

2020/2021 MONKFISH RESEARCH-SET-ASIDE PROGRAM RESEARCH NEEDS AND PRIORITIES

Note: These priorities were excerpted from the Notice of Federal Funding for the 2020/2021 Monkfish Research-Set-Aside (RSA) Program.

Projects funded under an RSA DAS award must enhance understanding of the monkfish fishery resource or contribute to the body of information on which management decisions are made. NMFS and the Councils will give priority to funding research proposals in the following areas. The priorities are listed in order of importance.

2020/2021 Monkfish RSA Program Research Needs and Priorities:

1. Research on monkfish life history focusing on: (a) age and growth, (b) longevity, (c) reproduction and (d) natural mortality;
2. Studies of stock structure/stock identification and implications for stock assessment and fisheries management;
3. Development of a standardized CPUE time series to estimate relative abundance;
4. Cooperative research surveys to supplement current survey coverage;
5. Research concerning bycatch and discard mortality focusing on: (a) Target species (i.e., monkfish or Northeast multispecies), and (b) non-target species (e.g., monkfish or skate);
6. Trawl and gillnet gear studies focusing on (a) bycatch reduction, including reducing interactions, and injury/mortality associated with these interactions, with sea turtles, Atlantic sturgeon, right and humpback whales, and other protected species and (b) size and/or species selectivity;
7. Ecological studies on protected species and monkfish as a new monkfish RSA priority, including consideration of monkfish and protected species' responses to environmental/climate change, and how these responses have the potential to change interaction risks to protected species;
8. Research concerning trophic interactions of monkfish with other species.