

2001 Operations Plan  
for the  
Fisheries Information Network  
in the Southeastern United States  
FIN

by: FIN Committee

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Number 78A

**2001 Operations Plan for the  
Fisheries Information Network in the  
Southeastern United States (FIN)**

January 1, 2001 to December 31, 2001

**I. INTRODUCTION**

The Fisheries Information Network (FIN) establishes a state-federal cooperative program to collect, manage, and disseminate statistical data and information on the commercial and recreational fisheries of the Southeast Region. There are two separate programs under the FIN: the Commercial Fisheries Information Network (ComFIN) and the Southeast Recrcational Fisheries Information Network [RecFIN(SE)].

The FIN is a cooperative state-federal marine commercial and recreational fisheries data collection program. It is intended to coordinate present and future marine commercial and recreational fisheries data collection and data management activities through cooperative planning, innovative uses of statistical theory and design, and consolidation of appropriate data into a useful data base system. This operations plan implements the FIN Framework Plan for 2001. All tasks will be completed dependent upon availability of funds.

**II. MISSION AND GOALS**

The mission of the FIN is to cooperatively collect, manage, and disseminate marine commercial and recreational fisheries statistical data and information for the conservation and management of fishery resources in the Southeast Region and to support the development and operation of a national program.

The goals of the FIN are:

- planning, management, and evaluation of data collection and management activities;
- implementation of data collection activities;
- establishment and maintenance of a data management system; and
- support for establishment of a national program.

The goals and objectives of FIN are found in Appendix A.

### III. OPERATIONS

#### A. Data Collection and Management Activities

The tasks below cover all 2001 objectives (see Section D). A 'C' denotes a ComFIN activity; an 'R' denotes a RecFIN(SE) activity; and an 'F' denotes a FIN activity.

**Task A1: Development and Implementation of Trip Ticket Program (Goal 2, Objective 2) (C)**

**Objective:** Develop and implement a trip ticket program for the Southeast Region.

**Team Members:** Gulf states and Data Collection Work Group

**Approach:** With available funds, the states of Texas, Mississippi, and Alabama will continue the implementation of trip tickets programs in their states. This task will provide for development of components for a commercial trip ticket system to census the commercial fisheries landings in Texas, Mississippi, and Alabama using the data elements and standards developed by the ComFIN. In addition, Louisiana will continue the development of a system for dealers to electronically capture and transfer trip ticket data to the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. All these activities will ultimately be combined with other commercial fisheries data collected from around the Gulf of Mexico. Accomplished by meeting, telephone, mail and in conjunction with the ACCSP, where applicable.

**Resources:** Operational costs, telephone costs, report costs, travel/meeting costs, and staff time.

**Product:** Gulf-wide trip ticket program

**Schedule:** Mississippi, Alabama and Texas began implementation in 1999 and will continue working on it during 2001.

**Task A2: Collection of Recreational Fisheries Data (Goal 2, Objective 5) (R)**

**Objective:** Collection of recreational fisheries data in the Gulf of Mexico.

**Team Members:** Gulf states, GSMFC, NMFS

**Approach:** The states of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida will continue to conduct the MRFSS survey for shore, for-hire, and private modes. This task will provide for coordination of the survey, a field intercept survey of shore, for-hire and private boat anglers to estimate angler catch using the existing MRFSS methodology, and entry of the data. It will be combined with the NMFS effort estimate telephone survey. The NMFS will produce expanded estimates of catch and effort by wave using the existing MRFSS methodology. In

addition, the states will conduct supplemental sampling of the intercept portion for the MRFSS for charter boats in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida. Where possible, the Committee will work with the ACCSP to ensure comparability and compatibility between the two programs.

Resources: Operational costs, travel/meeting costs, mail costs, and staff time.  
Product: Collection of recreational fisheries data for the Gulf of Mexico.  
Schedule: This is an on-going task.

Task A3: Implementation of Methods to Monitor the For-Hire Fisheries (Goal 2, Objective 5) (R)

Objective: Identify evaluate, and test methodologies to survey charter and head boat fisheries.

Team Members: Gulf states, GSMFC, and NMFS

Approach: For charter boats, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida have implemented the Charter Boat Telephone Survey. Texas has compiled a charter boat vessel directory which will enable the state to implement the telephone survey in Texas. Regarding head boats, the FIN will coordinate with the ACCSP and await the outcome of the South Carolina pilot survey which is comparing the MRFSS RDD, captain telephone survey, and mandatory logbook methodologies.

Resources: Travel/meeting costs, mail costs, and staff time.

