

1 GULF OF MEXICO FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

2
3 DATA COLLECTION COMMITTEE

4
5 Omni Houston

Houston, Texas

6
7 June 24, 2024

8
9 **VOTING MEMBERS**

10 Susan Boggs.....Alabama
11 Kesley Banks.....Texas
12 Dave Donaldson.....GSMFC
13 Jonathan Dugas.....Louisiana
14 Dakus Geeslin (designee for Robin Riechers).....Texas
15 Bob Gill.....Florida
16 Chris Schieble (designee for Ryan Montegut).....Louisiana
17 Joe Spraggins.....Mississippi
18 Andy Strelcheck.....NMFS
19 C.J. Sweetman (designee for Jessica McCawley).....Florida
20 Ed Walker.....Florida
21 Troy Williamson.....Texas

22
23 **NON-VOTING MEMBERS**

24 Kevin Anson (designee for Scott Bannon).....Alabama
25 Billy Broussard.....Louisiana
26 Dale Diaz.....Mississippi
27 Tom Frazer.....Florida
28 Lt. Carl Fuhs.....USCG
29 Michael McDermott.....Mississippi
30 Anthony Overton.....Alabama

31
32 **STAFF**

33 Max Birdsong.....Social Scientist
34 Assane Diagne.....Economist
35 Matt Freeman.....Economist
36 John Froeschke.....Deputy Director
37 Beth Hager.....Administrative Officer
38 Lisa Hollensead.....Fishery Biologist
39 Mara Levy.....NOAA General Counsel
40 Emily Muehlstein.....Public Information Officer
41 Ryan Rindone.....Lead Fishery Biologist/SEDAR Liaison
42 Bernadine Roy.....Office Manager
43 Carrie Simmons.....Executive Director
44 Camilla Shireman.....Administrative & Communications Assistant
45 Verena Wang.....Fishery Biologist

46
47 **OTHER PARTICIPANTS**

48 Richard Cody.....OST
49 Tim Griner.....SAFMC

1 Frank Helies.....NOAA
2 Anna Kersting.....NOAA
3 Christopher Liese.....SEFSC
4 Dominique Lazarre.....NOAA
5 Jack McGovern.....NOAA
6 John Walter.....SEFSC

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PAGE 8: Motion to recommend that the need for this action be to improve management and monitoring of the federally-permitted for-hire and headboat component of the recreational sector of Gulf reef fish and CMP fisheries to prevent overfishing while achieving, on a continual basis, the optimum yield. The motion carried on page 14.

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1 The Data Collection Committee of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery
2 Management Council convened at The Omni Houston in Houston,
3 Texas on Monday morning, June 24, 2024, and was called to order
4 by Chairman Susan Boggs.

5
6 **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**
7 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
8 **ACTION GUIDE AND NEXT STEPS**
9

10 **CHAIRMAN SUSAN BOGGS:** I would like to call the Data Collection
11 Committee to order. The committee members are myself, Susan
12 Boggs, as chair, Captain Ed Walker as vice chair, Kesley Banks,
13 Dave Donaldson, J.D. Dugas, Bob Gill, Dr. C.J. Sweetman, Mr.
14 Schieble, Dakus Geeslin, General Spraggins, Frank, and I don't
15 know how to say Frank's last name, and I'm sorry, and Troy
16 Williamson. The first item on the agenda is the Adoption of the
17 Agenda.

18
19 **MR. BOB GILL:** So moved, Madam Chair.

20
21 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Thank you, Mr. Gill. Do I have a second? Mr.
22 Schieble. Thank you. The second agenda item is the Approval of
23 the 2024 Minutes.

24
25 **MR. GILL:** So moved, Madam Chair.

26
27 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Thank you, Mr. Gill.

28
29 **MR. DAVE DONALDSON:** Second.

30
31 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** It's seconded by Dave Donaldson. The next item
32 is the Action Guide and Next Steps, and I am going to let Dr.
33 Hollensead lead us through that.

34
35 **DISCUSSION OF THE FOR-HIRE DATA COLLECTION PROGRAM**
36 **DRAFT AMENDMENT**
37

38 **DR. LISA HOLLENSHAD:** Thank you, Madam Chair. The first agenda
39 item we have is Discussion of the For-Hire Data Collection
40 Program. Within this agenda item, there's sort of four little
41 sub-bullets that I just want to draw everybody's attention to.

42
43 The first is that there has been some changes to the document,
44 and the latest revision is available in the briefing book
45 materials. There has been some additions to the introduction,
46 which is in the analysis summarizing some sector-specific
47 landings, to give a bit of context of how the for-hire industry
48 operates in the Gulf, and so that wasn't in the original

1 document, and that has now been included. There's also a little
2 bit of analysis for that in the new Appendix A that you can
3 review for your notes.

4
5 Additionally, in Action 3, there was a request to include an
6 alternative for submitting a trip declaration for trips engaging
7 in any fishing activity, and so that was added. If you recall,
8 there was the no action alternative, which would have been no
9 trip declaration, and then the second alternative outlined a
10 trip declaration for charter activity, and so that has now been
11 added, and so those are some of the things that have been
12 revised in the document.

13
14 Getting to the second sort of point of order here, the big one
15 is there has now been an additional Action 4 included, and so
16 this one is the one which is going to probably be the major
17 talking point for this agenda item, and so we'll make sure that
18 we get some time for that, and so this one includes the
19 consideration of collection of economic data within the program,
20 and, when we get to that portion, I'm going to pass it off to
21 Dr. Diagne, and he will go through that with you all.

22
23 Dr. Christopher Liese is also online. If you recall, at our
24 last meeting, he provided a presentation, and gave some context
25 for that, and so he's also online to answer questions and
26 provide a little background. He is from the Southeast Fisheries
27 Science Center.

28
29 The third note here is that we also would like to -- Staff would
30 like to briefly speak about what Atlantic HMS, Highly Migratory
31 Species, is proposing for their electronic reporting program, in
32 terms of their economic data collection. If you recall, one of
33 the broader objectives is to sort of look at one-stop reporting
34 across these programs, and so we thought we would bring in a
35 little bit of information about what HMS is sort of proposing,
36 what they're also considering. Dr. Banks attended a recent HMS
37 AP meeting, and so she can help provide some context on those
38 discussions for that.

39
40 Then the last sort of activity here, underneath Agenda Item IV,
41 is staff would request any guidance that the committee has for
42 next steps for this document, what you would like to see over
43 the next coming meetings. If at any point there might be
44 something that we need to deliberate on, we might bring
45 something back in November, depending on what that might be, and
46 certainly, with the discussions happening today, we'll probably
47 get a little more clarity as to what that might look like, but I
48 would just request that of the committee, if there's any

1 guidance for next steps, and that would be appreciated by staff.
2 If there's no questions about that, I would move to the
3 document.

4
5 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** I do have one question, and I know this is
6 going to be premature, but do we have any timeline of when this
7 council is looking to take this document final? I mean, I know
8 that's kind of a broad swipe, considering all the questions on
9 the table today, but has there been any consideration? I mean,
10 I don't think I've asked the question, since we've started this,
11 and time is of the essence, and so, as not to prolong this
12 document, and I guess maybe I shouldn't be asking the question,
13 and I should be making the statement that I encourage this
14 council to move this document along, and not drag it along,
15 because the charter-for-hire fleet wants this document, and we
16 don't need to be getting hung up.

17
18 It's not going to be a perfect document, and we're going to have
19 winners, and we're going to have losers, but we need to get
20 something moving with this document, sooner than later.
21 Proceed, Dr. Hollensead.

22
23 **DR. HOLLENSEAD:** Okay. Bernie, if you wouldn't mind pulling up
24 the document for me, please. Again, I'm just going to briefly
25 touch on some of the items that have been included in the
26 document that are not pertinent to the new Action 4 just yet,
27 but just to bring note to them. Bernie, if you wouldn't mind
28 jumping to Table 1.1.1.

29
30 Again, I mentioned that there's been an analysis added to the
31 document that looks at -- It just provides some context, some
32 landings for the for-hire industry within the Gulf, and there's
33 also an Appendix A that has now been added that gives some of
34 the background information, and so I just wanted to point that
35 out, that that's been included. Bernie, if you wouldn't mind
36 then scrolling down to the purpose and need.

37
38 The purpose and need hasn't been changed very much, but I
39 certainly just wanted to touch on this, if anybody had any
40 questions, or any recommendations on this, and we would
41 certainly take it to the IPT and consider it. You know, as we
42 build-out the document, it's likely this might be, you know,
43 slightly amended, depending on what is added, and so just to let
44 you know that it may be revised, as the document continues to be
45 built-out, but I wanted to provide an opportunity now, if
46 anybody on the committee had any questions or recommendations.

47
48 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Mr. Gill.

1
2 **MR. GILL:** Thank you, Madam Chair, and so my question is the
3 last part, the need, and it says to prevent overfishing, and
4 that is, in my mind, not what the need is. The need is to
5 achieve optimum yield and maximize the benefits to the nation,
6 and so that's my suggestion. Thank you, Madam Chair.
7
8 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Thank you for your comments, Mr. Gill, and I do
9 agree with that. I mean, I don't think -- I mean, I think this
10 will assist in trying to prevent overfishing, and I don't think
11 it's going to prevent overfishing. It's a means to an end, if
12 you will, and so, if you would like to offer some language
13 change, I would certainly be amendable to that, or if you would
14 like to wait until Full Council, but I do like -- I do like your
15 comments.
16
17 **MR. GILL:** I would be happy to give a whack at it, Madam Chair.
18
19 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Please do.
20
21 **MR. GILL:** So replace -- In the need, replace "to prevent
22 overfishing" with "to achieve -- I will wait until Bernie
23 catches up.
24
25 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Go ahead, Mr. Gill.
26
27 **MR. GILL:** Thank you, Madam Chair. My motion is to replace "to
28 prevent overfishing", in the need, with "to achieve optimum
29 yield and maximize benefits to the nation".
30
31 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Are those your changes, Mr. Gill? Is that what
32 you wanted to see, Mr. Gill?
33
34 **MR. GILL:** Yes, Madam Chair.
35
36 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** All right. Is there a second to the motion?
37
38 **MR. ED WALKER:** Second.
39
40 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** All right. Captain Walker. Dr. Frazer.
41
42 **DR. TOM FRAZER:** Thank you, Madam Chair, and so I appreciate
43 Bob's comments, but, you know, I think, if you go back to the
44 National Standards, there are both of those component parts
45 there, right, and so I think you actually want to prevent
46 overfishing while maximizing, or optimizing, the yield, and so I
47 would suggest perhaps, Bob, if you're amenable, to wordsmithing
48 it in a way that keeps both of those, to be consistent with the

1 National Standard Guidelines.

2
3 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** So, Mr. Gill, if you did -- If we said, "CMP
4 fisheries to achieve optimum yield and maximize benefits for the
5 nation to prevent overfishing"? I don't know how you would --
6 Dr. Frazer is assisting. One moment. Mara.

7
8 **MS. MARA LEVY:** So a couple of comments. I do agree with Tom
9 that taking out preventing overfishing and putting in optimum
10 yield -- I mean, they're both components of National Standard 1,
11 also noting that optimum yield includes not maximizing benefits,
12 because I'm not sure we can necessarily do that, but it includes
13 providing the greatest overall benefit to the nation, and so
14 that's included in optimum, and so it's sort of redundant to say
15 that, and I also wouldn't use the term "maximize".

16
17 I guess I didn't really think about this too much before, but
18 improving the management of the for-hire component isn't
19 necessarily, on its own, going to achieve optimum yield and
20 prevent overfishing, but that will assist in that endeavor,
21 right, and I think that's kind of what you were getting at, and
22 so I don't know if we want to say, you know, to -- I don't know,
23 and I don't want to use the word "help", because that's not the
24 word I would use, but that kind of word, right, to help achieve
25 optimum yield and prevent overfishing, right, because it's a
26 component of that.

27
28 I'm just throwing all that out there, because I don't really
29 like the edit as it is, but I haven't really thought about how
30 to change it specifically.

31
32 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Dr. Frazer.

33
34 **DR. FRAZER:** Well, I mean, I will just read directly from the
35 standard, and it says "shall prevent overfishing while
36 achieving, on a continuing basis, the optimum yield from each
37 fishery".

38
39 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Is it as simple as just plugging that language
40 in there?

41
42 **DR. FRAZER:** That would be my suggestion, if the motion maker is
43 willing to accept it.

44
45 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** I might add that you're not on this committee,
46 but thank you for the guidance here, Dr. Frazer. Mr. Gill and
47 then Captain Walker.

1 **MR. GILL:** I'm amenable to changes, and I would like to see what
2 Dr. Frazer would like to suggest. I think the objective here is
3 to be more inclusive than just overfishing, is where I was
4 coming from, and however we achieve that I think is a step in
5 the right direction.

6

7 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Dr. Frazer.

8

9 **DR. FRAZER:** So I would say, where it says "and CMP fisheries",
10 I would say "to prevent overfishing while achieving, on a
11 continuing basis, the optimum yield for each fishery". That's
12 directly from the National Standard.

13

14 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Ms. Levy.

15

16 **MS. LEVY:** I guess I would delete the "for each fishery". I
17 mean, we're talking about the Gulf reef fish fishery, and so
18 it's evident that that's what we're talking about, and I'm also
19 going to think about maybe trying to put some like to assist in
20 doing this language, as opposed to accomplishing it all on its
21 own, because it's only a little piece of all of the things that
22 we're doing.

23

24 **DR. FRAZER:** Fair deal.

25

26 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Mr. Gill and Captain Walker, and, of course, we
27 can come back to this at Full Council, if we want to pass it as
28 it is, and then we can discuss it again, but, Mr. Gill, you were
29 the motion maker.

30

31 **MR. GILL:** That's fine by me.

