release.
 - SAFIS software rollout schedule
 - eTRIPS /mobile v2 for SERO/SEFSC/HMS/GARFO – August 2020
 - eTRIPS /online: modifications to allow partner elements via a ‘switchboard’
 - eTRIPS /online REDESIGN: Jan 2021 – move to very different underlying structure – allows for greater flexibility for partners to collect questions.
 - eTRIPS /mobile v2 compromise lists for multiple permit holders– January 2021
 - eDR /mobile & online will undergo further redesign work during 2021
- SEFHIER
 - GULF regulations published for January 5, 2021 for Logbooks and Hail out. Location tracking (VMS) has unknown implementation date
 - ACCSP applications and database will be ready, awaiting SERO certification
 - ACCSP coordination timeline highlights the benefits (and complexity) of an integrated program and database: coordination and lead time critical to overall success



ACCSP Vision: To be the principal source of fisheries-dependent information on the Atlantic coast through cooperation of all program partners

ATLANTIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION

2020 Action Plan



Approved October 29, 2019

Goal 3 - Produce dependable and timely marine fishery statistics for Atlantic coast fisheries

Effective management depends on quality fishery-dependent data and fishery-independent data to inform stock assessments and fisheries management decisions. While Goal 2 of this Action Plan focuses on providing sound, actionable science and fishery-independent data to support fisheries management, Goal 3 focuses on providing timely, accurate catch and effort data on Atlantic coast recreational, for-hire, and commercial fisheries.

Goal 3 seeks to accomplish this through the activities of the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP), a cooperative state-federal program that designs, implements, and conducts marine fisheries statistics data collection programs and integrates those data into data management systems that will meet the needs of fishery managers, scientists, and fishermen. ACCSP partners include the 15 Atlantic coast state fishery agencies, the three Atlantic Fishery Management Councils, the Potomac River Fisheries Commission, NOAA Fisheries, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

On a continuing basis, ACCSP will:

- Review and maintain coastwide standards for data collection and processing in cooperation with all program partners
- Provide funding to its Program Partners supporting data collection management and innovation through a competitive process
- Maintain commercial dealer reporting and commercial and for-hire fishermen catch reporting through the Standard Atlantic Fisheries Information System (SAFIS) electronic applications
- Coordinate state conduct of the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) Access Point Angler Intercept Survey (APAIS) and the For-hire survey (FHS)
- Consolidate and integrate partner data and provides user-friendly, online public and confidential access to those data via the Data Warehouse

ACCSP staff is also responsible for ensuring that all hardware and software related to ASMFC and ACCSP systems and the network components (e.g., routers, firewalls) are maintained in accordance with established processes and procedures.

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

- Monitor 2020 ACCSP funded projects, and select 2021 projects through a competitive proposal process; these years represent the first targeted reductions in funding for ongoing or maintenance projects
- Strengthen and modernize the committee process and bolster partner and advisor engagement
- Determine an alternative method for distribution and revision of Atlantic coast data standards to improve accessibility and be more responsive to partner needs
- Integrate communication strategies with ASMFC Strategic Communications Plan

FISHERIES-DEPENDENT DATA COLLECTION

SAFIS

- Extend SAFIS application capabilities to capture trip declaration reports (hailing) and vessel location data
- Continue major redesign of the SAFIS database and applications for dealer landing and harvester catch reporting (SAFIS eDR and eTrips) that includes an integrated reporting solution to streamline reporting, and reduce duplication. This will be accomplished by:
 - Develop data collection applications that allow a single submission to meet the reporting requirements of multiple partner agencies
 - Implement updated participant and permit database design
 - Coordinate implementation of trip management system with universal trip ID
 - Implement one methodology to process data entered via online, mobile, or file upload
- Support the efforts of federal and state agencies to implement mandatory electronic trip reporting, including expansion of commercial and for-hire logbooks by the regional fishery management councils, and NOAA Fisheries' regional offices and science centers

Recreational Surveys

- Implement state conduct of the MRIP FHTS from Maine to Georgia
- Expand implementation of electronic data collection for MRIP APAIS and FHTS
- Develop methodology to more fully incorporate for-hire logbooks into recreational catch statistics
- Update Atlantic Recreational Implementation Plan

DATA DISTRIBUTION AND USE

- Update Data Warehouse structures and queries to incorporate new data elements collected by partner systems
- Continue to expand Data Warehouse content including the addition of biological data module
- Implement additional processes and partner communication designed to improve data integrity

DATA INFRASTRUCTURE AND SECURITY

- Extend infrastructure to support increasing data volumes associated with partner implementation of SAFIS reporting applications
- Address security protocols as needed to comply with Federal Information Security Management Act