



FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT AND CALL FOR PAPERS

74th GULF AND CARIBBEAN FISHERIES INSTITUTE 8-12 NOVEMBER 2021, FORT WALTON BEACH, FL

GCFI is pleased to announce that the 74th annual meeting of the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute (GCFI 74) will be held in Fort Walton Beach, FL from 8 – 12 November 2021 at The Island Hotel. GCFI is partnering with the Okaloosa County, the Destin – Fort Walton Beach Convention Center and Visitor Bureau to host GCFI74. We intend to host a **hybrid in-person event in Florida with options for virtual participation**. We are monitoring the status of COVID19 within the region and the safety of our GCFI Family is our priority. Thus if the status of the pandemic changes, and it is no longer safe to host an in-person meeting, a virtual event will be convened. **Regardless of the format, we encourage everyone who is interested in participating to submit an abstract.**

CONFERENCE THEME

The theme of this year's conference is "*Marine and Estuarine Ecosystems of the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean in a Changing Time: Interactions between Science and Governance*".

THE VENUE

The Island Hotel will serve as the main hotel while the meeting will be hosted across the street at the Destin – Fort Walton Beach Convention Center. The Island Hotel is a 329 room beachside resort that has multiple resort-style amenities, bars, onsite restaurants, and complimentary parking. More information will be posted on the [GCFI74 Conference Page](#) related to transportation, travel, accommodations and reservations.



SPECIAL SESSIONS

1) Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease Research and Innovations

Organizers: Caroline McLaughlin (Florida Sea Grant), Dana Wusinich-Mendez (NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program), Emma Doyle (Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute)

This special session will highlight the latest stony coral tissue loss disease (SCTLD) research from around the Gulf-Caribbean region. The session will help share knowledge, promote collaboration, and highlight innovative research, treatment, and rescue approaches to the disease throughout the region.

Format: This session will feature a series of brief presentations highlighting the latest SCTLD research, followed by a panel discussion composed of SCLTD experts from around the region.

The Goals of the Session are to:

- Share information regarding the latest SCTLD research findings and innovations.
- Identify key research gaps and questions.
- Increase awareness among participants related to SCTLD and solutions and efforts underway to respond to the continued spread of the disease.
- Highlight management implications of research and explain how our current state of knowledge enables us to manage and address the disease.
- Promote collaboration and information sharing among disease experts, scientists, managers, and stakeholders throughout the Gulf and Caribbean region.
- Share research priorities and outstanding questions from different regions, promoting collaborative research partnerships.

Contact: For more information, please email cmclaughlin1@ufl.edu

2) Science, Management, and Solutions to address Abandoned, Lost and Otherwise Discarded Fishing Gear (ALDFG) in the Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico

Organizers: Global Ghost Gear Initiative, Gulf Caribbean Fisheries Institute, GPML-Caribe

This special session will bring together scientists, researchers, managers, fishers, government officials, partners, and other stakeholders to share current state of the science, lessons learned, ongoing activities, and other issues related to abandoned, lost and otherwise discarded fishing gear (ALDFG) in the Wider Caribbean region. The intent of this session is to bring together collective perspectives and expertise from stakeholders on ALDFG.

Contact: For more information, please email gpml-caribe@gcfi.org

TECHNICAL SESSIONS

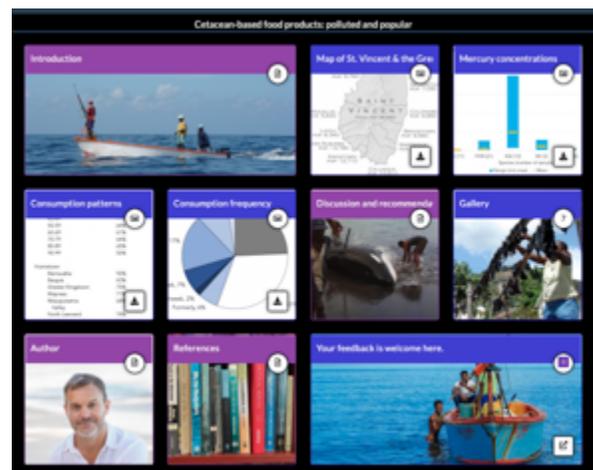
The conference program features multi-disciplinary thematic sessions that have a mix of natural and social science, management, and technology related to the ecosystem or fisheries. Abstracts are solicited in the following areas (other subjects not listed will also be considered):