32

33 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** All right, and Captain Walker gives a thumbs-
34 up, and so we have a motion on the board. Any more discussion?
35 I will read the motion. **The motion is to amend the need as**
36 **follows: the need for this action is to improve management and**
37 **monitoring of the federally-permitted for-hire and headboat**
38 **component of the recreational sector of Gulf reef fish and CMP**
39 **fisheries to prevent overfishing while achieving, on a continual**
40 **basis, the optimum yield.** Ms. Levy.

41

42 **MS. LEVY:** I apologize in advance. I did not have time to look
43 at this before the council meeting, and so now I'm looking at it
44 more closely. It says the federally-permitted for-hire and
45 headboat component, and so the headboats are part of the for-
46 hire component, and so I guess my suggestion would be to just
47 delete "and headboat". It's for the federally-permitted for-
48 hire component.

1
2 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** So, if I'm not mistaken, throughout this entire
3 document, we parse out for-hire and headboat, and I think it's
4 important that we do that, because, in my opinion, they are kind
5 of two separate animals, and so, if we do that here, are we
6 going to have to -- Of course, the purpose states the federally-
7 permitted for-hire vessels. I mean, is that going to affect the
8 rest of the document?

9
10 **MS. LEVY:** I think we parse it out between charter and headboat,
11 with headboats being those that are in the headboat reporting
12 system. It's not for-hire and headboat. It's charter and
13 headboat, and they're all for-hire.

14
15 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Well, understood, and I'm just making sure, and
16 so, under the purpose, we refer to the federally-permitted for-
17 hire vessels, and so, in this case, we need to say "for the
18 federally-permitted for-hire vessels", and take out "and
19 headboat"?

20
21 **MS. LEVY:** I mean, you could, but, I mean, it says "component",
22 instead of "vessels", right, because, when we broke out the
23 private anglers and the for-hire, we had a private angling
24 component and a for-hire component, and so it's all just like
25 the language, but maybe, to be consistent, it should be for-hire
26 component, up top, or for-hire vessels down here, and you might
27 want to use consistent language. Either choose component or
28 vessels.

29
30 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Captain Walker.

31
32 **MR. WALKER:** I would agree with you, Ms. Boggs. I think we
33 should keep it as-is, because, to a lot of us, for-hire means
34 the smaller, non-headboat, and maybe it's inaccurate, but I'm a
35 for-hire guy, and I'm used to seeing things, you know, divided
36 up for-hire and headboat, and so I'm okay leaving it as-is,
37 because I think there might be some discrepancy, if you just
38 leave for-hire, and some people might say, well, what about the
39 headboats, because they're often referred to separately, and so
40 I don't know that for-hire, in my mind, necessarily includes
41 headboats, and I understand that it does here, but I think we
42 should leave it in, just for clarification.

43
44 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Okay. I see lots of hands, and I'm going to
45 get to you all in just a minute, because I'm going to comment to
46 Ed's comments. That's the thing, and so, I mean, if we leave it
47 that way in the need, do we need to change it in the purpose,
48 because you're using two different languages, if you will, and

1 we're not using common currency, my new favorite term, and so --
2 As far as this body, I think we understand what "permitted for-
3 hire vessels" is. If the general public is reading this, they
4 get confused, because we own a six-passenger boat, and we own a
5 forty-nine-passenger vessel, and people will say, as Ed pointed
6 out, that I don't want to go on that headboat, and I want to go
7 on a charter boat. Well, it's the same darned thing, but it's
8 just the public doesn't understand that.

9
10 I'm going to look to staff, and what do you want it to say, or
11 Mara, where it's more clear, and then I will get to the other
12 folks that want to comment. Ms. Levy.

13
14 **MS. LEVY:** Okay, and so I will just note that, on page -- Right
15 in the background, it's page 6, and the recreational -- This
16 amendment affects reporting requirements for vessels issued the
17 federal Gulf of Mexico charter vessel/headboat (for-hire
18 component) permits. We have defined it as the vessels that have
19 those permits, which is all of -- Whether you call them charter
20 vessels or headboats, it's the for-hire permit that they have,
21 and so we've already defined it.

22
23 If you want to be super clear in the purpose and need, then
24 refer back to the permit, right, and so it's for vessels issued
25 the Gulf of Mexico charter vessel headboat permit, and that's
26 everybody, but I would not say "for-hire and headboat", because
27 the headboats are in the for-hire, and that's how we've defined
28 them throughout all of this discussion, when we did sector
29 separation, and they've always been part of the for-hire sector.

30
31 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Okay. I'm going to ask Bernie to find that
32 language, but then, while she's looking for that, and Dr.
33 Hollensead can assist, I'm going to go Dr. Banks and then Dr.
34 McGovern.

35
36 **DR. KESLEY BANKS:** Thank you, Madam Chair. In the purpose, we
37 say fishing effort data from federally-permitted charter vessels
38 and headboats in the for-hire component, and can we not just use
39 that language, and then you would say both the charter guys and
40 the headboat guys, and we already have it in the purpose
41 statement.

42
43 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** We just need to be consistent, and so however
44 we decide to be consistent. Mr. McGovern.

45
46 **DR. JACK MCGOVERN:** My suggestion was going to be along the
47 lines of Mara's, where we just throw, into the purpose and need,
48 the word "charter", and you could say "for-hire

1 charter/headboat", or "charter and headboat", and then that gets
2 both of those in there.

3

4 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Captain Walker.

5

6 **MR. WALKER:** I agree. I think it does show up as for
7 hire/charter pretty regularly, and so, if that's the way it's
8 often referred to, then I think that would be a good way to do
9 it, and it's just changing the "and" to a "/" I think, to make
10 it consistent.

11

12 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Okay. We've been around the world. Mr. Dugas.

13

14 **MR. J.D. DUGAS:** Why would we not use the language from the
15 original SEFHIER document?

16

17 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Why don't we just bring the SEFHIER document
18 back and just do something different than VMS? To me, it's that
19 simple, but here we are. I'm going to look to Dr. Hollensead,
20 because I think what this has brought up is you have the charter
21 vessel and headboat for-hire component permits, and you've got
22 charter vessel -- I mean, it's all -- It's different, and do we
23 need to be consistent within the document, Dr. Hollensead?

24

25 **DR. HOLLENSEAD:** The short answer is yes. Then, to Mr. Dugas'
26 point, this language here did come from the original SEFHIER
27 document, and so it may be that, as we've built this out,
28 there's been some changes, through -- As people have added
29 things, and things have come through, and sections have been
30 worked on, and so, as an IPT, we can certainly make sure that we
31 go through and that everything is consistent, and we can make a
32 point to do that.

33

34 Certainly we'll have to make sure that's what in the purpose and
35 what's in the need is consistent as well, and so we can
36 definitely do that, and the IPT can take that recommendation and
37 certainly work that through the document.

38

39 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** So okay, and we've got to get back to -- Please
40 leave this up for just a minute. Mr. Gill, what would you like
41 to do? We have this motion on the board, and do we want to look
42 at the entire purpose and need, because now we're trying to be
43 consistent with the language, or what is your pleasure, sir?

44

45 **MR. GILL:** I believe we should address the motion on the table
46 and then proceed from there.

47

48 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Sounds good. I'm not going to read the motion

1 again. We have a motion on the table. I'm going to go this
2 route. **Is there any opposition to the motion? Seeing none --**
3 Dr. Simmons.

4
5 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CARRIE SIMMONS:** I was just going to suggest
6 to put "charter vessels" in there, so that you could be done
7 with this.

8
9 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Well, the motion maker asked that we dispense
10 with this motion, and so, again, any opposition to this motion?
11 Seeing none, the motion passes.

12
13 So I don't know, Dr. Hollensead, if you need another motion.
14 Bernie, could you go back to that other language? I'm sorry,
15 but I think what we need to do, in the purpose and need, is, in
16 the very first sentence, and, if you want this in the form of a
17 motion, but the purpose of this amendment is to improve the
18 accuracy, precision, and timeliness in landings, discards, and
19 fishing effort data from -- Bring the language back, Bernie.

20
21 I am trying to talk my way through this and make sure that Dr.
22 Hollensead and I are on the same -- After it says "fishing
23 effort data", and then you take this language from "for fishing
24 effort data for vessels issued federal Gulf of Mexico" -- I
25 can't read it. I'm at an angle. "Gulf of Mexico charter
26 vessel/headboat (for hire component) permits" -- Take all that
27 language and put it in the purpose and need, so it's consistent.
28 Dr. Simmons, you're shaking your head. Dr. Sweetman. Okay.
29 We'll start with Dr. Sweetman.

30
31 **DR. C. J. SWEETMAN:** Thank you, Madam Chair, and so I'm just
32 wondering -- I mean, I feel like we kind of know where we want
33 to go with this here, just to make these statements consistent,
34 and I'm wondering if there's enough direction and the IPT can
35 look at this and try and clarify this.

36
37 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Well, that's where I was going. I was trying
38 to give my suggestion of how we should word it. We need to
39 basically take this language, and put it in the purpose, and
40 probably use the same language in the need.

41
42 **DR. HOLLENSEAD:** Yes, ma'am, and the IPT can make sure that's
43 get done. I can report back what the discussions of the
44 committee are and make sure that that is the case throughout.

45
46 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Okay. I don't want anybody else to be any more
47 confused than we are. Dr. Hollensead, please proceed, I think.

48

1 **DR. HOLLENSHAD:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Bernie, if you
2 wouldn't mind going to Action 3 for me, please. I had mentioned
3 before, when going through the action guide, that Actions 1 and
4 2 have remained the same, in this revision, from what you saw
5 the last time, but, in Action 3, there is this additional
6 alternative that was requested at the last meeting to include,
7 as well as looking through and writing up some of the discussion
8 to compare these various alternatives.

9
10 Alternatives 1 and 2 were what was reflected in the trip
11 declaration framework action. If you will recall, that was
12 passed by the council just before the rule came about to set
13 aside the program, but there was the recommendation to pull in
14 another alternative that would look at submitting a trip
15 declaration just for the purpose of engaging in fishing
16 activity, and so that has been included, and so I just wanted to
17 make the committee aware that that language had been added.

18
19 If there's no questions of that, I would then pass it off to Dr.
20 Diagne to go through Action 4, which is the consideration of
21 collecting economic data.

22
23 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Dr. Diagne.

24
25 **DR. ASSANE DIAGNE:** Thank you, Madam Chair, and, as Lisa
26 mentioned in the beginning, Dr. Liese is on the line, from the
27 Science Center, to answer questions, if need be. Action 4
28 considers the establishment of reporting for economic data for
29 for-hire vessels, and, in short, I will just say for-hire
30 vessels, and, of course, that includes charter and headboat.

31
32 We have here three alternatives. The status quo, or no action,
33 alternative would mention that, currently, there are no
34 requirements for the reporting of economic data for federally-
35 permitted for-hire vessels, and so that would continue then, and
36 we won't be able to collect the data needed for the analysis,
37 should we stick with the no-action alternative.

38
39 Before I go in detail in Alternatives 2 and 3, I will mention
40 that, for the development of this action, not only did we have
41 IPT meetings to discuss this, but, as a follow-up, we had a
42 subset of the IPT, and that subset included the economists,
43 quote, unquote, and so the Science Center economists, SERO
44 economists, as well as council economists, and so it is after
45 those discussions that we came up with these alternatives.

46
47 Alternative 2 essentially would require all permitted for-hire
48 operators, in short, to report the economic data, and so, in

1 essence, it is going to be a census then. Everybody would have
2 to report on all the trips. The third alternative, which would
3 have options, would essentially select a sample of trips,
4 because the unit of measurement here that matters really is the
5 trip, right, and so we have options for different sample sizes,
6 ranging from up to one in two trips, meaning a sample size of 50
7 percent of the population, to Option d, which would sample one
8 in five trips, meaning a sample size of 20 percent, and we have,
9 in between, one in three, 33 percent, as well as one in four, 25
10 percent, essentially to give enough flexibility, you know, for
11 your consideration here.

12
13 These are the different sample sizes that we have, and so just a
14 word about the Options a, b, c, and d. In general, in general,
15 essentially, other things equal, and not to get into that, the
16 smaller the sample size, well, the larger, or the wider, your
17 confidence interval is going to be, meaning the less precise the
18 estimate is going to be, just to stop there, and so, in thinking
19 about options, that is something to consider.

20
21 Another element, perhaps, to consider is, depending on your
22 interest, and, by that, I mean the subpopulation in which you
23 are interested, the sample size may be smaller or wider, and
24 what I mean by that is, if our interest is limited to, for
25 example, red snapper trips, we know that there is an abundance
26 of red snapper trips, and so, by and large, a smaller sample
27 size would be able to cover and give us enough information to
28 generate, you know, the estimates that are needed, but now, as
29 we move away from red snapper, and, for example, think about
30 species that are less prevalent, and, if our interest is in
31 those, then, obviously, to achieve the same level of precision,
32 you would have to think about the wider sample size.

33
34 To the extent that, in general, for our management alternatives,
35 we deal with trips that are very prevalent, and, for example, if
36 we said a red snapper target trip, or even a red snapper trip in
37 Florida, but we also deal with more -- How would I say this?
38 Niche, quote, unquote, type of trips, and let's say the number
39 of cobia target trips in a particular area, which would require
40 a larger sample size, and so, essentially, we would have to
41 balance those.

42
43 At the end of the day, when making your decision, on one side,
44 we have the burden to be imposed on the industry, essentially,
45 burden hours, or reporting hours, and privacy considerations,
46 and, on the other side, the level of precision that we may want
47 to achieve, especially when we are looking at some of those more
48 niche trips, and so I'm going to stop here for now, and, before

1 I turn it over to you, I will ask Christopher if he has anything
2 to add to the presentation of the alternatives.

3

4 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Dr. Liese, are you on the line?

