Sustainable Fisheries Goal Implementation Team
Invasive Catfish Policy Recommendations

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Invasive Catfish Policy Formally Adopted January 27th, 2012

•Include blue catfish and flathead catfish in public awareness campaigns targeting invasive species, including efforts to prevent further introductions;

•Improve scientific understanding of blue catfish and flathead catfish biology and population dynamics;

•Develop models that will aid in better understanding the potential impacts of non-native species on the fish community;

•Develop, evaluate, and implement a set of management measures (e.g. increased harvest and/or nutrient reduction) aimed at controlling populations and mitigating adverse effects of blue and flathead catfish while recognizing that these two catfish species currently support fisheries with economic and recreational value;

•Identify high-risk/high-value opportunities for containment and/or mitigation; assessing risk of expansion and ecological resource valuation by developing an integrated online decision support tool.

What's Next?

- Establish bay wide invasive catfish management measures using the best available science to lessen the adverse effects of invasive catfish species.

Recommendations

Establish an Invasive Catfish Task Force

-A team of scientists, managers, and market specialists;

Goals of the Invasive Catfish Taskforce

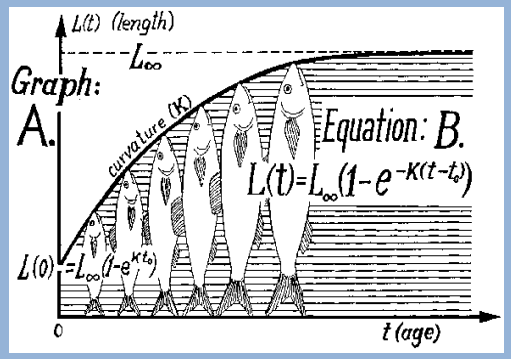
-Establish Invasive Catfish Fisheries Management Plan coordinating actions and integrating the five policy objectives;

-Focus on recommending management measures and actions to mitigate impacts of invasive catfish to the fisheries GIT;

Include blue catfish and flathead catfish in public awareness campaigns targeting invasive species, including efforts to prevent further introductions;

(In Progress)

-Finalize and prep invasive catfish outreach document completed by DCDOE



Improve scientific understanding of blue catfish and flathead catfish biology and population dynamics;
(In Progress)

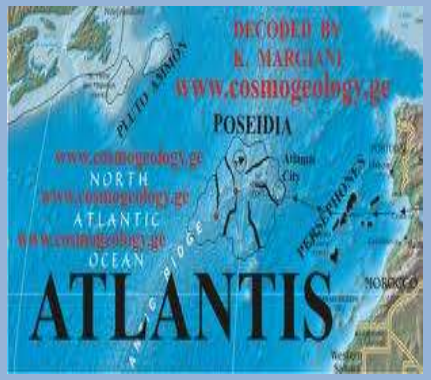
Critical knowledge gaps identified, NCBO is funding the following projects:

-(2/1/2012-1/31/2014)SERC: Trophic Dynamics in Blue Catfish

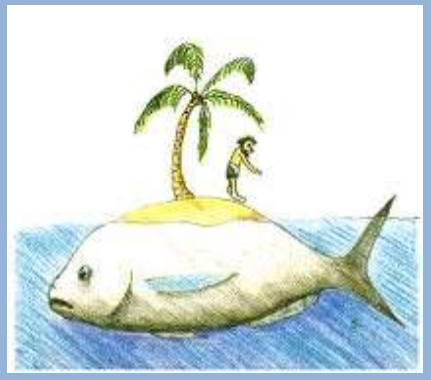
-(9/1/2011-8/31/2014)VIMS: Population Assessment and Survival Rates

-(8/1/2011-7/31/2012)VIMS: Growth Dynamics in Chesapeake Bay Watershed

-(7/1/2011-6/31/2012)VCU: Blue catfish predation as a novel source of mortality on other fisheries resources.

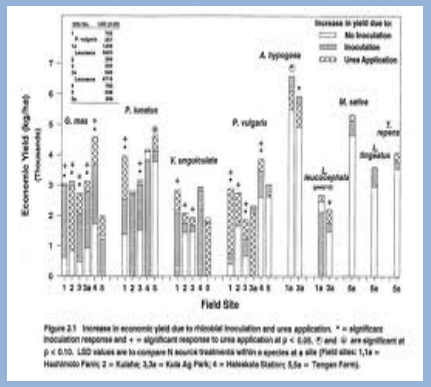


•Develop models that will aid in better understanding the potential impacts of non-native species on the fish community;
(In Progress)



-(4/1/2012-11/31/2012): NCBO Modeling Team: Expansion of the Chesapeake Bay Fisheries Ecosystem Model to a spatially specific tool to model scenario efficacy in specific tributaries.

-(10/1/2012): NCBO Modeling Team: Begin application of Atlantis (whole ecosystem model) to bracket the uncertainty around the ecosystem effects of the invasive catfish species

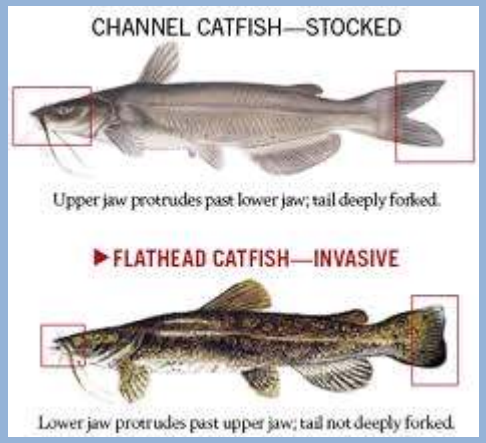


Develop, evaluate, and implement a set of management measures (e.g. increased harvest and/or nutrient reduction) aimed at controlling populations and mitigating adverse effects of blue and flathead catfish while recognizing that these two catfish species currently support fisheries with economic and recreational value;

(Priority Action Item)

- Adopt minimum level of compliance for all jurisdictions
    - Strictly banning and enforcing live removals
    - Mandate invasive catfish postings and circulation with jurisdictional regulatory materials

- Consider and evaluate the continuation of citation programs
    - Should jurisdictions continue to invest resources on citation programs for invasive species?
    - Do citation programs support catch and release fisheries?
    - Could programs be modified to support citations awarded for those fish that are no longer alive?



•Identify high-risk/high-value opportunities for containment and/or mitigation; assessing risk of expansion and ecological resource valuation by developing an integrated online decision support tool.
(In Progress)

-(4/1/2012-11/31/2012): NCBO: Spatial Chesapeake Bay Fisheries Ecosystem Model.

-VCU: Catfish Portal, An integrated decision support tool for blue catfish

-(9/1/2011-8/31/2012)VIMS: Evaluation of contaminants and implications on using fisheries as a population control mechanism.

Decisional

- Today

  -Decision on assembling task force.

  -Recommendations of addition members to add to the task force.

  -Fisheries management plan for invasive catfish as major goal for the task force.

  -Timeline…

Membership

Current members

-Nancy Butowski (MD DNR)
-Mary Fabrizio (VIMS)
-Greg Garman (VCU)
-Bob Greenlee (VDGIF)
-Joe Grist (VMRC)
-Mary Groves (MD DNR)
-Derek Orner (NMFS)

Suggested Additions

-Robert Hale (VIMS)
-Tim Groves (MD DNR)
-Danny Ryan (DC DOE)
-Steve Vilnut (MD DNR)