INDEPENDENT ADVISORY TEAM FOR MARINE MAMMAL STOCK ASSESSMENTS

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THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI GULF COAST RESEARCH LABORATORY

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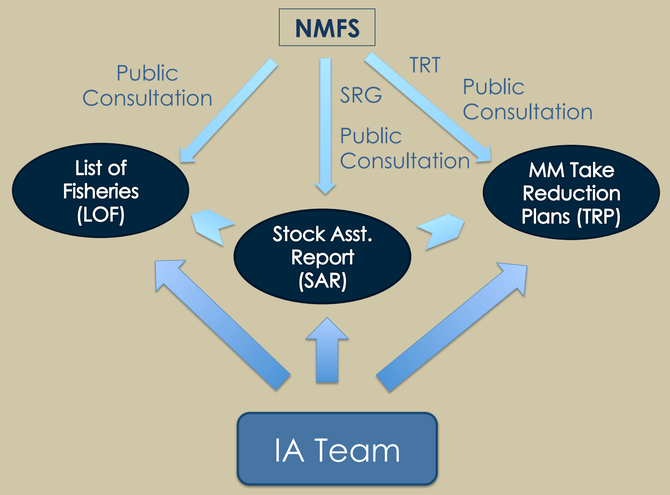
MM Stock Assessment Process and IA Team



Goals

- Establish an IA Team consisting of a science-industry liaison to:
  - Help ensure that the best science (data and methodologies) underlies MM stock estimates and classification of fisheries
  - Contribute to effective and efficient Take Reduction Plans aimed to reduce MM-fisheries interactions

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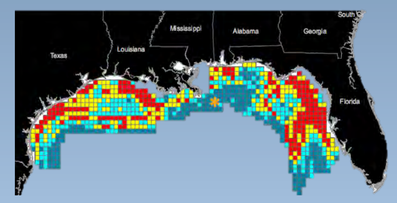
Relevance

- Large number of stocks (Atlantic: ~50)
- Potential Biological Removal (PBR) used to classify fisheries' impact is unknown for more than 40% of MM stocks
- Yet, 20+ fisheries are classified as causing occasional or frequent incidental mortality or serious injuries

Innovative Research

- Estimates of MM abundance and incidental mortality are key to setting PBRs
- Typically MM Asst. rely on estimates defined for broad geographic areas
- MMs often exhibit seasonal movement patterns that may intensify interactions with a fishery in a localized area while reducing them in other areas
- Modern techniques, such as DSM and IBM, offer the potential of higher resolution estimates that also capture the spatio-temporal dynamics of abundance and mortality

Density Surface Model for Bottlenose dolphins in the Gulf of Mexico



Planned Outcomes

- Form technical Advisory Team
- Engage in the review process (e.g., Scientific Review Group, Take Reduction Teams)
- Identify priority areas for improvement and appropriate research approaches
- Provide recommendations to SCeMFiS's science agenda