5

6 **DR. CHRISTOPHER LIESE:** I think, Assane, that all sounded good.

7

8 **DR. DIAGNE:** Okay, and so then I guess you will answer the
9 committee's questions, should they have any.

10

11 **DR. LIESE:** Okay.

12

13 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Okay. I see a couple of hands. I'm just going
14 down the table. Captain Walker and then Mr. Gill and then Mr.
15 Anson.

16

17 **MR. WALKER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. At the last meeting, we
18 had an hours-long discussion on this from the economists, and I
19 thought that, at least personally, we had come to a 10 percent -
20 - Call it a compromise, if you will, and, if I'm not mistaken,
21 the economists had said that would provide them sufficient
22 information, acceptable, and, to me, as not a fan of economic
23 data reporting, and recognizing this is part of what tanked the
24 program in the first place, I had kind of come around on 10
25 percent.

26

27 We get to this meeting, and the numbers have changed from --
28 Granted, the lower one is up to 20 percent, and I was just
29 informed of that last night, but up to 50 percent already,
30 without discussion, and I would just point out that this is the
31 other thing that got us in trouble last time, was adding things
32 to the program that weren't originally agreed upon, and, to me,
33 this just looks like here we go again.

34

35 We talked about 10 percent last time, and it's this tug between
36 charter fishermen and economists. Each side wants something
37 completely different here, and we're pulling back and forth, and
38 so I -- I am a fan of 10 percent, and I'm going to need to be
39 convinced, with significant convincing, to go anywhere else.

40

41 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Well, and I did read the minutes, since I was
42 not in attendance, and I understood 20 percent, at a minimal, to
43 achieve what the economists needed. Mr. Gill.

44

45 **MR. GILL:** Thank you, Madam Chair, and so my thinking is similar
46 to Ed's, and my question is that Option d, in the write-up and
47 discussion, is considered -- It might be too large of a margin
48 of error to draw valid inferences, and therefore not used, and

1 so the issue for this, to me, is we need to require at least the
2 minimum that's usable. There is no sense in collecting all this
3 information and then it's not used to help the fishery going
4 forward.

5
6 Now, Ed's recollection is at odds with Option d and the
7 discussion comment, and so my question is what is the minimum
8 needed to be reasonably expected to be useful for future
9 management considerations?

10
11 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Dr. Liese, to that point?

12
13 **DR. LIESE:** It depends on -- As Assane said, it's -- For the
14 frequent trips, target trips, or catch trips, like red snapper
15 and, you know, trips where there's just -- Like in Florida,
16 where there is a lot of trips, and we can get pretty good
17 estimates from even a 10 percent sample. As we go -- As you
18 want more -- You know, since most of the fishery management is
19 single species, if you want triggerfish, or if you want lane
20 snapper, or these type of species, it gets harder to do that
21 with 20 percent.

22
23 Now, obviously, if you go to the very-rarely-caught fish, like
24 cobia or others, then you -- You know, even a 20 percent sample
25 is going to be a problem. You know, it's not going to give -- I
26 mean, the truth is the confidence interval of your results gets
27 wider and wider with time. Now, it's -- All of that is better
28 than no data, and so, you know, I personally -- It really
29 depends on what you want.

30
31 I mean, the Science Center position, I believe, would be that,
32 ideally, we would not have a strict limit at all on this sample
33 size, but we get to decide that in order to provide you with
34 scientifically-valid data, as needed, and, you know, we do a
35 little bit of that in the commercial sector, where, for certain
36 permits, we oversample in certain years, because there are so
37 few of those permits, for instance the black sea bass pot
38 endorsements, and I think there's thirty of those, or twenty of
39 those, and then not even all are active, and so, if we randomly
40 sample at 20 percent, we get two, three, four, five, six a year,
41 and that's hard to make any decent sort of --

42
43 To provide you results with, or the fishery management process,
44 and so we've started oversampling them in certain years, so
45 that, in that one year, we try to get basically a sense of those
46 vessels, and, of course, there's always data loss anyway, but,
47 you know, the idea is that we can still provide good science, if
48 we oversample those occasionally, and we won't do that, you

1 know, but every five or ten years, or, if someone tells us in
2 advance that we need certain -- You know, that species will be
3 coming up to the council, and we can try to do it, though our
4 lead time is always two years, probably, between, you know,
5 wanting to collect it and then actually having collected the
6 data.

7
8 There is no absolute minimum size. If you ask me what I'm
9 willing to take, I would say anything is better than the status
10 quo, getting any -- You know, even 5 percent is good, because
11 it's a large population, but, ideally, we would have
12 flexibility, which is partly why we added the up to 20 percent,
13 and I don't know if the council could phrase it -- I mean, we
14 don't -- My take is we never want to sample more than we need
15 to, because, you know, we want to reduce burden hours, but
16 that's the problem.

17
18 The truth of the matter is that it's not always easy. In the
19 for-hire sector, we haven't really explored yet, and there are
20 no sub-permits that one would oversample, and so it's not -- You
21 know, if you wanted to have good data on triggerfish target
22 trips, there is no triggerfish permit that we could oversample,
23 and so then it gets much more complicated. You could take
24 vessels that historically caught that, and oversample those,
25 and, again, that's where a flat 20 percent would probably
26 provide us with pretty decent data across-the-board for all
27 requests.

28
29 One other way to solve small sample size is if -- You know,
30 we've occasionally done that on shrimp, and I think it was on
31 royal reds, and maybe rock shrimp in the past, where there is
32 very few vessels that actively harvest the fish, or the shrimp,
33 and we would then actually combine four years, or five years, of
34 econ data.

35
36 Now, that's always a little risky, because prices change, but,
37 again, in the absence of anything else, that's the best
38 available data we had, because we have not oversampled those
39 fleets at those times, and so I can't give you a strict answer,
40 and 20 percent would be nice. 10 percent could work, and, you
41 know, I don't think it's worth sampling at 50 percent. You
42 know, if you wanted absolute good data on everything, then we
43 would need a census. Thanks.

44
45 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** To that point, because I've got several people.
46 Captain Walker.

47
48 **MR. WALKER:** I'm glad that you pointed that out, Dr. Liese. I

1 was going to also point out that there's no way to randomly
2 survey by species, and so, by your justification here, the more
3 rare species would force us to do a higher percentage of
4 sampling, because they're all included together anyway, but you
5 did mention that, and I appreciate that, but, again, to me, it's
6 -- You know, we mentioned that last time, and this is a creep-up
7 again, and, you know, this is the kind of thing we could get
8 hung up on in the SEFHIER program, and I can tell you, for
9 certain, the charter fleet does not want to get hung up on
10 getting the SEFHIER program up and running again, and so I don't
11 know, and that's my comment there.

12

13 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Mr. Gill.

14

15 **MR. GILL:** I will pass, Madam Chair.

16

17 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Mr. Anson.

18

19 **MR. KEVIN ANSON:** Maybe a point of clarity, I guess, here, but
20 you talk about vessels, in the Alternative 3, in the option, but
21 then the Option a, the sub-options there, you have trips, and so
22 I'm just wondering if it shouldn't say vessels, instead of
23 trips, because it's different if you're trying to randomly
24 select trips, versus randomly selecting vessels, and so I'm just
25 wondering if that's in fact the case, if you're actually
26 randomly selecting a vessel that would be reporting over a
27 certain time period and not the number of trips that that
28 particular vessel may take, because you may encounter a vessel
29 that takes trips every day of the week, and then you're talking
30 about sampling 50 percent of those trips, versus just sampling
31 the vessel and all the trips they may take, and so just I have a
32 question about that.

33

34 **DR. DIAGNE:** This unit of measurement, when you're looking at
35 Alternative 3, those are the trips. Let's say, if we take
36 Option a, every other trip would be sampled, and so we would
37 collect those three variables, the trip fee, the fuel used, as
38 well as the price of fuel per gallon.

39

40 **MR. ANSON:** So just if I can follow-up, Madam Chair?

41

42 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Yes.

43

44 **DR. LIESE:** If I could just jump in there, and so, I mean,
45 coming up with a good sampling design for a survey is more
46 complicated than just deciding sort of that random sample
47 percentage that you want to sample. You know, strictly
48 speaking, if it was technologically feasible, then randomly

1 sampling trips would be the best, because then we would have
2 sort of a large sample size.

3
4 In the paper logbooks of the commercial logbooks, we've never
5 been able to do that, because we send out the logbooks before
6 the year starts, and so we have to sample vessels before the
7 year, and, with what I've heard so far, from the technical
8 perspective of programming the app, right now, people feel that
9 we will not be able to randomly sample trips, because that would
10 mean that the app itself would have to have a little code that
11 randomly assigns this trip to certain questions, or not, or
12 assigns questions to that trip, if the random number generator
13 is over say 80 percent, or something like that, but, if that's
14 not feasible, then our only alternative is to do what we've done
15 before, which is we sample vessels, but the goal of that vessel
16 sampling is to sample trips.

17
18 The way -- You mentioned the idea that certain vessels are very
19 active, and others are not active, and the way we go about that,
20 if we sample vessels, would be that we stratify the sample.
21 Sort of what we've done in the commercial sector is we look at
22 the historic activity level of these vessels, for the last two
23 years, and we look at the days-at-sea, in order to combine the
24 short trips and --

25
26 For commercial trips, some are longer, and some are shorter, and
27 so they don't do trips, but days-at-sea, and then we basically
28 stratify all the vessels by -- All the permitted vessels by
29 those that are not active, those that have been active in the
30 last two years, less than twenty days per year, and then those
31 which have broken the twenty days in either of the two years,
32 and so we have like the highliners, very active, somewhat
33 active, and not active.

34
35 Then we sample in each of those, in order to get an overall 20
36 percent sample. You know, otherwise, the random sample of 20
37 percent might just get us inactive vessels, and then we're far
38 below 20 percent, and so the stratification is a way to achieve
39 that. It does make the analysis a little bit more complicated
40 afterwards. Does that answer your question?

41
42 So, ideally, we would not specify any of these things in detail,
43 because things change, and different focuses are set, and so
44 having some flexibility, at the Science Center level, to adjust
45 the sampling design, to achieve our aims, that is helpful.

46
47 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Okay. Mr. Anson, and then I want to comment,
48 and then I'll go to -- Where did Jack go?

1
2 **MR. ANSON:** Dr. Liese, your desire for flexibility and my desire
3 for greater clarity, and interpretation of what's to be expected
4 of the participating vessels, may not come to be, or we may not
5 get there, but that was my intent, was to make this clear as to
6 what it is that we would be receiving, I guess, and what it is
7 that the captains would be providing, and so, again, a captain -
8 - You know, a captain that makes a lot of trips, 50 percent of
9 trips, there's going to be a lot of reporting, and, for a
10 captain that doesn't make a lot of trips, then there won't be a
11 lot of reporting, I guess is what I was getting at, and so
12 that's all. Thank you.

13
14 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Well, the point that I was going to make, to
15 what Dr. Liese was saying, is the only data you have is going to
16 be the headboats. Oh wait. There's Amendment 42. Jack, did
17 you have a comment?

18
19 **DR. MCGOVERN:** Thank you, Madam Chair. No, and I was just going
20 to suggest that we not lock ourselves into a percentage here and
21 that maybe another option could be that the Science Center
22 decides upon the percentage, or something like that, but Dr.
23 Liese may be able to comment on that, or Assane.

24
25 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** All right. Okay. Dr. Liese, did you want to
26 comment to that?

27
28 **DR. LIESE:** I think that would be best. I mean, I don't know if
29 we can get general guidance saying like to minimize the impact,
30 which we will then try to do, and we could change the percentage
31 from different years, and, you know, we could sample one year,
32 where we do a lot, in order to like try to catch small species,
33 that are rarer, and then, in other years, we would, you know,
34 just go down a 5 percent sample, in order to just update the
35 data, sort of the trend, and, you know, there's all kinds of
36 things we could do.

37
38 I mean, as a survey researcher, I totally don't like -- I don't
39 think we should collect data that we don't need. There are
40 sometimes situations, and this would be the mackerel in the
41 commercial sector, where technically we have too many mackerel
42 trips, and I would love to sample less of them, but the
43 logistics of sampling less mackerel trips, as part of the reef
44 fish and snapper grouper logbooks, is so difficult, and the
45 entire process of analyzing the data gets so complicated that we
46 have not done, and I feel sort of bad about it, but I haven't
47 found a solution that we can do with our resources, because it
48 would just be so complicated.

1
2 You know, the less trips we sample, the less work there is for
3 us, and, you know, we just want to have a decent sample size to
4 generate results that we feel confident in. Again, if we had 5
5 percent trips, and then someone wants something on say
6 triggerfish, and, you know, it's not even -- With a random
7 sample, I can't tell you that we can't produce decent numbers,
8 and I don't know, but, statistically speaking, it's going to
9 probably not be enough trips in any one year.

10
11 Now, if we pool years, then we might get back to something that
12 works, and so there is no clear-cut number that works. You
13 know, that's where the 20 percent is probably -- 20 percent is a
14 fairly large sample, as samples go, and so we could deal with
15 that, and I'm pretty sure that would cover most of the things we
16 want to do.

17
18 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Dr. Frazer and then Dr. Sweetman.

19
20 **DR. FRAZER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm not on your committee,
21 but I'm finding the discussion pretty interesting today.
22 There's a couple of things that I would say here, and I think
23 about, right, and the first one is that, if we go back to the
24 purpose and need, you know, what we're really trying to do is
25 optimize the yield, and part of that optimization process
26 involves reducing the cost, and the burdens, and, you know, it
27 involves the economics, right, and so then, when I think about
28 this particular action item, and the alternatives at the end of
29 the discussion, it really says it's a tradeoff between the
30 statistical precision, right, that you need to conduct the
31 analysis, and reducing the burden, and then privacy concerns,
32 but, when you look at the discussion, you're actually only
33 waving your arms at the reducing the burden and the privacy
34 concerns, and you don't really know what that is, since there's
35 no quantitative data to allow you to evaluate that tradeoff.