Product: For-hire survey methodology

Schedule: FIN staff will attend For-Hire Subcommittee meetings to keep informed about the South Carolina Study.

Task A4: Continue the Support of Commercial Data Collection Activities (Goal 2, Objective 5) (C)

Objective: Continue the support of commercial data collection activities

Team Members: Gulf states, GSMFC, and NMFS

Approach: The purpose of this task is to intercept shrimp fishermen and collect information on the amount of time the vessel was fishing and the area(s) where fishing occurred. In addition, to collect length and weight data, hard parts and tissue samples from various species under Federal or state fisheries management. A principal sub-objective is to increase the amount of size frequency and aging data for red snapper. However, because the commercial fishery for this species is only opened for a limited number of weeks during the year, the size frequency and aging data will be collected from other federal or state managed species during the remainder of the year.

Resources: Operational costs, travel/meeting costs, mail costs, and staff time.  
Product: Collection of necessary commercial data  
Schedule: This task is an on-going activity.

Task A5: Continue the Collection of Menhaden Data (Goal 2, Objective 5) (C)

Objective: Continue the support of menhaden sampling in the Gulf of Mexico.  
Team Members: Gulf states, GSMFC, and NMFS  
Approach: The purpose of this task is to sample gulf menhaden catches from menhaden purse-seine vessels which operate at the ports of Empire, Morgan City, Abbeville, and Cameron, Louisiana. Samples will be processed for size and age composition for use in coast-wide stock assessments. In turn, gulf menhaden stock assessments are incorporated into the Fisheries Management Plan for the species, and are also utilized by the Gulf coast states, the GSMFC, the menhaden industry, and the NMFS.

Resources: Operational costs, travel/meeting costs, mail costs, and staff time.  
Product: Collection of necessary menhaden data  
Schedule: This task is an on-going activity.

Task A6: Continue the Collection of Head Boat Data (Goal 2, Objective 5) (R)

Objective: Continue the support of head boat sampling in the Gulf of Mexico.  
Team Members: Gulf states, GSMFC, and NMFS  
Approach: The purpose of this task is to sample catches, collect catch reports from head boat personnel, and gather effort data on head boats which operate primarily in the Exclusive Economic Zone from ports along the coasts of Texas, Louisiana, and Florida. This task will be conducted in accordance with existing NMFS head boat methodology.

Resources: Operational costs, travel/meeting costs, mail costs, and staff time.  
Product: Collection of necessary head boat data  
Schedule: This task is an on-going activity.

Task A7: Design, Implementation and Maintenance of Data Management System (Goal 3, Objective 3) (F)

Objective: To design, implement, and maintain a marine commercial and recreational fisheries data management system to accommodate fishery management/research and other needs (e.g., trade and tourism).

Team Members: FIN and ACCSP program partners.  
Approach: The FIN will continue to develop the Data Management System.

Development of the permitting module and finalization of the biological sampling module will be address by the FIN Data Manager. These modules will be used by both FIN and ACCSP. FIN will continue to work in conjunction with the ACCSP to ensure compatibility and comparability between the programs.

Resources: Travel/meeting costs, mail costs, and staff time.  
Product: FIN data management system  
Schedule: A contract for development of the permitting module will be initiated in 2001.

**Task A8: Standards/Protocols/Documentation for Data Management (Goal 3, Objective 4) (F)**

Objective: Develop standard protocols and documentation for data formats, input, editing, quality control, storage, access, transfer, dissemination, and application.

Team Members: FIN/ACCSP program partners

Approach: The FIN and ACCSP are currently developing a data management system for their respective coasts. As part of the development, standard protocols and documentation for data formats, input, editing, quality control, storage, access, transfer, dissemination, and application are being developed. Through the involvement with the ACCSP Computer Technical Committee, the FIN will provide input into the development of this information.

Resources: Travel/meeting costs, report costs, and staff time.

Product: Standard protocols and documentation for the FIN data management system.

Schedule: The FIN began addressing this issue during 2000 and will continue working on it in 2001.

**B. Program Activities (see Section E for Committee and Work Group membership)**

The tasks below cover all 2001 objectives (see Section D). A 'C' denotes a ComFIN activity; an 'R' denotes a RecFIN(SE) activity; and an 'F' denotes a FIN activity.

**Task B1: Development of a Program Design Document (Goal 1, Objective 1) (F)**

Objective: Develop a program design document for FIN

Team Members: FIN Committee

Approach: Using the information developed from the Committee and various work groups, the Committee has drafted a plan which will be used by the program partners to implement FIN. The draft document was presented to the Committee in 1998. The Committee will continue

working on refining the document as the various components of the program are developed. Accomplished by meeting, telephone and mail.

