

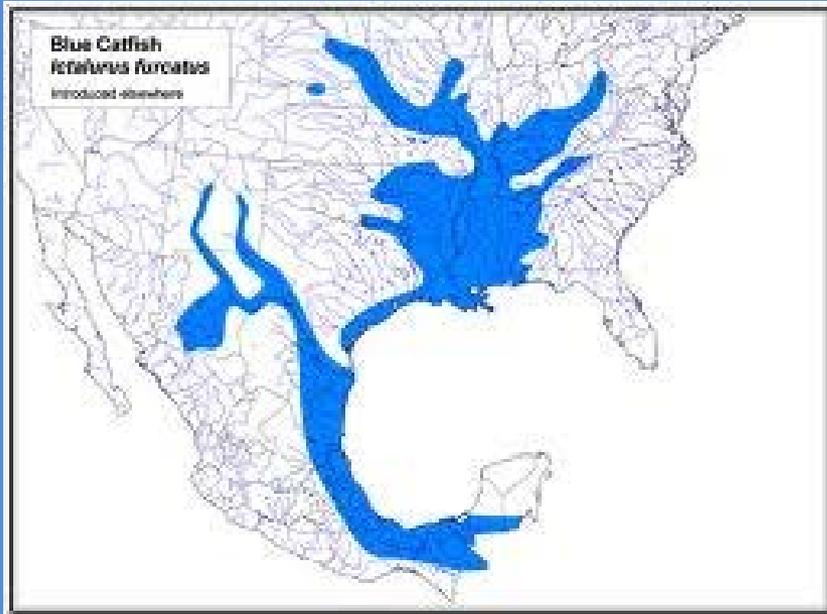
Santee Cooper Reservoir's Blue Catfish

2013

South Carolina Department of Natural Resources



Stocking History



*Native to the Mississippi Drainage

*December 1964 – 30 subadults

*April 1965 – 150 subadults

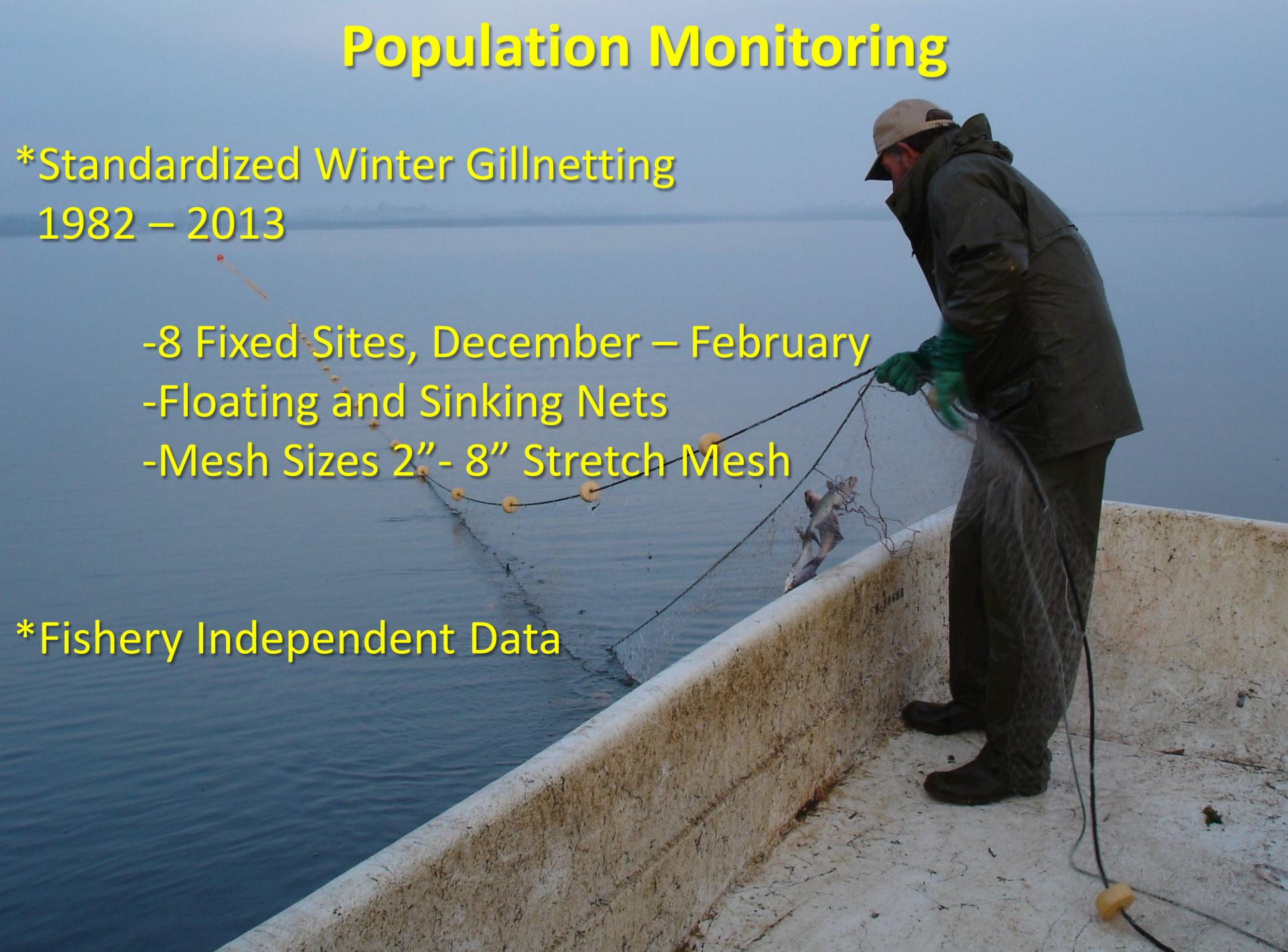


Population Monitoring

*Standardized Winter Gillnetting
1982 – 2013

- 8 Fixed Sites, December – February
- Floating and Sinking Nets
- Mesh Sizes 2" - 8" Stretch Mesh