36
37 The only one thing that we know is that we're going to need some
38 information that's going to allow us, ultimately, right, to
39 collect the economic data that we need, that's going to be of
40 value, and we're never probably going to get the rare trips,
41 right, and so I think we should just recognize that and say,
42 hey, can we start somewhere, right, whether it's red snapper,
43 the grouper, the highly-exploited fishes, and say what's the
44 minimum that we need, so we can have a baseline, so we can learn
45 and move on.

46
47 I understand what Captain Walker is saying, and others are
48 saying, right, and there is a burden here, and we don't know how

1 to evaluate it, but where I'm moving, with this council, is I
2 just want to make things more simple, right, and I would agree
3 with Dr. Liese that we don't want to collect data that we're not
4 going to use.

5
6 I guess I just would encourage people to think about that and
7 ask the economists that, for the majority of the highly-
8 exploited fishes, where you're likely to get meaningful data,
9 what's the lowest amount of information that you can get away
10 with, so that we can then reduce the burden on everybody
11 involved. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

12
13 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Okay. Dr. Sweetman passed. Dr. Diagne, would
14 you like to respond to that?

15
16 **DR. DIAGNE:** Yes, and, I mean, or a qualified yes, I guess. For
17 me, perhaps, I mean, a starting point would be to, just for
18 example, say, well, we picked 20 percent in the commercial
19 fishery, and, here, our alternatives are actually recognizing a
20 point that Dr. Liese made to be able to vary the sample size,
21 year in and year out, and if you see that they say "up to",
22 meaning to give that flexibility, on some years, to sample less.

23
24 It seems, to me, that 20 percent, one in five, up to that, would
25 give the scientists, quote, unquote, the flexibility to get most
26 of the species that we deal with and allow them, in some years,
27 to reduce the size of the sample to 10 percent, and maybe, in
28 some cases, below, just to refresh the data, and that would be
29 my, I guess, first perspective on this, and maybe Dr. Liese
30 would add to that.

31
32 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Dr. Liese, do you have anything to add?

33
34 **DR. LIESE:** Basically, I second what Assane said, and I will add
35 that there is just no -- You know, there is no strict science on
36 determining the sample size. You would need to know everything
37 about your population in advance to come up with the optimal
38 sample size, and you don't know that, because that's why you're
39 doing the survey in the first place, and so what we used, when
40 we sort of thought about this, was the 2022 test data that we
41 got, that year of data, and it had almost 50,000 trips, and so,
42 you know, we had a lot of --

43
44 We knew a lot about the population, and so, when we ran that, we
45 noticed that, you know, if you want a red snapper trip, you will
46 probably be okay with 2 percent, because, you know, almost a
47 third of all trips are red snapper trips, and so, you know, we
48 would still be left with -- We would still be left with, you

1 know, probably 500 or so red snapper trips, even at 2 percent,
2 but, as you go to the -- You know, because red snapper
3 dominates, other species are much less, and so 20 percent is
4 actually a decent balance between everything.

5
6 If we went to 10 percent, just more species would drop out, but,
7 again, it would be -- You know, it would depend on each year and
8 the variance of those variables in each year. You know, there's
9 just many things, and then random chance.

10
11 If you sample at the vessel level, and even if we stratify, we
12 still might be getting people who don't happen to take those
13 trips, and then we will have a very small sample size, even with
14 20 percent, and so it's not -- It's random, and it's
15 statistical, and we can't predict it exactly, and that's why
16 it's not an exact science, but just up to 20 percent would do
17 the job.

18
19 Personally, I've been trying to get these type of data for the
20 last fifteen years with MRIP and the telephone survey, and I
21 would take anything that you guys are willing to give us,
22 because anything would be better than the status quo, you know,
23 and having it linked to the logbook data -- That makes the
24 difference, because that characterizes the product, and the
25 charter fee is the price of the product, and so we, as
26 economists, would have the price and the product, which is, you
27 know, the length of the trip, where the trip took place, how
28 many anglers are on it, those type of characteristics, and what
29 species they caught.

30
31 That enables us to do a lot of economic research and answer
32 questions that are, you know, before the council, and so
33 definitely, you know, any data is better than none, and I would
34 recommend up to 20 percent would be best for the center, from
35 our perspective. Thanks.

36
37 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Thank you, Dr. Liese. Mr. Geeslin.

38
39 **MR. DAKUS GEESLIN:** Thank you, Madam Chair. To that point, I
40 guess, I'm struggling with the -- You know, given this data,
41 this economic data, is somewhat invasive to the individual
42 charter-for-hire fishermen, I'm questioning what the expected
43 outcomes, and how -- That's one question, the expected outcomes
44 of this data, but, as I understand it, NOAA currently has
45 economic data, and how is the agency utilizing that data that
46 they currently have into some meaningful input into the
47 management of these fisheries?

48

1 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Dr. Diagne.

2
3 **DR. DIAGNE:** I will just, I guess, zoom in one specific metric
4 that we use in our amendments, in terms of the evaluation of our
5 alternatives. Any action that would impact the for-hire sector
6 would affect, in one way or another, the number of target trips.
7 When you look at our amendments, you will see that there is a
8 value to those trips, essentially a net value, of producer
9 surplus, really, the amount that is earned in excess of the cost
10 of providing the trip.

11
12 That is how you would quantify the effect, positive or negative,
13 of a particular action on the charter vessels, and so, to get to
14 net revenue, you need two things. You need the revenue side,
15 and you need the cost side, right, and, on the revenue side, the
16 trip fee, how much people paid, and, on the cost side, how much
17 did it cost to go, and, here, for I guess ease, or simplicity,
18 to not add to the burden, we only require the major costs,
19 meaning fuel cost, right, number of gallons burned and price per
20 gallon.

21
22 The other, you know, the labor costs and so forth, those are,
23 you know, collected from other sources, so we can get to a net
24 value, that producer surplus, and so that net value is what you
25 see in all of the amendments where you have actions that impact
26 the charter-for-hire, but, because we don't have this here, we
27 have to find it somewhere else, and we find it on previous
28 surveys that were done, and sometimes via ad hoc data collection
29 things, and Dr. Liese talked about those last time.

30
31 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** A follow-up to that, Dakus?

32
33 **MR. GEESLIN:** To that point, I appreciate that explanation, Dr.
34 Diagne, but, in a free market capitalist society, shouldn't the
35 charter-for-hire fishermen be making those decisions on their
36 own business model? I guess I'm struggling with the economic
37 data, and you talked about the value of the charter trips, and
38 where it becomes, you know, economically beneficial or not, and
39 I would think that decision lies solely with the business
40 operator themselves.

41
42 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Dr. Diagne.

43
44 **DR. DIAGNE:** Perhaps I didn't express myself clearly. When I
45 talk about value, I'm talking about the economic value in an
46 economic sense, meaning the producer surplus that the trip has
47 generated, and, I mean, at the end of the day, that is, as I
48 said, the amount that is generated in excess of, you know,

1 providing that trip.

2
3 If we look at the other sectors, and let's say we look at the
4 commercial sector, over there, they are selling a product. The
5 product that they sell is the fish that is landed. We have the
6 price, and we have the cost information, and so we don't have a
7 problem.

8
9 If we look at the private angler sector, there is no product to
10 be sold. What we measure there is, you know, the satisfaction
11 of the trip, meaning the private angler, as an entity, does not
12 sell anything, and, on the for-hire, what is sold is a trip, a
13 for-hire trip, and so it seems, to me, that, if you want to talk
14 about anything, and you know the product, at the very least, you
15 need to know the price of that product, to begin.

16
17 I mean, if we were to write amendments without any inferences on
18 the effects on the charter-for-hire, I guess we don't need to
19 have this conversation, and so we don't need to collect
20 anything, but, to the extent that we have to measure the impacts
21 of management actions on the for-hire sector, it seems, to me,
22 that, at the very least, we need to be able to quantify the
23 product that they are selling, and that is called a for-hire
24 trip. Thank you.

25
26 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Mr. Strelcheck, welcome.

27
28 **MR. ANDY STRELCHECK:** Thank you. Good morning. Apologies for
29 being late, and so I'm playing a little catch-up. I, obviously,
30 wasn't around for the purpose and need portion of the
31 discussion, but I guess what I wanted to offer, from the
32 conversation here, is, you know, I don't have necessarily a
33 strong preference on how this is worded.

34
35 Obviously, with Option a, it gives the agency the maximum
36 flexibility, and Option b is the least flexibility, but
37 essentially still, from what I'm hearing from our economists,
38 would be probably sufficient, unless sampling resulted in us
39 maybe oversampling trips in any particular year.

40
41 What I did want to go back to was Tom's comments, and so I
42 really appreciated your comments, Tom, about minimizing,
43 reducing, the burden, and I think, as we work through this
44 particular action and alternatives in the amendment, that's
45 really going to have to be, I think, a primary focus of this,
46 right, and it's not just the burden on fishers, but the burden
47 on the agency, the costs that are associated with this for both
48 fishers and the agency.

1
2 You know, the way that Chris was describing, you know, having to
3 do with sampling, that's going to be potentially independent and
4 separate than a logbook program, and so that means an additional
5 separate effort, that someone is going to have to run, by the
6 agency, in order to collect this data, and so, you know, I'm
7 still hopeful that we can come up with some technological
8 solutions to subsample trips within the actual logbook app.

9
10 I've been told, you know, mixed responses, in terms of whether
11 that's a reality or not, but I think, at the end of the day, and
12 then kind of building off of what Dakus was asking, a lot of
13 this is going to come down to what are we trying to accomplish.

14
15 With the purpose and need, right, or the purpose in particular,
16 at least as of this morning, focused on improving accuracy,
17 precision, and timeliness of landings, discards, and fishing
18 effort data and then just collecting the economic data, right,
19 and so, to me, I think we're also working to improve the
20 collection of that economic data, going forward, for utility in
21 not only the analyses that we do for regulatory actions, but
22 allocation decisions and disaster determinations, and so I think
23 we need to work on continuing to refine and build the purpose
24 and need also, based on what we want to achieve out of the
25 economic data.

26
27 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Dr. Sweetman.

28
29 **DR. SWEETMAN:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I agree with Andy and
30 Tom's points there. I do think that one area that I think the
31 council, or councils, nationally, have really struggled with is
32 how to incorporate some of this socioeconomic information into
33 the actual management process. You know, everything that we
34 have so far, a lot of the decisions that we make are more or
35 less based on historical landings, and things along those lines,
36 and trends within.

37
38 I certainly see the value in trying to more holistically, if you
39 will, try to manage some of these fisheries, by incorporating
40 some of these components that are important to the day-to-day
41 for some of our for-hire charter fishermen, or headboat
42 fishermen, and so I'm supportive of this.

43
44 I kind of agree with the discussion at the table, relative to
45 the lowest common denominator to get a statistically-valid
46 number that is actually useable, from the council's perspective,
47 and then, you know, relative to what Dakus was saying, and Andy
48 kind of hit on it with the fishery disaster, and that was the

1 comment that I was going to bring up there, but we've got a new
2 federal law in place now, where charter-for-hire can be
3 considered within the fishery disaster process, rather than
4 commercial, and this gives us a lot more information that we
5 previously didn't have, and so thank you, Madam Chair.

6
7 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** So anyone else have any comments, because I
8 have made a list of all my comments that no one has touched on,
9 and so I'm going to try to wrap this up, because I know we have
10 other presentations to come to.

11
12 One of the first things, Assane, that I noticed, with Action 4,
13 in your alternatives, is, if you choose Action 3, or, excuse me,
14 if you choose Action 3, Alternative 3, then that makes none of
15 the actions, or alternatives, in Action 4 viable, because
16 Alternative 2, Action 3, specifies fishing or chartered
17 activity.

18
19 Alternatives 2 and 3 in Action 4 specify charter fishing or
20 chartered activity, but, if you choose Alternative 3, and maybe
21 they don't relate, because one has to do with trip notification
22 and one has to do with reporting, but Action 3, Alternative 3,
23 is fishing activity, and so they conflict, in my mind, and so,
24 if you do select one in Action 3 -- Because one specifies
25 fishing or chartered activity, and one is fishing activity, and
26 both of the alternatives in Action 4 specify charter fishing or
27 chartered activity, and so does that need -- Do those need to be
28 consistent?

29
30 **DR. HOLLENSHAD:** Yes, they would, and we could look through that
31 language again, like we mentioned before, to make sure that
32 that's buttoned up, such that whatever is selected in one
33 alternative would also be applicable for another, in terms of
34 what would be reported.

35
36 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** So I would think you would have to have two
37 more alternatives in Action 4 to mesh with Action 3, and the IPT
38 can look at that, but, to me, you may be dooming yourself to
39 start with. I may be wrong.

40
41 One of the things, in talking about Alternative 3 and the
42 options, and I will have to say that I am a fan of Dr. Liese's.
43 He is reasonable, in my opinion, and he's not asking for a lot,
44 but he needs help, and I think the charter fleet wants to give
45 him that help, and, in talking about the unexploited species,
46 you know, I would caution the council to really look at this. I
47 mean, I was kind of thinking maybe 33 percent, because what
48 you're finding is a lot of the charter fleet is looking for

1 other alternatives, at least off the State of Alabama.

2
3 The red snapper fishery in the State of Alabama is okay, and
4 you're getting sixteen or seventeen-inch fish, unless you go
5 forty-plus miles offshore, and so they're looking for other
6 species to target. I hear a lot about deep-dropping, and other
7 species that, you know, would be more HMS, but I think you're
8 going to see a lot more, at least in our area, other fish
9 exploited that you don't typically see, and so that concerns me,
10 that, if we don't take this opportunity to collect the data,
11 then what are we doing?

