

WORKSHOP TO DISCUSS BYCATCH REDUCTION TECHNOLOGIES TO
REDUCE SEA TURTLE BYCATCH IN SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND AND MID-
ATLANTIC INSHORE TRAWL FISHERIES

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has a record of involving fishermen in cooperative research to investigate technological solutions to reduce bycatch of protected species. To initiate this process for the reduction of sea turtle bycatch in the southern New England and mid-Atlantic inshore trawl fisheries, the University of Rhode Island is hosting a workshop with leaders in the affected trawl fisheries in Ocean City, MD on 25-26 Jan. 2007 at the Fontainebleau Hotel, a Clarion Resort (410-524-3535). The two-day workshop will start on Thursday 25 Jan. at 9 AM and adjourn Friday 26th at 1 PM, and will cover the following topics:

1. Background

- Welcome and introductions of participants.
- Brief discussion of general life history, physiology of swimming and breathing of sea turtles impacted by trawls in the mid-Atlantic region, and discuss the stress, injury or lethal processes associated with the capture of these animals in trawls.
- Presentation of the bycatch problem (observer data expanded by effort or landings to cover the relevant fisheries).
- Review legal requirements and agency approach to sea turtle bycatch reduction in the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico
- Review sea turtle bycatch reduction technologies (specifically Turtle Excluder Devices TEDs) used in the Gulf of Mexico and southeast US trawl fisheries.
- Discuss the results of TED evaluations in the scallop trawl fishery conducted in summer 2006, and the potential/need for TED evaluations in other fisheries. Is this a good process to use for other fisheries?

2. Solicit ideas or concepts for BRTs or other measures for the trawl fisheries in the mid-Atlantic region, that will reduce the capture of sea turtles while minimizing impact on target species catch.

3. Plan specific evaluations/experiments in selected fisheries to conduct in the summer and fall of 2007.

URI has NMFS funding to support travel expenses of a limited number of fishermen and fishing industry representatives to participate in the workshop. All travel hotel and airline arrangements must be made by the URI travel agent (Donavon Travel) to be eligible for reimbursement.

Please contact: Joe DeAlteris at URI by telephone 401-874-5333 or by email at jdealteris@uri.edu for additional information on the final agenda or travel reimbursement.