

2016 Operations Plan
for the
Fisheries Information Network
in the Southeastern United States
FIN

by: FIN Committee

March 2015

Number 251

**2016 Operations Plan for the
Fisheries Information Network in the
Southeastern United States (FIN)**

January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2016

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. FIN is comprised of a commercial fisheries component and a recreational fisheries component.

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 2016. 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:

- To plan, manage, and evaluate data collection and management activities;
- To implement data collection activities;
- To establish and maintain a data management system; and
- To support the 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 2016 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 A1: Operation of Trip Ticket Programs (Goal 2, Objective 2) (C)

Objective: Operation of trip ticket program for the Southeast Region.
Team Members: Gulf States and Commercial Technical Work Group
Approach: For Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama, this task will provide funding for the operation of their trip ticket programs. In addition, GSMFC will contract with Bluefin Data to implement and maintain electronic trip ticket reporting for Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida. Accomplished by meetings, telephone, and 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: Operations of trip ticket will continue in 2016 for Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida.

Task A2: 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, GSMFC Systems Administrator, SEAMAP/FIN Oracle DBA, and ComFIN Programmer/Survey Coordinator
Approach: The FIN will continue to develop the Data Management System (DMS) including the development of standard protocols and documentation for data formats, input, editing, quality control, storage, access, transfer, dissemination, and application. The ComFIN Programmer/Survey Coordinator will continue to receive routine delivery of Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida trip ticket data into the FIN DMS. The Oracle DBA will also maintain the historical data in the system and provide support

of outside users of the system. In addition to the commercial data, regular loads of recreational and biological data into the DMS will be accomplished. 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: Work on a revised data management system and routine delivery of data will continue in 2016.

Task A3: 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, NOAA Fisheries
Approach: This task will provide for the conduct of the MRIP survey in Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida for shore, for-hire, and private modes. This task will provide for coordination of the survey, an intercept survey of shore, for-hire and private boat anglers to estimate angler catch using the existing MRIP methodology, and entry of the data. The states will also conduct weekly telephone calls to a 10% random sample of the Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida charter boat captains to obtain estimates of charter boat fishing effort. NOAA Fisheries will produce expanded estimates using cleaned data provided via GSMFC of catch and effort by wave using the existing MRIP methodology. 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 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 NOAA Fisheries
Approach: The purpose of this task is to sample gulf menhaden catches from menhaden purse-seine vessels that operate at the ports of Moss Point, Mississippi and Empire and Abbeville, 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 NOAA Fisheries.

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.

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

The tasks below cover all 2016 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 Annual Operations Plan, 2017 (Goal 1, Objective 3) (F)

Objective: Develop 2017 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 2017.
Resources: Travel/meeting costs, report costs, and staff time.
Product: 2017 Annual Operations Plan.
Schedule: Annual Operations Plan will be drafted by fall 2016 and addressed by the Committee at the March 2017 meeting.

Task B2: 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: The Recreational Technical Work Group/NOAA Fisheries/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 began in 2001 however this only last for the 2001 sampling season. In 2012, the GSMFC reinstated the coordination and administration of the recreational data collection activities in Puerto Rico. Unfortunately, in 2014 GSMFC discontinued coordinating recreational data collection due to difficulties in obtaining support staff from Puerto Rico DNER and the inability of PRDNER staff to adhere to the new MRIP methods. GSMFC will continue to facilitate communication between all agencies to determine the best methods for recreational sampling in Puerto Rico and the U.S Virgin Islands.

Resources: Travel, copy and mailing expenses and staff time.
Product: Develop a long-term MRF surveys for the Caribbean.
Schedule: This task is an ongoing activity.

Task B3: Dissemination of Program Information (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 MRIP staff has developed a home page where users are able to access the MRIP 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 that includes information concerning the FIN.
Resources: Copy and mailing expenses and staff time.
Product: Development and distribution of a fact sheet concerning FIN has been developed. Results-oriented tables were included in the FIN Annual Report in 2009 and will continue in 2016.
Schedule: This task will be an ongoing activity.