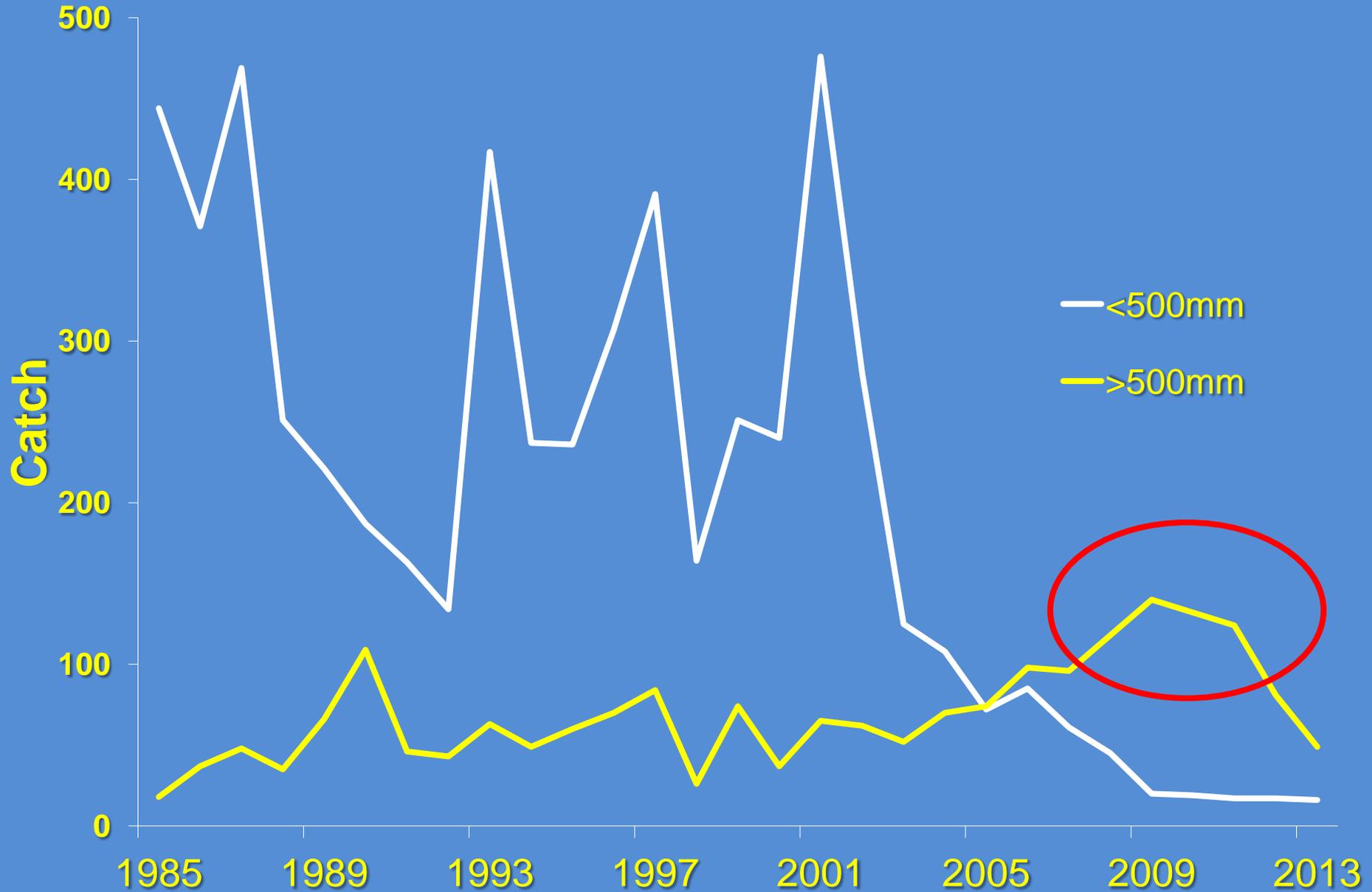
*Fishery Independent Data



Blue Catfish Population Monitoring



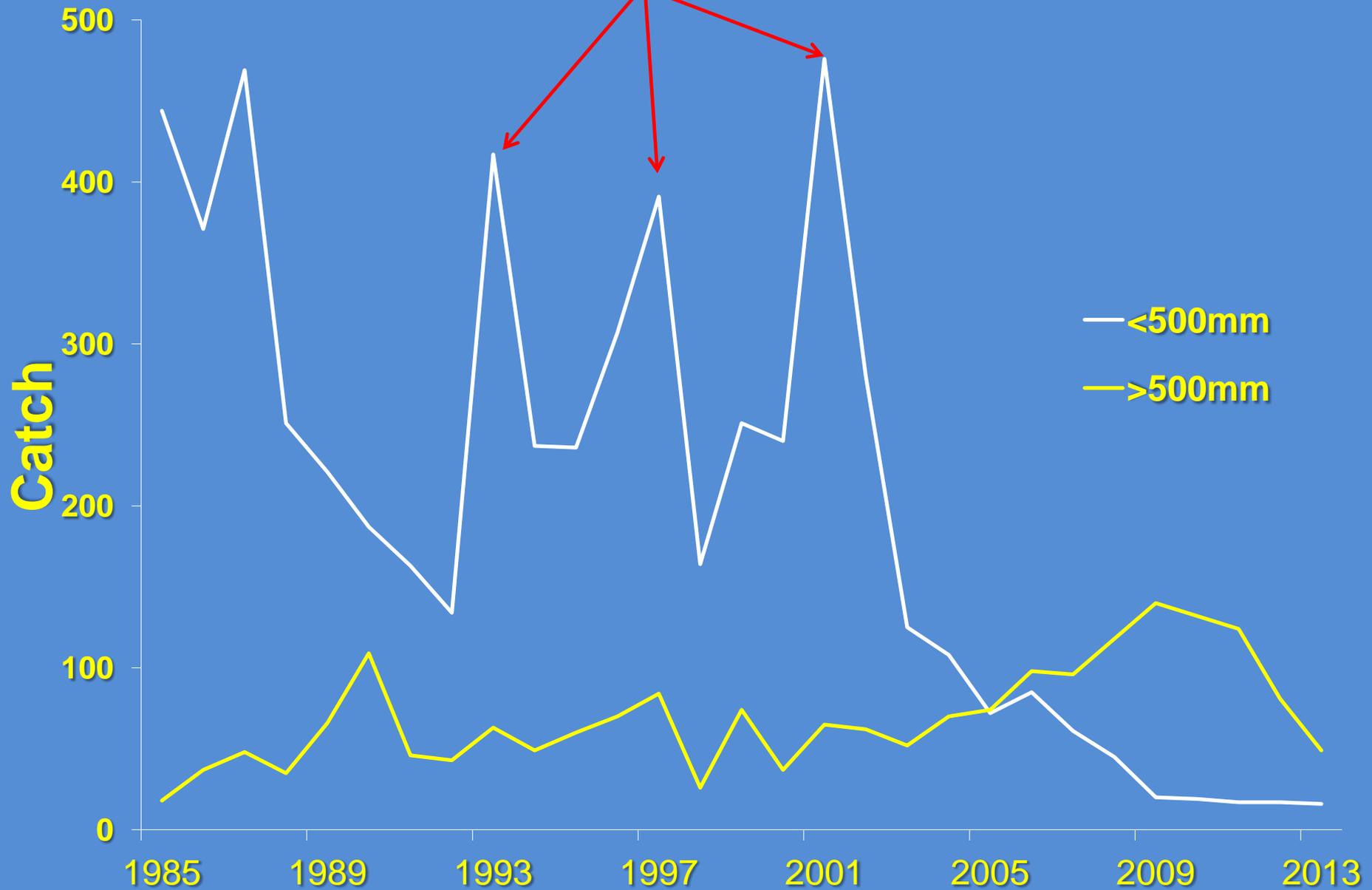
