

Gulf of Mexico Shrimp Bycatch Data Workshop

Wednesday, July 11 2018

Galveston, Texas

Meeting Participants:

Laura Deighan, Audubon Nature Institute

Conor Donnelly, SAI Global/Global Trust

Dr. Benny Gallaway, Consultant

Gary Graham, Consultant

Dr. Rick Hart, NOAA

Aryn Keen, Big Easy Foods, Gulf of Mexico Shrimp Supply Chain Roundtable

Laura Picariello, Texas Sea Grant

Dr. Elizabeth Scott-Denton, NOAA

Megan Westmeyer, Sustainable Fisheries Partnership

John Williams, Southern Shrimp Alliance

Key Points

1. Meeting participants reached a shared understanding of the remaining barriers to full eco-certification of the US Gulf of Mexico shrimp fishery. The barriers to certification are: a) adequacy of observer coverage data with respect precision and verifiability b) lack of recent and systematic full characterization of bycatch.
2. NOAA is working on an update to Scott-Denton et al., 2012, which will publish and evaluate the observer program catch and bycatch data from 2012 to 2016. Publication is expected in 2019, and results are similar to that of the 2012 publication. This paper will provide coefficients of variation for many of the primary bycatch species and should serve as a good indicator of precision of the observer program data.
3. The Electronic Logbook (ELB) data could be used to verify the accuracy of the observer program data by comparing estimates of shrimp catch per unit effort (CPUE) from the observer program and ELB data. Dr. Gallaway offered to take the lead in publishing this data comparison; Dr. Hart and Dr. Scott-Denton agreed to support this effort.
4. Mr. Graham and Dr. Gallaway described how full bycatch characterization could be completed through a cooperative research program in which NOAA observers would bag, tag, and freeze all unidentified specimens in the basket sample from each tow and bring back to port, allowing full bycatch characterization to be completed on land. Dr. Gallaway offered to take the lead on drafting a more in-depth proposal, and investigate the possibility of applying for a Saltonstall-Kennedy grant to fund the project.

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