- Governance, livelihoods, and organizations
- Reefs and associated ecosystems and fisheries
 - Shallow and deep reef fishes
 - Snapper and grouper fisheries
 - Fish spawning aggregations
 - Lionfish and other invasive species
 - Artificial Reefs
- Marine protected areas science and management
- Pelagic ecosystem and recreational fisheries
- Continental shelf ecosystem fisheries
- Shrimp and demersal trawl fisheries
- Habitats and coastal management
- Climate change science and adaptation
- Sargassum science and management
- Aquaculture
- Communication and environmental education
- Marine litter science and management (including ALDFG)
- Queen conch, spiny lobster, oysters and other invertebrates



E-POSTER SESSION

Instead of printed posters, we will be showcasing dynamic electronic posters (e-posters). An e-poster is a collection of multimedia resources related to the author's research. E-posters will be available one week before the conference and the showcase along with e-posters from GCFI73 will be accessible even after the conference. Poster specification guidelines will be available on the [GCFI website](#).



CALL FOR ABSTRACTS FOR TECHNICAL, SPECIAL AND POSTER SESSIONS

Abstracts for GCFI74 are due by July 31, 2021. Abstracts will be accepted in English, French, and Spanish. **ALL ABSTRACTS MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY ENGLISH, SPANISH AND FRENCH TITLES.** Abstracts are only required in one of the three languages; titles **must** be in all three languages. Abstracts must not exceed 250 words (275 for Spanish and French). Abstracts must be submitted online via the secure online Abstract Submission Form.

Acceptance to present within an oral or poster session requires submission of an extended abstract. Extended abstract preparation guidelines are available [online](#). Members of GCFI are encouraged to submit full manuscripts or short communications based on presentations given at GCFI meetings to [Gulf and Caribbean Research](#) for peer review. Accepted manuscripts will be published open access at no charge to the authors through the GCFI-GCR partnership. Full manuscripts will also be accepted for publishing in the GCFI Proceedings.

Authors of accepted presentations will be notified via e-mail in September 2021. Submissions intended for the oral presentation, but not granted a slot, would automatically be accepted as a poster presentation. **Regardless of the format, we encourage everyone who is interested in participating to submit an abstract.**

WORKSHOPS

1) Regional Caribbean Best Practice ALDFG Cross-Sectoral Solutions Workshop

Organizers: Global Ghost Gear Initiative, Gulf Caribbean Fisheries Institute, GPML-Caribe

This workshop will be built on the foundations laid by a series of very successful joint FAO/GGGI ALDFG workshops held in 2019 in Vanuatu, Indonesia, Senegal and Panama respectively. This workshop will draw most heavily on the workshop delivered in Panama City in November, 2019, as many of the outcomes and lessons learned will be most directly attributable to the Caribbean region. Drawing on the extensive networks of both GCFI and GGGI, this workshop will bring together stakeholders from all over the Gulf and Caribbean region to discuss ALDFG in a regional context, gather relevant data and insights from local fishers and community members, and discuss the best methods to address ALDFG successfully in the Caribbean context. This workshop will draw on the GGGI Best Practice Framework for the Management of Fishing Gear as a way to frame the various workshop activities.

Contact: For more information, please email gpml-caribe@gcfi.org

THE GCFI STORY SLAM – STORIES FROM THE FIELD

This year, the GCFI Conference will continue with our story slam focused on compelling stories from the field. We encourage submission of 5-minute contributions that will be performed via a story-telling format. There is no restriction on the topic of the story except that it cannot be a scientific-only presentation, unless it relates to some entertaining experience you may have had. Some examples of story topics are experiences from field-work, unexpected interactions with a person or animal, a mentor who influenced you, or any other memorable experiences. Details for participation are available on the GCFI Website. Relive the GCFI73 Story Slam [here](#).