Population Monitoring

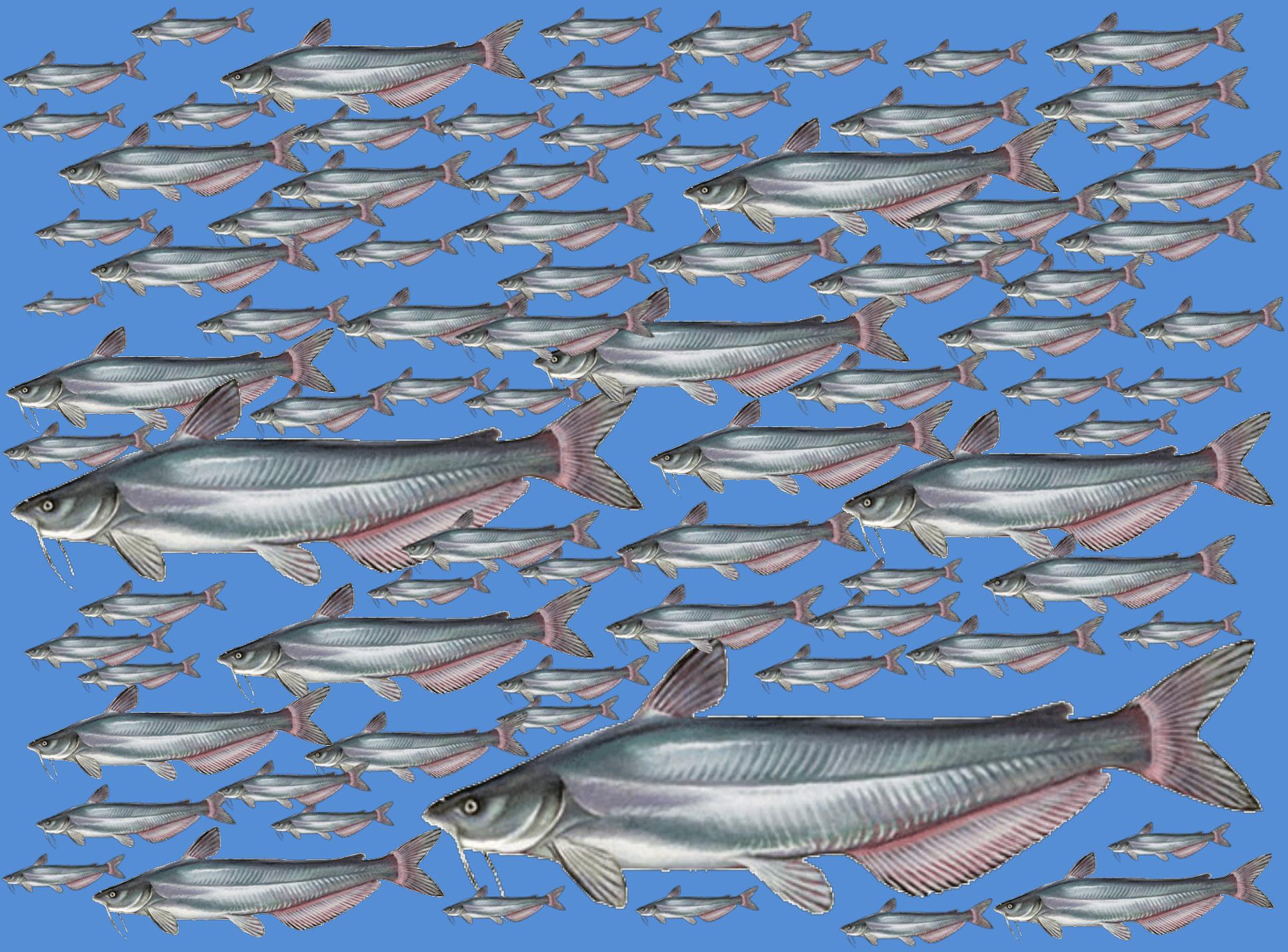


Population Monitoring

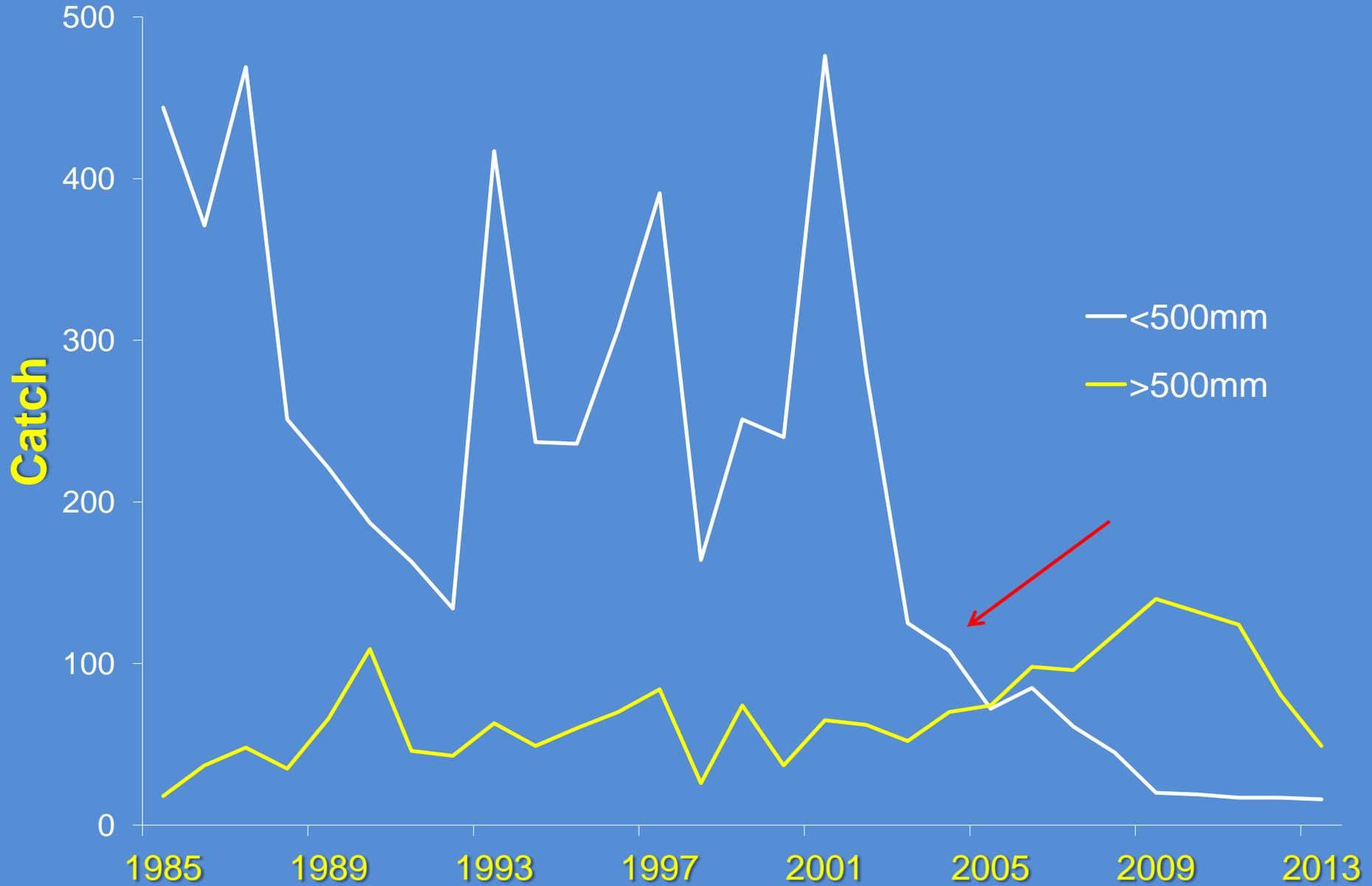


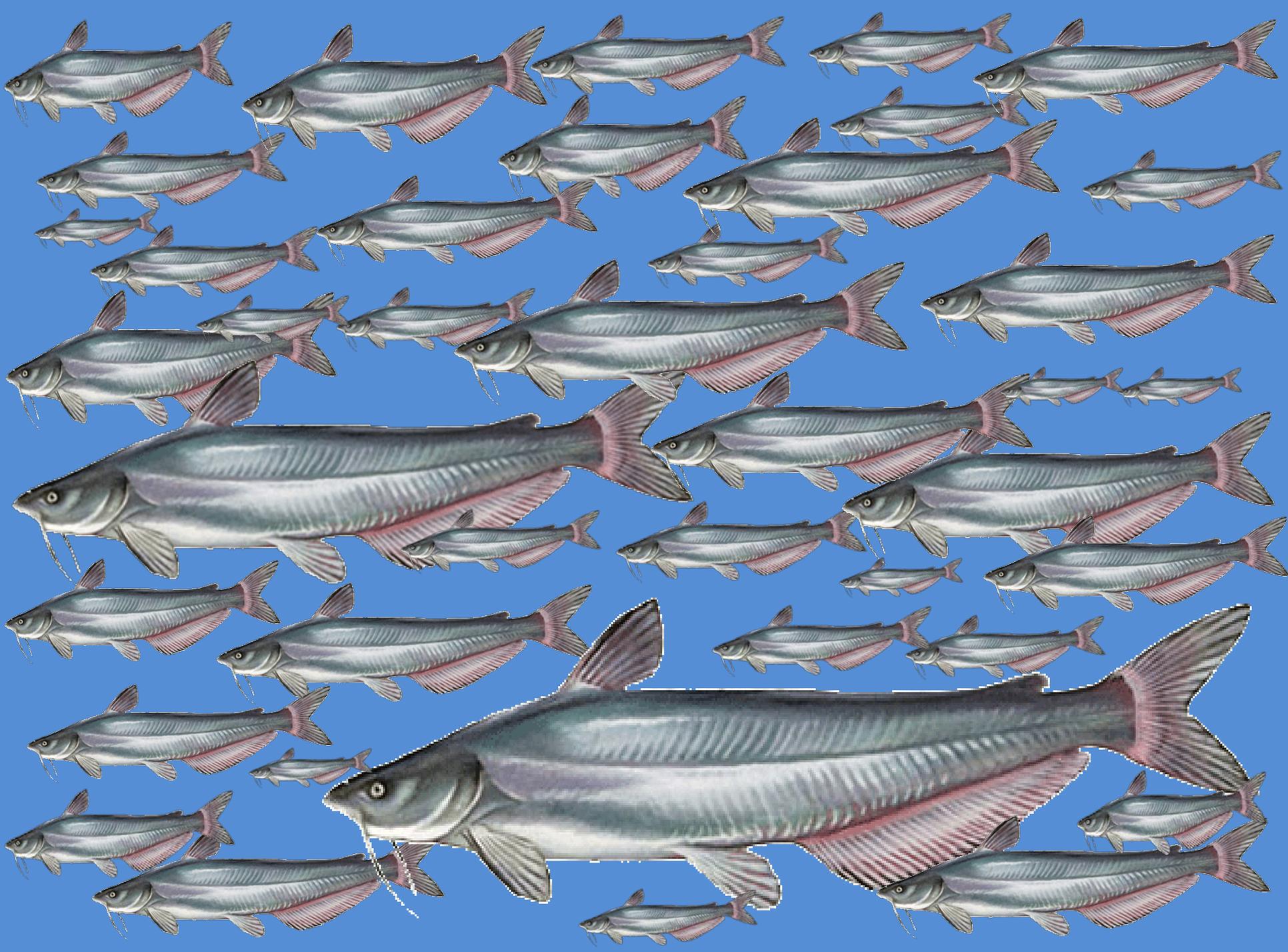
