

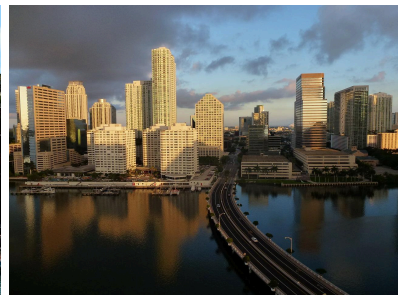
Recommendations for Spanish Translation Services at the Southeast Fisheries Science Center



San Juan, Puerto Rico



St. Croix, US Virgin Islands



Miami, Florida

Executive Summary

A primary goal of the Southeast Fisheries Science Center's (SEFSC) Caribbean Strategic Planning efforts is to increase external collaboration through communications with stakeholders in their primary language. As the SEFSC provides scientific advice and data to Spanish-speaking communities, communication in the Spanish language is essential for effective and inclusive collaborations. Communication in the Spanish language will facilitate trust-building between the SEFSC and regional stakeholders, partner agencies, and local communities. A working group was established to identify resources for translation services that are available to SEFSC personnel as well as provide recommendations for those avenues. This document contains those findings. While the focus of this group was for Spanish translations, these resources may be applicable to all primary languages of NOAA Fisheries stakeholders.



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Working Group

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Please contact a working group member with changes or suggestions for additional resources.

Meeting Translation Applications

Simultaneous Translation Services

For formal meetings in which regional partners will be in attendance, consider contracting a simultaneous translation service to ensure all attendees are able to participate in the discussions. Vendors who can provide this service include: 1) Agency personnel, 2) Local personnel, and 3) Translation professionals. Each option has its own benefits and disadvantages, which should be considered when selecting the appropriate option for each individual situation. With any option and application, it is recommended to hire translators from the region (i.e., Puerto Rico or St. Croix) to ensure correct dialect and regionally appropriate translations. It is also recommended that the group requesting the service provides the translator with relevant information in advance of the meeting to ensure preparedness. This information may include the species names, statistical analyses, methodology, and other terminology that may require additional information in order to provide a regionally appropriate translation. See below for details.

1) Agency personnel

Agency personnel are experts on the subject matter with technical industry knowledge. They work at or very closely with the agency contracting the translation service. This option ensures trust in the translation and strong understanding of the technical processes and terminology to be translated. This option is the most cost-effective.

An application of this option could include a Professional Specialty Group (PSG) of Spanish-speaking NOAA Fisheries staff to provide simultaneous translation services as needed by agency personnel to achieve mission requirements. The PSG could include NOAA Fisheries employees on a local, regional, or national level and incorporate personnel from various expertise and disciplines. Another application of agency personnel providing translation services could be in the form of a Lantern detail. The detail could be on a rotational basis to alleviate the burden on any one person or a group of people. This application presents a unique opportunity for collaboration on a national level and for NOAA Fisheries personnel to engage at a broader level. Both applications provide valuable services necessary for the missions of NOAA Fisheries and SEFSC as well as an incomparable professional development opportunity for Spanish-speaking staff.

Another application of this option could be the formation of a translation professional position for the NOAA agency, or more specifically, NOAA Fisheries. The Spanish translator in this full-time or part-time position would be responsible for providing translation services in meetings, which could be in the form of simultaneous translation using a separate video platform channel (see below) or an informal conversation in which the discussion is translated back and forth between the languages. This position would require strong understanding of NOAA Fisheries processes and statistical analyses as well as tone for messaging. This application may involve the use of

permanent or programmatic funds to ensure the availability of agency-wide translation services.

2) Local personnel

Local personnel have strong ties to the industry and, in the case of NOAA Fisheries, may be fishers in the community. Although these personnel may not have as strong of an understanding of the technical processes, they are knowledgeable about industry terminology and may provide additional perspective. This option is also cost-effective but requires significant trust in the translator to ensure the facts and tone of the dialog are accurately translated both to the stakeholders as well as industry questions or feedback to NOAA Fisheries staff.

Applications of this option could include local fishers, regional scientists, academic partners, or interested community members who have ties to the industry. While this option requires a formal funding governance structure, allows for community and stakeholder engagement, and could help foster relationships between NOAA Fisheries staff and local community members. Partnerships established through this application may help to resolve any misconceptions in the science process and build rapport in the region.

3) Translation professionals

Translation professionals work for a translation service provider and may not have industry knowledge or ties to the industry. This option provides trust in the translation, but may be the least cost-effective.

