

# Fishery Monitoring and Research Priorities for 2025-2028

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council





# Background: Council Research and Monitoring Priorities

- **Purpose:** Council identifies research and monitoring priorities to address data gaps
- **Timeline:** List is periodically updated (i.e., 4-5 years); current priorities cover the 2025-2028 Council grant cycle
- **Review Process:** The Council is revisiting its priorities and seeking feedback from the SSC
- **Distribution:** Once approved by the Council, the priority list is shared with NMFS and is posted on the Council website
- **Impact:** Intended to focus research and monitoring needs to improve federal fisheries management



# Request for SSC Review and Input

**SSC initially reviewed draft priorities at its July 2025 meeting and made several requests:**

**Short Notice:** Difficulty in reviewing extensive priority list quickly

- *Provided additional time for review at October meeting*

**Priority Labeling:** Concerns over too many items marked as "Priority A"

- *Abandoned the ranking system*
- *Acknowledge that this list is not exhaustive, there are other priorities that could be addressed given sufficient resources. Items listed reflect the highest priority items.*

# Overview of Changes



## SSC requests continued:

### **Suggestion:** Streamline and categorize priorities more selectively

- *Categories have been streamlined focusing more on themes or issues rather than specific data components*
- *Specific needs may change and may not accommodate new research*

### **Value:** Consider if time spent on list is justified by its impact

- *Contacted partners at NMFS to learn more about how this list is used and could be improved. Presentation planned at this meeting.*



# I: Monitoring Program Needs

Why so much monitoring in the priorities list?

- Monitoring supports Gulf-wide and long-term data for stock assessments
  - Smaller (or short-term) studies more typical of individual investigators can be difficult to incorporate into stock assessments
  - Monitoring programs often provide data/samples for research



## II: Species-Specific Priorities

How are the priority species selected?

- Focus on species in **rebuilding programs** and “**key**” stocks
  - **Red Snapper**
  - **Greater Amberjack**
  - Gray Triggerfish
  - **Gag**
  - **Red Grouper**
  - **Gray Snapper**
- Reviewed recommendations from most recent stock assessment
  - Recognize that new research may develop solutions to challenges that are not identified here

# III: Economic and Social Recommendations



- Economic and social effects of management measures
- Individual Fishing Quota research
- Fishing behavioral models
- Social and economic indicators
- Social and economic impacts of allocation and reallocation
- Incentive-based management of recreational fisheries

# IV: Ecosystem-Based Management Recommendations



What information is needed to make progress toward EBFM?

- Data and monitoring to improve our holistic understanding of ecosystem components and their interactions
- Modeling efforts to account for impacts of environmental pressures on fisheries productivity
  - Ecosystem perspective to improve single species management

# Southeast Strategic Plan

## NOAA Southeast Strategic plan 2024-2027- (3) Strategic Goals

1. Adaptively manage fisheries for sustainability and economic competitiveness
2. Safeguard species and propel their recovery
3. Diversify the workforce, promote equity and environmental justice, and improve our mission performance through organizational excellence

## **Council suggested priorities are consistent with the SE strategic planning document goals**

- Research for monitoring informs management of fisheries and economic impacts
- Bycatch estimates, discard estimates, species-specific life history= informed management
- Emphasis on species in rebuilding plans is consistent with goal #2 to safeguard species and propel their recovery

# SSC Recommendations & Next Steps



## Feedback requested

- Recommendations about priorities:
  - Did we miss high priority items?
  - Did we include items that may not be a high priority?
  - Recommendations to improve the dissemination of Council priorities to funding agencies and investigators
- Next Steps:
  - Present to Council along with SSC feedback
  - Once approved, posted on Council website and shared with NMFS.