Population Monitoring



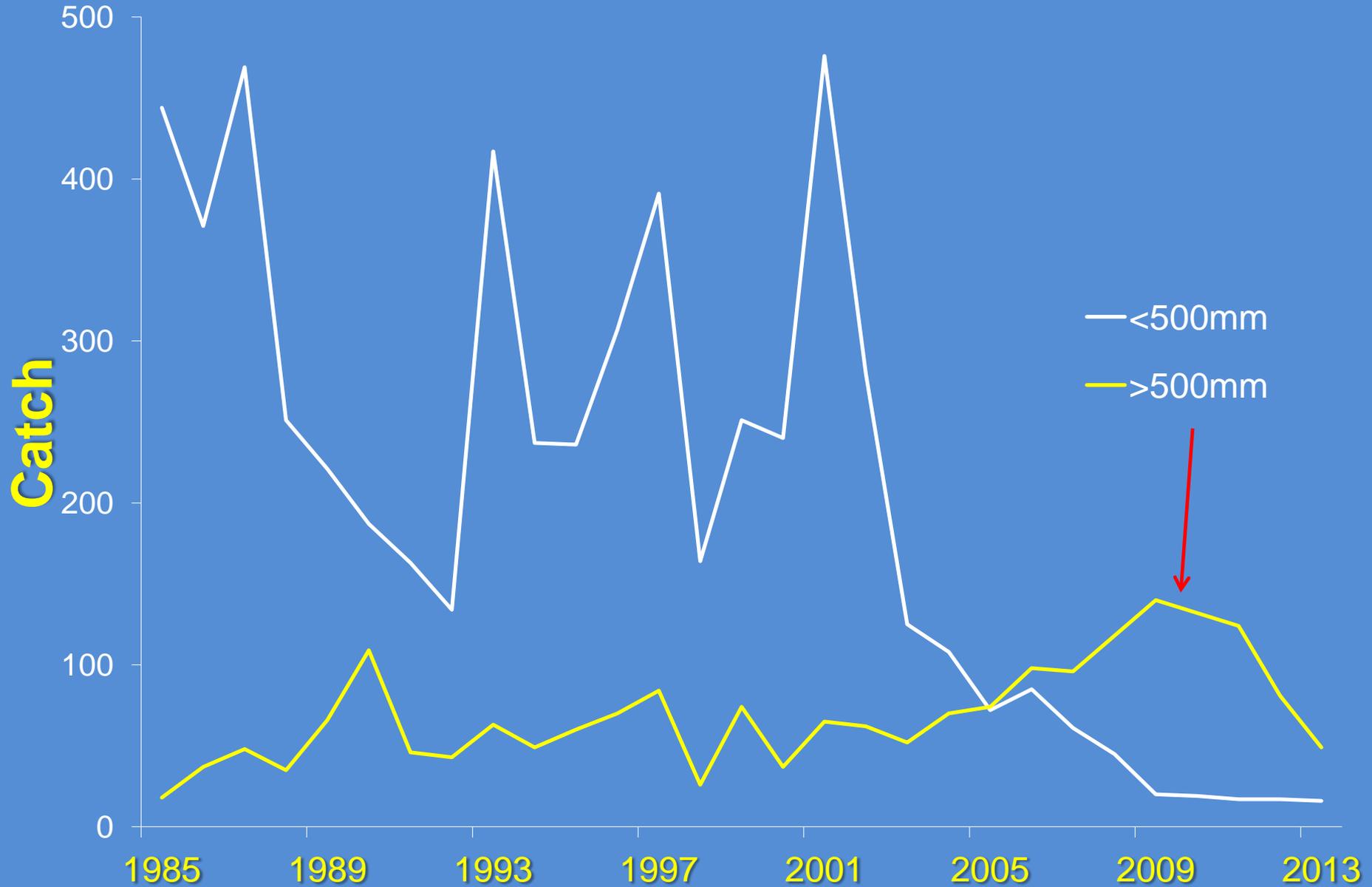


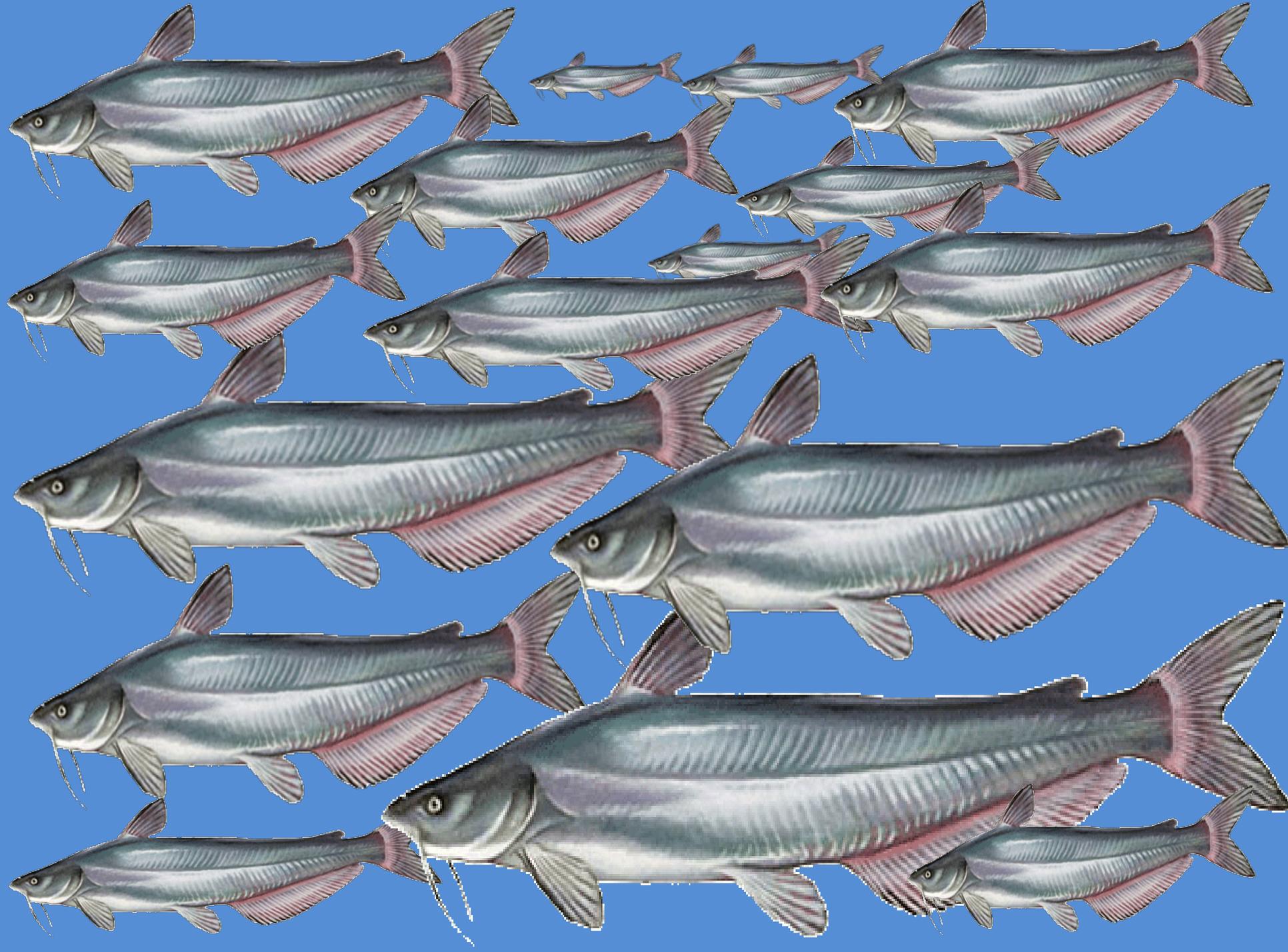
Population Monitoring