Task B4: Implementation of Outreach Program (Goal 1, Objective 4) (F)

Objective: Implement an outreach program for FIN.
Team Members: FIN Outreach Work Group/FIN Committee
Approach: The Work Group has developed a strategy for outreach. The group developed a draft strategy document that has been reviewed and approved by the FIN Committee. As outlined in the document, it is incumbent on the program partners to conduct outreach within their jurisdiction. The Commission recently developed an Outreach Subcommittee and FIN is exploring how to utilize this group for its outreach issues, as appropriate. The FIN staff will attend a variety of meetings to promote the program as well. FIN Committee will continue to work with the ACCSP in developing outreach activities.
Resources: Telephone costs, report costs, travel/meeting costs, and staff time.
Product: FIN outreach program
Schedule: The FIN Committee approved the strategy in June 2002. The Committee will periodically review outreach activities and institute the necessary actions.

Task B5: Create an On-Boarding Process for New GulfFIN Members (Goal 1, Objective 4) (F)

Objective: Create a process for training new GulfFIN members on the program and its current issues.

Team Members: FIN Administrative Subcommittee/FIN Committee

Approach: The FIN Administrative Subcommittee will determine existing or new documentation and outreach materials that will be provided to new FIN Committee members to help educate them on FIN's purpose, history, and details regarding ongoing projects.

Resources: Telephone costs, report costs, and staff time.

Product: Develop materials useful for educating new FIN Committee members

Schedule: The Administrative Subcommittee will meet via conference call in early 2016 and present their recommendations to the FIN Committee in March 2016.

Task B6: Define Partner Needs and Requirements (Goal 2, Objective 1) (F)

Objective: Survey state and federal GulfFIN partners to determine current needs for data collection, quality control, and data management.

Team Members: State/Federal Fisheries Management Committee/FIN Committee

Approach: To promote improvements in data collection activities and improve the GulfFIN Data Management System GulfFIN needs to survey its state and federal partners to determine and define each partner's data needs. The initial step will be to utilize the FIN Committee to develop a process for defining partner needs that could be presented to the S/FFM Committee for input and approval.

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

Product: Develop a list of partner needs and requirements for data collection, quality control, and data management that can be used to guide future improvements.

Schedule: FIN Committee will meet in March 2016 to begin discussions.

Task B7: 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 GSMFC and NOAA Fisheries

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. The Gulf of Mexico workshop will be attended by the state and federal port agents from Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida, NOAA Fisheries and GSMFC staff as well as other interested personnel. In addition to commercial issues, the group will also dedicate some time to discuss biological sampling issues. Some of the suggested topics for these meetings include species identification workshops, 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. Develop a list of recommendations regarding commercial data collection activities.
Schedule: The need for a 2016 meeting will be evaluated based on available funding and the amount of essential agenda topics.

Task B8: Otolith Processors Training Workshop (Goal 2, Objective 3) (F)

Objective: Convene an annual workshop of state and federal otolith processors to discuss issues related to analyzing hard parts (otoliths, spines, etc.)
Team Members: State and federal processors and GSMFC and NOAA Fisheries
Approach: In an effort to provide a forum to ensure quality control and quality assurance for otolith processing, the FIN Committee decided to convene workshops of state and federal processors. Processing personnel from Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida and NOAA Fisheries, GSMFC staff as well as other interested persons will attend the workshop.
Resources: Telephone costs, report costs, travel/meeting costs, and staff time.
Product: Provide a forum for processing personnel to discuss problems and issues related to analysis of age structures.
Schedule: The meeting will be scheduled for early to mid-2016 if the states and NOAA Fisheries continue to request attending this workshop.

Task B9: Evaluate Alternative Methods for Collecting Recreational Discards Data (Goal 2, Objective 3) (R)

Objective: Evaluate methods for collecting data regarding discarded recreational catch in the Gulf of Mexico.
Team Members: The Recreational Technical Work Group
Approach: The Recreational Technical Work Group will work in conjunction with MRIP regarding the recreational redesign activities to address this issue. GulfFIN sponsored a recreational discards workshop in

2016 and the findings from that work will be included in the revised GulfFIN Recreational Standards document. This task will be accomplished by meetings, telephone and mail.

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

Product: Validation process to be used by the FIN partners.

Schedule: The Recreational Technical Work Group is attempting to produce a draft standards document and provide it to the FIN Committee in 2016.

Task B10: Review of Commercial QA/QC Standards (Goal 2, Objective 3) (C)

Objective: Review the existing FIN commercial quality assurances/quality control (QA/QC) standards.

