LOBSTER VENTLESS TRAP SURVEY SYMPOSIUM: A SYNTHESIS OF CURRENT AND ONGOING WORK

A Rhode Island Marine Fisheries Institute Symposium

Held at the University of Rhode Island's

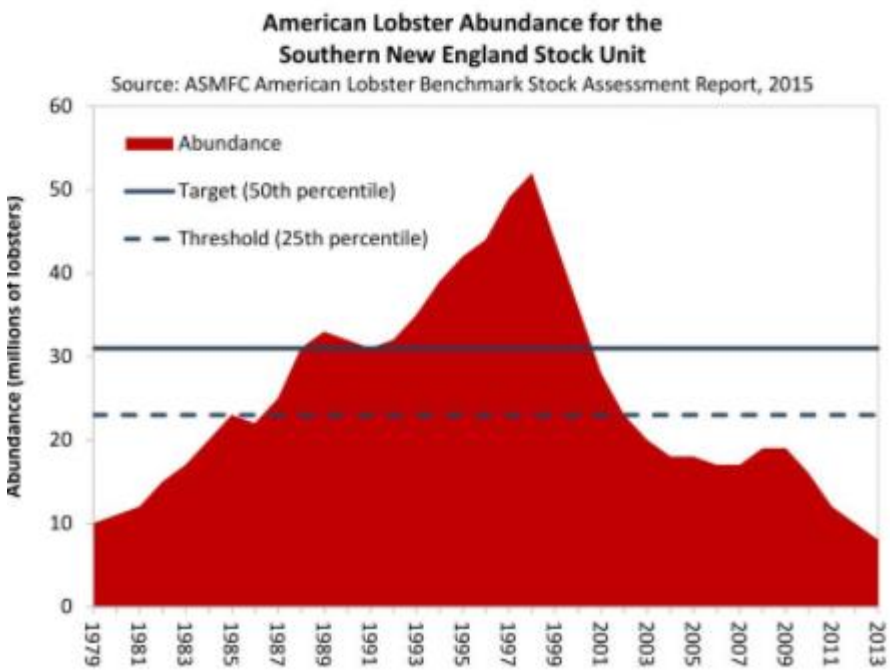
Graduate School of Oceanography Coastal Institute

Overview of the Symposium

- Introduction for context – J. McNamee
- Rhode Island State Lobster Ventless Trap Survey – C. McManus
- Southern New England Cooperative Ventless Trap Survey – J. Collie
- Block Island Wind Farm Ventless Trap Survey – M. Griffin
- Discussion - J. Collie

Southern New England Stock Status

- The lobster stock in SNE has been in a period of decline since 2000
- Decline may be caused by many factors:
  - Climate change
  - Habitat/Water quality issues
  - Fishing
  - Natural population cycle
- The need to have a rigorous assessment and good data to analyze is critical



Southern New England Stock Status

- The existing assessment uses trawl survey information to a large extent to indicate population trends

- Effectiveness of trawl survey information for lobster has been questioned
  - May have non-linearity issues
  - Catchability may be changing due to changes in population dynamics

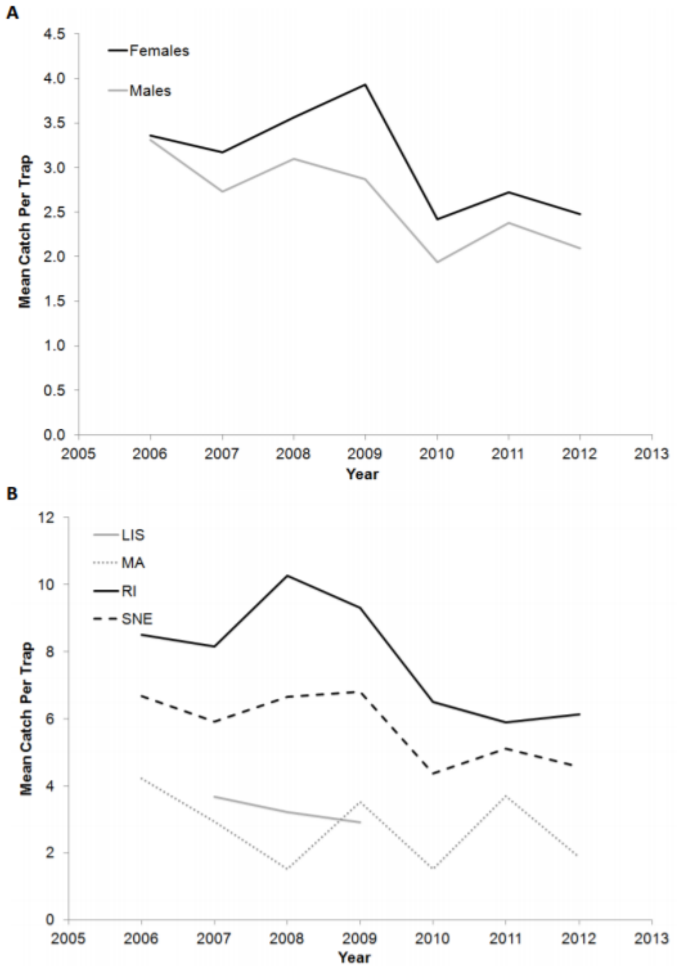
- Given these factors, ventless trap surveys were developed by the states with investment in the lobster fishery as a way to better account for population trajectories through time

Ventless Trap Surveys

- Attribute of using ventless trap surveys to supplement other data sources is that we're using same gear as the professional fishery, hope is won't have biases present in trawl survey data

- The additional attribute is the collaborative nature of the surveys; professional fishermen working with scientists to produce data

- The ventless surveys were used by the assessment scientists during the 2015 assessment process

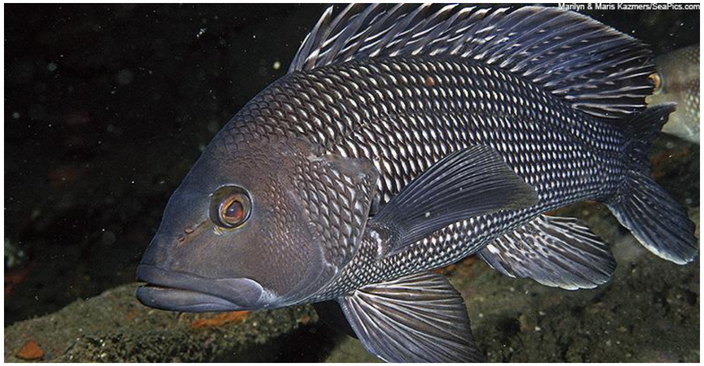


Figures 4.2.2.3.5. SNE Ventless Trap Survey indices (A) by sex and (B) by state.

Ventless Trap Surveys

- Once the effectiveness of this technique was demonstrated through the assessment process, it was adopted in other research initiatives
  - Such as, Before and After Impact Analysis for offshore energy development

- Data provided beyond just abundance; we get length frequency info, spatial info, information on finfish species as well



- Getting a lot of bang for our buck with these collaborative surveys

- So, the symposium allows us to step back, look at the work being done, and provides a chance to discuss and improve this important data stream