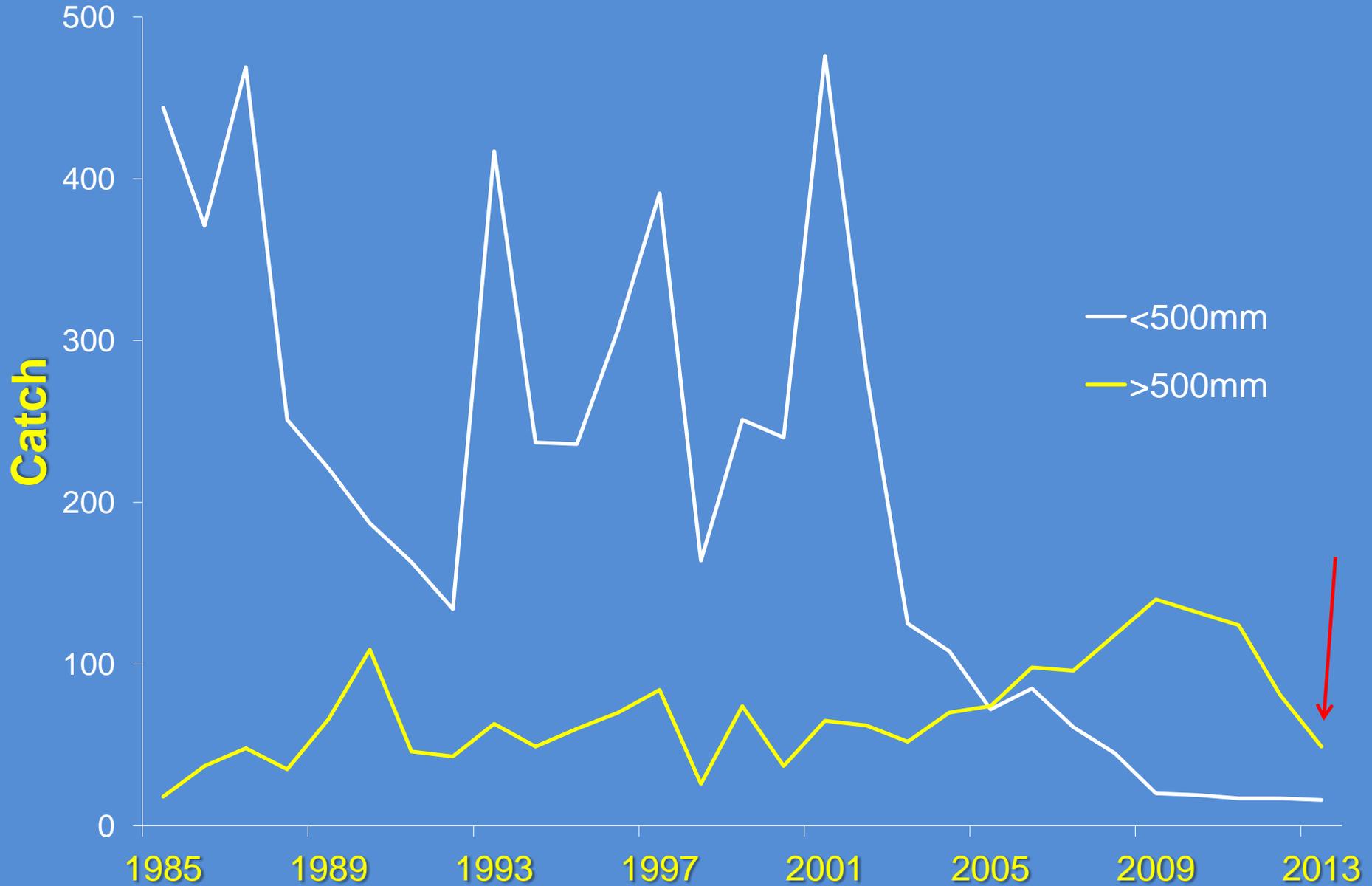


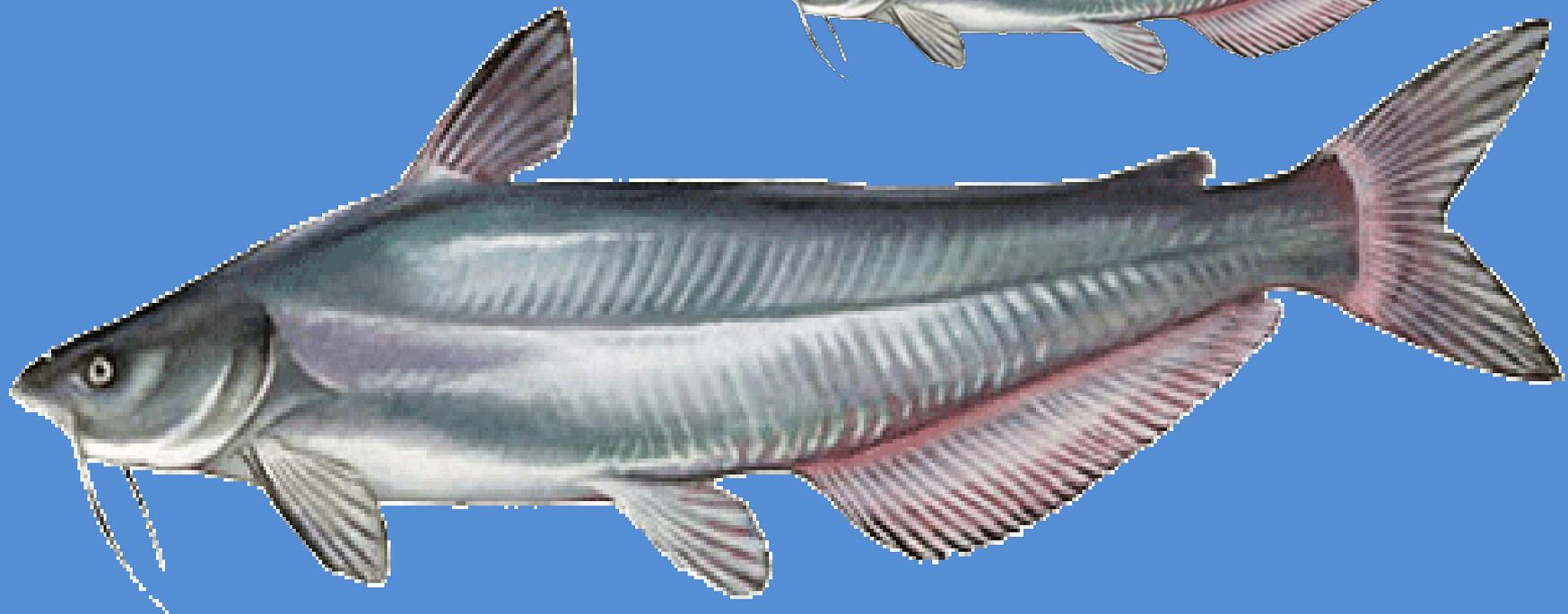
Population Monitoring



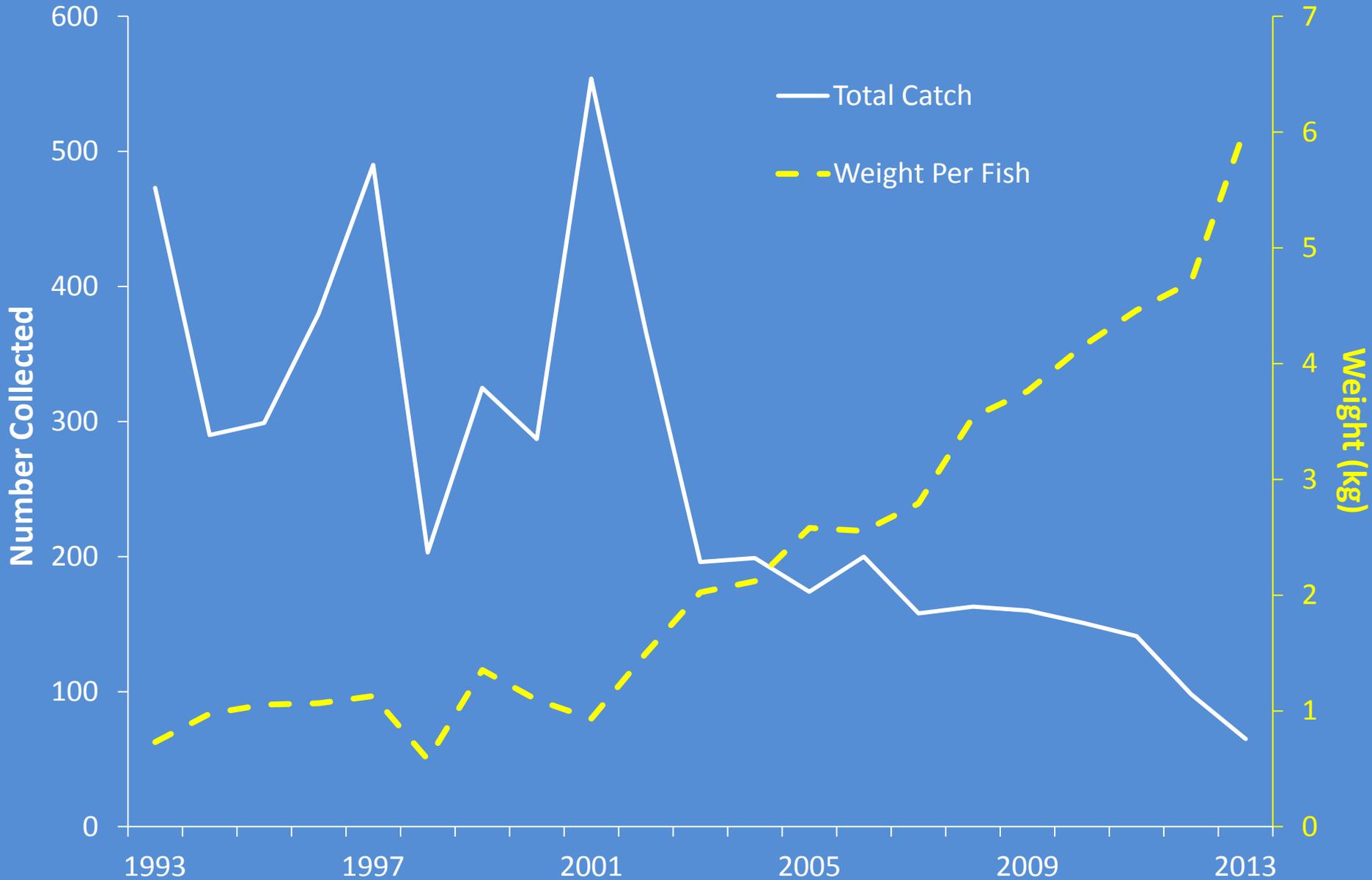


Population Monitoring