12
13 I wanted to ask, I guess Dr. Assane, and maybe Dr. Liese, and,
14 in Alternative 3, and Action 4 in general, economic data, and,
15 Assane, you commented the price of the trip, how much fuel you
16 burn, and the cost of the fuel. This is what got us in trouble
17 with the SEFHIER program, because we didn't know what to expect
18 when we saw the program, and so are you telling us, today, these
19 are going to be those economic questions?

20
21 **DR. DIAGNE:** Yes, and those three things would be what is asked
22 for. I mean, in the past, I mean, the previous program, I think
23 it was set at something like socioeconomic data would be
24 collected, without specifying, and so, this time around, this is
25 upfront, and clear, that these are the three variables that are
26 going to be collected for economic data.

27
28 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** So I think that would help. The other thing
29 is, and this is a personal opinion, observation, is the
30 headboats, for twenty-plus years, have collected data, and, over
31 the last -- I can't remember, and I would have to go look back,
32 but ten or twelve years, we've collected economic data, and the
33 reason we do that is because that is a requirement that has been
34 put upon us to operate as a headboat in the Gulf of Mexico, and
35 that is a condition for us to get our permits renewed every
36 year, our CMP and our reef fish.

37
38 A permit is a privilege to do business, and sometimes we have to
39 do things that we don't like to do, but, if you are not willing
40 to provide some information, and I agree that we don't want to
41 go overboard, but, if you want to participate in the fishery,
42 then sometimes you have to do things you don't want to do, and
43 that's in any job.

44
45 I mean, I love it when you get a job description, and it gives
46 you this whole detailed description, and then all other duties,
47 as assigned, and there's always going to be something that has
48 to be done that you don't like to do, but, unfortunately, if you

1 like your job enough, you're going to say, yes, I'll go clean
2 that toilet today, because the janitor didn't show up, but my
3 point is the headboats have been doing this for years, and we
4 haven't bitched, and we haven't griped, and we do it. We get
5 our permits, and we go fishing.

6
7 I wish the charter-for-hire fleet, and my husband and I -- We
8 own a six-passenger boat, and we're in this too, and we have no
9 problem with this, but I just want this council to understand
10 that, to me, it's almost a cost of doing business. Dr. Banks.

11
12 **DR. KESLEY BANKS:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I just have a quick
13 question, and I don't really know who to direct this to, and so
14 I will leave it to you, Lisa, and you can tell me who it goes
15 to. Since we haven't fleshed out the purpose and need, in
16 regard to economic data, very well yet, and it seems like we
17 have a lot more questions, after discussing this action, is
18 there a possibility of maybe moving Action 4 to a separate
19 document?

20
21 That way, the SEFHIER program moves forward, as Ms. Boggs had
22 stated at the beginning of this, that she wants the data
23 collection part to move forward, and so maybe this gets tacked
24 on, and I think that would also help with getting some of the
25 sea days, I think, at-sea days, that might inform some of that
26 analysis to figure out which of these percentages is correct.

27
28 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** I would oppose that. I mean, this is what
29 happened with the commercial fishery. We've been dealing with
30 the commercial fishery -- I've been on this council for six
31 years, and we've done nothing with the commercial fishery but go
32 round and round and round and round.

33
34 This is my last meeting, and I don't support that. I think you
35 keep it together, and I think you move it forward. I think this
36 council buckles down and finishes something, instead of kicking
37 the can down the road, or we'll deal with this later, because
38 what happens is that you don't, and you have a conundrum at the
39 end of the day, and so I would not support that, but, if you
40 want to make that motion, you're more than welcome to. Dr.
41 Walter.

42
43 **DR. JOHN WALTER:** Thank you. Good morning, everyone. I'm not
44 on your committee, Madam Chair, but I wanted to add one more
45 thing, as to some of the utility of this data, in particular for
46 the offshore wind leases. They have extended the bidding
47 credits to charter-for-hire vessels, and so that's an additional
48 usage of this information, in terms of being able to record the

1 economic benefits to the industry, and potentially where they
2 may be eligible for compensation, and so that's something that I
3 think, in addition to, as C.J. pointed out on the disaster
4 declarations, is quite valuable, because I think the question
5 come up of how is the agency going to use this data, and those
6 were two very specific ones, where, without that data, the
7 agency wouldn't have it.

8
9 Then I think, as move, and as we change the purpose and need to
10 specifically invoke achieving an optimum yield, one of the
11 things that we're trying to do, as we move forward, is think
12 about the economics of inherent optimum yield, and what that
13 really means, and I think, while we haven't fleshed that out, it
14 clearly states that that is one of the considerations, and
15 having the data to inform it is probably going to be the first
16 and foremost thing that we're going to need to be able to do as
17 we flesh out how we achieve optimum yield for the nation, and I
18 think we're talking about collecting that data. It looks like
19 we've got something that's 20 percent, which is what the
20 commercial fishery does, and it's probably a great starting
21 place. Thanks.

22
23 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Captain Walker, and then we're going to move on
24 to the next item.

25
26 **MR. WALKER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I agree with you that
27 let's keep moving on this. It's been two meetings, and the
28 information is all fresh in our heads, and let's make some
29 decisions on it and not kick it any further.

30
31 I would like to throw in, you know, the charter guys have
32 debated the value of economic data for a while, and some of the
33 guys are onboard with as much as we can, and most of the reason
34 I've heard for that is because they believe they're going to get
35 some money from somebody somewhere down the road, but I would
36 point out that we all did better in the BP oil spill by not
37 having such data.

38
39 We have tax returns that we used, and, you know, there is ways,
40 and I don't know about the wind thing, but, if I have a federal
41 permit, and tax record that shows that my income came entirely
42 from charter fishing, I would like to think that would also
43 qualify, and, you know, it's not the only way that you're going
44 to be able to access disaster money, or wind money, from that,
45 for being displaced or whatever it is, and so I think that might
46 be a little bit overstated, myself.

47
48 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Well, I have to comment to that, and then Mr.

1 Strelcheck. I almost got ran out of Orange Beach because I had
2 my tax return, and I did get money from the BP oil spill, and
3 those that didn't have their tax return, or did have their tax
4 return, but, oh, they made a lot of cash, and, guess what, they
5 didn't report it, and they didn't do so well, and so that can
6 bite you in the rearend too. Mr. Strelcheck.

7
8 **MR. STRELCHECK:** Well, I just wanted to comment that, Ed, it
9 really depends on the program, and, you know, ultimately, the
10 grant award, or whatever, is ultimately providing that funding,
11 and some of the rules and requirements that come along with
12 that, right, and so BP was different than, you know, how we're
13 handling disaster requests.

14
15 We've just gotten done with disaster workshops with the states,
16 and, from what I'm hearing from my economic staff, tax returns
17 were not something that the states really were wanting to deal
18 with, and address, right, and so, you know, it gets back to -- I
19 feel like we want to -- I feel like we want to make things more
20 difficult for ourselves, right, and we're putting up hurdles,
21 and reasons and rationale, as to why not to collect the data, or
22 to collect the data in a different manner, and we need to think
23 more along the lines of, well, what's the easiest lowest common
24 denominator to collect the data that's not administratively
25 burdensome to both the fisher and the government, and ultimately
26 meets the purpose of why we're collecting it, right?

27
28 Some of the questions that I'm hearing today, I think people
29 aren't convinced, in terms of maybe even why we're collecting
30 the data, and we spent a lot of time, at the last meeting,
31 talking about that, but what I guess I would want to add is, you
32 know, talking with Frank, it sounds like, you know, there's some
33 work to be done here, and the IPT is going to have to go back
34 and work on kind of the range of actions and alternatives, and
35 so we certainly would want to give the council staff, and my
36 team, direction to be able to do that and kind of flesh that
37 out, based on not only the action we just talked about, but
38 really the whole amendment, but certainly I want to continue to
39 proceed forward with making progress on this amendment with
40 those recommended changes that they can bring back at the next
41 meeting.

42
43 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Well, Dr. Hollensead, I think we've given you
44 plenty of direction. How about we move on to the discussion of
45 HMS economic data collection and see what we can mess up there?

46
47 **DISCUSSION OF HMS ECONOMIC DATA COLLECTION**
48

1 **DR. HOLLENSHAD:** Sure thing, Madam Chair. Again, I touched on
2 this a little bit when talking about the action guide. In your
3 briefing book materials, we've provided an advance notice of
4 proposed rulemaking, and so the Atlantic HMS is looking towards,
5 you know, some standing electronic logbook requirements as well.

6
7 In that, they do have some considerations for cost and earnings
8 information, the collection of economic data, and, within that -
9 - Bernie, if you wouldn't mind actually pulling up that
10 presentation, and it's the background HMS presentation. It's
11 going to be Tab F, Number 4(b), and then going to Slide 15,
12 please.

13
14 In the middle part of that graphic there, they sort of lay out
15 sort of the proposed alternatives for collecting economic data,
16 and, if you will notice, it's not wildly different from what
17 we've discussed today. There's a report for each trip, report
18 only if a vessel is selected for reporting, and report via a
19 survey, and so they've got a couple of different ways that they
20 can hash out this.

21
22 In thinking of sort of one-stop reporting, you know, staff has
23 just had some general questions, as this has been building out.
24 You know, what would happen if, for example, this council
25 selected something and HMS selected something else, and so, you
26 know, what would happen for one-stop reporting, and Dr. Banks
27 was at that AP meeting, and so she can certainly provide any
28 context of those discussions for the committee's consideration.

29
30 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Dr. Banks.

31
32 **DR. BANKS:** The HMS AP had very similar concerns on exactly what
33 HMS would be picking that might be outside of the council
34 process, especially with South Atlantic representatives also
35 sitting, and so it's not just the Gulf, and it's also the South
36 Atlantic that is having the same discussion.

37
38 When posed with this question, HMS staff was not clear exactly
39 how the economic data would get implemented, or the economic
40 survey would get implemented, if this moved forward, and so
41 there's a lot of confusion between the two groups currently.

42
43 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Is there any way that -- I mean, I know HMS is
44 their own animal, and we've got South Atlantic, and we have
45 nothing in the Gulf, and we're trying to get there, but, Lisa,
46 to your point, if they move forward quicker than this council
47 moves forward, are we going to be hamstrung to what we can do,
48 and, I mean, that's the question you're asking, and I'm

1 repeating the question to you, and so I don't know if there is
2 any way that, in this instance, that HMS, and I think this is
3 maybe what we're doing here, could work with the councils to
4 make sure that we're somewhat in sync in what we're trying to do
5 and get what everybody wants.

6
7 I mean, here we go again, and cost and earnings information, and
8 everybody wants this economic data, and you're not going to get
9 around it, but I'm just kind of rambling, but I think we're
10 going to have to figure this out, because we don't want to get
11 hamstrung one way or the other. Dr. Sweetman.

12
13 **DR. SWEETMAN:** Fair point, Madam Chair, and so I guess my
14 question, maybe, is, is it possible to maybe have an HMS staffer
15 on the IPT to come try to help navigate some of these issues
16 here between what they're working on, versus what we're working
17 on?

18
19 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Dr. Hollensead.

20
21 **DR. HOLLENSEAD:** So we currently do have some folks from the HMS
22 office on the IPT. They've provided some comments, and so they
23 are aware of what we're doing, and our deliberations at the
24 level, and they can provide some comment even on the document,
25 as they go through it, and they have, and some of it we've
26 incorporated, but I think the -- You know, we can do that, to an
27 extent.

28
29 It's a little bit looking at tea leaves though, to decide if
30 that does come about, and so I think the purpose here is staff
31 just wanted to begin this conversation, recognizing that we're
32 in the weeds certainly with what we've got in our region, but
33 also trying to recommend -- For example, the ad hoc AP had put
34 one of their motions, or recommendations, as a one-stop
35 reporting, and so we're just trying to keep that in mind as we
36 move through this.

37
38 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Dr. Banks.

39
40 **DR. BANKS:** I just want to point out too that public comment on
41 this has already ceased for HMS, and I believe this is now going
42 to be a topic at the September HMS meeting, in more detail.

43
44 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** So HMS, you said, has a member on the IPT, but
45 this will also affect the headboats that report to the Southeast
46 Regional Headboat Survey, and so is there someone from that team
47 that's on your IPT, because, I mean, this will impact them as
48 well. I mean, I know people think that headboats don't do this

1 type of fishing, but they do. Ken is retiring.

2
3 **DR. HOLLENSHAD:** Yes, and we can bring in anybody, and, like I
4 said, there's a lot of cooks in this kitchen for this one, as it
5 should be, because we're trying to move sort of simultaneously
6 with what some other regions are doing, but, yes, those
7 considerations are talked about at the IPT level.

8
9 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Just making sure we're covering all our bases,
10 because of unintended consequences that we'll end up struggling
11 with. All right. Any more questions on this agenda item? Yes,
12 sir, Mr. Schieble.

13
14 **MR. SCHIEBLE:** I just had a comment about the public hearings,
15 and so it says that the comment period closes on August 18, and
16 the public hearings that they listed are June 6 in Fort
17 Lauderdale, and it was on a Thursday, and the webinar on June
18 13, of course, and then June 14 was on a Friday, in Toms River,
19 and the 21st is a Friday also, and the webinar is the 27th.
20 August 3, in Belle Chasse, is a Saturday, and then August 9 in
21 Gloucester, Massachusetts, is a Friday. Is there any particular
22 reason they picked a Saturday for the public hearing in
23 Louisiana, versus a weekday?

24
25 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Go ahead, Dr. Hollensead.

26
27 **DR. HOLLENSHAD:** That's something I can reach out to HMS staff
28 and ask for any of their rationale on that.

29
30 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Dr. Banks.

