



Chesapeake Bay Program Sustainable Fisheries Goal Implementation Team

March 2014 Update

Our Vision: The Sustainable Fisheries Goal Implementation Team (Fisheries GIT) brings a wide group of managers, scientists, and stakeholders together to improve management and maintain the sustainability of commercially and ecologically important Chesapeake Bay fisheries. The Fisheries GIT is working across jurisdictional boundaries and applying the best available science to support ecosystem-based decisions.

Fall/Winter 2013-2014 Accomplishments

The full Fisheries GIT, the Executive Committee, and the GIT's workgroups have continued to collaborate on science and policy issues to support sustainable Chesapeake Bay fisheries. Recent highlights include:

Blue Crabs

- CBSAC is gearing up for analysis of the Winter Dredge Survey results and development of the 2014 Blue Crab Advisory Report which is set to be complete in June.
- CBSAC developed and will evaluate the new gear selectivity sampling design which was implemented in this year's WDS to improve gear efficiency estimates.
- CBSAC is reviewing a proposed VMRC management trigger for future use in the Virginia blue crab fishery.

Invasive Catfish

- The Invasive Catfish Task Force is finalizing their report for submission to the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) for peer review.
- The Task Force's seven management recommendations explained in their report were presented to the Executive Committee and senior natural resources managers from Virginia DGIF, Pennsylvania, and Delaware. The recommendations fall into three major categories: Reduce Populations, Limit Spread, and Public Outreach. The managers agreed to commit time to further explore implementing these recommendations for their jurisdiction.

Oysters

- 67.7 acres of reefs were constructed and/or planted in 2013 in Harris Creek, which brings the total restoration action to 188.6 acres in Harris since 2011.
- Discussions have begun among Virginia partners to begin planning tributary-scale oyster restoration for the Piankatank and Lafayette.

Forage Fish

- The Fisheries GIT and Tom Ihde, Fisheries GIT liaison to the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC), submitted a proposal and was approved for funding for a STAC-funded workshop to assess the Chesapeake Bay forage base.
- Tom Ihde and Ed Houde (CBL) are co-chairing this effort and leading a workshop Steering Committee comprised of Fisheries GIT members and experts from across the Bay.
- The proposed outcomes of this workshop are based on discussions by the full Fisheries GIT at their December 2013 meeting and are an important step toward EBFM.

Chesapeake Bay New Watershed Agreement

- The new Agreement will establish the Bay Program's restoration goals through the year 2025. The current draft includes a Sustainable Fisheries Goal with five fisheries outcomes: blue crab abundance, blue crab management, oyster restoration, forage fish, and fish habitat.
- The new Agreement is set to be signed this June by the seven Bay jurisdictions, the Chesapeake Bay Commission, and EPA representing the federal government.
- Once the new Agreement is signed, the Fisheries GIT will be responsible for developing Management Strategies that explain how the Fisheries GIT and Bay Program partners will work to achieve the fisheries outcomes.

ASMFC Striped Bass Management Board

- Draft Addenda IV and V will be considered for public comment at the May 2014 ASMFC meeting. These addenda would propose changes to fishing mortality reference points, including stock-specific reference points for the Chesapeake Bay, and potential management measures to achieve the new reference points.

Executive Committee Monthly Meetings

At monthly Fisheries GIT Executive Committee meetings Bay scientists and policy administrators discuss various topics including:

- Derelict Fishing Gear Assessment in the Chesapeake Bay
 - Jason Landrum and Nancy Wallace (NOAA)
 - NOAA Marine Debris Division is planning a Derelict Fishing Gear (DFG) Regional Impact Assessment for the Chesapeake to better understand the impacts and causes of DFG. This work in the Chesapeake will serve as a template for future work in other regions.
- Chesapeake Bay Oyster Population Assessment
 - Roger Mann (VIMS)
 - Roger reviewed the overall objectives and expected results of this work. These results include a population estimate, location-specific growth rates and disease status, age-specific mortality estimates, the status of shell substrate, and biological reference points.

June 2014 - Full GIT Meeting

**June 4th-5th at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science
in Gloucester Point, VA
SAVE THE DATES!**

Meetings, Presentations, and other Fisheries GIT information can be found at:

http://www.chesapeakebay.net/groups/group/sustainable_fisheries