



**RESPONSIBLE FISHERIES
MANAGEMENT / SUSTAINABILITY
COMMUNICATIONS**

For Gulf Coast Fisheries

We Manage Fisheries!

- *Decades of data allow for monitoring of trends.*
 - Fishery dependent data
 - Independent data collected by our field crews daily
- *Strict regulations and enforcement by NMFS, US Coast Guard, LDWF enforcement.*
- *Fisheries are intensely studied*
- *Species specific management plans*
- *Fishing seasons, gear restrictions, apprenticeship programs are a few management tools.*



Prove It!

- *Criticism of fisheries management is increasing and will likely continue as buyers are pressured to source 'certified' seafood.*
- *Like it or not, government has a responsibility to inform the public that the assessment processes are protecting the health of the species that are fished.*





What is the need?

- Many suppliers in our industry are expressing the need to have their products 'certified sustainable'
- Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) is the most recognized certifier in this field.



Sustainability – Where we've been

	In Pre-Assessment	Completed Pre-Assessment	In Full Assessment	Certified	
Blue Crab	✓	✓	✓	✓	MSC
Oysters	✓	✓			
Shrimp (in shore)	✓	✓			MSC / FAO Based
Shrimp (off shore) <small>Sustainable Fisheries Partnership</small>	✓	✓			
Crawfish (wild)	✓	✓			
Black Drum	✓	✓			
Catfish (wild)	✓	✓			

What We've Learned

- *Existing certification schemes aren't flexible enough to handle all fisheries (e.g. crawfish, annual crops).*
- *The indirect costs are extremely expensive.*
- *Logo fees aren't always recouped in pricing.*
- *Annual auditors can be intrusive regarding management practices.*
- *Red / Yellow / Green lists often 'punish' fishermen who are adhering to NOAA's fish stock rebuilding plans* (Bering Sea snow crab, Atlantic Coast summer flounder and Gulf of Maine haddock – currently rebuilt)
- *Industry, ENGOs, and buyers must be involved in the creation of any sustainability program to ensure its credibility (and relevance).*
- *State Government must play a role in communicating our management practices to the public.*



2 Programs we are developing to tackle sustainability communications

Tier 1

*We would like to demonstrate responsible management for G.O.M. production with **established** controls based on **existing federal and state regulations** and the authority to manage harvests from our waters*

Tier 2

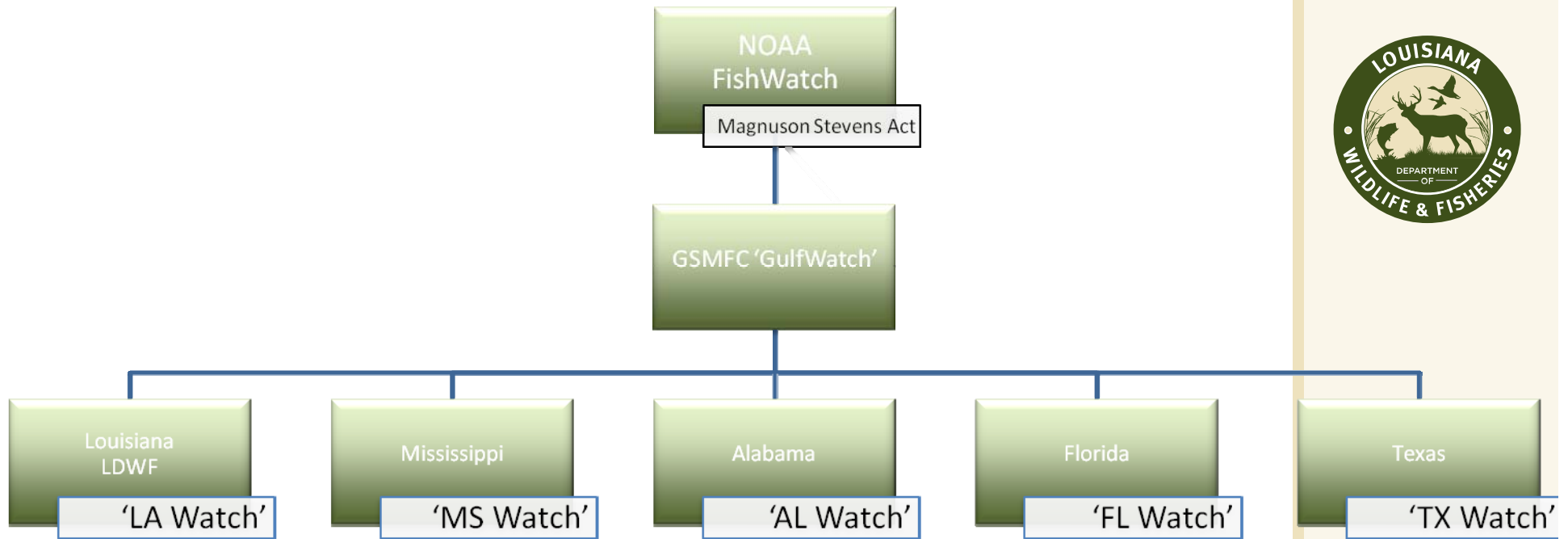
Where and when an independent verifier is needed it needs to be done more efficiently than current 3rd party schemes, and must be applicable to Gulf of Mexico species.



GulfWatch Website

Central website GSMFC, should resemble FishWatch for continuity

Tier 1



Tier 2 - What's the need?

- Some existing 3rd party schemes:
 - aren't tailored for local fisheries,
 - are intrusive to the management process,
 - attempt to control market access with 'voluntary' schemes,
 - try and influence state regulations
 - are expensive to the industry and are controlled by eNGOs.
- This allows for the development and control of a home-grown model.



Why Audubon Nature Institute?

- Familiarity with the Gulf Coast
- Long relationship with LDWF
- Seeking to help our industry not critique it
- Came to us asking “how can we help?”
- Influential among eNGOs, especially other aquarium organizations.
- Strong communications and outreach opportunities