31
32 **DR. BANKS:** We do have a Migratory Committee sometime at this
33 meeting, and so there will be HMS staff calling in, and so we
34 might be able to get answers during that, in Other Business or
35 something, Lisa.

36
37 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Okay. Anything else for this agenda item?
38 Next is Dr. Masi's presentation on our options for effort
39 validation.

40
41 **PRESENTATION: OPTIONS FOR EFFORT VALIDATION**

42
43 **DR. MICHELLE MASI:** I'm Dr. Michelle Masi, the SEFHIER Program
44 Manager, and, today, what I want to do is show you why we need
45 trip validation for the SEFHIER program and then what some
46 options are in order to estimate nonreporting.

47
48 Why do we need trip validation to use the SEFHIER data? So you

1 can think of the trip validation as a method to estimate the
2 amount of non and misreporting in self-reported SEFHIER logbook
3 data. In other words, it allows us to estimate the amount of
4 uncertainty, or error, in the data, where uncertainty you can
5 think about as being measured along a scale, or a continuum,
6 where, if you have too much uncertainty, then it makes your
7 final estimates of catch and effort unreliable.

8
9 I want to put that into perspective for you. Let's imagine that
10 30 percent of the for-hire vessels are submitted on-time and
11 accurately, every single time, and then let's imagine that 10
12 percent are never reported, because maybe those folks just hate
13 SEFHIER, and they refuse to report until they're caught, and
14 then somewhere in between is, you know, say 60 percent of the
15 vessels, who most of the time they're intending to do things
16 right, but potentially they enter a twenty-two, instead of a
17 two, for the number of red snapper that were retained, or maybe
18 they forget to enter a species, or send a logbook, if they got
19 busy.

20
21 Then we do know that there's folks out there, because I've
22 spoken to them on the phone, who tell me that they're only going
23 to report some of the trips, and not all of them, at least until
24 they get caught, and so, you know, I want to emphasize here too
25 that this is in no way a trust issue. This is more of a quality
26 control and assurance measure, and we do this in all kinds of
27 different data collection programs.

28
29 For example, when I worked at Florida Fish and Wildlife, we
30 would go out, and we would go in the field to count fish, and
31 then we come back, and we would enter those fish counts into the
32 computer, and then we had another group of scientists that would
33 come and check our data entries, because humans are prone to
34 mistype, and they would make corrections, to ensure that we had
35 the best quality data, and so this sort of thinking that it's
36 analogous to this idea of we need some way to do trip
37 validation, so that we can ensure the final estimates that we're
38 producing of catch and effort represent reality.

39
40 All right, and so what I want to do on this slide is provide you
41 with a conceptual model, to help you better understand this, and
42 so here we're talking about how we can measure uncertainty in
43 nonreporting, and specific to that question of are they latent
44 permits or are they not reporting.

45
46 You can see, based on the conceptual model, on the one side, the
47 left there, we have little uncertainty, and then on the other
48 end is most uncertain, and so, if you did no trip validation,

1 then your data would be the most uncertain. It would be
2 unreliable, and we wouldn't be able to use it for stock
3 assessment or management purposes.

4
5 On the other end there, you can see we have VMS, and the reason
6 that VMS has little uncertainty is because, if you think about
7 it, we've got a device that's on that vessel. It's turned on
8 twenty-four-seven, and it's always monitoring that vessel's
9 activity, and so the chance that you're going to miss that a
10 trip occurred is pretty low. Now, there is some uncertainty
11 there, because, of course, somebody could turn off their box, or
12 the box could break, and so we could never get full, complete no
13 uncertainty, but we can get close.

14
15 Geofencing, as you can see, is actually a way of monitoring the
16 vessel, but geofencing actually reduces the positioning
17 frequency, based on how you want that geofence to work.

18
19 Then, on the other end there, you can see we have declarations,
20 and, if it's only declarations, only declarations would not be
21 sufficient to capture enough of the uncertainty to be able to
22 estimate nonreporting, and I will explain that in more detail.

23
24 Then, beside that there, you have dockside intercepts, or port
25 agents, and now, I say "or port agents" because the headboat
26 survey is using port agents, but intercept surveyors, or port
27 agents, are doing the same thing, and they're being able to be
28 out in the field and capture that nonreporting uncertainty, and
29 many programs use dockside intercepts successfully to capture
30 nonreporting in their programs, like MRIP, and the headboat
31 survey, in our region, but other programs throughout the United
32 States.

33
34 Then you see, in the center there, and I should add that the
35 reason that dockside intercepts are more on the most uncertain
36 side is because of a low sample size issue, and we just spent a
37 lot of time talking about sample size issues, and so hopefully
38 that concept is pretty clear.

39
40 Now, we can gain certainty in our estimates by adding different
41 things, different components, as you can see with that middle
42 bullet there, where, if we did dockside intercepts in addition
43 to did-not-fish reports, which I want to mention that did-not-
44 fish reports -- We haven't spent a lot of time talking about it,
45 but, if we went with something like dockside intercepts to
46 validate trips, then these did-not-fish reports serve a really
47 important purpose in closing the loophole in uncertainty of
48 folks that are either not reporting or are they not fishing.

1
2 For example, we have yet to be able to address that question
3 that keeps coming up of, you know, can you tell us how many
4 latent permits are out there, versus how many people are not
5 reporting, and so the did-not-fish reports provide that
6 opportunity to rapidly account for that, and then we also have
7 declarations, which, you know, combined with these other things,
8 help to do things like compliance and enforcement.

9
10 What I wanted to do here is just provide you this conceptual
11 model, to see how all these different options are falling out,
12 and I want to now go into each one in detail.

13
14 All right, and so let's start off with this idea of doing
15 dockside intercepts in order to estimate nonreporting, and so
16 this would be one option for validating trips, and so dockside
17 intercepts can be used to estimate nonreported trips, and that
18 assumes that there is a sufficient sample size, that intercept-
19 to-trip ratio, and this is something that we do prior to
20 implementing a survey, where we do those statistics to get some
21 sort of baseline estimate of what we expect a minimum sample
22 size should be.

23
24 Importantly, these dockside intercepts also provide us a way to
25 account for misreported trips. I mentioned that issue of humans
26 being prone to mistype, and so that intercept survey, or the
27 port agent, is providing an opportunity to essentially recapture
28 the logbook. If somebody accidentally entered that twenty-two
29 for the number of red snapper they retained, and the surveyor
30 say that it was only two, again, there's that opportunity to
31 capture that misreporting error.

32
33 Also, these surveys provide us with that opportunity to collect
34 important biological information, and that's not currently being
35 collected, or at least it was suggested to be collected in the
36 SEFHIER logbook, and, for example, when the user completes their
37 logbook, they're entering the number of -- They're entering
38 catch in numbers, whereas the surveyor could be out in the field
39 collecting information on length and weight, which becomes
40 really critical if we want to calibrate against MRIP estimates.

41
42 Now, importantly, the dockside intercepts are more uncertain
43 than VMS or geofencing, and, as I mentioned, it's that low
44 sample size issue, and the reason for the low sample size is, of
45 course, that boots on the ground are expensive, and so typically
46 what we try to do then, with some funding constraints, is
47 maintain a minimum sample size.

48

1 Now, we can also, as I mentioned, do things like adding a did-
2 not-fish report requirement, to better close the uncertainty
3 gaps for doing things like being able to rapidly account for the
4 number of latent permit holders out there, and the idea with
5 that being that, like right now, in the South Atlantic SEFHIER
6 program, there is a did-not-fish requirement.

7
8 The way that that works is the fishing, which goes Monday to
9 Sunday, and you either submit a logbook, or all the logbooks for
10 your fishing trips, or, and I should clarify it's for your for-
11 hire fishing trips, or you submit a weekly did-not-fish report,
12 to say you took no for-hire fishing trips for the week, and you
13 can submit those, at least right now in the South Atlantic
14 program, up to thirty days in advance, and there's the potential
15 to maybe allow that up to ninety days in the future, which is
16 what the commercial e-log program is going with.

17
18 Also, there's been discussion, between these programs, that
19 potentially having an option, say in the logbook, where you have
20 a check-box, and so any permit holder that was say wanting to --
21 Acknowledging that they know they're not going to take any for-
22 hire fishing trips for the year, and they're going to be latent
23 permit holders, and they could check this box and then submit a
24 year's worth of did-not-fish reports, and, of course, our team
25 could do some QA/QC, to make sure that wasn't checked in error,
26 and so those are some ways that we can use a did-not-fish report
27 to better account for some of that nonreporting uncertainty.
28 Also, that declaration, as I mentioned, is really useful, for
29 example, in helping to do enforcement for the program.

30
31 Now, importantly, NOAA Fisheries already had a validation survey
32 in place, and we had the Gulf SEFHIER validation survey, and
33 what that means is we already developed a program manual, and we
34 already developed the software for the survey app, and we had,
35 you know, our state reps trained to be able to do this survey,
36 and so, assuming funds exist, there is the potential to rapidly
37 reimplement this, if this is the preferred option that the
38 council selects to do trip validation.

39
40 What are the concerns? Well, it's expensive, as I mentioned,
41 and boots on the ground is expensive, and, if the agency doesn't
42 have funding to do the dockside intercepts, then there would be
43 no trip validation component to the program, and, at that time,
44 we would need to come up with an alternative solution.

45
46 Before I go on to the next set of slides, what I want to do is
47 just provide some explanation for another concept. At the
48 SEFHIER AP, there were lots of really great suggestions on ways

1 in which we can do trip validation, and some of those were
2 centered around this sort of self-validation option, and so what
3 I want to do here then is kind of break apart some of these
4 different ideas that were presented, or discussed, at the
5 SEFHIER AP, and so here we're talking about active versus
6 passive self-validation of trips.

7
8 Self-validation, because this method, in regard to, you know,
9 the dockside intercept, here we're putting the onus back on the
10 individual, versus on the agency, to do this trip validation,
11 and so active self-validation of trips is going to require
12 somebody to manually do something, and so there was discussion
13 of, well, could we potentially have an app, where we, you know,
14 press a button, and then the app starts tracking the trip.

15
16 Whenever you require somebody to actually physically press a
17 button, for example to send a declaration, to tell us that
18 you're taking a trip, we really can't rely on that as a way to
19 estimate nonreporting, because, importantly, if they're choosing
20 to not report, if they're not even sending a declaration, or a
21 logbook, normally, they're unlikely going to choose to press
22 this button to initiate this tracking, or this validation, that
23 a trip is going to occur.

24
25 Instead, then what we need is passive self-validation of trips.
26 In other words, the individual has to take no action, and there
27 is no conscious decision being made, and that device is just
28 working passively in the background, and, of course, some
29 examples of that are VMS or geofencing, and so, of course, you
30 can't rely on passive self-validation to estimate nonreporting.

31
32 All right, and so I mentioned declarations, and so declarations
33 alone are not going to be able to capture enough of the
34 uncertainty to estimate nonreporting, and, again, that's because
35 it's requiring somebody to actively press a button, and you can
36 see that image of the declaration there from our VESL
37 application, and so somebody literally has to enter that in, and
38 then press "continue", to confirm they're going to take a for-
39 hire fishing trip, and so, you know, since it's requiring that
40 conscious action, we can't rely on that as our way to estimate
41 nonreporting.

42
43 However, declarations are important for other aspects of trip
44 validation, because it's alerting officers when and where to
45 meet that vessel at the dock, and it's also informing the Office
46 of Law Enforcement, in real time, what a vessel is actively
47 doing, and it's providing that documentation of the activity, or
48 lack thereof, and, importantly, these declarations -- Once you

1 hit that continue button, it gets transmitted to our database,
2 which automates an email, in almost real time, and that goes to
3 our officers, to their email address, and so they get that
4 information, and they have it on hand. Should they see some
5 vessel out doing some sort of activity, they have that
6 documentation to confirm what's going on there.

7
8 Now, I was thinking through this declaration consideration, and
9 I wanted to just mention that, should the council decide to go
10 with some sort of geofencing type of option, in order to
11 validate trips -- Right now, we've just been talking about
12 needing a declaration for every for-hire fishing trip, or for-
13 hire fishing trips and/or charter activities, and, importantly,
14 if we're using a geofence to do the trip validation, then,
15 really, we also need to have a declaration that is encompassing
16 any activity that is past the geofence.

17
18 Otherwise, if that vessel is out, you know, and whatever it's
19 doing in the activity past the geofence, and it would be
20 unclear, without that documentation, to understand what that
21 vessel is doing, without needing say an officer in the field to
22 go out and board the vessel, to do an investigation, and so it's
23 really going to hinder the compliance of enforcement, and make
24 it more on the uncertain side, in terms of being able to
25 estimate non-reporting.

26
27 All right, and so now what I want to do is talk about geofencing
28 as a way of validating trips, and I want to spend a little time
29 here focusing on how it works, because I think this needs to be
30 abundantly clear.

31
32 Geofencing, again, is going to require a device that's working
33 in the background, passively, twenty-four-seven, tracking a
34 vessel and knowing where that vessel is at, and really then the
35 geofence -- What it's doing is it's altering the position
36 frequency.

37
38 Now, remember, in the previous iteration of the Gulf program, we
39 required VMS, and we didn't have a geofence option, but,
40 essentially, we were requiring the VMS to position every hour,
41 and so, importantly, the unit -- It needs to be able to position
42 regularly enough to know whether the vessel has passed a
43 geofence. Now, you can specify the positioning frequency, say
44 every hour, or every two hours, and VMS specs -- Right now, they
45 allow up to every twenty-four hours, but, importantly, as you
46 increase the interval, you're increasing the uncertainty of
47 being able to capture a trip, and so let me explain an example.