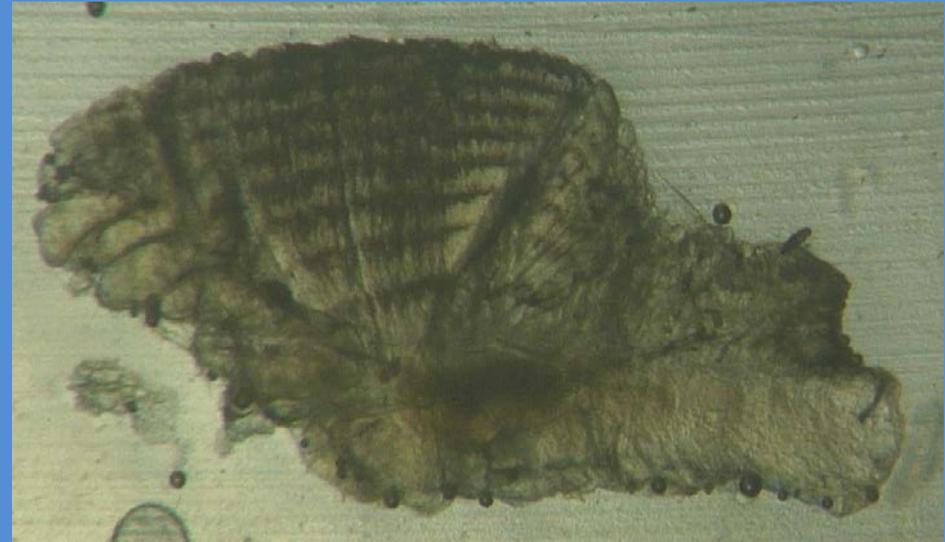




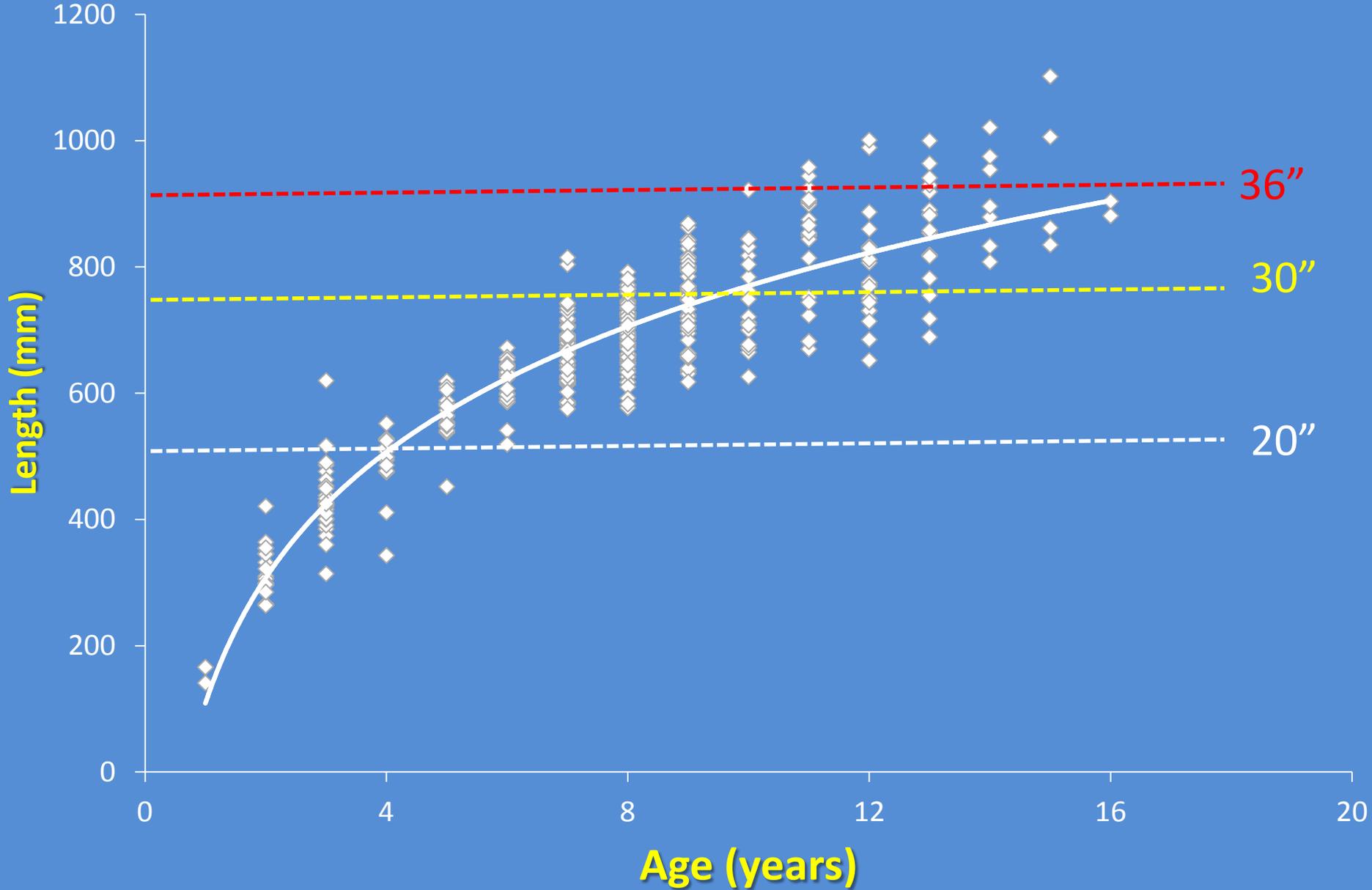
Population Monitoring



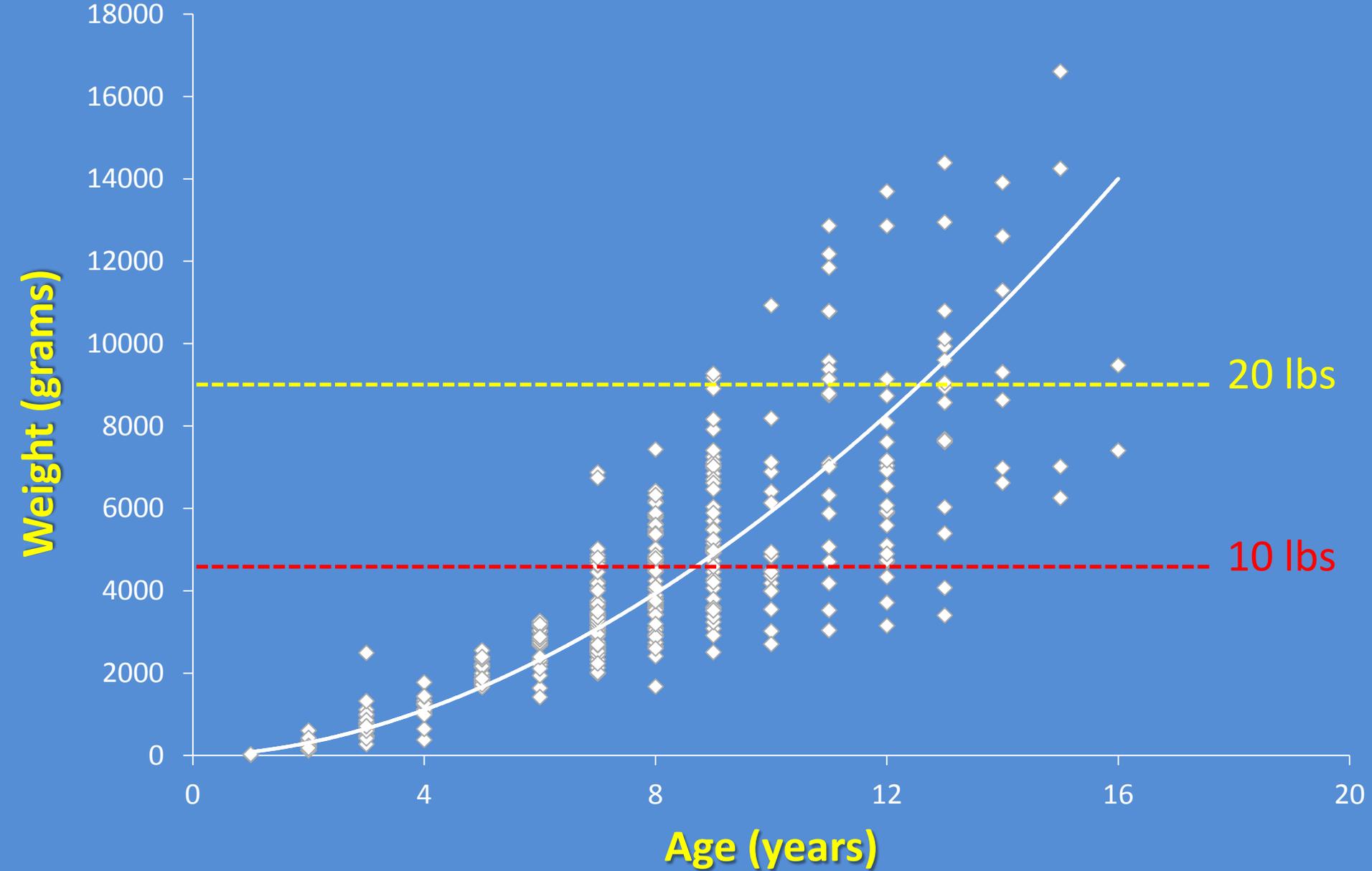