Resources: Telephone costs, report costs, travel/meeting costs, and staff time.  
Product: Program design document  
Schedule: A draft of the revised program design document will be reviewed by the FIN Committee at the 2001 meeting.

Task B2: Annual Operations Plan, 2002 (Goal 1, Objective 3) (F)

Objective: Develop 2002 Annual Operations Plan including identification of available resources, that implements the Framework Plan.  
Team Members: FIN Committee  
Approach: Through meetings and mail, the Committee will develop and complete an Annual Operations Plan for 2002.  
Resources: Travel/meeting costs, report costs, and staff time.  
Product: 2002 Annual Operations Plan.  
Schedule: Annual Operations Plan will be drafted by spring 2001 and addressed by the Committee at the 2001 meeting.

Task B3: Development of Funding Initiatives to Establish Marine Recreational Fisheries (MRF) Surveys (Goal 1, Objective 3) (R)

Objective: Support the establishment of long-term, comprehensive MRF surveys in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.  
Team Members: Biological/Environmental Work Group  
Approach: The Work Group has been working on this issue for several years. In 2000, the NMFS secured funding for conducting the MRFSS in Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands. The FIN will continue to work in conjunction with the Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources (PRDNER) and U.S. Virgin Islands Division of Fish and Wildlife (USVIDFW) to continue MRF surveys in Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands. The PRDNER has secured funding for implementing an MRF survey in Puerto Rico.  
Resources: Travel, copy and mailing expenses and staff time.  
Product: Develop a long-term MRF survey outline for the Caribbean.  
Schedule: The Work Group will continue monitoring this task in 2001.

Task B4: Information Dissemination (Goal 1, Objective 4) (F)

Objective: Distribute program information to cooperators and interested parties.  
Team Members: FIN Committee and staff  
Approach: The Committee will distribute program information to cooperators

and interested parties. Each committee member is responsible for maintaining a list of information distributed and providing that list to the staff. In addition, the MRFSS staff has developed a home page where users are able to access the MRFSS data for their use. The user is able to specify the area, species, gear, etc. that he/she is interested in obtaining. Also, the GSMFC has developed a home page which includes information concerning the FIN.

Resources: Copy and mailing expenses and staff time.  
Product: Development and distribution of a fact sheet concerning FIN and a report which compiles a record of information distributed and presentations given by the Committee and staff. This information is included in the FIN Annual Report.  
Schedule: This task will be an ongoing activity.

**Task B5: Implementation of Outreach Program (Goal 1, Objective 4) (F)**

Objective: Further development and implementation an an outreach program for FIN  
Team Members: FIN Outreach Work Group/FIN Committee  
Approach: The Work Group has developed a strategy for outreach. A request for proposals (RFP) will be developed that solicits proposals from various groups for the development of a strategy for disseminating information about the FIN to the variety of commercial and recreational groups as well as the general public. The FIN will also continue to disseminate program information via newsletters, brochures, etc. The RFP will request the development of program materials such as program information, brochure, public service announcements, magazine articles, a presentation, and poster.  
Resources: Telephone costs, report costs, travel/meeting costs, and staff time.  
Product: FIN outreach program  
Schedule: The Work Group met in early 2000 and will meet in 2001 to address the development of the RFP.

**Task B6: Conduct FIN Program Review (Goal 1, Objective 5) (F)**

Objective: Conduct a formal external program review of the FIN to evaluate the effectiveness of the program in achieving the goals and objectives.  
Team Members: FIN Committee/Administrative Subcommittee  
Approach: The FIN Committee will conduct an external program review. A written report will be prepared by an external review team and presented to all the FIN signatory agencies, with a recommendation on the success and continuation of the FIN. It has been suggested that the American Fisheries Society - Marine Fisheries Section be



utilized for this review.  
Resources: Meeting costs, conference call costs, report costs, and staff time  
Product: Program review report  
Schedule: A review panel will be selected and the review meeting will be scheduled for early 2001.

**Task B7: Development of the Discards, Releases, and Protected Species Interactions Modules (Goal 2, Objective 2) (C)**

Objective: Develop the discards, releases, and protected species interactions modules of the FIN.  
Team Members: ComFIN Data Collection Work Group  
Approach: Using information developed by the ACCSP and other pertinent information, the Work Group will design a data collection module for the compilation of discards and protected species interactions for all commercial fisheries in the Southeast Region. The program will outline the data elements that need to be collected for compilation of discards and protected species interactions. Accomplished by meeting, telephone and mail and in conjunction with the ACCSP, where applicable.  
Resources: Telephone costs, report costs, travel/meeting costs, and staff time.  
Product: Discard, Releases, and Protected Species Interactions collection program  
Schedule: The Work Group addressed this issue in 1998 and will continue working on it during 2001.