48

1 Let's say you have a geofence that's a mile offshore, and let's
2 say we have a unit that positions say every six hours. If that
3 vessel leaves the dock to go take a trip, and the unit positions
4 -- The unit on that vessel positions just before it passes the
5 geofence, then it's not going to position again for another six
6 hours, and so, if a trip occurred in that six hours, we would
7 miss that, and the geofence would do nothing to alert us that
8 that trip was occurring.

9
10 What we need then is a positioning frequency, given that we know
11 that there's up to three trips occurring in the for-hire
12 industry per day, that is frequent enough to capture potentially
13 up to three trips per day. Now, there are some examples that I
14 want to walk through, in terms of pros and cons of geofencing.

15
16 The first would be to modify the existing VMS units to do
17 geofencing. The second is AIS with geofencing. The third would
18 be to develop a GPS tracking phone app, and the fourth is to
19 adapt the existing land-based GPS tracking technology, and,
20 before I move to the next slide, I want to just commend the
21 industry for working with us to try to come up with alternatives
22 to VMS. I don't think that -- You know, going into this, these
23 are all really great ideas, and, digging into them a little bit
24 more, we found that there might be some issues with some over
25 others.

26
27 I just want to reiterate that I appreciate all that they did to
28 try to come up with these ideas, and I don't want to discredit
29 any of them, and they were all excellent, but you'll see, as we
30 go through, that there are some concerns.

31
32 All right, and so the first option then for using this form of
33 constant self-validation of trips would be to modify the
34 existing SEFHIER VMS units, and I say "existing" because these
35 are the VMS units that were type approved for the previous
36 iteration of the program, and so pros, of course, would be the
37 potential that there's a cost savings for the service, if we
38 reduce the positioning intervals, using it as a geofence option,
39 where the idea is that geofence is serving to alter the position
40 interval.

41
42 How it's working then is that you have this vessel monitoring
43 unit, say a VMS, and it is positioning every hour, and those
44 positions are stored on the device, and then, at whatever
45 interval the vendor requires, those stored positions get
46 transmitted back to the vendor. If it's a cellular unit, then
47 the positions -- All the stored positions get transmitted as
48 soon as the device is within cellular range.

1
2 The more positions you store, the more -- The larger the data
3 file that needs to get transmitted back to the vendor, and so,
4 if we reduce the positioning frequency, say to every three
5 hours, there is the potential that there's a cost savings,
6 because there's less data needed to transmit back to the vendor.
7 I can't guarantee that, but that's a possibility.

8
9 The second pro is that, you know, many of our Gulf for-hire
10 constituents already went out and bought a VMS unit, and so they
11 potentially have it on-hand and ready to go. Some in our
12 industry did say, at the AP, that they have interest in
13 continuing to use their VMS units, and then, of course, we have
14 our dual-commercial-permitted vessels, which have to use VMS,
15 and so, therefore, this modification of the existing VMS unit to
16 do self-validation of trips is potentially a resource-effective
17 solution.

18
19 Also, NOAA does have a VMS reimbursement program in place, and
20 it is susceptible to funding. We have cellular and satellite
21 options, where satellite would work better in remote areas, and
22 we've also already gone through that type-approval process and
23 have a data transmission pathway from the vendor to NOAA
24 established, and so we're likely to have, if we went with
25 something like this as a trip validation option, the ability to
26 rapidly reimplement this program.

27
28 Now what are the cons? The biggest con, of course, is that it's
29 VMS, and there's a really large negative VMS stigma, where, you
30 know, at least a good portion of the industry does not want
31 anything to do with VMS, and so that's definitely a hurdle to
32 overcome. We also have the fact that all of these geofencing
33 options would potentially add the additional burden, and cost,
34 onto the constituent, versus it being an agency burden, and,
35 also, the agency would need to determine the privacy burden
36 impacts, especially as it relates to the lawsuit.

37
38 Now, importantly, I'm going to repeat this for every geofencing
39 option, because these devices are going to need to be powered
40 on, tracking the vessel twenty-four-seven, regardless of if NOAA
41 gets the data or not, to know where that vessel is, to know if
42 it's taking a trip, if it's past the geofence, and, also, it
43 needs to be positioning frequently enough in order to capture up
44 to three trips per day.

45
46 Now, I did put a couple of other options, down here at the
47 bottom, which would be less rapid implementation options, but
48 the idea being here that we've heard that industry may have

1 concerns over transmitting their private fishing hole location,
2 and, even though VMS data are secure, these are -- You know,
3 talking with the VMS program coordinator, these are alternative
4 options that could further protect this private fishing hole
5 location information.

6
7 The first option then would be sort of a data pathway change.
8 The time horizon to do something like that, from talking with
9 the coordinator, is approximately three to six months. There's
10 a slight cost to the agency, due to development constraints,
11 but, essentially, the way it would work is that NOAA Fisheries
12 could reject any positional data that was outside of an
13 established geofence, with the idea being that, essentially, the
14 unit tracking that vessel's position twenty-four-seven, while
15 it's parked inshore, and then the geofence, and say it's a mile
16 offshore, would serve to alert the agency that is a trip is
17 occurring.

18
19 Anything after that, any positions collected after the geofence,
20 would still be collected by the box, and it would still get
21 transmitted to the vendor, but, when the data went to go from
22 the vendor to NOAA, NOAA could reject that positional
23 information, and, in other words, we wouldn't store it, and we
24 wouldn't even have it, to see it, the idea being it would be
25 further protecting the private fishing location information.

26
27 Now, the other alternative there would be even less rapid, and
28 it's an amendment change, and so looking at roughly a one to
29 two-year time horizon for something like that, but a similar
30 thought is -- There's units, at least one out there right now, a
31 VMS, that can store positional information, at whatever the
32 desired frequency is, and say it's an hour, three hours, six
33 hours, whatever it is, and then the unit doesn't have to
34 actually transmit those positions to even the vendor, and so
35 essentially then only the owner of that unit has their private
36 fishing hole location information.

37
38 The reason for the amendment change is because, right now, even
39 though the device exists, it's not wrapped into the VMS
40 standards, and so, in order for us to be able to ensure the
41 device works appropriately, we would have to make sure that it
42 was part of the OLE VMS technical specifications.

43
44 On this one, and the second option, again, for this self-
45 validation of trips would be to do AIS. I want to emphasize
46 that AIS can be done with or without geofencing, but geofencing
47 was something that was really preferred by our AP, and so adding
48 AIS to geofencing here.

1
2 There is lots of AIS transceivers already on the market,
3 available right now for purchase, and they range from roughly
4 \$500 to \$1,400, and so potentially a little bit cheaper than the
5 VMS units. Importantly, these do function just like VMS.
6 They're tracking a vessel's position, but, instead of working
7 off that VMS signal, it's working off of a VHF signal.

8
9 Now, I did Google this, and so don't quote me on it, and I'm not
10 entirely sure what it looks like, and a VHF license is about \$23
11 per year, in order to transmit those positions, and so it could
12 be a potential cost savings over something like a VMS service
13 fee, and, again, it's equivalent to VMS in every way, but,
14 instead, it's AIS, working off that VHF signal.

15
16 Now, the biggest con, and I have bolded it there for you,
17 because it's obviously a large con, is that this AIS data is
18 publicly available. You can log into websites, just like the
19 image shown here, and this is a static image, but, when you go
20 to that website, you can actually zoom-in to get a very detailed
21 look at what that vessel is doing, and, of course, the reason
22 for that is the purpose of AIS is to try to have vessels avoid
23 collision, and so, obviously, that data needs to be publicly
24 available to do that.

25
26 Now, importantly, again, that unit needs to be powered on,
27 tracking the vessel twenty-four-seven, in order to ensure that
28 we're capturing nonreporting, and it needs to be positioning
29 frequently enough in order to capture up to three trips per day.

30
31 Also, with this solution, we don't have a data pathway
32 established yet, which is not a huge hurdle, and it's a slight
33 development cost to the agency, where we need to connect to the
34 Department of Transportation's database, in order to bring that
35 data into NOAA. Also, we would want to do some field testing
36 and type approval, to ensure the devices are working according
37 to how the SEFHIER program needs them to.

38
39 The third way we could do this passive self-validation of trips
40 is to develop this GPS tracking phone app, and, off-the-shelf,
41 this was a really great idea, one of my favorites, and it would
42 work really great, because you could just download this app,
43 essentially, onto your cellphone service, and you already need
44 to have something similar in order to do your trip reporting.

45
46 The technology is already out there, and I put this example of
47 Life 360, which I use with my family, to know where my kids are
48 at, and so, you know, all of us -- Not all of us, but most of us

1 use some sort of similar technology to do various day-to-day
2 things. You know, Find My iPhone, for example, works off the
3 same exact kind of technology.

4
5 However, we would need to adapt it to work with SEFHIER,
6 because, obviously, for this application here, this example
7 isn't doing exactly what we need. Now, there are options out
8 there for some sort of satellite service, the Starlink, in order
9 to work for those people in remote areas, and, again, this is
10 totally equivalent to VMS, meaning it needs to be tracking that
11 vessel, to know where it's at, to know if it's past the
12 geofence, to know if it's taking a trip.

13
14 Maybe we didn't get all the positional information from it, and
15 that could be an option, but, again, it still has to be doing
16 basically the same thing that VMS would be doing.

17
18 Now, importantly, in doing some preliminary research, you know,
19 just like any app on your phone, you can easily delete the app,
20 and there's not really a way to limit that, and so it becomes
21 really unreliable, in terms of being able to regulate and
22 enforce, or to actually estimate nonreporting, because, again,
23 if the user doesn't want to report, they're probably not going
24 to want to have this app on their phone, and maybe they install
25 it initially, and then they delete it, and there's not going to
26 be a way for us to regulate that, and so it really isn't a
27 viable solution, unfortunately.

28
29 Also, the technology is not ready, because we do -- Even though
30 there are similar things out there, we would need to spend time
31 researching and developing the software, in order to have it
32 work for SEFHIER, and, of course, we would have to come up with
33 some sort of duplicate data storage to what VMS is already
34 capable of, and we would need time to field test and type
35 approve this, and, of course, we don't have existing funding
36 available to do this at this time.

37
38 The fourth and final geofencing option, again, a really great
39 idea, would be to adapt the existing GPS tracking technology
40 that's already working right now in the land-based environment
41 to support the transportation and shipping industry. Now,
42 again, it's working great for the land-based environment, but we
43 would need to adapt it to work for the marine environment, so
44 that it would work for SEFHIER, and, because it's equivalent, in
45 every way, to how VMS is working, by the time we did that, we
46 would probably need to call it a VMS unit.

47
48 Again, this is just working the same way as the other ones, but

1 I'm going to repeat that it needs to continuously track the
2 vessel, twenty-four-seven, in order to know where that vessel is
3 at, to know if it's taking a trip, so that we can actually
4 account for those reported trips, and, importantly, the
5 technology, even though it's out there working in the land-based
6 environment, it is not ready yet for the marine environment, and
7 so we need that research and development time, that data flow
8 and storage needs to be considered, and then time to field test
9 and type approve, and, of course, again, we don't have funding
10 available right now to adapt this technology.

11
12 All right, and so now I just want to summarize, and this was a
13 very technical presentation, and so, again, I'm putting that
14 conceptual model up there for you to understand the different
15 options and where they fall in terms of capturing nonreporting.

16
17 If we did no validation, no trip validation, we would not be
18 able to use the data, because the estimates of catch and effort
19 would be too uncertain. If we went with something like
20 dockside intercepts to validate trips, we would be able to
21 account for an acceptable level of uncertainty in the data, and
22 then we would also be able to do things like represent
23 nonreporting and misreporting.

24
25 Of course, that does assume that we have an appropriate sample
26 size, that ratio of intercepts to trips, which, again, is
27 something that statisticians do in advance, to ensure the sample
28 size is appropriate.

29
30 We did already have that validation survey in place, as I
31 mentioned, and we could possibly rapidly reimplement this
32 solution, if that's preferred, and, of course, as I mentioned,
33 you can reduce uncertainty by increasing your sample size, which
34 is probably not possible, but we could also think about adding
35 that did-not-fish report requirement, because it does allow for
36 that rapid accounting of vessel activity, and also the
37 declaration, which helps to improve enforcement and compliance
38 capabilities, and then, again, the dockside intercepts are also
39 giving us that means to collect that important biological
40 information, and so lots of pros.

41
42 Then, of course, the risk though is that it's very costly for
43 the agency to implement this. We may not have funding, or we
44 could lose funding, and so that's a concern, and we would have
45 to come up with an alternative solution.

46
47 Then, of course, I mentioned those four different geofencing
48 options, in order to self-validate trips, and there are many

1 options out there, and some of them are going to take time and
2 money to research, to develop, and I want to just emphasize that
3 we may do that research and development and prove that the
4 option that we were trying to go with is not viable.

5
6 I put that example there of P-Sea WindPlot, because I came from
7 the shrimp industry, as the shrimp stock assessment scientist,
8 and so I was highly involved with all these conversations, and
9 it was a commendable idea by the shrimp industry, and I don't
10 want to not put that one, and they were already using this
11 software on their boats, and they just wanted to be able to
12 adapt that software to collect the positional data that they
13 need.

14
15 Unfortunately, after spending a couple of years researching it,
16 and putting money into this, we found that actually the VMS
17 units are a more reliable solution, and so I would just hate to
18 see the council go down a similar path, spinning their wheels,
19 and so throw caution to the wind there on that one. That's all
20 I have. Thank you very much, and I'm going to open the floor to
21 questions.

22
23 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Thank you for your presentation, Dr. Masi. I
24 have a couple of questions. Dr. Sweetman.

25
26 **DR. SWEETMAN:** Thank you for the presentation, Dr. Masi. So I
27 guess my question to you is -- So, obviously, we're on a new
28 venture here, trying to learn lessons from maybe our past
29 experience, moving forward there, but also kind of what the
30 South Atlantic Council is going through right now.