Age and Growth



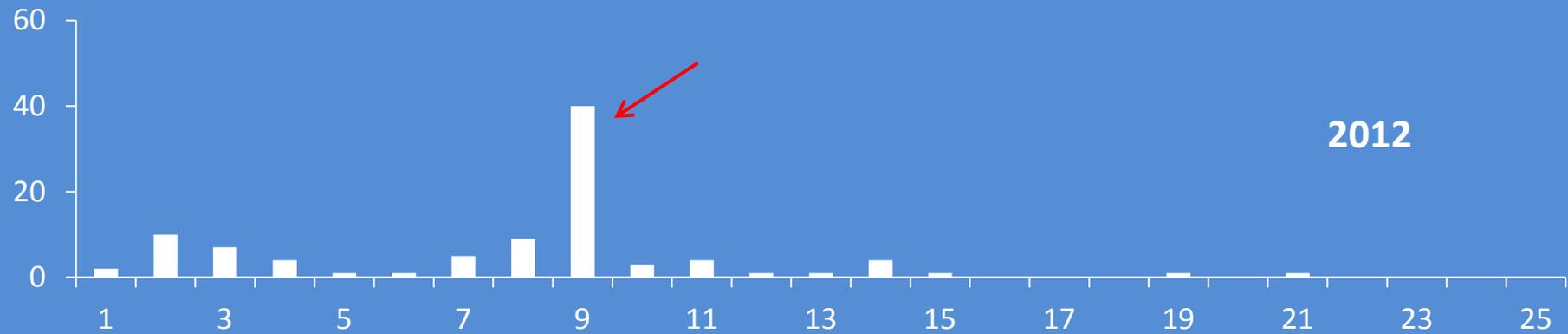
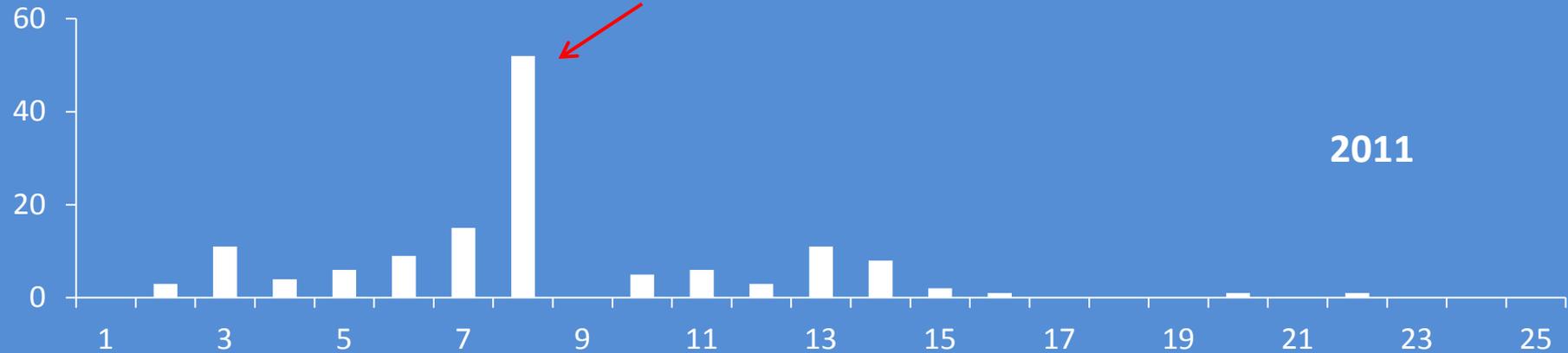
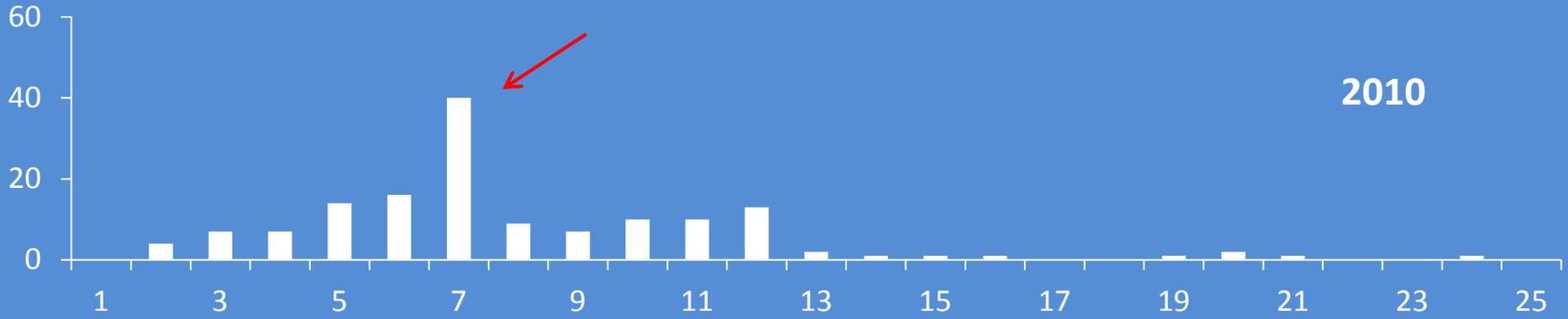
Age and Growth