**Task B8: Development of the Social/Economic Module (Goal 2, Objective 2) (F)**

Objective: Develop the social/economic module for the ComFIN.  
Team Members: Social/Economic Work Group  
Approach: Working in conjunction with the ACCSP, the Work Group will design a data collection module for the compilation of social/economic information for all commercial fisheries in the Southeast Region. The program will outline the data elements required for each fishery component that need to be collected for compilation of social/economic data. The ACCSP is currently conducting a pilot survey for commercial harvesters in Georgia. In addition, the NMFS is conducting various pilot studies in the Southeast and Northeast Regions. The Social/Economic Work Group will be involved in the evaluation of these surveys and will await the outcome of these surveys. Also, the Work Group will meet during the year to explore the possibility of conducting a pilot survey in the Gulf of Mexico. The Committee agree to include members of the

Work Group on the ACCSP committee for social and economic issues. Accomplished by meeting, telephone and mail and in conjunction with the ACCSP, where applicable.

Resources: Telephone costs, report costs, travel/meeting costs, and staff time.

Product: Social/Economic data collection module and data collection surveys for collection of the data.

Schedule: The Work Group began addressing this issue during 1998 and will continue working on it during 2001.

Task B9: Development of Data Collection Procedures Document (Goal 2, Obj 2) (C)

Objective: Develop a document which outlines the procedures for the collection of data under the ComFIN.

Team Members: Data Collection Procedures Work Group/ComFIN Committee

Approach: The Work Group developed a draft document which describes the various techniques and methods for collection of marine commercial data. The Work Group utilized existing procedures for the Trip Interview Program and other related information. The Work Group, in conjunction with the Committee, will continue to develop this document as the program evolves.

Resources: Telephone costs, report costs, travel/meeting costs, and staff time.

Product: Procedures document

Schedule: The Work Group started addressing this issue in 1998 and will continue working on it during 2001.

Task B10: Development of Metadata Database (Goal 2, Objective 2) (F)

Objective: Compile metadata for inclusion into a metadata database for the Southeast Region.

Team Members: Biological/Environmental Work Group/FIN Data Manager

Approach: The Biological/Environmental Work Group has worked on this issue in the past and has developed a criteria for creating a metadata database. The Committee discussed the issue of metadata and decided that the Work Group should continue looking at compilation of fishing regulations. The Work Group recommended that the FIN Data Manager begin developing the data structure for the data base and develop a time frame for creating the structure as well as inputting the fishing regulations information into the system. Once the fishing regulations information is in the system, subsequent categories to be collected will be determined by the Committee.

Resources: Meeting/travel costs, telephone costs, mail costs, staff time.

Product: Development of metadata module

Schedule: The initial development of the data base structure began in 2000 and

will continue in 2001. The compilation of these data will be an ongoing activity.

**Task B11: Development of Permitting/Licensing Module (Goal 2, Objective 2) (C)**

**Objective:** Development of a permitting module for FIN.  
**Team Members:** Permitting Work Group  
**Approach:** In conjunction with the ACCSP, the Work Group will continue the development of the permitting system for both programs. This module will provide a unique identifier for fishermen, dealers, and others involved in commercial fisheries that is trackable through geographic location and time. The data management structure will also be developed in 2001. Accomplished by meetings, conference calls, and mail.  
**Resources:** Meeting/travel costs, telephone costs, mail costs, and staff time.  
**Product:** Permitting module  
**Schedule:** The Work Group addressed this issue in 2000 and will meet in 2001 to continue development of this module.

**Task B12: Commercial Quality Assurance and Quality Control (Goal 2, Objective 3) (C)**

**Objective:** Identify and determine standards for commercial catch/effort data collection, including statistical, training, and quality assurance and quality control standards.  
**Team Members:** Data Collection Work Group.  
**Approach:** Determine standards for collection and management of commercial catch/effort data. Review and expand the quality assurance and quality control document developed by the Biological/Environmental Work Group. This expanded document will encompass all quality assurance and quality control standards for the FIN. This information will be part of the Data Collection Procedures Document being developed by the Committee. Where possible, the Committee will work with the ACCSP to ensure comparability and compatibility between the two programs. Accomplished by meetings, conference calls, and mail.  
**Resources:** Meeting/travel costs, telephone costs, mail costs, and staff time.  
**Product:** FIN quality assurance and quality control document  
**Schedule:** The document will be revised as new and existing modules are addressed. This is an ongoing activity.

