

Chesapeake Bay Program Sustainable Fisheries Goal Implementation Team

September 2011 Update

2011 Accomplishments

The Fisheries GIT Executive Committee has continued to collaborate on science and policy issues to support sustainable Chesapeake Bay fisheries. Recent highlights include:

Blue Crab

- The Blue Crab Stock Assessment was released to the public on August 9. The Executive Committee has tasked the Chesapeake Bay Stock Assessment Committee to recommend male- and female-specific abundance targets and exploitation thresholds based on the Stock Assessment by the end of October.

Blue Catfish

- The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) released a resolution on blue and flathead catfish. The resolution formalizes ASMFC's position labeling these species as invasive within the mid-Atlantic region and recognizes their potential effects on ASMFC-managed species.
- Initial model scenarios testing different approaches to managing blue catfish were completed and were presented at the American Fisheries Society meeting this month. The model runs will be revised based on feedback from AFS, discussed with the Blue Catfish Workgroup, and will be presented to the Executive Committee in October or November.

Oysters

- The Oyster Metrics Team is close to finishing their report establishing a set of reef- and tributary-level metrics for use in evaluating oyster restoration success. The metrics report sets reef- and tributary-level targets for reef structure, aerial coverage, longevity, and number of oysters that, based on scientific consensus, are believed to improve ecological function. This metrics report is setting the bar for other national and regional efforts working toward shellfish restoration success metrics.

The final metrics report is slated for adoption by the Executive Committee by October 15.

- Executive Committee reviewed Fisheries GIT goals and objectives being submitted for the development of the 'Chesapeake Bay Program Blueprint.'

Executive Committee Meeting Presentations

At monthly Fisheries GIT Executive Committee meetings, attendees hear from Bay scientists and policy administrators on topics including these recent presentations:

- ChesapeakeStat: Introduction, Purpose, Applications
 - Richard McEntee (Chesapeake Bay Program) and Doreen Vetter (Chesapeake Bay Program)
- Overfishing, disease, habitat loss, and potential extirpation of oysters in upper Chesapeake Bay
 - Michael J. Wilberg (University of Maryland Center of Environmental Science)
 - Findings suggest 99.3% of the Chesapeake Bay oyster population has been eliminated.

December 2011—Full GIT Meeting

The next Full GIT meeting is tentatively scheduled for the week of December 19 in Washington, D.C. Please save the dates!

Potential agenda topics include:

- Progress since June meeting
- Field trip
- Connecting land use and fisheries health