

Florida's Marine Aquarium Fishery

Regulation and Fisher Engagement for Coral Reef Conservation

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Dynasty Marine Associates, Inc.



History and Development of the Florida Marine Life Fishery

- Early collection began in the 1930s
- Formation of the Florida Marine Life Association (1973)
- Rapid growth in fishers and landings (1980s – 1990s)
- Introduction of regulations (1990s onward)

Veteran Florida Marine Life fisher Dr. Henry Feddern displays gorgonians he's harvested on a collecting trip for sale through the aquarium trade.



E. Haag/CORAL Magazine

Threats to Florida's Marine Life Fishery after Closure of the Hawaii Aquarium Fishery

- Global trend: closures & restrictions on aquarium fisheries
- Hawaii's fishery closed in 2017 after activist-led litigation
 - Media narratives overshadowed scientific data
 - Economic & cultural fallout

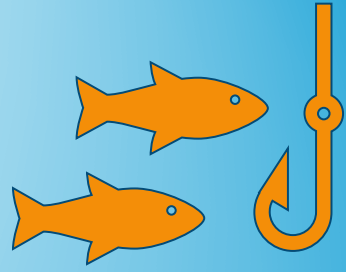


B. Everett

- Florida now hosts the U.S.'s largest marine aquarium fishery
- Dynasty Marine commissioned study by Aquarium Fisheries
- *Anderson & Pomeroy (2023)* offers comparative, fact-based evaluation



Policy Analysis



Input (Effort) Controls



Licenses/Permits
Required



Gear Restrictions



Anti-Cyanide
Regulation

Output (Catch) Controls



Quotas



Total Allowable
Catch Limits



Size Limits



Prohibited
Species Catch

Spatiotemporal Controls



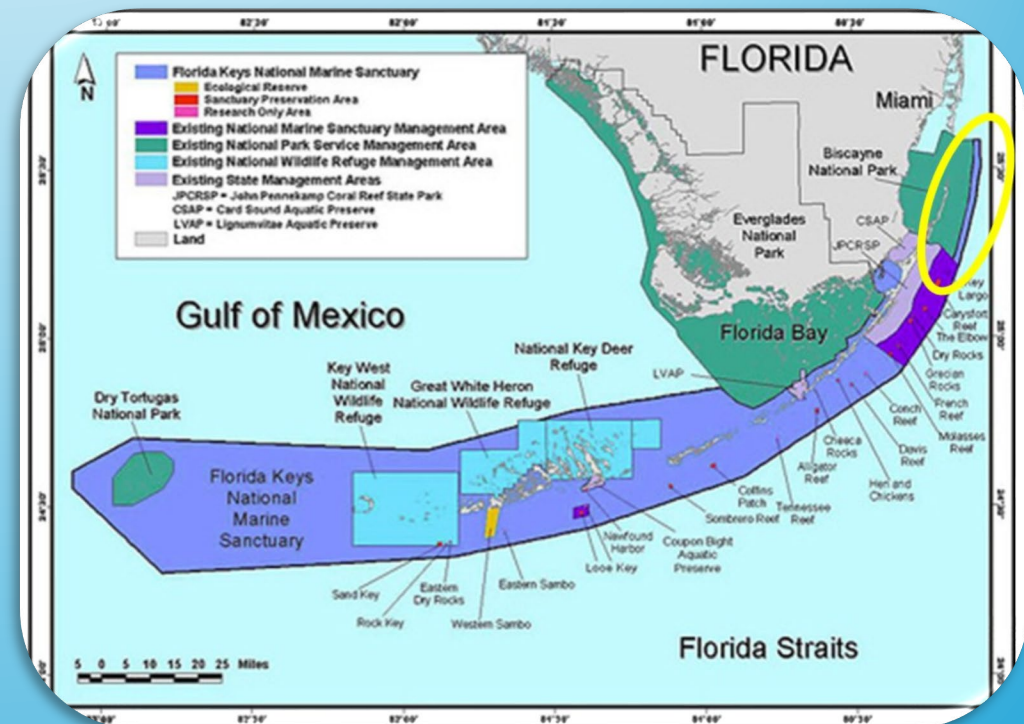
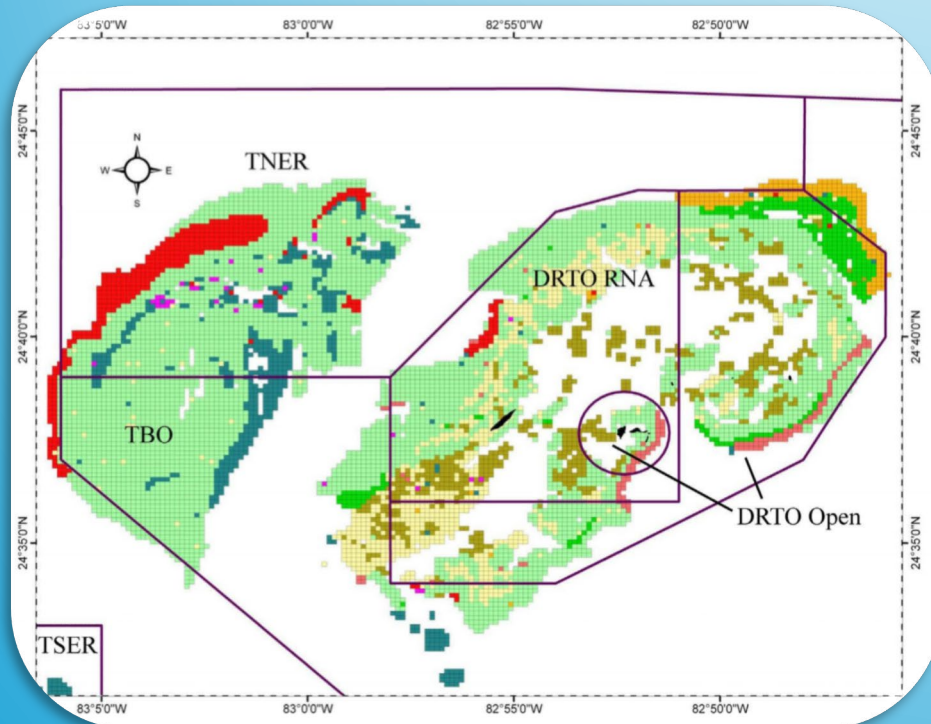
No-Take
Reserves