**Task B13: Port Samplers Workshops (Goal 2, Objective 3) (C)**

**Objective:** Convene workshops of state and federal port samplers to discuss

commercial data collection activities

Team Members: State and federal commercial port samplers and staff

Approach: In an effort to provide a forum for discussing various issues concerning commercial data collection activities, the ComFIN Committee decided to convene workshops of state and federal port agents. There will be several workshops: Texas/Louisiana; Mississippi/Alabama/Florida; and the Caribbean. These workshops will be attended by the state and federal port agents from Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Puerto Rico, and U.S. Virgin Islands, the ComFIN chairman, appropriate NMFS staff and other interested personnel. Some of the suggested topics for these meetings includes species identification workshop, overview of ComFIN program, trip ticket information, regulations, ways to build better rapport with dealers, sampling and sub-sampling techniques.

Resources: Telephone costs, report costs, travel/meeting costs, and staff time.

Product: Provide a forum for field personnel to discuss problems and issues related to commercial data collection activities. List of recommendations regarding commercial data collection activities.

Schedule: The meeting will be scheduled for mid- and late-2001.

**Task B14: Identification and Evaluation of Current Programs (Goal 2, Objective 4) (F)**

Objective: Identify and evaluate the adequacy of current and future programs for meeting FIN standards.

Team Members: FIN Committee

Approach: Periodically evaluate surveys based on their adequacy for meeting FIN standards and make appropriate recommendations.

Resources: Travel/meeting costs, report costs, and staff time

Product: Report containing recommendations for commercial and recreational surveys as well as an evaluation and report on recommendations.

Schedule: This task is an ongoing activity.

**Task B15: Combining Duplicative Data Collection and Management Activities (Goal 2, Objective 4) (F)**

Objective: Identify and combine duplicative data collection and management efforts.

Team Members: FIN Committee

Approach: The Biological/Environmental Work Group has identified redundancies in MRF data collection and management in the Southeast Region and provided recommendations to the RecFIN(SE) Committee concerning these activities. From this information, the Committee will develop strategies for reducing duplicative efforts in

the Southeast Region.  
Resources: Travel/meeting costs, mail costs, and staff time.  
Product: Recommendations for reducing duplicative data collection and management efforts  
Schedule: This is an ongoing task.

Task B16: Determination of Catch Rates and Species Composition from Night Fishing Goal 2, Objective 5) (R)

Objective: Determine catch rates and species composition from night fishing.  
Team Members: Biological/Environmental Work Group  
Approach: The Work Group met and further investigated the issues of collecting night fishing data. The group needs to identify a smaller geographic area (Mississippi or Alabama) to begin examining this issue for the purpose of conducting a pilot survey. The purpose of the pilot will be to determine if the information collected provides useful information and will allow RecFIN(SE) to decide how to proceed. The group developed a more detailed proposal for collecting data at night which included a justification for doing night fishing activities. Where possible, the Committee will work with the ACCSP to ensure comparability and compatibility between the two programs.  
Resources: Operational costs, travel/meeting costs, mail costs, and staff time.  
Product: Detailed plan for the compilation of night fishing activities in the Southeast Region.  
Schedule: This task will be continued to be addressed in 2001.

Task B17: Collection of Tournaments Data (Goal 2, Objective 5) (R)

Objective: Collect appropriate information from fishing tournaments, and integrate with other marine recreational fisheries data.  
Team Members: Biological/Environmental Work Group  
Approach: A list that identifies all ongoing tournaments in the Southeast Region has been compiled and reviewed by the Committee. The Work Group met and discussed this issue. It was decided that states provide updates to NSIL staff regarding fishing tournaments in their states. FIN staff will have the states update the current FIN list and forward the updated list to NSIL staff. The NSIL would be responsible for maintaining the list of tournaments. Since NSIL is currently developing methods for sampling tournaments, FIN will await the outcome of these activities before moving forward with this issue. Where possible, the Committee will work with the ACCSP to ensure comparability and compatibility between the two programs.  
Resources: Travel/meeting costs, mail costs, and staff time.

**Product:** Recommendations regarding sampling methods for tournaments  
**Schedule:** The Committee addressed this issue in 1998 and the Work Group will meet in 2001 to continue examining this issue.