Team Members: Commercial Technical Work Group, Data Management Subcommittee

Approach: The current development of a unified Gulf Trip Ticket program coupled with a planned redesign of the FIN Data Management System will aide in reviewing and editing the Commercial QA/QC standards also. The Commercial Technical Work Group will be involved with development of the new unified trip ticket system. The Data Management Subcommittee will be provided several presentations regarding progress of the new system development. This task will be accomplished by meetings, conference calls, and mail. New standards resulting from the new unified trip ticket system will be included in GulfFIN QA/QC standards documentation.

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

Product: Updated FIN QA/QC standards

Schedule: The FIN Committee will be updated by the Commercial Technical Work Group and keep them abreast of the progress on this issue.

Task B11: Establish an Approach for Validation Commercial Conversion Factors (Goal 2, Objective 3) (C)

Objective: Establish an approach for updating commercial conversion factors.

Team Members: Commercial Technical Work Group

Approach: Previous work has shown that many of the conversion factors used in commercial data are outdated and have no details as to how they were generated. Many states have questioned the accuracy of conversion factors for several key species. The Commercial Technical Workgroup will meet to begin discussions on appropriate methods for evaluating and updating conversion factors.

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

Product: Updated commercial conversion factors
Schedule: The FIN Committee will be updated by the Commercial Technical Work Group and keep them abreast of the progress on this issue.

Task B12: Development of Recreational Standards (Goal 2, Objective 3) (F)

Objective: Review and modify the existing FIN recreational standards documentation.
Team Members: Recreational Technical Work Group
Approach: The current Recreational Standards document is outdated and in need of improvement. The ACCSP has developed a recreational standards document and FIN would likely utilize this document as a starting point. Work is already beginning on logbook electronic reporting in the for-hire sector and this standards document needs to include these types of data collection programs. This team should also be involved in the process of statistical review of state recreational data programs such as LA Creel and other red snapper pilot projects currently in process. This task will be accomplished by meetings, conference calls, and mail.
Resources: Meeting/travel costs, telephone costs, mail costs, and staff time.
Product: Updated FIN QA/QC standards
Schedule: The Recreational Technical Work Group will be convened multiple times in 2016 with the goal of providing a revised FIN Standards document to the FIN Committee in 2016.

Task B13: Evaluation of Recreational Data (Goal 2, Objective 5) (F)

Objective: Periodically review the recreational catch and effort data collected under the Marine Recreational Information Program methods.
Team Members: Gulf States, GSMFC and NOAA Fisheries
Approach: The Gulf States, GSMFC and NOAA Fisheries will review the catch and effort data collected under the MRIP methods after each sampling wave estimates are generated via electronic mail submissions. If necessary conference calls and webinars will be convened. The group will examine the catch data looking for potential species misidentifications and outliers (overly large/small or light/heavy fish, etc.). For the effort data, the group looks at the historical data and compares it with the current wave data to determine if there are large decreases or increases. These reviews are conducted to ensure the best quality data are used in generating the recreational fishing estimates. The Gulf States, GSMFC, and NOAA Fisheries will also meet face to face at minimum once per year to discuss performance issues and discuss proposed survey

methodology changes.
Resources: Telephone costs, report costs, travel/meeting costs, and staff time
Product: Periodic review of recreational fisheries data.
Schedule: The group will review 2016 wave estimates via electronic communications in March, May, July, September, and November. The group will meet face to face in October/November 2016 to review the sampler performance and discuss survey methodology. Topics that need to be addressed include:

- Identify species that should be targeted by for specific surveys and implement these surveys;
- Investigate methods for improving sampling coverage of offshore trips;
- Identify geographic regions of interest for recreational sampling;
- Increase recreational sampling levels Gulf-wide; and
- Optimize sampling allocations to improve precision for key species.

Many of these issues are being addressed by NOAA Fisheries MRIP staff. FIN should utilize these efforts to avoid duplication of effort.

Task B14: Integration into the Stock Assessment Process (Goal 2, Objective 5) (F)

Objective: Develop a plan that outlines the needs for stock assessment for the upcoming years 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 that 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 and the Committee has developed a feedback mechanism to the SEDAR process regarding the adequacy of the level of biological sampling. This task will be accomplished by meetings, telephone and mail.
Resources: Meeting costs, mail costs, telephone costs, and staff time
Product: Data collection plan
Schedule: The group has expressed a desire to revisit the complete biological sampling targets to determine what changes might be necessary if funding is obtained for future sampling seasons.

