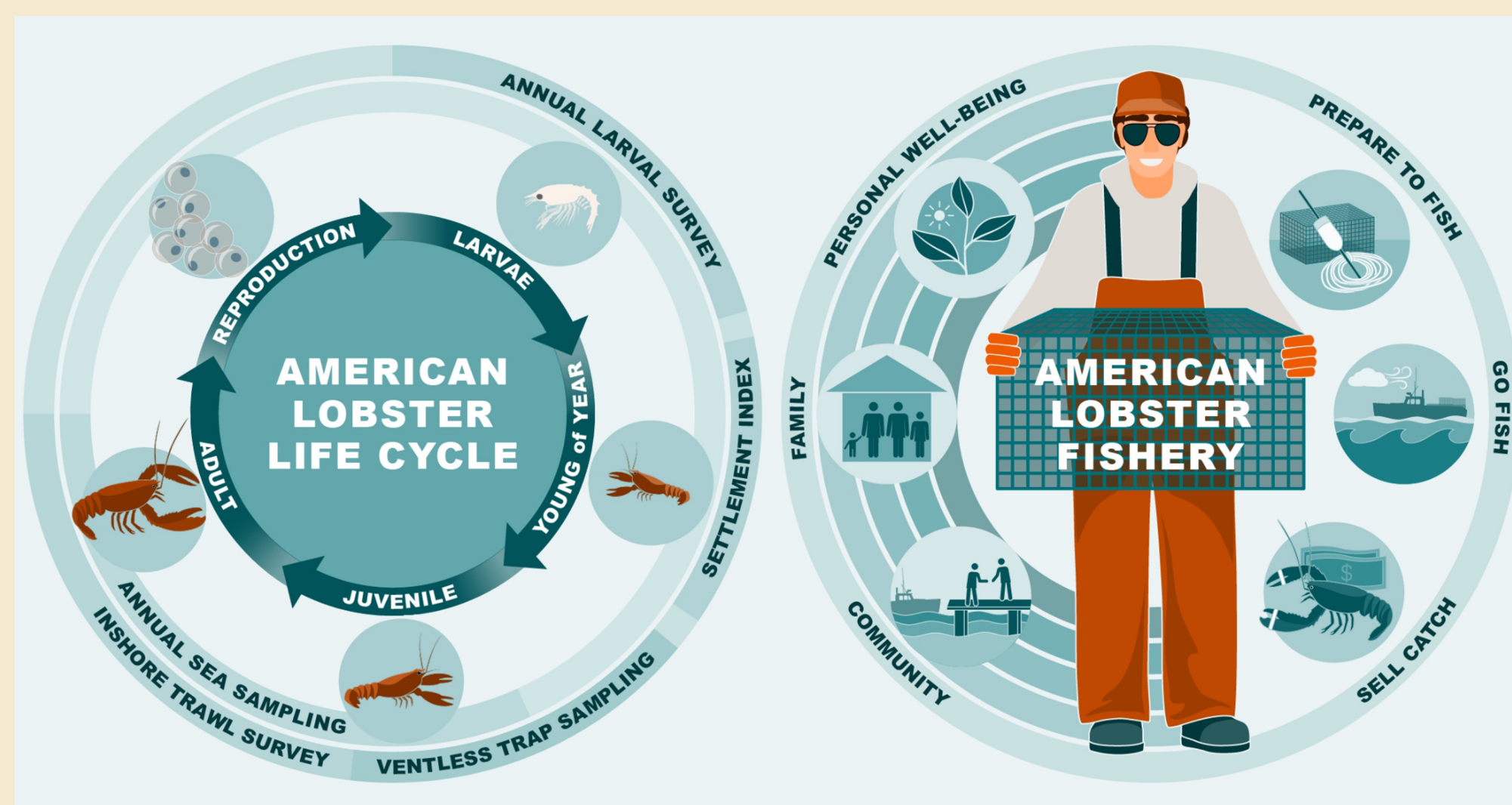


Senator George J. Mitchell Center for Sustainability Solutions

Supporting Maine's Lobster Fishery Through the Collaborative Development of Socioeconomic Indicators of Resilience

Sustainability Problem

The lobster fishery is critically important to many coastal communities in Maine, supporting thousands of jobs at a value of more than \$500M per year. Yet the lobster fishery is experiencing rapid change in the face of socioeconomic and environmental stressors, raising concerns about the future of the fishery.



To support local, state, and federal decision-making, our research complements existing biological monitoring efforts by focusing on the human dimensions of the lobster fishery through creation of socioeconomic resilience indicators.

Team and Partners

Key Partners

- Maine Dept. of Marine Resources
- Maine Lobstermen's Association
- Maine Center for Coastal Fisheries
- Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Comm.
- Maine Sea Grant

Graduate Students

Joelle Kilchenmann
Tracy MacKeracher
Christina McCosker

Team Leaders

Joshua Stoll
Theresa Burnham

Building a collaborative network

This work was proposed by the Maine Lobstermen's Association and was supported by a letter signed by seventy Maine fishermen. To increase awareness and encourage input we hosted regular "open" meetings where we shared updates and invited feedback on our methods and preliminary results. A total of 70 people participated in the eighteen meetings that we hosted. This approach strengthened our work and opened doors for new collaborations and data sharing.

Solutions Approach

Creation of knowledge through a shared research process (co-creation) is a key feature of our approach. It ensures that the interests of the lobster industry, managers, and coastal communities are central to this work.

Fostering relationships is key to maximizing the visibility and impact of our research. We have developed strong collaborative ties with state and federal agencies, community organizations, and industry associations to ensure our work is relevant and impactful.

Prioritizing "open" science provides transparency around research methods, results, and data products. This allows us to quickly respond to new research requests from partners and empowers future research into the health of the lobster fishery.

Training graduate students to engage in collaborative and policy-relevant science that supports decision-making is vital workforce development that addresses the needs of Maine's coastal communities.

How Our Work Is Making a Difference

Developing socioeconomic indicators of resilience supports the timely detection of and response to many different changes affecting the fishery. Our collaborative process has **strengthened relationships with community partners and industry leaders**.



This research can help **identify strategies for enhancing community resilience as the fishery faces many changes**. There are important regional differences that impact how the fishery responds to change. **Incorporating socioeconomic factors into fisheries management** can help decision-makers be more responsive to diverse challenges and develop supportive actions.