Sustainable Fisheries Goal Implementation Team (GIT) Meeting

Williamsburg, Virginia
December 1st-2nd, 2010

Key Outcomes:

- Fisheries Ecosystem Workgroup (FEW) summarized progress toward developing an Index of Ecosystem Based Fisheries Management. Discussion identified the following potential areas where the FEW can provide technical advice/scientific synthesis in support of Sustainable Fisheries GIT priorities:
    - Characterize and communicate land-use impacts on fisheries;
    - Build/Improve models to help understand complex ecosystem interactions and allow scenario testing (e.g. assessing ecological and economic tradeoffs).
    - Identify ecosystem approaches and indicators that can be applied to fisheries management in the near term.
- Fisheries GIT Executive Committee agreed that blue catfish constitute an invasive species that demands further management consideration.
    - Fisheries GIT brainstormed several management alternatives (e.g. eradication) but did not reach a consensus on any specific near term management actions.
    - Based on science advice from presenters, eradication of this species was deemed not viable
- Fisheries GIT established and tasked a blue catfish workgroup to develop a "best effort" stock assessment (population estimate) to determine best alternative policy options to be considered at the next full GIT meeting. This is a step forward in coordinating the development of an interjurisdictional agreement/policy between the Bay states on blue catfish.
- The Oyster Metric Team identified next steps in developing common oyster restoration metrics. First the team will define what constitutes restored vs. non-restored and then define specific achievable goals and objectives for tributary based ecological oyster restoration. The team will meet again in mid January and report findings to the Fisheries GIT Executive Committee in March. These goals and metrics will promote consistent accountability and evaluation of oyster restoration efforts across the Chesapeake Bay.
- Influencing land use decisions/activities that negatively affect fisheries health and sustainability remains a high priority for the Fisheries GIT. The Fisheries GIT agreed there is a need to develop visualization tools that can be used to show and communicate the impacts land use decisions have on fish habitat, abundance, distribution, and ultimately sustainability.

Action Items:

1.) Executive Committee to vote on changes to the charter, workplan, and research needs the GIT members supplied at the meeting.
2.) Establish blue catfish workgroup
    - This group will further investigate this species and develop management options for GIT consideration
    - Executive Committee:
        - Develop clear tasks/guidance for Blue catfish workgroup
        - Contact agencies to determine what the FDA/state regulations are for consumption
        - Ensure inclusion of all stakeholders in developing policy and develop communication products on the issue
        - Establish awareness and linkages at ASMFC
        - Contact Mid-Atlantic Panel on Aquatic Invasive Species
3.) Oyster Metric Team
        - Define endpoint(s) for what constitutes a restored tributary
        - Define specific achievable goals and objectives for tributary based ecological oyster restoration
4.) Baywide & Coordinated Fish Stock Monitoring
    - Executive Committee: Determine next steps for improving and integrating fisheries monitoring
5.) Keep schedules free for next Fisheries GIT meeting the week of June 6th-10th

---

Background:

The Sustainable Fisheries Goal Implementation Team (GIT) is focused on facilitating fisheries management that encourages sustainable Chesapeake Bay fish populations, supports viable recreational and commercial fisheries, and promotes natural ecosystem function. The Fisheries GIT provides the forum to discuss fishery management issues that cross state and other jurisdictional boundaries. The Fisheries GIT is also working to better connect science to management decisions and create a framework/mechanism for implementing ecosystem-based approaches to fisheries management. The second official meeting of the full Sustainable Fisheries Goal Implementation Team was convened on December 1st-2nd, 2010 in Williamsburg, Virginia.

Facilitator: Dana Goodson (RESOLVE)

List of Attendees:

Sustainable Fisheries GIT Executive Committee Members

Peyton Robertson (NOAA)
Tom O'Connell (MD DNR)
Jack Travelstead (VMRC)
A.C. Carpenter (PRFC)
Bob Beal (ASMFC)

Sustainable Fisheries GIT Members

Suzan Bulbukaya (Chesapeake Bay Commission)
Bill Goldsborough (CBF)
Ron Lukens (Omega Protein)
Mark Mansfield (USACE; *teleconferencing*)
Matt Mullen (EDF)
Mike Slattery (US FWS; *Panelist*)
Dave Sutherland (US FWS)
David Whitehurst (VADGIF; *Panelist*)
Trent Zivkovich (Coastal Conservation Association)
Jack Brooks (MD Tidal Fish Advisory Committee; *Proxy: Bill Sieling*)
Jim Gracie (Maryland Sportfish; *Proxy: Bill Windley*)
Mark Bryer (The Nature Conservancy; *Proxy: Andrew Lacatell*)