Applications of this option require identified and contracted translation and interpreter services as well as a formal funding governance structure. A regional stakeholder, the Caribbean Fisheries Management Council, has contracted a translator to simultaneously interpret all meetings hosted by the Council and a similar contract could be established for use by NOAA Fisheries, or more specifically, the SEFSC. The language translation and interpretation services are provided by the company [AlterEgo](#). Other vendors approved and utilized by the University of Miami can be found [here](#). These vendors present a DEIA opportunity to hire diverse and minority-owned service providers. If contracted through the Cooperative Institute for Marine and Atmospheric Studies, the often complex federal contractual process can be avoided.

Video Platform Translation Capabilities

Video platforms have capabilities that allow for translated closed captioning as well as a separate channel for simultaneous translation during live presentations. Platforms utilized by NOAA Fisheries staff that allow for these features include: 1) Google, 2) Zoom, and 3) GoToWebinar. NOAA Fisheries, and more specifically the SEFSC, uses Google Workspace for meetings while the NOAA national office uses GoToWebinar and many Caribbean regional partners use Zoom. Although NOAA staff cannot host Zoom meetings or download the

application, they can join a meeting via web browser. See below for capabilities and functionality of each video platform.

1) Google Workspace

Google Meet offers AI-generated live closed captioning that can be translated between English and French, German, Portuguese, or Spanish. This feature allows for the presenter to speak in their preferred language while the captions appear in the viewer's preferred language. Spoken English can also be live-translated into captions for Dutch, Indonesian, Japanese, Mandarin, Swedish, Turkish, and Vietnamese; however, these spoken languages cannot yet be live-translated into English captions. As the captions are AI-generated from spoken words, there may be errors in grammar, differences in dialect, or broken translations. Please be mindful that although this feature is convenient, it may not be the most appropriate option depending on the needs of the meeting. If using this feature, it is recommended to have activation instructions written out in all appropriate primary languages to easily copy and paste into the chat for participants to read. See [here](#) for additional details and instructions to activate this feature.

Google Workspace also allows for simultaneous audio interpretations via a separate channel in the Google Meet video conference call. With this feature, participants can open a secondary interpretation channel and listen to the presentation in their preferred language. This feature requires a contracted interpreter to listen to the presentation in one language, and simultaneously speak the translated presentation for participants to hear. Interpreters can be contracted from any agency, organization, or online service. This feature also requires that all participants download a Google Chrome extension. See [here](#) for additional details and instructions to activate this feature.

The Google Workspace and all features are provided to NOAA Fisheries staff at no additional cost. Other participants from outside organizations are able to utilize these features when the meeting is hosted by a NOAA Fisheries employee.

2) GoToWebinar

GoToWebinar allows for live subtitling and translated caption services between English and Portuguese, Spanish, French, Mandarin, Cantonese, Hebrew, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Finnish, Hungarian, Macedonian, Montenegrin, Romanian, and Serbian. This service is available using CaptioningStar with rates from \$99-\$140 per hour. A translated transcript is provided after the webinar. See [here](#) for additional details and instructions for contracting this service.

GoToWebinar also allows for simultaneous audio interpretations via the separate application, Interprefy, which gets integrated into the webinar. Interpretation services must first be booked through Interprefy, then participants will be able to access a link with the interpretation channel. The interpreter will listen to the presenter and simultaneously speak the translated presentation for participants to hear. There is an

additional cost for this service; pricing is based on individual event/webinar needs. See [here](#) and [here](#) for additional details and instructions for contracting this service.

3) Zoom

Zoom offers AI-generated live closed captioning that can be translated between English and Arabic, Chinese, Czech, Dutch, Estonian, Finnish, French, German, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Polish, Portuguese, Spanish, Russian, Turkish, Ukrainian, and Vietnamese. Spoken English can also be live-translated into captions for Bengali, Hebrew, Hindi, Norwegian, Romanian, Swedish, and Tamil; however, these spoken languages cannot yet be live-translated into English captions. As the captions are also AI-generated from spoken words, there may be errors in grammar, differences in dialect, or broken translations. Please be mindful that although this feature is convenient, it may not be the most appropriate option depending on the needs of the meeting. If using this feature, it is recommended to have activation instructions written out in all appropriate primary languages to easily copy and paste into the chat or meeting invitation for participants to read. This feature is accessible with a Zoom One Business Plus or Zoom One Enterprise Plus account. See [here](#) for additional details and instructions to activate this feature.

Zoom Pro, Business, Education, or Enterprise accounts also allow for simultaneous interpretations via a separate channel in the Zoom video conference call. With this feature, participants can open a secondary interpretation channel and listen to the presentation in their preferred language. This feature requires a contracted interpreter to listen to the presentation in one language, and simultaneously speak the translated presentation for participants to hear. Interpreters can be contracted from any agency, organization, or online service. See [here](#) for additional details and instructions to activate this feature.

All meeting participants are able to utilize these features when the meeting is hosted by an organization that has a Business or Enterprise Zoom account.