**Task B18: Coordination and Integration of Data Collection Efforts (Goal 2, Objective 5) (F)**

**Objective:** Encourage coordination, integration, and augmentation, as appropriate, of data collection efforts to meet the FIN requirements.  
**Team Members:** FIN Committee  
**Approach:** Communicate results of evaluation and recommendations regarding marine commercial and recreational fisheries surveys to the appropriate personnel.  
**Resources:** Travel/meeting costs, report costs, and staff time  
**Product:** Communication and presentation of recommendations to ongoing programs.  
**Schedule:** This is an ongoing activity.

**Task B19: Integration into the Stock Assessment Process (Goal 2, Objective 5) (F)**

**Objective:** Develop a plan which outlines the needs for stock assessment for the upcoming year as well as tracking the collection of these data.  
**Team Members:** FIN Committee and other appropriate personnel  
**Approach:** The Committee has developed a data collection planning process which identifies the priority species (and associated data needed to be collected) for the state, interstate and federal entities. The plan will provide guidance to the states, NMFS, and FWS for the development of funding mechanisms that are implemented to provide funding support for collecting the data. The FIN Committee asked the GSMFC stock assessment team as well as the appropriate NMFS and Caribbean personnel to begin development of this plan. As trip ticket systems are implemented Gulf-wide, the data from these systems will allow for better allocation of samples. Accomplished by meetings, telephone and mail.  
**Resources:** Meeting costs, mail costs, telephone costs, and staff time  
**Product:** Data collection plan  
**Schedule:** The group met in 2000 and will continue to do so into the future.

**Task B20: Evaluation of Fishery-Independent Data Activities (Goal 2, Objective 5) (F)**

**Objective:** Evaluate current fishery-independent data activities  
**Team Members:** FIN Committee  
**Approach:** The Committee will compile a list of fishery-independent activities

being conducted in the region. From this list, the Committee will evaluate each activity and make standardization recommendations to appropriate fishery-independent programs.

Resources: Telephone costs, report costs, travel/meeting costs, and staff time.  
Product: Standardize fishery-independent program  
Schedule: The FIN Committee began discussing this issue at the 2000 meeting and will continue addressing it during 2001.

Task B21: Establish/modify recreational licenses (Goal 2, Objective 5) (F)

Objective: Establish/modify recreational licenses to meet criteria for use as sampling frame

Team Members: FIN Committee

Approach: The FIN has developed criteria that allows state marine recreational fishing licenses to be used as a regional sampling frame. Based on these criteria, each state needs to either adopt a recreational fishing license or modify existing licenses to meet the identified criteria. The Committee will periodically review the status of each states' licenses. Once a region has adopted a standardized license, a pilot can be conducted to compare the license sampling frame and RDD methods.

Resources: Telephone costs, report costs, travel/meeting costs, and staff time  
Product: Recreational fishing licenses suitable for use as sampling directory  
Schedule: The FIN Committee will periodically address this issue to determine the status of each states' license.

Task B22: Evaluation of potential improvements to intercept site selection process (Goal 2, Objective 5) (F)

Objective: Evaluate potential improvements to intercept site selection process

Team Members: FIN Committee

Approach: The MRFSS staff has been working on this issue for several years. The Committee needs to discuss the status of the activities and evaluate the advantages and disadvantages for each of the potential improvements.

Resources: Telephone costs, report costs, travel/meeting costs, and staff time  
Product: Best site selection process to ensure more efficient sampling  
Schedule: The FIN Committee began discussing this issue at the 2000 meeting and will continue addressing it during 2001.

Task B23: Evaluation of Innovative Data Collection Technologies (Goal 2, Objective 6) (F)

Objective: To evaluate and recommend innovative data collection technologies  
Team Members: FIN Committee and other appropriate personnel  
Approach: The FIN program partners will report to the Committee any new technologies which will aid in the collection of marine commercial and recreational fisheries data.  
Resources: Travel/meeting costs, report costs, and staff time  
Product: Progress reports concerning data collection technologies.  
Schedule: This is an ongoing activity.

Task B24: Evaluation of Information Management Technologies (Goal 3, Objective 6) (F)

Objective: To evaluate and recommend innovative, cost-effective information management technologies.  
Team Members: FIN Committee and industry personnel  
Approach: Committee members will report any new technologies which will aid in the management of marine commercial and recreational fisheries data.  
Resources: Travel/meeting costs, conference call costs, report costs, and staff time.  
Product: Progress reports.  
Schedule: This is an ongoing activity.

