

2002 Operations Plan  
for the  
Fisheries Information Network  
in the Southeastern United States  
FIN

by: FIN Committee

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**2002 Operations Plan for the  
Fisheries Information Network in the  
Southeastern United States (FIN)**

January 1, 2002 to December 31, 2002

**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 Recreational 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 2002. 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. Operational Activities

The tasks below cover all 2002 objectives (see Section D). A 'C' denotes a commercial activity; a 'R' denotes a recreational activity; and a 'F' denotes a commercial/recreational activity.

Task A1: Development, Implementation and Operation of Trip Ticket Programs (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: The states of Texas and Mississippi, will continue the full 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 and Mississippi using the data elements and standards developed by the ComFIN. Mississippi is currently collecting trip-level data for oyster landings. They are attempting to pass legislation that would allow for the expansion of collection of trip-level data for all commercial species. Texas is currently evaluating the feasibility of implementing trip tickets in their state. For Louisiana and Alabama, funding will be provided for the majority of operation of their trip ticket programs. In addition, Louisiana will continue to implement a system for dealers to electronically capture and transfer trip ticket data to the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. Ultimately, all states will have operating trip tickets programs and all commercial landings will be captured via these systems. Accomplished by meeting, telephone, mail and in conjunction with the ACCSP, where applicable.

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

Product: Gulf-wide trip ticket program

Schedule: Implementation of trip tickets in 1999 and will continue during 2002.

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, Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida have implemented the Charter Boat Telephone Survey which collects effort data from charter boat captains. In addition, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida will be collecting social and economic data from the charter boat operators in order to assess the value of the charter boat industry. Later in the year, Texas will also be evaluating the results of the Charter Boat Telephone Survey. 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 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 A5: 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 A6: Collection of Biological (otoliths and lengths) Data (Goal 2, Objective 5) (F)

Objective: Implement the collection of recreational and commercial sampling of biological data in the Gulf of Mexico.  
Team Members: Gulf states, GSMFC, and NMFS  
Approach: The purpose of this task is to conduct interviews of recreational and commercial fishermen using the modified MRFSS and Trip Interview Program protocols. Samplers will collect length frequencies, identifications of species, trip and gear characteristics, weights of catches, hard parts (otoliths) and make comparisons of interview data to trip ticket data for quality assurance purposes.  
Resources: Operational costs, travel/meeting costs, mail costs, and staff time.  
Product: Collection of necessary biological data  
Schedule: This task is an on-going activity.

Task A7: 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: Mississippi, GSMFC, and NMFS  
Approach: This is a continuation of the pilot survey started in 2001. The pilot consists of developing a night sampling site register on the

Mississippi coast for shore mode as well as conducting an intercept survey for night fishing activities. This information is potentially needed in order to improve estimates of recreational fishing catch and effort. It provides for the nighttime identification and classification of sites as well as a field intercept survey of shore anglers (1X) to estimate angler catch at night using the existing MRFSS methodology. The shore mode fishing mode will be the primary target mode for the development of the nighttime site register and intercept survey. The NMFS will produce expanded estimates of catch and effort by wave using the existing MRFSS methodology. These estimates will be compared with daytime catch estimates to determine if significant differences existing between day and night fishing activities.

Resources: Operational costs, travel/meeting costs, mail costs, and staff time.  
Product: Determination of differences (if any) between day and night fishing activities.  
Schedule: The collection of data for this task will be completed by December 2002. Analysis of these data will be conducted in late 2002 and early 2003.

Task A8: 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 (DMS). Development of the registration tracking system will be address by the FIN Information Manager. This system will be used by both FIN and ACCSP. In addition, the FIN IT manager will continue to establish routine delivery of Louisiana, Mississippi (oyster data only), Alabama, and Florida trip ticket data into the FIN DMS. 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: Further development of registration tracking system and delivery of data will continue in 2002.

Task A9: 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/FIN Data Management Work Group

Approach: The FIN and ACCSP are currently developing data management systems 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. The FIN Data Management Work Group and ACCSP Computer Technical Committee will continue to develop this information and there will be coordination between the programs to insure comparability and compatibility.

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

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

Schedule: The FIN Data Management Work Group and ACCSP Computer Technical Committee will meet in 2002 to discuss these issues.

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

The tasks below cover all 2002 objectives (see Section D). A ‘C’ denotes a commercial activity; an ‘R’ denotes a recreational activity; and an ‘F’ denotes a commercial/recreational 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 2002 meeting.

Task B2: Annual Operations Plan, 2003 (Goal 1, Objective 3) (F)

Objective: Develop 2003 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 2003.  
Resources: Travel/meeting costs, report costs, and staff time.  
Product: 2003 Annual Operations Plan.  
Schedule: Annual Operations Plan will be drafted by spring 2002 and addressed by the Committee at the 2002 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/NMFS/GSMFC  
Approach: The Work Group has been working on this issue for several years. In 2000, the MRFSS was re-established in the U.S. Caribbean, although there were severe problems with attracting and retaining reliable intercept interviewers in the U.S. Virgin Islands. Sampling in Puerto Rico was conducted in 2001 however, sampling was dropped in the U.S. Virgin Islands during 2001. Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, NMFS and GSMFC personnel are exploring ways to ensure long-term collection of recreational data in the Caribbean.  
Resources: Travel, copy and mailing expenses and staff time.  
Product: Develop a long-term MRF surveys for the Caribbean.  
Schedule: The Work Group will continue monitoring this task in 2002.

