



Knowledge, Attitudes and Perceptions of Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary PROCESSES

Introduction

The information presented here is from a larger study of three user groups: commercial fishers, dive operators and environmental group members on their knowledge, attitudes and perceptions of management strategies and regulations in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary (FKNMS). The study profiles these user groups and provides information on user group knowledge, attitudes and perceptions of FKNMS management strategies and regulations in the baseline 1995-96 period and how things have changed over a 10-year time period. Some new baselines are also established on new management strategies and regulations.



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This fact sheet focuses on information obtained from dive operators on the FKNMS processes to develop management strategies and regulations.

FKNMS Processes

In both the baseline and 10-year replication, seven survey questions were used to assess the views of dive operators on FKNMS processes to develop management strategies and regulations. The questions focused on views on whether the processes were fair and just and whether NOAA/FKNMS listened to the concerns of individuals and local and state government or whether individuals were included or could have influence in the process of developing the management strategies and regulations. A five-point agreement scale was used where 1=strongly agree and 5=strongly disagree. A “Don’t Know” response was also allowed, but this was not included in statistical tests of changes in mean scores. Here A=Strongly to Moderately Agree and D=Strongly to Moderately Disagree. Statistical tests were done to test whether there were statistically significant changes in these views over the 10-year period.

Processes Fair and Just. A majority of dive operators agreed that the processes to develop rules and regulations were fair and just in both periods (Question 1). However, in the baseline, only 39.4% agreed that the process for developing boundaries and regulations for the zones was fair and just (Question 2). But in the 10-year replication a majority of dive operators (52.2%) agreed that the process for developing boundaries and regulations for the zones was fair and just. The proportion that disagreed also correspondingly declined from 29.5% to 17.3%. This is a statistically significant change. There was also a statistically significant movement in agreement with the answer to question 3 on whether the procedures NOAA has established to deal with violations of the FKNMS regulations were fair and just. Agreement went from 26.2% in the baseline to 40.6%. However, there was not a corresponding large movement in disagreement (37.7% in the baseline to 33.4% in the 10-year replication). Most of the movement came from those who answered “Don’t Know” in the baseline. Researchers in the baseline study had concluded that anti-FKNMS groups had raised doubts in the minds of dive operators about how the FKNMS would perform, which they argued moderated support for the FKNMS. With 10 years of experience with the FKNMS, the many fears raised have dissipated. Effectively, dive operators changed their views on the FKNMS processes from wariness to acceptance.

Fair & Just Question (Statement)	1995-96	2004-05	Statistical Difference
1. The processes that NOAA has used to develop rules and regulations for the FKNMS was open and fair to all groups.	50.8% A (2.41)	50.3% A (2.18)	NO (NO)
2. The Processes used by NOAA to develop boundaries and regulations for the FKNMS zones was open and fair to all groups.	39.4% A (2.91)	52.2% A (2.13)	YES (YES)
3. The procedures that NOAA has established to deal with violations of FKNMS regulations have been fair and just.	37.7% D (3.38)	40.6% A (2.81)	NO (NO)

- mean scores and statistical significance of mean scores in parentheses.



NOAA Listened to Others. As with FKNMS processes, dive operators were more wary of how the FKNMS would include the concerns of others in developing and implementing management strategies and regulations in the baseline study. For all four questions, dive operators moved toward more positive views on how NOAA/FKNMS listened and acted on the concerns of others. The shifts were statistically significant for questions 3 and 4. Again, after 10 years of experience with NOAA/FKNMS, dive operators have moved from wariness about NOAA/FKNMS to acceptance.

NOAA Listened to Others – Question (Statement)	1995-96	2004-05	Statistical Difference
1. It has not mattered whether the average person participated in the workshops and meetings on the FKNMS because the average person could not influence the final decisions.	45.9% D (3.00)	43.5% D (3.13)	NO (NO)
2. NOAA has not addressed the concerns of local and state governments in developing rules and regulations for the FKNMS.	32.8% A (2.94)	35.9% D (3.35)	NO (NO)
3. NOAA has not addressed the concerns of individual citizens in developing rules and regulations for the FKNMS.	57.3% A (2.45)	43.2% D (3.27)	YES (YES)
4. Once that the FKNMS regulations have been in effect, there has been no way that the average person could voice his/her opinion on the usefulness of the regulations.	60.3% A (2.54)	42.0% D (3.25)	YES (YES)

- mean scores and statistical difference of mean scores in parentheses.

Access to Full Report

The full report can be cited as follows:

Shivlani, M., Leeworthy V.R., Murray, T.J., Suman, D.O., and Tonioli, F. 2008. Knowledge, Attitudes and Perceptions of Management Strategies and Regulations of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuaries by Commercial Fishers, Dive Operators, and Environmental Group Members: A Baseline Characterization and 10-year Comparison. Marine Sanctuaries Conservation Series ONMS-08-06. U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, Silver Spring, MD. 170pp.

Available at: <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/science/conservation/pdfs/kap2.pdf>

Full Report and Executive Summary are also available in portable document format (pdf) from:

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