Task B25: Long-term National Program Planning (Goal 4, Objective 1) (F)

Objective: Provide for long-term national program planning  
Team Members: FIN Committee  
Approach: The FIN Committee members, GSMFC staff and ASMFC staff will attend Pacific RecFIN, PacFIN, ACCSP Operations Committee, and ASMFC Marine Recreational Fishery Statistics meetings and coordinate activities as appropriate. Accomplished by mail and meetings.  
Resources: Travel/meeting costs, report costs, and staff time.  
Product: Record of coordination activities.  
Schedule: This task is an ongoing activity.

Task B26: Coordination, Consistency and Comparability with Other Cooperative Marine Commercial and Recreational Fisheries Programs (Goal 4, Objective 2 and Objective 3) (F)

Objective: Coordinate FIN with other regional cooperative marine commercial and recreational fisheries programs and encourage consistency and comparability among regional programs over time.



Team Members:	FIN Committee/ FIN/ACCSP Compatibility Work Group
Approach:	The FIN Committee members, GSMFC staff and ASMFC staff will coordinate activities with the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission, Pacific RecFIN, and PacFIN on the West Coast. The MRFSS staff is revising data files and will get input from the RecFIN(SE) Committee. The FIN/ACCSP Compatibility Work Group was created to examine the differences/similarities between the FIN and the ACCSP. It was decided that this group would meet on an annual basis to ensure comparability and compatibility between the two programs, and to distribute appropriate program results and recommendations to other cooperative fisheries programs. The topic of a joint meeting among FIN, ACCSP and Pacific has been discussed and staff will examine the possibility of conducting these types of meetings. Accomplished by mail and meetings.
Resources:	Travel/meeting costs, report costs, and staff time.
Product:	Ensure adequate information exchange, consistency and comparability between all regional fisheries programs and compilation of a record of information exchange.
Schedule:	This task is an ongoing activity. The Work Group will meet in 2001.

### **C. Administrative Activities**

Coordination and administrative support of FIN will be accomplished through The Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission. Major tasks involved in the coordination and administration of the various levels of FIN include but are not limited to the following:

- Work closely with the ComFIN, FIN and RecFIN(SE) Committees in all aspects of program coordination, administration, and operation;
- Implement plans and program directives approved by the ComFIN, FIN and RecFIN(SE) Committees;
- Provide coordination and logistical support, including communications and organization of meetings for the ComFIN, FIN and RecFIN(SE) Committees, subcommittees, and work groups;
- Develop and/or administer cooperative agreements, grants, and contracts;
- Serve as liaison between the ComFIN, FIN and RecFIN(SE) Committees, other program participants, and other interested organizations;
- Assist the ComFIN and RecFIN(SE) Committees in preparation or review of annual spending plans;

- Prepare annual operations plans under the direction of the FIN Committee;
- Prepare and/or supervise and coordinate preparation of selected documents, including written records of all meetings;
- Distribute approved ComFIN, FIN and RecFIN(SE) information and data in accordance with accepted policies and procedures as set forth by the ComFIN, FIN and RecFIN(SE) Committees;
- Assist in the identification of regional and geographic needs that can be satisfied through ComFIN, FIN and RecFIN(SE) activities;
- Seek funding for ComFIN, FIN and RecFIN(SE) activities as the need develops; and
- Conduct or participate in other activities as identified.



## D. Time Table

	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>
<b>Planning, Management, and Evaluation</b>					
FIN Committee					
Maintenance of FIN Committee	X	X	X	X	X
Framework Plan					
Review of Framework Plan					X
Operations Plans					
Development of annual operations plans	X	X	X	X	X
Support establishment of MRF survcys in PR & VI	X	X	X	X	X
Identify funding needs for MRF programs	X	X	X	X	X
Information dissemination					
Implement outreach strategy	X	X			
Develop outreach materials and list of users	X				
Use Internet communications	X	X	X	X	X
Program Review					
Conduct program review					X
<b>Data Collection</b>					
Data components					
Review of components of fisheries					X
Needed data elements					
Collection of metadata	X	X	X	X	X
Develop rec and comm catch/effort modules	X	X	X		
Develop permitting module	X	X			
Develop social/economic data module	X	X			
Develop biological sampling module	X				
Develop fishery module	X	X			
Develop discard and protected species interactions module	X	X	X		
Standard data collection protocols					
Develop data collection procedures manual	X	X	X		
Determine precision levels for priority species	X				
Evaluate methods for achieving desired precision levels	X				
Quality control/assurance					
Develop commercial and recreational QA/QC standards	X	X	X		
Review of commercial and recreational QA/QC standards					X
Recommendations regarding duplicative collection and management	X				
Coordination of data collection					
Development of data collection plan	X	X	X	X	X
Evaluate current fishery independent data activities	X				
Make recommendations to appropriate fishery -independent programs		X			
Establish/modify recreational licenses to meet criteria	X	X	X		
Conduct comparison survey of license frame and MRFSS				X	
Implement the appropriate license frame methodology					X
Determine methods for collecting recreational data for private access points		X	X		
Determine methods for collecting recreational catch data for night fishing	X				
Develop method for collecting recreational data on fishing tournaments	X	X			
Develop methods for collecting recreational data on non hook-&-line fisheries			X	X	X
Evaluate potential improvements to intercept site selection process	X				
Determine the extent of non-consumptive activities					X