Task B15: Collection of Soft Tissue and Other Biological Information (Goal 2, Objective 5) (F)

Objective: Be responsive to requests for soft tissue and other biological

information, as needed.

Team Members: FIN partners

Approach: Through FIN, partners need to be aware of soft tissue and other biological information requests and collect the needed information as resources and time permits. This task will be accomplished by meeting, telephone and mail.

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

Product: Collection of needed biological data.

Schedule: As requests are made, staff will provide the pertinent information to FIN partners and they will attempt to collect the requested information based on available resources and time. This is an ongoing activity.

Task B16: Collection of Social/Economic Data (Goal 2, Objective 5) (F)

Objective: Implement the collection of the social/economic data in the Gulf of Mexico.

Team Members: FIN Committee

Approach: The GSMFC in conjunction with NOAA Fisheries had hired a term economist to work on various economic projects but funding ended in 2014. The implementation of this module should continue and issues to consider include securing long-term funding; increasing economic data collection and support trending over time; improving coordination among management entities and developing a uniform approach for assessing the impact of management decisions and fishery disasters. This task will be 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.

Schedule: GSMFC will continue to work to obtain funding with the goal of retaining a permanent economist. This is an ongoing activity.

Task B17: Compilation of Metadata (Goal 2, Objective 5) (F)

Objective: Compile metadata from the FIN partners for inclusion into a metadata database.

Team Members: FIN and ACCSP staff and FIS personnel

Approach: The Recreational Technical Work Group has worked on this issue in the past and has developed criteria for creating a metadata database. FIN has populated the metadata data base using the InPort tool. States will routinely update and/or add information to the system. The FIN has hired a part-time staff person to assist the states

in compiling this information. The status of metadata compilation is a standing item on the Gulf of Mexico Geographic Subcommittee. Meeting/travel costs, telephone costs, mail costs, staff time.

Resources: Development of metadata module

Product: The compilation of these data will be an ongoing activity and is routinely discussed by the Gulf of Mexico Geographic Subcommittee. The subcommittee will provide a report to FIN at the March and October 2016 meetings.

Schedule:

Task B18: Evaluation of Innovative Data Collection Technologies (Goal 2, Objective 6) (F)

Objective: Evaluate and recommend innovative data collection technologies

Team Members: FIN Committee and other appropriate personnel.

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: Exploration of Strategies for In-Season Quota Monitoring (Goal 2, Objective 6) (R)

Objective: Explore strategies for implementing in-season quota monitoring for the recreational fisheries in the Gulf of Mexico.

Team Members: Recreational Technical Work Group

Approach: In the past, FIN has recommended that in-season quota monitoring for recreational fisheries not be implemented; however, it appears the in-season quota monitoring has become an important recreational issue with shorter seasons for many key species. Some work has been accomplished specific to red snapper data collection pilot programs in each Gulf State. The FIN will continue to work in conjunction with the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) to explore this issue.

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

Product: Potential strategies for implementing in-season quota monitoring.

Schedule: The MRIP will provide periodical reports to the FIN Committee to keep them abreast of the progress on this issue.

Task B20: Improve Timeliness of Data to Support Quota Monitoring (Goal 2, Objective 6) (C)

Objective: Improve timeliness of commercial data to support quota monitoring for the commercial fisheries in the Gulf of Mexico.

Team Members: NMFS and FIN staff

Approach: NMFS instituted a rule in 2011 that all federally-permitted dealers are required to report their commercial landings via electronic means. NMFS, Gulf States, FIN and ACCSP staff have been working on implementing this rule. This task will be accomplished by meetings, conference calls, and mail.

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

Product: Increased electronic reporting.

Schedule: NMFS, Gulf States and FIN staff will continue to increase the number of commercial dealers who report via electronic means.

Task B21: **Develop Improved User-Access Tools (Goal 3, Objective 3) (F)**

Objective: Develop improved web queries for end user interface and information dissemination.

Team Members: FIN Data Management Work Group

Approach: In conjunction with the ACCSP, the Work Group will work on the development of end-user web queries that will provide non-confidential results from databases housed in the FIN Data Management System. Many commercial and recreational databases have similar structure between GulfFIN and ACCSP so a coordinated approach can save resources. This task will be accomplished by conference calls, meetings, and mail.

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

Product: End-user web query tools housed at GSMFC.

Schedule: GSMFC and ACCSP will work on development in early 2016. The Data Management Work Group will provide input on preliminary designs and with plans to provide an update to the FIN Committee in 2016.