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 of 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) was developed that solicits proposals from various groups for the development of a strategy for disseminating information about the FIN to a variety of commercial and recreational groups as well as the general public. The FIN Committee asked the Work Group to further refine the RFP and work with the ACCSP in developing an outreach strategy.

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

Product: FIN outreach program

Schedule: The Work Group met in 2001 and will meet in 2002 to further develop the RFP.

Task B6: 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. As an initial step, the FIN Committee began compiling information about the magnitude of discards in the Region. 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 2002.

Task B7: 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. In addition, the Work Group has developed a pilot study in the Gulf of Mexico. The Committee agreed 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 2002.

Task B8: 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/FIN 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 present a draft of the document to the FIN Committee at the 2002 meeting.

Task B9: 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 IT 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 presented the FIN Committee a recommended data structure for the data base. Upon approval, inputting the fishing regulations information into the system can begin. Once the fishing regulations information in is 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. Entry of data into the FIN DMS will begin in 2002. The compilation of these data will be an ongoing activity.

Task B10: Development of Registration Tracking System (Goal 2, Objective 2) (C)

Objective: Development of a registration tracking system for FIN.  
Team Members: Registration Tracking Work Group  
Approach: In conjunction with the ACCSP, the Work Group will continue the development of the registration tracking system for both programs. This system will provide a unique identifier for fishermen, dealers, and vessels involved in commercial fisheries that is trackable through geographic location and time. Modification of the existing data base structure will be done in 2002. Accomplished by meetings, conference calls, and mail.  
Resources: Meeting/travel costs, telephone costs, mail costs, and staff time.  
Product: Registration tracking system for FIN and ACCSP  
Schedule: The Work Group addressed this issue in 2000 and will meet in 2002 to continue development of this system.

Task B11: 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. A draft data collection procedures document will be presented to the FIN Committee at the 2002 meeting. Review of this information is an ongoing activity.

Task B12: 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 FIN 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 FIN 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, sampling and sub-sampling techniques and other pertinent topics.

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-2002.

Task B13: 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: Recommendations for commercial and recreational surveys.

Schedule: This task is an ongoing activity.

Task B14: 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 FIN 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 B15: 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: In 2001, a night fishing pilot study was conducted in Mississippi. The Work Group will meet in 2002 to begin evaluating the results of this study. Based on the evaluation, appropriate recommendations and implementation of appropriate methods will be implemented. 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: The Work Group will meet in 2002 to address this task.

Task B16: 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 had been decided that states provide updates to NSIL staff regarding fishing tournaments in their

states. However, NSIL is no longer involved in tournament registration. The outcome of this activity is unclear at this time. 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 2002 to continue examining this issue.

Task B17: 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 B18: 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/Data Collection Plan Work Group  
Approach: The Committee has developed a data collection plan which identifies the priority species (and associated data needed to be collected) for the state, interstate and federal entities as well as establishes sampling target levels for biological data. The plan provides guidance to the states. 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 2001 and will continue to do so into the future to develop this annual plan.

Task B19: 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 has compiled a list of fishery-independent activities being conducted in the region. The Committee decided that a similar initiative to FIN should be undertaken for fishery-independent activities. Program such as SEAMAP and other fishery-independent surveys will be involved in the development of goals and objectives, program organization, etc.

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

Product: Development of a coordinated state/Federal fishery-independent program,

Schedule: The FIN Committee discussed this issue at the 2001 meeting and will continue addressing it during 2002.

Task B20: 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 criteria. The Committee will periodically review the status of each states' licenses. Once a region has adopted a standardized license, implementation of license sampling frame can be accomplished.

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' licenses.

Task B21: 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. GSMFC is exploring the possibility of using data loggers for the collection of recreational data.

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

Product: Progress reports concerning data collection technologies.

Schedule: This is an ongoing activity.

Task B22: 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 B23: 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 other pertinent 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 B24: 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 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 2002.

### **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 FIN Committee in all aspects of program coordination, administration, and operation;
- Implement plans and program directives approved by the FIN Committee;
- Provide coordination and logistical support, including communications and organization of meetings for the FIN Committee, subcommittees, and work groups;
- Develop and/or administer cooperative agreements, grants, and contracts;
- Serve as liaison between the FIN Committee, other program participants, and other interested organizations;
- Assist the FIN Committee 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 FIN information and data in accordance with accepted policies and procedures as set forth by the FIN Committee;
- Assist in the identification of regional and geographic needs that can be satisfied through FIN activities;
- Conduct or participate in other activities as identified.

## D. Time Table

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
<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 surveys 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

<b>Data Collection (continued)</b>	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
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 Committee 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 FIN requirements.
- Objective 5 To coordinate, integrate and augment, as appropriate, data collection efforts to meet FIN 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 a national 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 national program planning.
- Objective 2 To coordinate FIN with other regional and national marine commercial and recreational fisheries programs.
- Objective 3 To encourage consistency and comparability among regional and national marine commercial and recreational fisheries programs over time.