Fisheries Ecosystem Workgroup (FEW)

Jonathan Kramer (MD Sea Grant)
Shannon Green (MD Sea Grant)
Alesia Read (MD Sea Grant)
Ed Houde (UMCES-CBL)
Eric Johnson (SERC)
Rom Lipcius (VIMS)
Doug Lipton (UMD)
Tom Miller (UMCES-CBL)
Howard Townsend (NOAA)
Troy Tuckey (VIMS)

GIT-FEW Liaisons

Lynne Fegley (MD DNR; *webinar*)
Rob O'Reily (VMRC)
Patrick Campfield (ASFMC; *webinar*)

GIT Staff

Bruce Vogt (NOAA)
Adam Davis (CRC)
Nancy Butowski (MD DNR; *webinar*)

Panelists

Mary Fabrizio (VIMS)
Greg Garmin (VCU)
Bob Greenlee (VADGIF)
Mary Groves (MD DNR)
Heath Kelsey (UMCES – EcoCheck)
Eric Weissberger (MD DNR)
Jim Wesson (VMRC)
Mark Luckenbach (VIMS)
Ken Paynter (UMD-UMCES)
Kevin Sellner (CRC-STAC)
Angie Sowers (USACE)
Stephanie Westby (NOAA)

Guests

Daniel Beck (MD Waterman's Association)
Joyce Beck (Waterwoman)
Derek Orner (NOAA; *webinar*)
Michael L. Fine (VCU)
Zack Ghahramani (VCU)
Tim Hagan (Catfish Nation)
Troy Hartley (VA Sea Grant; VIMS)
Paula Jasinski (Chesapeake Environmental Communications)
Yasha Mohajer (VCU)
Steve McIninch (VCU)
Mitchell Norman (VADGIF)
Edward Sismour (VA State Univ.)
Rose Wills (Catfish Nation)

Meeting Summary & Minutes:

Day 1 *– The Williamsburg Hospitality House Hotel Conference Room*

Welcome

Objectives: *Inform on progress since June meeting and request feedback to finalize charter and workplan*

- **Agenda Review**
  - Peyton Robertson welcomed all meeting participants and gave a brief synopsis of what to expect from the agenda throughout the course of the meeting.
- **What's new**
  - **Executive Committee Progress**
    - Progress the Fisheries GIT Executive Committee has made since the June full GIT meeting was discussed.
  - **Charter Finalization**
    - The charter has undergone some membership changes and the Fisheries Ecosystem Workgroup has added two new sections for adoption by the full GIT.
  - **Workplan**
    - The workplan was completed and built on Fisheries GIT input from the June GIT meeting as well as the Chesapeake Bay Executive Order Strategy/Action Plan.
  - **Science and Research Needs**
    - The GIT has been compiling a table of research needs to address fishery management issues. This document was distributed to the full GIT and to the Fisheries Ecosystem Workgroup for comment, but the Executive Committee was not happy with the low number of responses. Expect to see more participation in following years.

Fisheries Ecosystem Workgroup Progress Report

Objectives: *Provide updates on Ecosystem Based Fisheries Management (EBFM) progress and facilitate discussion between managers, stakeholders, and researchers*

