

Outreach and Education Advisory Panel (OEAP)

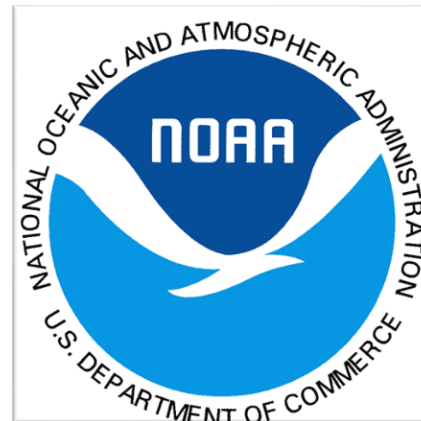
Report to the Council

July 23, 2025

Virtual Meeting



Summary of
achievements and
ongoing initiatives



Outreach at Segundo Ruiz Belvis School – Mayagüez, Puerto Rico

I gave a talk at Segundo Ruiz Belvis School in Mayagüez, which serves children with autism and other conditions. The presentation was adapted to meet their needs and focused on the importance of conserving species and their ecosystems.

Coloring books and crayons were distributed as part of the activity.

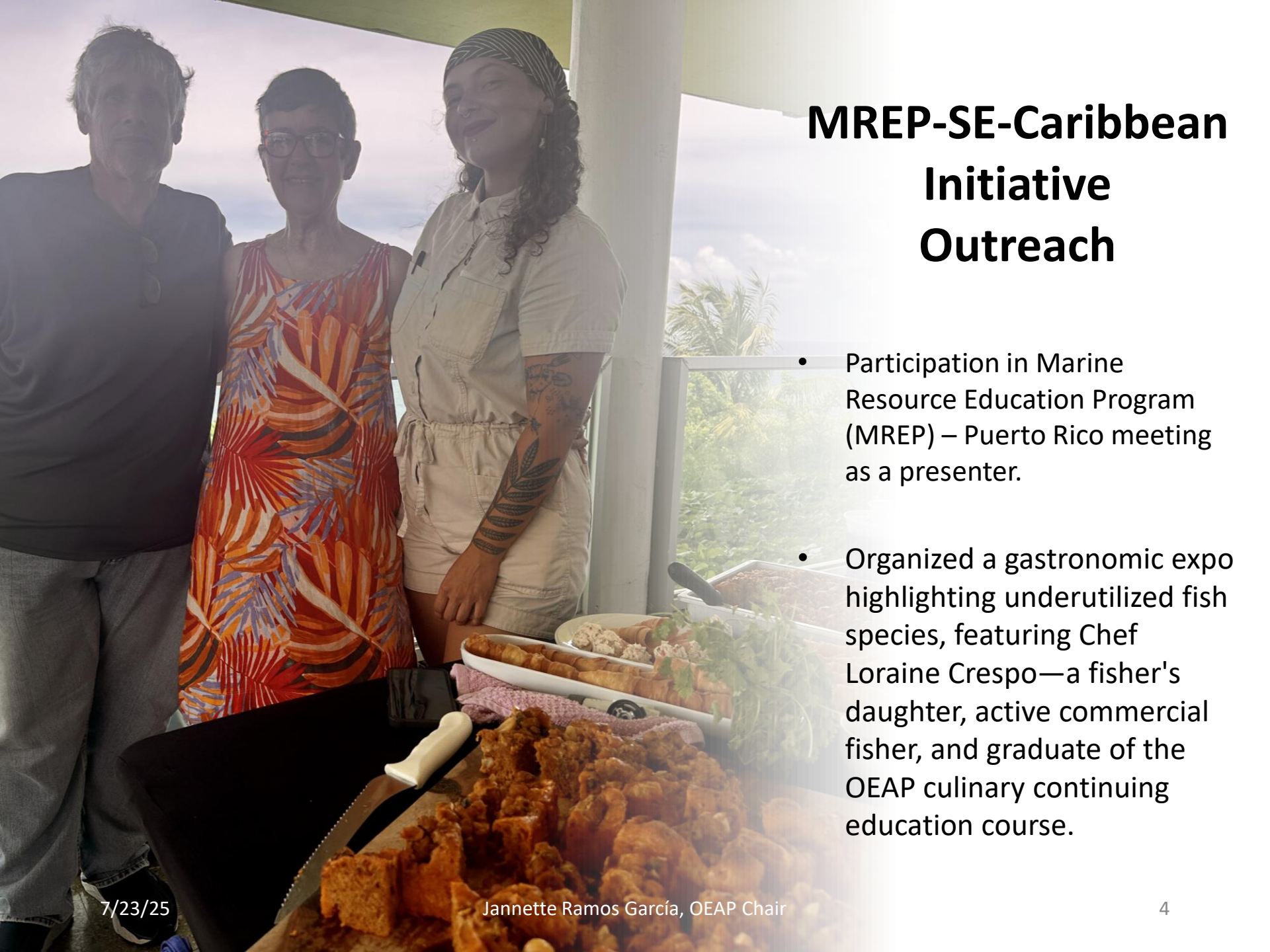


Fieldwork conducted as part of the project "*Understanding Extreme Events and Their Impact on the Fishery Ecosystem and the Fisher's Community in the U.S. Caribbean*"



As part of Dr. Árida Ortiz's project, *Understanding Extreme Events and its impact on the fishery ecosystem and the fisher's community in the U.S. Caribbean*, I conducted interviews and field observations on how extreme weather events have impacted fishers and fisheries.

The findings will be featured in an upcoming **storybook** designed to highlight community experiences and resilience.



MREP-SE-Caribbean Initiative Outreach

- Participation in Marine Resource Education Program (MREP) – Puerto Rico meeting as a presenter.
- Organized a gastronomic expo highlighting underutilized fish species, featuring Chef Loraine Crespo—a fisher's daughter, active commercial fisher, and graduate of the OEAP culinary continuing education course.

Educational Talk for Children

Activity aimed at children from socially vulnerable communities

Focus on marine ecosystems, species, and their importance

Interactive and age-appropriate educational dynamics

Promotion of marine knowledge and educational equity

Children were taken by boat to Los Pozos, Cabo Rojo, for a full hands-on marine experience

We were accompanied by a local fisher who helped guide the educational tour





OEAP Calendar in Progress

- **2026 Calendar – Families in Fisheries**
Most of the photos and information for the 2026 calendar are ready to be submitted for editing and layout.

This edition will highlight **families in fisheries**, celebrating how knowledge and traditions are passed down from generation to generation to sustain this way of life.
- This calendar will feature families from **St. Croix and Puerto Rico**.

Participation in the Big Fish Initiative

Supported the **Big Fish** initiative by identifying and engaging fishers to participate in the radio campaign aimed at protecting **mutton snapper aggregations (sama/pargo criollo)**.

Their voices helped raise awareness about the importance of conserving this valuable species.



Grouper Conservation Initiative (Meros PR)

- Participated alongside Cristina Olán in an outreach effort led by Dr. Michelle Schärer, focused on engaging recreational fishers.
- Topics Covered:
 - Identification of key grouper species (e.g., Nassau grouper)
 - Seasonal closures, regulations, and conservation measures
 - Main threats: overfishing and habitat degradation
- **Objectives:**
 - Help fishers recognize and differentiate protected species
 - Raise awareness of the ecological importance and vulnerability of groupers
 - Foster dialogue and promote sustainable fishing practices
- Use of the descending device.



Thank you!



Questions?