Task B22: **Evaluation of Information Management Technologies (Goal 3, Objective 6) (F)**

Objective: 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

Product:	Progress reports.
Schedule:	This is an ongoing activity.
<u>Task B23:</u>	<u>Implementation of Long-term National Program Planning (Goal 4, Objective 1) (F)</u>
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. This task will be 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.
<u>Task B24:</u>	<u>Coordination, Consistency and Comparability with Other Cooperative Marine Commercial and Recreational Fisheries Programs (Goal 4, Objective 2 and Objective 3) (F)</u>
Objective:	Coordinate FIN with other regional cooperative marine commercial and recreational fisheries programs and encourages consistency and comparability among regional programs over time.
Team Members:	FIN Committee
Approach:	The FIN Committee members, GSMFC staff and ACCSP staff will coordinate activities with the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission as well as attend the national Fisheries Information System (FIS) meetings. The FIN and ACCSP staffs periodically meet jointly to discuss the activities that each program is involved in and where the two programs can work together. This task will be 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.

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 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 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

	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
Planning, Management, and Evaluation					
FIN Committee					
Maintenance of FIN Committee	X	X	X	X	X
Framework Plan					X
Review of Framework Plan					X
Operations Plans					
Development of annual operations plans	X	X	X	X	X
Define approach for assessing partner needs and requirements		X			
Information dissemination					
Coordinate with ACCSP and NMFS to develop outreach/education materials	X	X	X	X	X
Use Internet communications	X	X	X	X	X
Create on-boarding process for new FIN Committee members	X				
Program Review					
Conduct periodic FIN strategic planning		X		X	
Data Collection					
Quality control/assurance					
Evaluate alternative methods for collecting recreational discard information	X				
Review of commercial and recreational QA/QC standards	X	X			
Establish approach for validating commercial conversion factors	X	X			
Coordination of data collection					
Development of data collection plan	X	X	X	X	X
Development of recreational data standards	X				
Expand collection of metadata	X	X	X	X	X
Evaluate suitability of new data sources and integrate FIN data system	X	X	X	X	X
Prioritize species for additional biological sampling	X	X	X	X	X
Continue coordination of biological sampling	X	X	X	X	X
Evaluate biological sampling strategies		X	X		
Collect soft tissue, etc samples, as time permits	X	X	X	X	X
Innovative collection technology					
Evaluate innovative data collection technologies	X	X	X	X	X
Data Management					
Hardware/software capabilities					
Review hardware/software capabilities					X
Data maintenance	X	X	X	X	X
Integration of databases					
Identify appropriate databases for integration in DMS	X	X	X	X	X
Innovative data management technology					
Evaluate innovative data management technologies	X	X	X	X	X
Protect data confidentiality	X	X	X	X	X
Develop improved end-user access tools	X				

Development of National Program

Long-term and coordination with other programs planning
Coordination with ACCSP and Pacific RecFIN
Coordination with other programs

X X X X X

E. Committee, Subcommittee, and Work Group Membership

FIN Committee

Ken Brennan
NOAA Fisheries
Beaufort Laboratory

Richard Cody
Florida Fish and Wildlife Research Institute

Chris Denson
Alabama Marine Resources Division

Gregg Bray
Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission

Justin Esslinger
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

John Froeschke
Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

Graciela Garcia-Moliner
Caribbean Fishery Management Council

David Gloeckner
NOAA Fisheries
Southeast Fisheries Science Center

Faye Grubbs
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

Michael Harden
Louisiana Department of Wildlife and
Fisheries

Matt Hill
Mississippi Department of Marine
Resources

Craig Lileyestrom
Puerto Rico Department of Natural and
Environmental Resources

Daniel Matos-Caraballo
Puerto Rico Department of Natural and
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Roy Pemberton
Virgin Islands Division of Fish and Wildlife

Bill Richardson
Mississippi Department of Marine
Resources

Nicole Beckham
Alabama Marine Resources Division

Tom Sinclair
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Tom Sminkey
NOAA Fisheries
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Nicole Smith
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Jessica Stephen
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FIN Administrative Subcommittee

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NOAA Fisheries
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Michael Harden
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Darrin Stewart
Mississippi Department of Marine Resources

Roy Pemberton
Virgin Islands Division of Fish and Wildlife

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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 protocols 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 an internal 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.