- **Quantitative Ecosystem Team (QET) Presentations *(Presentations; 30 min each)***
  - **Tom Miller – Stock Dynamics Ecosystem Drivers and Reference Points for EBFM**
    - Tom presented on the fisheries management indicators underlying stock dynamics ecosystem drivers and their related reference points for EBFM.
  - **Rom Lipcius – Habitat Suitability Ecosystem Drivers and Reference Points for EBFM**
    - Rom discussed habitat characteristics/factors that Bay species rely upon, and how these parameters can positively or negatively affect EBFM.
  - **Doug Lipton – Socioeconomic Ecosystem Drivers and Reference Points for EBFM**
    - Doug reviewed the regional impacts (i.e. commercial income, recreational benefits, cultural knowledge and values, etc.) and their reference points relating to EBFM.
  - **Howard Townsend – Foodweb Ecosystem Drivers and Reference Points for EBFM**
    - Howard presented on the foodweb dynamics involved in making EBFM connections. His presentation reviewed the foodweb components within the Bay, highlighted cross-species issues, and suggested potential for EBFM metrics.
- **Facilitated Discussion with Fisheries GIT members led by Jon Kramer *(1 hour)***
  - Key Topics from this Discussion:
    - 1.) Characterizing and communicating land-use impacts on fisheries.
    - 2.) Importance of models in understanding complex ecosystem interactions and allowing scenario testing (e.g. assessing ecological and economic tradeoffs).
    - 3.) Identifying ecosystem approaches and indicators that can be applied to fisheries management *now*.

Day 2 *– William & Mary Alumni House – Leadership Hall*

Welcome and Agenda Review – *Peyton Robertson, Chair and Dana Goodson, RESOLVE facilitator*

- Peyton welcomed participants to day two of the meeting, and introduced Dana Goodson (facilitator).
- Dana welcomed the group and walked through the agenda, ground rules, and operating procedures for the meeting.

Blue Catfish Presentations & Panel

Objective: *Learn about the best available science on Blue Catfish*

- **Mary Fabrizio (VIMS) – Scientific Foundation: What we know and don't know** ***(Presentation 35 min; Q&A 10 min)***
    - Mary presented on the scientific background underlying Blue Catfish and how they are impacting the Chesapeake Bay. She talked about their basic life history and physiological/ecological parameters.
- **Dave Whitehurst (VADGIF) – Virginia Perspective and Historical Context** ***(Presentation 5 min; Q&A 5 min)***
    - Dave explained the history of blue catfish as they relate to the Chesapeake Bay. He discussed their introduction, by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) in 1973, to their current state of proliferation.
- **Bob Greenlee (VADGIF) – Blue and Flathead Catfish Science** ***(Presentation 15 min; Q&A 5 min)***
    - Bob gave an overview of some of the work that VDGIF has conducted related to blue catfish populations in tidal rivers. Their research involved low-frequency electrofishing surveys throughout the Virginia portion of the Bay.
- **Greg Garman (VCU) – Flathead Catfish** ***(Presentation 10 min; Q&A 5 min)***
    - Greg talked about the relationships (both similarities and differences) between flathead catfish and blue catfish. Both were introduced species into the Chesapeake system which have comparable stories, but vastly differing outcomes.
- **Mike Slattery (USFWS) – Lessons Learned: Nutria and Mute Swan Examples** ***(Presentation 10 min; Q&A 5 min)***
    - Mike talked about how he and his group went about the eradication of nutria and mute swans within the Chesapeake Bay watershed. He provided some 'lessons learned' advice for developing invasive species policy and management.
- **Mary Groves (MDDNR) – Potomac River Blue Catfish** ***(Presentation 10 min; Q&A 5 min)***
    - Mary presented on data compiled from her DNR electrofishing surveys throughout the Maryland portion of the Bay. She has come across blue catfish throughout the Bay (i.e. Potomac, Patuxent, Nanticoke, lower-Susquehanna, and some upper-Bay tributaries as well).

Blue Catfish Public Comment Session

- **Tim Hagan** (Catfish Nation)
    - Fishing on lower Potomac since late 1960s
    - Caught first blue catfish in Potomac in 1978
    - Potomac is one of the top blue catfish rivers in the USA

    - Price of blue catfish went up when the restrictions allowed for one fish/day
    - Majority don't want to go through citation process
    - Thinks blue catfish are following bait fish out to the Bay and then returning following salinity gradients
    - He is catching 30-40lbs fish at mouth of Potomac
- **Danny Beck**
    - First started catching flathead catfish in the upper bay 7 years ago
    - Thinks channel catfish will not associate with blue catfish
    - August and February are only months where he can get $1/lb. Rest of year is $0.50
    - Waterman cannot make money with the current system
    - When did you first start catching flathead catfish in the upper bay?
        - 7 years ago

Policy Discussion & Brainstorming – *Facilitated Discussion*
Objectives: *Decide whether to work on consistent policy throughout the Bay; generate ideas for management options; and decide on next steps*

- All Executive Committee members agreed that blue catfish are invasive and are having potentially detrimental impacts with their proliferation, diet, and habitat needs.
- The GIT established a blue catfish workgroup to operate under the guidance of the Fisheries GIT and Executive Committee. This group will synthesize the science and recommend approaches for managing blue catfish. This is a big step forward in using the GIT to coordinate the development of an interjurisdictional agreement/policy between the Bay states on blue catfish.