Video Translation Applications

Pre-recorded videos, like informational videos on YouTube, should be translated into all primary languages as appropriate based on video content and target audience. These translations can be in the form of spoken (i.e., voice-over) or on-screen captions. Depending on the viewing audience, it may be more beneficial to have spoken or voice-over translations to allow for all ages, reading levels, and personnel to follow along with the video content. On-screen captions will provide additional accessibility and are required for videos on the NOAA Fisheries YouTube channel.

The Communications team at the SEFSC can facilitate the addition of translated on-screen captions to pre-recorded videos by the Office of Communications at headquarters. Contact the team at nmfs.sefsc.comms@noaa.gov to discuss video translations.

Document Translation Applications

NOAA Fisheries-wide Translation Services Pilot Project

The NOAA Fisheries Communications team has initiated a nation-wide translation services pilot project. The intent for this initiative is to translate available documents, summaries, and/or abstracts into appropriate primary languages of NOAA Fisheries key stakeholders to improve accessibility of scientific processes and data. Translation needs will be contracted through the State Department at no cost to NOAA Fisheries staff. The pilot project, as of mid-June 2023, has not been executed. Contact the center communications team at nmfs.sefsc.comms@noaa.gov for the status of this project.

Recommendations

Examples of Meetings that Need Translation Services

Meetings that require translation services are those in which attendance includes SEFSC scientists, regional partners, industry partners, community members, territorial and commonwealth governments, academic partners, and other stakeholders. The translation services for meetings can be in the form of simultaneous translation or translated closed captions. Below are examples of meetings in which translation services should be considered.

- SEDAR meetings that include fishers, regional scientists, and local community members
- Education and Outreach meetings
- Informational seminars in which regional partners are invited; e.g., the Caribbean Seminar Series

Examples of Documents and Videos that Need Translation

Documents that require translation include those that will be viewed by SEFSC scientists, regional partners, industry partners, community members, territorial and commonwealth governments, academic partners, and other stakeholders. If the document to be translated is long, consider developing and translating a fact sheet or executive summary to avoid delays in allowing all interested parties to read the content. Below are examples of documents in which translated versions should be considered.

- [SEFSC Fact Sheet](#) - original document in English; Spanish translation needed
- [Guide to Fisheries Science and Stock Assessments](#) - original document in English; Spanish translation needed
- Strategic plans that may have stakeholder interest
- SEDAR Stock Assessment Reports
- Education and outreach materials
- Booklets and factsheets
- Executive summaries and abstracts for longer documents, such as SEDAR reports

Videos that require translation include those that will be viewed by SEFSC scientists, regional partners, industry partners, community members, territorial and commonwealth governments, academic partners, and other stakeholders. Video translations can be in the form of voice-over or on-screen captions. Below are examples of videos in which translated versions should be considered.

- [Ereporting shellcatch Puerto Rico. Pesca Artesanal](#) - original video in Spanish; English subtitles or voice-over needed
- [The ABCs of Stock Assessments](#) - original video in English; Spanish subtitles or voice-over needed

Conclusions and Additional Resources

Availability of Funding

The most prominent constraint facing language translation services is the availability of funding. Additional funds would be required to hire simultaneous interpreters, create an agency position, and translate documents when projects are completed. Although these translation activities may be costly, they are critical expenses to increase stakeholder engagement, foster effective and inclusive collaborations, and build trust between SEFSC and regional partners. Funding programs that may be leveraged to contract translation services include [Saltonstall-Kennedy](#), [Human Dimensions S&T](#), [NOAA Heritage Program](#), and [Fisheries Information System](#). Consider partnering with the SEFSC Social Science Research Group, SEFSC Communications Team, or members of the DEIA and EEJ task forces (see below) when in need of translation services or when seeking funding for translation services.

Inclusivity and Accessibility at NOAA Fisheries

NOAA Fisheries and the SEFSC are committed to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) and Equity and Environmental Justice (EEJ). Priorities for these topics include expanding communications and engagement with stakeholders, addressing barriers faced by underserved communities, and cultivating a diverse workforce to represent the stakeholders we serve. The DEIA and EEJ task forces identified language translation as necessary to overcome barriers in engagement and accessibility. See the [DEIA intranet](#) and the [EEJ strategy](#) for information on those actions. See the [NOAA Fisheries Strategic Plans webpage](#) for links to the National Strategic Plan, Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan, and Southeast Regional Strategic Plan which include the annual priorities and goals related to DEIA and EEJ.

The NOAA Employee Resource Group (ERG) Latinos@NOAA manages the [NOAA in Spanish](#) intranet site. The site lists different resources available in NOAA, including internal and external translation services, NOAA webpages in Spanish, sign language interpreting services, and instructions to add Spanish accents and other symbols.