CINEFISH

Are you interested in submitting a short film for this year's CINEFISH film festival at the GCFI conference? If so, please email the following information to communications@gcfi.org. **The submission deadline is September 30, 2021** and films should be submitted in mp4 format prior to the conference.

- Title of film
- Brief description of film (2-3 sentences)
- Film makers(s)
- Duration of film – Note: **films should be a maximum of 15 minutes**
- Image for film (png or jpg) – To be used for promotion
- Link to preview the film (YouTube, Vimeo, GoogleDrive etc)
- Type of film (Documentary, Animation or New Media)

GCFI STUDENT AWARDS

Outstanding Student Achievement Award

GCFI, through partnerships with NOAA's Caribbean Fisheries Management Council and the Harte Research Institute is awarding \$1,500 scholarships to the best oral and poster presentations (both virtual and in-person presentations are eligible). The content of the presentation must be related to final research done by the student related to their thesis or dissertation. If already submitted, this thesis or dissertation must be no older than one year. **A manuscript of the oral/poster presentation must be submitted to be eligible for this award.** The award winners will receive their scholarship at the following year's conference, to help support their participation in this meeting. Complete instructions and eligibility requirements are on the [Outstanding Student Achievement Awards web page](#).

GCFI Travel Awards

GCFI in partnership with the Harte Research Institute will offer two travel awards of US\$750 each to eligible students to help offset travel costs to GCFI74. ***The deadline for students to apply***

for this award is July 31, 2021. Complete instructions and eligibility requirements are on the [GCFI Student Travel Awards web page](#). Students will be notified of acceptance/rejection of their application by September 1, 2021. Students may apply for a travel award and for consideration for the Student Achievement Award in the same year. Students who received the GCFI72 Student Achievement Award are not eligible for a travel award.

Ron Schmied Scholarship

The Ron Schmied Scholarship, a GCFI initiative supported by the International Game Fish Association (IGFA) and private individuals, will be offered to a qualified graduate student in support of their travel to GCFI74. The Scholarship is in the amount of US\$1,500, and graduate students with an interest in social, economic, biological, ecological, or management perspectives on recreational fisheries are eligible to apply. *The deadline for students to apply for this award is July 31, 2021.* Students will be notified of acceptance/rejection of their application by September 1, 2021. **Note that a manuscript of the oral/poster presentation must be submitted to be eligible for this award.** Complete instructions and eligibility requirements for the Ron Schmied Scholarship are on the [Ron Schmied Scholarship page](#). Students may apply for the Scholarship and for consideration for the Student Achievement Award in the same year. Students may also ask to be considered for the Ron Schmied Scholarship and a GCFI Travel Award in the same year but will only receive one award.

GLADDING MEMORIAL AWARD

As a component of the Fisheries for Fishers (F4F) Initiative, the GCFI Gladding Memorial Award (GMA) committee is requesting nominations of outstanding fishers for GCFI74. This annual award is presented to select fishers (male or females) who demonstrate, as Peter Gladding did, significant commitment to the sustainable use and long-term conservation of marine resources in the Gulf and Caribbean region. The winner will be sponsored to attend the GCFI meeting in Fort Walton Beach, Florida to receive his or her award, and to participate in the entire conference including the Fisheries for Fishers Forum and field trip. You are invited to submit award nominations to the GMA committee at gma@gcfi.org. All nominations must be received by **August 15, 2021**. Background information on the GMA, nomination forms with award criteria, and details of the process are available on the [Gladding Memorial Award Page](#).

SOCIAL MEDIA

To stay informed of all GCFI74 updates, we encourage you to follow GCFI on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [Instagram](#) and use the Conference Hashtag #GCFI74.

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU IN FORT WALTON BEACH,
FLORIDA FOR GCFI74**