Oyster Team Goals and Metrics
Objectives: *Learn about the oyster team's proposed tasks and ideas for metrics and give feedback on the team's proposals*

- **Presentation/Discussion about Oyster Team *(30 min)***
    - The core oyster team presented their perspectives of the charge bestowed to them from the Executive Committee. This group will define "restoration success" through ecological metrics such as reef community composition and structure, water filtration and nutrient cycling, and self-sustaining populations that can be scientifically evaluated using common monitoring and assessment protocols. These goals and metrics will promote progress and facilitate accountability in restoration efforts to meet the Chesapeake Bay Executive Order Oyster Outcome. The following will be considered by the team over the next four months (March 15, 2011) in consultation with experts from across the region: 1) Develop bay wide restoration goals (success/performance metrics) for a sustainable oyster populations that include specific, compatible and quantitative goals for ecological function and ecosystem services from

restored oyster populations. 2) Develop and identify support for a bay-wide complementary survey and monitoring and assessment program of oyster abundance and other key physical, chemical, and ecological parameters that will allow consistent evaluation of progress toward the oyster restoration goals.

Oyster Data Tool

Objectives: *Learn about the Oyster Data Tool and give feedback and suggestions for improving the tool*

- **Presentation by Howard Townsend on Oyster Data Tool - Chesapeake Bay Ecosystem Integrated Information System (CBEIIS) – *(30 min)***
    - Howard presented a recently developed oyster data tool that can be used to select possible/historical oyster reefs online. It utilizes a user friendly interface that will make oyster reef research/identification much easier.

Looking Ahead

Objective: *Receive updates on future topics for the Sustainable Fisheries GIT Team to address*

- **Land Use Activities Affecting Fisheries**
    - **Presentation by Heath Kelsey *(10 min)***
        - Heath talked about the issues regarding land-use throughout the Bay watershed and how this can impact fisheries management in the Bay. He discussed the need to identify highly significant areas that could have vast impacts on fisheries.
        - The GIT will work with people like Heath to develop visualization tools that can be used to show the impacts land use decisions have on fish habitat, abundance, distribution, and ultimately harvest.
- **Recommendations for development of baywide fish stock monitoring programs**
    - **Presentation by Kevin Sellner *(10 min)***
        - Kevin Sellner gave a presentation outlining the 2006 *Baywide & Coordinated Fish Stock Monitoring Report*. There are a lot of ideas in this document that can help fisheries managers develop a means to evolve monitoring techniques into what the future Chesapeake Bay needs. This document deserves another look and further investigation.

Options for Next Meeting

- **Review list of potential agenda topics for next meeting**
    - Progress of the blue catfish workgroup
    - Land use activities
        - SARP – talk to them on related issues
        - National Fish Habitat Plan Initiative

        - MAFMC meeting – fisheries habitat workshop
    - Baywide fish stock monitoring
    - Oyster Metric Team
    - Blue crab stock assessment and abundance target
- **Suggested potential meeting locations**
    - Washington, D.C.
    - Potomac River
    - Consideration: Accessibility for GIT members (especially with travel funding)
- **Review proposed meeting dates and identify conflicts with other meetings**
    - Consensus agreed to targeting the week of the 6th for our next full GIT meeting

June, 2011 Full GIT Meeting Dates						
Sunday	**Monday**	**Tuesday**	**Wednesday**	**Thursday**	**Friday**	**Saturday**
			1	**2**	**3**	**4**
5	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**	**11**
	Please try to keep this week clear in your calendars					
12	**13**	**14**	**15**	**16**	**17**	**18**
	SAFMC	SAFMC, MAFMC	SAFMC, MAFMC	SAFMC, MAFMC	SAFMC	
19	**20**	**21**	**22**	**23**	**24**	**25**
	CBP MB	NEFMC	NEFMC	NEFMC		
26	**27**	**28**	**29**	**30**		
		VMRC				