	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>
<b>Data Collection (continued)</b>					
Innovative collection technology					
Evaluate innovative data collection technologies	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Data Management</b>					
Data management system					
Review location and responsibility of DMS					X
Hardware/software capabilities					
Review hardware/software capabilities					X
Provide finalized recreational data in electronic form		X	X	X	X
Data maintenance	X	X	X	X	X
Standard data management protocols					
Develop review process for finalization of MRFSS data		X			
Integration of data bases					
Identify recreational databases for integration in DMS	X	X	X	X	X
Innovative data management technology					
Evaluate innovative data management technologies	X	X	X	X	X
Data confidentiality					
Protect confidentiality	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Development of National Program</b>					
Long-term planning					
Coordination with ACCSP and Pacific RecFIN	X	X	X	X	X
Coordination with other programs					
Coordination with ACCSP and Pacific RecFIN	X	X	X	X	X
Consistency and comparability					
Coordination with ACCSP and Pacific RecFIN	X	X	X	X	X

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## **APPENDIX A**

### **FIN Goals and Objectives**

- Goal 1:** To plan, manage and evaluate a coordinated State/Federal marine commercial and recreational fishery data collection program for the Region.
- Objective 1** To establish and maintain FIN, ComFIN and RecFIN(SE) Committees consisting of MOU signatories or their designees to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate the program.
  - Objective 2** To develop and periodically review a Framework Plan that outlines policies and protocol of the program
  - Objective 3** To develop annual operation plans, including identification of available resources, that implement the Framework Plan.
  - Objective 4** To distribute program information to the cooperators and interested parties.
  - Objective 5** To conduct a program review at least every five years of operation to evaluate the program's success in meeting needs in the Region.
- Goal 2:** To implement and maintain a coordinated State/Federal marine commercial and recreational fishery data collection program for the Region.
- Objective 1** To characterize and periodically review the commercial and recreational fisheries and identify the required data priorities for each.
  - Objective 2** To identify and periodically review environmental, biological, social and economic data elements required for each fishery.
  - Objective 3** To identify, determine, and periodically review standards for data collection, including statistical, training and quality assurance.
  - Objective 4** To identify and evaluate the adequacy of current programs for meeting ComFIN and RecFIN(SE) requirements.
  - Objective 5** To coordinate, integrate and augment, as appropriate, data collection efforts to meet ComFIN and RecFIN(SE) requirements.
  - Objective 6** To evaluate and recommend innovative data collection methodologies and technologies.

**Goal 3:** To establish and maintain an integrated, marine commercial and recreational fishery data management system for the Region.

**Objective 1** To periodically review and make recommendations regarding the location and administrative responsibility for the FIN data management system.

**Objective 2** To periodically evaluate the hardware, software and communication capabilities of program partners and make recommendations for support and upgrades.

**Objective 3** To implement, maintain, and periodically review a marine commercial and recreational fishery data management system to accommodate fishery management/research and other needs.

**Objective 4** To develop, maintain, and periodically review standard protocols and documentation for data formats, inputs, editing, storage, access, transfer dissemination, and application.

**Objective 5** To identify and prioritize historical databases for integration into the marine commercial and recreational fisheries database.

**Objective 6** To evaluate and recommend innovative, cost-effective information management technologies.

**Objective 7** To protect the confidentiality of personal and business information, as required by state and/or federal law.

**Goal 4:** To support the development and operation of an inter-regional program to collect, manage and disseminate marine commercial fisheries information for use by states, territories, councils, interstate commissions and federal marine fishery management agencies.

**Objective 1** To provide for long-term inter-regional program planning.

**Objective 2** To coordinate FIN with other regional and national marine commercial fisheries programs.

**Objective 3** To encourage consistency and comparability among regional and national marine commercial fisheries programs over time.