

**Shrimp Committee Report  
January 29, 2024  
Chris Schieble, Chair**

The Committee adopted the agenda (**Tab D, No. 1**) and approved the minutes (**Tab D, No. 2**) of the October 2023 meeting as written.

***Update on Early Adopter Program for Shrimp cVMS (Tab D, No. 4)***

Dr. Lowther (SEFSC) presented an update on the Early Adopter Program for a cellular vessel monitoring system (cVMS) on the Gulf of Mexico (Gulf) federal shrimp fleet.

A Council member inquired as to the location of the five vessels that signed up in the last half of January 2024 to participate in the program. Dr. Putman (LGL Ecological Associates) responded that the vessels are located in Florida. Another Committee member asked which devices had been selected by the 16 vessels that had signed up to participate in the program. Dr. Lowther responded that he did not have that information at this time.

A Committee member stated that, on the timeline, device installation would end in July 2024 and asked if there was a deadline to participate in the program. Dr. Lowther explained that all funds have to be spent by August 2026, so in order to provide two years of service, that devices would have to be installed no later than July 2024. However, if someone wanted to participate after July 2024, the device could potentially still be provided, but without two years of cellular data transmission costs being paid for through the program. Dr. Putman stated that the July 2024 date was more flexible than originally planned. The Committee member then asked how many units might be provided based on the knowledge of costs so far. Dr. Lowther responded that 50 to 75 devices might be provided. Dr. Putman stated that the retail prices were provided to shrimpers so that they would understand future costs if a cVMS device needed to be replaced.

Dr. Simmons inquired where the data collected by the cVMS devices would be transmitted. Dr. Lowther responded that the data would be transmitted to the Southeast Fisheries Science Center (SEFSC). Dr. Simmons asked if side-by-side testing would be done with cVMS devices and current cellular electronic logbook (cELB) devices. Dr. Lowther responded that there was limited capacity to reprogram cELB devices that the SEFSC has in supply. Dr. Simmons asked if it was possible to at least check if the currently installed cELB devices were operating properly so they could be used in side-by-side testing, particularly with any new vendors that may want to participate in the program and were not included in the pilot test. Dr. Walter responded that they could check with LGL Ecological Associates to see if that was possible but that program funds would not go to reprogramming the old cELB devices to run side-by-side testing.

***Shrimp Futures Project: Workshops to Address Current Challenges and Future Scenario Planning (Tab D, No. 5)***

Dr. Walter (SEFSC) presented information on the SEFSC's Shrimp Futures Project. A Committee member stated this information had been scheduled to be presented to the Louisiana Shrimp Task Force on January 17, 2024, but the meeting was cancelled. The Committee member noted that the Louisiana Shrimp Task Force meeting has been rescheduled for March 6, 2024, and encouraged the presentation be given at that meeting.

Another Committee member inquired what Council support could entail. Dr. Walter stated that the Council letter sent to Dr. Rubino on the National Seafood Strategy was already a show of Council support and added that lending Council staff time to these workshops would be helpful. Dr. Simmons responded that additional details on the workshops would be useful for knowing the extent of Council staff time that may be requested.

Several Committee members stated that they wanted to applaud the efforts laid out in Dr. Walter's presentation. Dr. Simmons added that local leadership and Sea Grant agent assistance would be needed to encourage workshop attendance by the shrimp industry. Dr. Simmons also encouraged more information be provided to the Council on how funding from the Inflation Reduction Act may assist with this project. A Committee member commented that an update at the April 2024 Council meeting would be informative.

The Committee recommends, and I so move, **to recommend the Council support the Shrimp Futures Project.**

*Motion carried unanimously.*

***Other Business***

A Committee member inquired if Council staff are on-track to bring the draft shrimp document to the April 2024 Council meeting. Dr. Freeman responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Chair, this concludes my report.