Age and Growth



Age Histograms



Age (Years)

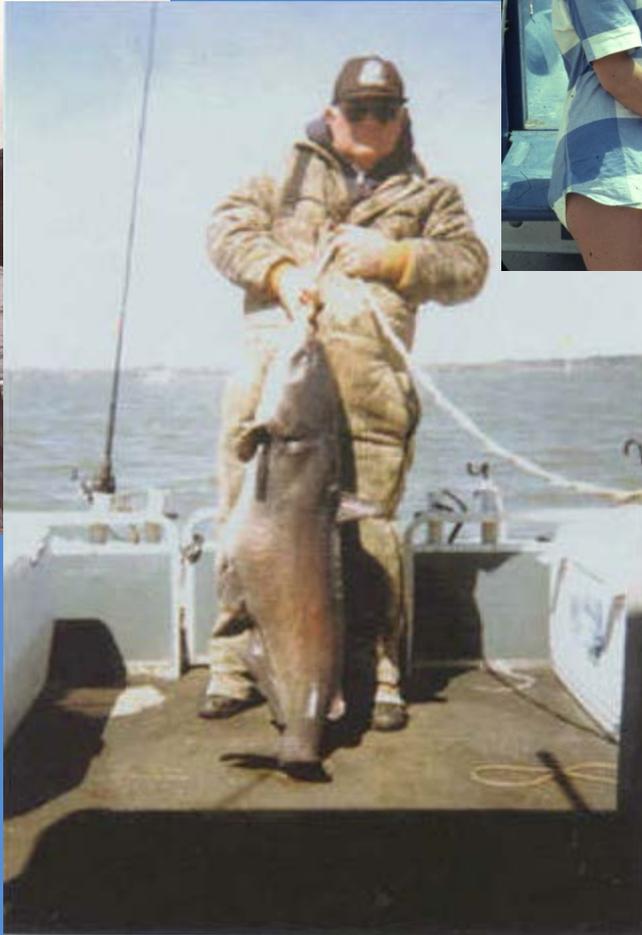
Total Number Caught

Summary of Information from Gillnet Fish

- *Juvenile abundance has been decreasing since 2003
- *Historically high catches of adult fish were recorded in 2009 and 2010
- *The 2013 catch was the lowest overall recorded catch
 - Adult catch was below the previous 10 year average
 - Lowest recorded catch of juveniles



Hook and Line Fishermen

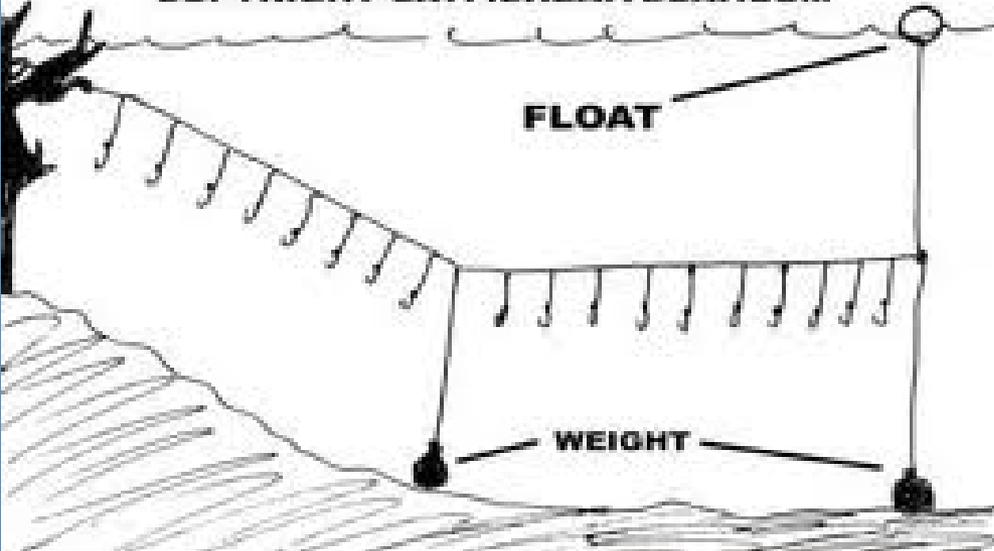


Bow fishermen



TROTLINE

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Trotline Fishermen – Commercial and Recreational



Management

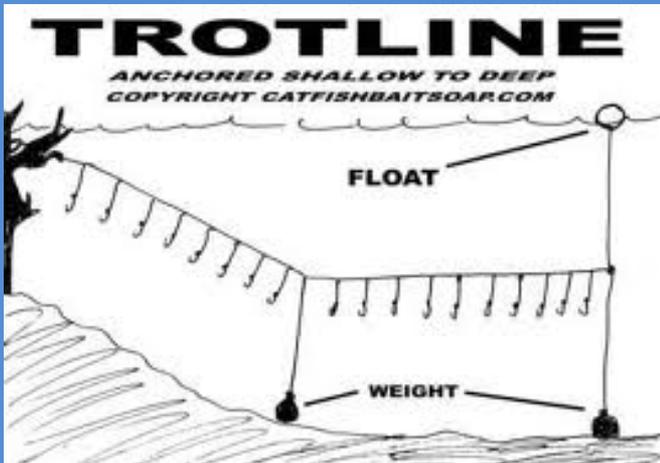
Commercial



Recreational



Unlimited daily harvest, with the exception of only 1 fish >36"



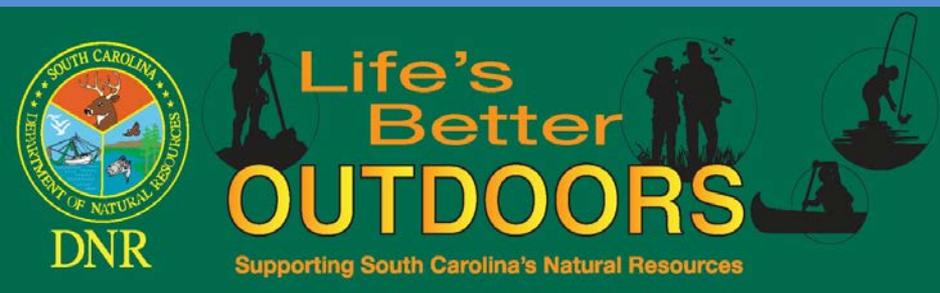
Why are we worried about managing them at all?

- *They use resources native fish could use
- *Blue catfish are opportunistic feeders and will consume anything they can find including native freshwater and anadromous fish



Outdoor Recreation ~375,000 anglers

Food ~500,000 lbs of hook and line harvest/year



Economics

*Blue catfish

~\$8.3 million annually

*Largemouth bass

~\$3.0 million annually

*Striped bass

~\$1.0 million annually



*Economic impact from bow fishermen, and the commercial and recreational trotline fishery is unknown

Conclusions

- * Blue catfish are an established non-native species (*Naturalized State Citizen*)
- * There is interest from a diverse group of stakeholders to maintain a strong fishery
- * Blue catfish management presents us with the challenge of maintaining our mission as stewards of South Carolina's native natural resources while also maintaining an economically and socially important fishery.

A person wearing a bright orange protective suit and hood is seen from the side, looking out over a large body of water. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright, shimmering path of light across the water's surface. The sky is clear and blue. In the distance, a small structure or buoy is visible on the water. The overall scene is serene and suggests a maritime or environmental setting.

Questions & Comment Sheets