



## Socioeconomics Section

# Spring 2020 Newsletter

Editor: Mackenzie Mazur

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**President:** Joshua Etherton, **President-elect:** Mackenzie Mazur, **Secretary-Treasurer:** Aaron Sundmark, and **Past President:** Syma Ebbin

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### ***From the President's Desk***

It's spring, which means that the AFS annual meeting is right around the corner! We've been working hard to provide at least one symposium for this year and will be excited to host in Columbus, Ohio. As we approach the date, please feel free to reach out to us with questions. We will also do our best to convey any updates as we get them. More details about submitting papers to our symposium in the newsletters below and on the AFS website.

The upcoming meeting will be the 150th anniversary of the Society and as such there will be a lot more happening than you might find at a typical meeting! Our section will be hosting a booth, displaying our accomplishments over the history of the Section and seeking to interact with our membership in a way we don't normally get to do. There are more details here in this newsletter, so please let us know if you have ideas. We hope we can see many of you in Columbus this year!

Our best wishes go out to you and yours. We hope that you are staying comfortable and safe!



### ***Call for photos!***

For the next annual AFS meeting in Columbus, Ohio in 2020, our section will be putting together an exhibit! As 2020 is the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of AFS, our exhibit will focus on the past, present, and future of our section. We would like to put together a display of the work our members have done in the past and are working on now. Displayed above is SES president-elect, Mackenzie, interviewing a lobster fisher for her PhD research. Displayed to the left are fishers that participated in surveys for Aaron's (SES secretary-treasurer) research! If you would like to share any photos of research or other activities that you have done or are working on related to

socioeconomics in fisheries, it would be greatly appreciated. Please email any photos with a brief caption to Mackenzie ([mackenzie.mazur@maine.edu](mailto:mackenzie.mazur@maine.edu)). We are excited to display our section's incredible work and are looking forward to the 2020 meeting!



### ***2020 Symposia***

At the 2020 Annual AFS Meeting in Columbus, Ohio, on August 30- September 3, we are sponsoring two symposiums! Please consider submitting an abstract to either or both symposia. You can submit your abstract(s) for a presentation through the AFS meeting portal <https://afs.confex.com/afs/2020/cfp.cgi> by April 20, 2020.

#### **Symposium 1: The Effect of Human-driven Environmental Change on the Socioeconomic Aspects of Fisheries Management**

Description: Human-driven environmental change can affect fisheries by impacting productivity, fish habitat, fish distribution, fish catchability, and biodiversity. During environmental change, fisheries that already pose complicated management challenges must adapt to meet biological, economic, and social objectives. Often, the focus is on the biological objectives, not social or economic objectives. Fisheries management can fail from inadequate scientific advice, but it is often difficult to identify reference points, especially with environmental change. Managers and fishers must use an approach, even with large uncertainties in the outcome, that is appropriate for future rather than past environmental conditions. Fishing behavior may also change as a result of environmental change, and this needs to be considered in management plans. To address the issue of human-driven environmental change, environmental parameters need to be integrated into management frameworks. This symposium aims to highlight how fisheries management, with a

focus on the socioeconomic aspects, has adapted to environmental change. This can include but is not limited to changes in fishing behavior, target species, management frameworks, management regulations, management objectives, reference points, and stakeholder engagement. This symposium will address the progress and future of fisheries management under environmental change, including existing as well as novel approaches to fisheries management.

Organizers: Mackenzie Mazur ([mackenzie.mazur@maine.edu](mailto:mackenzie.mazur@maine.edu)), Joshua Etherton, Aaron Sundmark, Syma Ebbin, and Christopher Dumas

### Symposium 2: A Fisheries Biologist's Guide to Using Human Dimensions Data (Including Data You Didn't Know You Had)

Description: Natural resource agencies often collect human dimensions data, but staff may not realize these datasets are available or how to maximize their potential. This symposium will demonstrate how to identify and use these data to improve fisheries management and guide decision-making. It will conclude with a free workshop-style session in which participants learn specific analytical techniques with experts. In fisheries, human dimensions examines knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors toward fisheries that have significant socioeconomic and policy implications. For example, a typical creel survey includes zip codes, implying a distance traveled and a time and financial investment by the angler. Travel behavior can be mapped across space/time or linked to explanatory variables. Alternatively, a mailed survey may poll opinions on potential management actions or test knowledge regarding fish contaminants. With survey results, opinions can be weighed, predicted, and even mapped to identify areas of concern. Public attitudes can be combined with stock assessment to predict the fishery impact of a slot limit change. With human dimensions data, fascinating and important questions can be answered to develop better management strategies, but require a few steps beyond summarizing averages. This symposium will introduce techniques and tangible examples of transforming these data into powerful information.