31
32 I think, similar to the previous discussion, I think the lowest
33 common denominator of what we want, but we want data that is
34 actually usable, and so I'm wondering if you could perhaps
35 explain, maybe, to the Gulf Council, maybe some of the issues
36 that the South Atlantic is having, in terms of utility of the
37 SEFHIER data and how, you know, your office recently sent a
38 letter out to the South Atlantic Council saying that that data
39 is not really usable, from a management perspective, and so I'm
40 trying to get above that, so we can actually have something
41 that's usable. Thanks, Dr. Masi.

42
43 **DR. MASI:** Thanks for your comment and question, and so I'm
44 going to just give you a high-level overview, and then, if Andy
45 wants to step in with more background, but, essentially, the
46 South Atlantic program, right now, does not have a trip
47 validation component to the program, and so that data cannot be
48 used for any type of management or stock assessment purposes.

1
2 We did send that letter, which mentioned, you know, some ways in
3 which they could get that sort of trip validation component, and
4 we emphasized that dockside intercepts might be that solution,
5 and so then, from there, if Andy wants to step in and provide
6 any more specific detail.

7
8 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Mr. Strelcheck.

9
10 **MR. STRELCHECK:** Just a quick history, right, and the councils,
11 at one point, went down a path of trying to align the programs.
12 They deviated at some point, I think when the Gulf Council was
13 considering VMS, but, you know, there are substantial
14 differences in the programs, and how they operated, even before
15 the lawsuit.

16
17 The main challenges, I think, that we're seeing, right, is, one,
18 the reporting frequency is weekly, rather than at the end of a
19 trip, and there is no hail-out, or hail-in, reporting
20 requirements, and so it's lack of accountability and then a lack
21 of essentially enforceability, and it's very difficult,
22 obviously, for us to monitor that program, and so, when we
23 approved the program, we acknowledged that it was going to
24 provide maybe a minimum level of fishing effort, but that there
25 was limitations to actually using the data, and that has
26 certainly come to fruition in kind of what we've seen so far
27 with the program.

28
29 They are, you know, beginning work on an amendment, and I've
30 been advising, right, that the Gulf and South Atlantic should be
31 coordinating with one another, and they should be paying close
32 attention to what we're doing over here, but certainly I think
33 the frequency of reporting is a very important aspect to the
34 programs, and then, ultimately, how we can validate that trips
35 are occurring, and that those reports are actually coming in is
36 a key aspect of both programs, going forward.

37
38 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Mr. Schieble.

39
40 **MR. SCHIEBLE:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I just have a comment
41 and then a quick question for Dr. Masi. In the original
42 program, we had the dockside reviewers, or intercepts, going on
43 for validation. From the state perspective, it was helpful for
44 us, because we lost a large chunk of the BioFIN funding that
45 gave us the ability to go get the age and growth data from
46 dockside intercepts, and so having more boots on the ground can
47 be beneficial, from the state perspective, to be able to get
48 some more of that information that we're currently not able to

1 provide for the stock assessments, in the quantity that we used
2 to be able to provide that.

3
4 My question is, as we work through this with the VMS different
5 options, and requirements, for the Shrimp Committee, we've been
6 told that we have to use basically the type-approved units that
7 are required within the fishery, and why do we not have to go
8 with that in this instance? So, for example, you had where the
9 captains could just to West Marine and pick up a unit, and it's
10 acceptable, and so I guess I'm missing the connection there, and
11 somebody -- Maybe Dr. Walter could clarify that as well, I
12 suppose.

13
14 **DR. MASI:** I can clarify it, and Dr. Walter can jump in if he
15 wants, and so the difference between the shrimp fishery and the
16 for-hire sector is that, for the for-hire sector, we have the
17 logbook, which is capturing the start and end time of the trip,
18 and the catch and all of that great stuff, right, and so we
19 don't really need a duplication of positional information to
20 tell us how long that trip went out, and where it went out from.
21 What we were using the VMS for SEFHIER was to validate whether a
22 trip occurred or not.

23
24 In the shrimp fishery, they're actually using the positional
25 data to estimate the speed of the vessel, which they use to
26 estimate the amount of effort, and so it's a bit different, and
27 so you can't get that from a dockside intercept, because we're
28 not going to be able to tell how fast the vessel is going, and
29 when it stopped to fish, and things like that, and so it's a bit
30 different of an application.

31
32 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Dr. Walter.

33
34 **DR. WALTER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I think, Michelle, you can
35 confirm that the units for SEFHIER were type approved, and so
36 they would be eligible for OLE reimbursement, correct?

37
38 **DR. MASI:** That's correct, yes, and so they went through the
39 type-approval process so that they could be a part of the
40 national VMS standards, and they were then able to go through
41 that reimbursement process.

42
43 **DR. WALTER:** A follow-up, and the second option, of using AIS
44 units, which would be separate from VMS, was not considered for
45 the shrimp fishery, particularly because a lot of the vessels
46 either have them, because of their size, but then often can
47 choose to turn them off, and they aren't required to have them
48 on, and I think there was concerns relative to privacy, with

1 respect to AIS units, because they would be open, and available,
2 to anyone who could see them, and I think that was a major
3 concern for the fishery.

4

5 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Mr. Anson.

6

7 **MR. KEVIN ANSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm not on your
8 committee. Dr. Masi, thanks for the presentation. I can't
9 remember any discussion about it, but, in terms of the cost,
10 related to dockside surveying that was in SEFHIER, the APAIS
11 dockside survey could potentially be used to fill in that gap,
12 and did you all have any discussion about that, as to whether or
13 not APAIS dockside sampling could be part of that validation?

14

15 **DR. MASI:** I will provide a response, and then I'll go to Dr.
16 Stephen, if she's online and wants to step in and add some
17 additional information, but, essentially, when we were running
18 our SEFHIER dockside validation survey, there was lots of
19 discussion, from our state reps who were involved in the survey,
20 who said, you know, why don't we do something like a blended
21 survey, because we already have folks that are going out to
22 these docks and doing this MRIP APAIS survey, and it was a
23 really great idea.

24

25 Unfortunately, at the time, we established our SEFHIER
26 validation survey such that they were completely separate, and
27 so the staff were separate and all of that, and so something
28 that we've been thinking, coming into this, is, if the council
29 did decide to go with this dockside intercept survey as the trip
30 validation component, it's to start thinking better and planning
31 in advance how we can do more of a blended survey and do maybe
32 some sort of joint survey with that APAIS survey.

33

34 Now, that being said, I know that some of the states are moving
35 away, some of our Gulf states are moving away, from doing the
36 APAIS survey, but there's still that potential that we can work
37 jointly with the states, to have better coordination, in order
38 to save resources and do a more blended survey,

39

40 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Thank you, Dr. Masi. Captain Walker, and then
41 we need to wrap this discussion up, and we can finish it at Full
42 Council, if we need.

43

44 **MR. WALKER:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Just a couple of points.
45 I think we could, when the time is right, go ahead and just
46 remove the AIS consideration. It's the least private, and there
47 was privacy concerns before. I have the app on my phone, and I
48 could show you where all the shrimp boats are right now in the

1 Gulf, and so no charter boat guy is going to sign-up for that,
2 and so that's considered, but rejected, in my mind.

3
4 Also -- I have a few things, and we'll finish them up later, but
5 almost all of these include the state that must update every
6 three hours, to capture all the trips, and, to me, that almost
7 makes them all VMS, right, if you're going to be tracked all the
8 time, and that was what the initial issue was, and am I missing
9 something there, Dr. Masi?

10
11 **DR. MASI:** No, I think you're correct, and I was trying to
12 reiterate that point, is that I think they're all equivalent to
13 VMS, and we do already have VMS, and so, if that's the intended
14 trip validation option, then we have this VMS solution already.

15
16 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** All right. I'm just going to ask this quick
17 question, and then we'll wrap this up, and we might have to
18 bring it up, the discussion, at Full Council, but, Dr. Masi, at
19 the beginning of your presentation, you were talking about
20 active self-validation, versus passive self-validation, and is
21 that something that this council needs to consider for this
22 document, and not that I want to add any more to it, but do we
23 need to consider a hail-out and hail-in alternative, like we did
24 with the SEFHIER, so, at the very least, you know when they're
25 going?

26
27 Then just a quick question, I hope, and, again, we can finish it
28 at Full Council, if need be, and is there the possibility, kind
29 of like the Alternative 3 and up to 20 percent reporting for the
30 economic, and is it a possibility to have a random or a -- I
31 think we've discussed this before, but a voluntary basis, or
32 volunteers, I should say, to participate in a VMS program, if
33 that helps?

34
35 **DR. MASI:** So I'm going to try to respond to this, and hopefully
36 it will be clear, but feel free to ask any follow-up questions.
37 So, as we've been assessing these economic data questions, and
38 whether we have a census or a sample, as I showed that
39 conceptual diagram of the uncertainty, when you do something
40 like a dockside intercept, you already are more at the, you
41 know, higher side of uncertainty.

42
43 When you go with something like geofencing, you have more
44 uncertainty than you have with VMS, and so everything that you
45 kind of take apart, take out, from the options, then you add
46 more uncertainty, and so, sure, we could do some sort of sample-
47 based approach, but, again, if you're trying to actually get a
48 representation of nonreporting, and we're already reducing your

1 sample size to those other alternatives than just straight VMS,
2 then you're reducing your ability to actually estimate
3 nonreporting, and so just throw caution to the wind.

4
5 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** At Full Council, will you be available at that
6 time?

7
8 **DR. MASI:** Yes, I will be.

9
10 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Thank you. Dr. Hollensead, do you want to take
11 us through our next item, Discussion of the NOAA Fisheries
12 Guidance on MRIP-FES Transition Document?

13
14 **DISCUSSION OF THE NOAA FISHERIES GUIDANCE ON MRIP-FES TRANSITION**
15 **DOCUMENT**

16
17 **DR. HOLLENSEAD:** Yes, Madam Chair. The Office of Science and
18 Technology has recently developed and released the NOAA
19 Fisheries Guidance on MRIP-FES Transition, and that is available
20 in your meeting materials, for review. This document was
21 produced by OST as guidance for the MRIP-FES transitions until
22 the result of a pilot study is completed. This pilot study aims
23 to gain a clearer understanding of the differences in effort
24 estimates between the current survey design and a revised design
25 that changes both the MRIP-FES question order and increases the
26 frequency of sampling, monthly instead of every two months, to
27 improve response accuracy.

28
29 The follow-up study is being conducted over the full course of
30 the 2024 calendar year, with the revised design administered
31 alongside the current MRIP-FES design.

32
33 The timeline for the calibrated time series of catch and effort
34 estimates, rescaled to the revised design, becoming available
35 for incorporation into stock assessments, is anticipated no
36 later than the spring of 2026, which is the normal release for
37 the 2025 estimates. This is contingent upon successful
38 development, implementation, and review of the updated MRIP-FES
39 calibration model, as well as favorable results from the follow-
40 up study.

41
42 Dr. Evan Howell is in the room, and he's available to answer any
43 committee questions. This presentation is information, and it's
44 to bring it up at the committee meeting, that this has been
45 published by that office. No action is required, but if, at any
46 point, anybody from the committee had some clarifying questions,
47 those could get answered today. Madam Chair.

48

1 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Any questions on this agenda item? Seeing none
2 -- I'm sorry. I didn't see you, C.J. Sorry. Dr. Sweetman.

3
4 **DR. SWEETMAN:** Thanks, and, for you, Evan, and so we say that
5 we'll potentially get an update at kind of the midpoint here for
6 the follow-up study, and we're halfway through the year, and I'm
7 just curious of timing, from you all's perspective, of what the
8 midpoint time will be.

9
10 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Briefly, yes.

11
12 **DR. RICHARD CODY:** C.J., what I can say right now is that the
13 side-by-side study is ongoing. We've done two successful waves
14 of data collection, and so no hitches so far, in terms of, you
15 know, data -- Problems with the data collection. We're seeing
16 similar response rates. We don't have any kind of data results,
17 in terms of, you know, my ability to present those here, and I
18 think it would be premature at this point, since we only have
19 two waves. The third wave starts this week, or next week, and
20 so we start collection then, and so that would be about half a
21 year's worth of data at that point.

22
23 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Thank you, Dr. Cody. Any other questions? I
24 think the next agenda item, Update on Status of Commercial ELB
25 Document, would that be Dr. Walter?

26
27 **DR. HOLLENSSEAD:** No, Madam Chair. That's going to be Sydney
28 Alhale, and she is online to give us that report.

29
30 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Okay. Go ahead.

31
32 **UPDATE ON STATUS OF COMMERCIAL ELB DOCUMENT**

33
34 **MS. SYDNEY ALHALE:** Hi, everyone. I am Sydney Alhale, and I'm
35 of the Southeast Fisheries Science Center, and I'm leading the
36 transition to electronic logbooks for commercial. Our update is
37 that implementation is still pending the permits database being
38 fixed. We are currently working on the infrastructure and
39 database design, and we are shooting for a volunteer group to
40 test out that infrastructure in late 2024, with mandatory
41 implementation in June of 2025.

42
43 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** Awesome. Thank you for that update. Any
44 questions? Captain Walker.

45
46 **MR. WALKER:** Have you selected a group to test them out yet, or
47 how would one get involved with that?

1 **MS. ALHALE:** We do have a list of vessels that have expressed
2 interest in the past, but, if you are interested, contact our
3 office, and we can put you on that list.

4

5 **MR. WALKER:** Very good. Thank you.

6

7 **CHAIRMAN BOGGS:** All right. Seeing no other questions, that
8 brings us to Other Business. There was no other business added
9 to the agenda, and so, Mr. Chair, I turn it back to you with
10 fourteen minutes to spare, or, actually, I had an extra hour, I
11 guess.

12

13 (Whereupon, the meeting adjourned on June 24, 2024.)

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