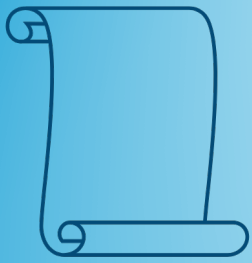
MPAs



Seasonal
Closures



Ault et al. (2013)



Rights-Based Management



Pompano Brownie (2020)



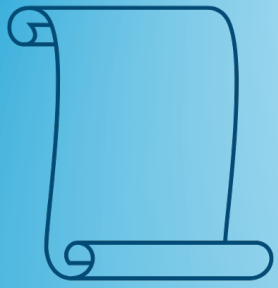
Limited
License



TURFs



ITQs



Informed Governance



Bluecornerconservation.org



Logbooks



Stock Assessments



Co-management



Fisheries Management
Plan



Fisheries Trends Analysis

Fisheries-Dependent

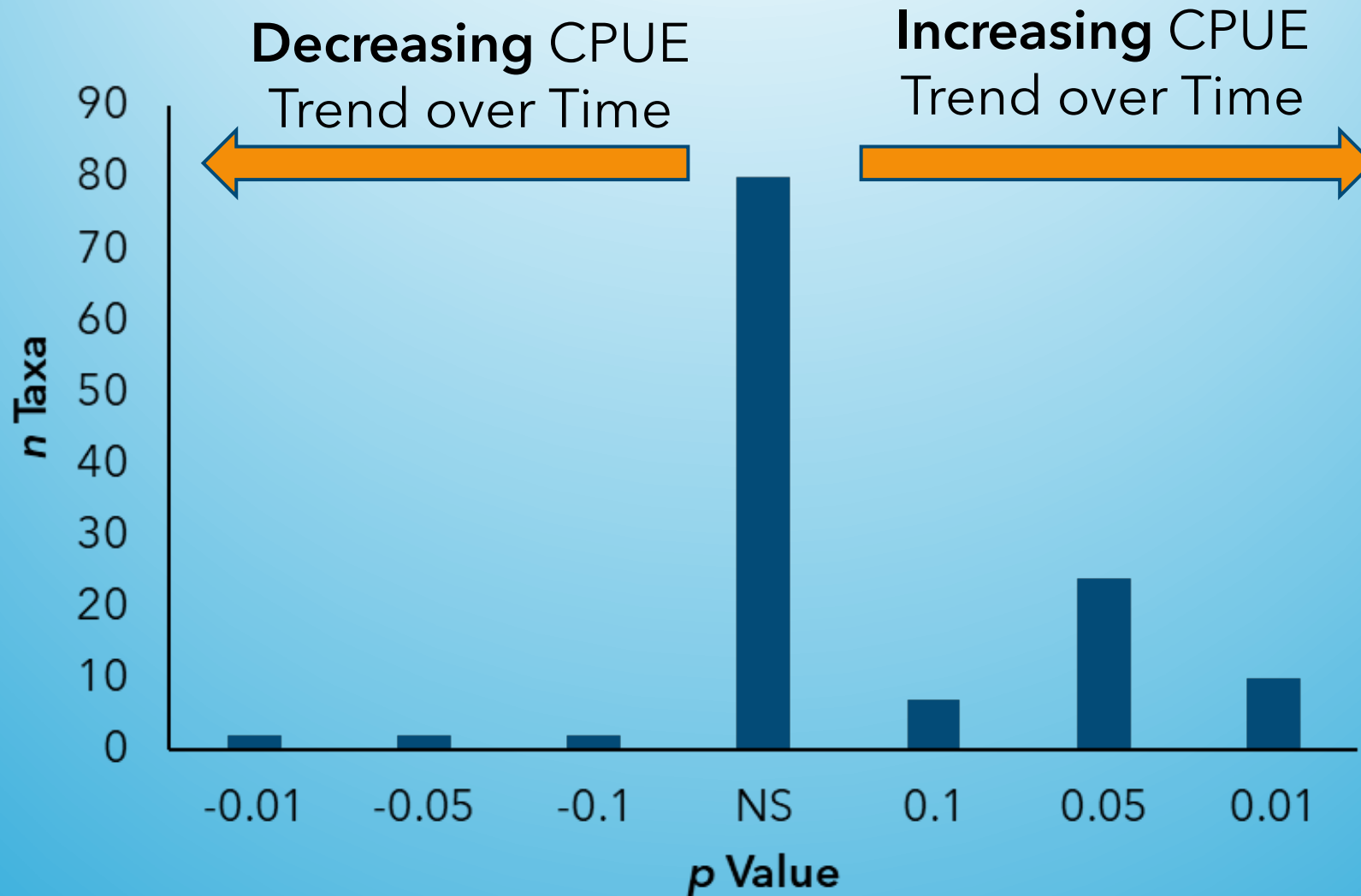
Statewide Fisheries-Dependent Survey

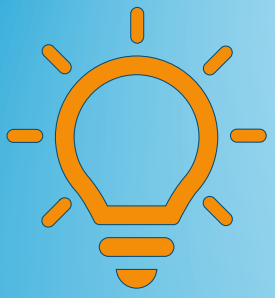
- Sharp and Sheridan (2019)
- Assessed landings data for 127 commercially fished marine aquarium fish taxa over a decade +
- CPUE = Catch Per Unit Effort
 - Standardizes for variation in the level of effort spent to catch each taxon
- Assessed trends over time





Fisheries-Dependent

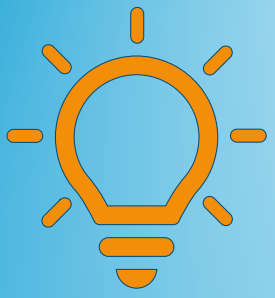




Conclusions



- Strong regulatory structure featuring a range of management measures
- Both fisheries-independent and dependent surveys conducted in recent years to assess the fishery
- Marine aquarium fish catch data are largely stable or increasing under current management



Recommendations



E. Haag/CORAL Magazine

- Assess economic impacts
- Management plan
- Comprehensive statewide fisheries monitoring program
- Audit available and needed resources
- Elevation of the fishery at the national level for federal fiduciary support



- Introduced to the Florida Marine Life Association last week
 - Builds on policy recommendations
 - Expands outreach, training, and fisher support
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- Connects fishers with experts to improve fish survival & profits
 - Shapes policy advocacy
 - Partnership:
 - FMLA
 - Mystic Aquarium
 - Aquarium Fisheries
 - Sponsored by USFWS



B. Daughtry/FMLA

Site Visits

- One-on-one support from aquarists, vets, and scientists
- Metrics over time—Changes in:
 - Mortality rates
 - Handling practices & facility operations
 - Business revenues



P. Anderson/Aquarium Fisheries



P. Anderson/Aquarium Fisheries

Thank You!

Contributions

- University of Rhode Island
 - K. Samuel-Jakubos & T. Dalton
- Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission
 - J. Herbig, B. Sharp, N. Sheridan
- University of Miami
 - J. Ault
- B. Risley & D. Contrada

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Questions?

Dynasty Marine Associates, Inc.