Organizers: Rebecca M. Krogman, Mackenzie Mazur, Aaron Sundmark, Allen D. Martin and Joshua Etherton

### **A. Stephen Weithman Student Paper Award**

The Missouri Chapter and the Socioeconomics Section of the AFS sponsor the A. Stephen Weithman Best Student Paper Award in Socioeconomics. The award is presented for the best platform or poster paper presented by a student at the American Fisheries Society Annual Meeting. Papers are judged on content, originality, organization, contribution to the field of fisheries science, and overall presentation of the study. The award winner receives \$150 and an award certificate following the annual meeting.

To be considered for this award, interested applicants should complete the form available at <https://units.fisheries.org/socioecon/awards/> and deliver it to the President of the Socioeconomics Section by August 21 (via e-mail).

Please email your submission and nomination form to:

Joshua Etherton, President  
AFS SocioEconomics Section  
[rajabinoculata@gmail.com](mailto:rajabinoculata@gmail.com)

### ***Early Career Professional Travel Award***

The Education Section of the American Fisheries Society is currently accepting applications for the Early Career Professional Travel Award for the 2020 Annual Meeting of the American Fisheries Society in Columbus, Ohio. The Early Career Professional Travel Award was established to promote attendance of young professionals at the Annual Meeting who have made substantial contributions to the field through continued education, outreach, and AFS service. The award provides up to \$1,000 in travel support. Preference will be given to individuals presenting at the meeting, those involved in continuing education or outreach, and those in need of financial assistance for travel. Three awards will be given this year! All young professional members (within 5 years post-graduation at the time of application), including agency biologists, postdoctoral associates, and faculty are encouraged to apply. The award winners will be required to attend the Education Section business meeting to receive the award and contribute to the Section's winter newsletter.

The application should consist of the following:

1. Letter of interest describing:
  - a. Service to the Society, AFS sections, divisions, or chapters
  - b. Reasons for attending the meeting;
  - c. Financial need; and
  - d. Career goals (brief).
2. Current CV, including
  - a. Degree(s);
  - b. List of publications and presentations; and
  - c. Honors and awards.
3. Anticipated title and abstract of the paper(s) or poster(s) being presented at the annual meeting

Applications should be submitted as a single PDF file to Dan Weaver and Erin Peterson, chairs of the Membership and Early Career Professional Committee, at [daniel.weaver@maine.edu](mailto:daniel.weaver@maine.edu) and [erin.peterson1@maine.edu](mailto:erin.peterson1@maine.edu) and must be received by April 17, 2020. Award recipients will be notified by May 15, 2020.

### ***Oregon State University News Release***

Oregon State University Professor Robert Lackey, presented a talk, “Darwin Was Right: A Scientist Needs a Heart of Stone,” at the 56 th Annual Meeting of the American Fisheries Society, Oregon Chapter, March 6, 2020. Given that public trust in the impartiality of scientists

is low, Lackey encouraged attendees to recognize that scientific information communicated by scientists to managers, policy makers, and the public should be the relevant, unvarnished facts, including probabilities, uncertainties, and caveats. Such information that only scientists can credibly provide, will not be trusted unless scientists are — and are perceived to be — even-handed and policy-neutral.

The talk is available online: [https://media.oregonstate.edu/media/0\\_melddnvc](https://media.oregonstate.edu/media/0_melddnvc)

**Full Abstract:**

In 1857 Charles Darwin offered a blunt admonition to scientists: “A scientific man ought to have no wishes, no affections, — a mere heart of stone.” His advice was strict, uncompromising, and unequivocal, but spot-on for scientists, then and now, regardless of the type of employer. These days, regrettably, many scientists seamlessly substitute “normative” science (i.e., information that superficially appears to be legitimate science, but contains an embedded policy preference) for “policy neutral” science (i.e., politically and policy unbiased information derived following the scientific method) when communicating with policy makers, natural resource managers, and the public. Not only is such behavior a misuse of science, it is insidious because the consumer of normative science is often unaware of the hidden policy preference contained in the information being offered (i.e., “stealth policy advocacy”). The practice of science, as with all human enterprises, is not free of bias, but it should be as policy neutral as possible.

Confidence that scientific information is both accurate and policy neutral is fundamental to informed resolution of fisheries policy and management issues, but in a YouGov national poll, 34% of the respondents believed that scientists “often” let political ideology influence their science. Another 44% felt that the influence of political ideology “sometimes” occurred. In a Washington Post/ABC national poll, 40% of the respondents said that they place little or no trust in what scientists have to say about the environment. Scientific information communicated by scientists to managers, policy makers, and the public should be the relevant, unvarnished facts, including probabilities, uncertainties, and caveats — information that only scientists can credibly provide, but will only be trusted if the providers are perceived to be even-handed and policy-neutral. Science must be a cornerstone of fisheries policy and management, but I advise scientists to be careful. Play an active, engaged, and responsive role, but be ever vigilant to stick to the proper role — the one recommended by Darwin 163 years ago.

***Call for items and photos for the next newsletter!***

Do you have research or events that you would like to advertise? Email us so we can advertise it in the next newsletter! Or do you have general feedback or ideas for the SES section? Contact Mackenzie Mazur ([mackenzie.mazur@maine.edu](mailto:mackenzie.mazur@maine.edu)).