RED CRAB
2010 Specifications / Decision Document

New England
Fishery Management Council

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NEFMC

November 19, 2009

DECISION

- Approve Specifications for the Red Crab fishery for 2010 fishing year

  – Preferred Alternative - based on ABC recommended by SSC for 2010

  – Status Quo Alternative – the same as the current Emergency Action

  – No Action Alternative – measures in effect before the current Emergency Action was implemented

BACKGROUND (1)

- JAN 1, 2009 - the red crab fishery was operating under a target TAC of 2,689 mts & 780 fleet DAS based on OY = 95% of MSY (2,830 mt).

- JAN 2009 - the Data Poor Working Group Assessment concluded that MSY ranged from 1,700 – 1,900 mt.

BACKGROUND (2)

- APR 2009 - in response to the DPWG assessment results, NMFS implemented an emergency action that set the target TAC at 1,615 mt (95% of the lower range of MSY) and DAS at 582.

- SEP 2009 – Council approved SSC recommendation for a 2010 ABC of 1,284 mt (68 – 76% of the DPWG MSY of 1,700 – 1,900 mt).

Council Motion on ABC Recommendation

that the Council send the red crab ABC back to the SSC for further analysis after new peer review information is available and that a quorum is present throughout SSC deliberations.

The motion to amend **carried** unanimously on a show of hands (16/0/0).

SEP 23, 2009

Red Crab Specification Alternatives for Fishing Year 2010

Alternatives	MSY/OFL	Buffer	TAC/ABC
1) Preferred Alternative	1,700-1900 mt	24-32%	1,284 mt
2) Status Quo	1,700 mt	5%	1,615 mt
3) No Action	2,830 mt	5%	2,689 mt

Red crab specification alternatives for fishing year 2010

Alternatives	ABC/target TAC	Fleet DAS
1) Preferred Alternative	1,284 mt (2.83 million lb)	464
2) Status Quo	1,615 mt (3.56 million lb)	582
3) No Action	2,689 mt (5.93 million lb)	780

Expected Revenues for Specification Alternatives

Alternatives	ABC / Target TAC	Expected Landings mt / (pounds)	Ex-vessel Revenue ($ million)
1) Preferred Alternative	1,284 mt	1,284 mt (2.83 million)	$ 2.7
2) Status Quo	1,615 mt	1,615 mt (3.56 million)	$ 3.3
3) No Action	2,689 mt	1,941 mt (4.28 million)	$ 4.0

Notes on Expected Revenues

1. Expected landings under No Action assumed to be the average landings for 2004 – 2006 and not the target TAC because landings never reached the target TAC during this period.

2. 2007 average price ($0.94/lb.) used for estimates and constant price / quantity used.

SSC Recommendations

- **The overfishing limit (OFL) for red crab is 1,700-1,900 mt based on long-term average landings and depletion-adjusted average catch analyses from the 2008 Data Poor Stocks Working Group.**

- **Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) of red crab for 2010 is 1,284 mt based on 2007 landings.**

- **Improvement of fishery and resource monitoring information is needed to derive estimates of MSY reference points and an ABC control rule.**

NMFS Guidance on SSC Advice

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) Section 302(h)(6) provides that a Council may not exceed the fishing level recommendations of its SSC in developing ACLs. This provision specifically applies when the ACL mechanisms required by MSA have been implemented. However, in addition to the ACL provisions, in 2007, the MSA enhanced the role of the SSCs, mandating that they shall provide ongoing scientific advice for fishery management decisions, including recommendations for acceptable biological catch (MSA 302(g(1)(B)). This requirement was effective in January 2007. The MSA requires that conservation and management measures, which include catch quotas, must be consistent with the requirements of the MSA, which include preventing overfishing (National Standard 1) and using the best scientific information available (National Standard 2). The role of a Council's SSC is to provide the Council with scientific advice based on the best scientific information available.

SEP 2009 Council Motion

that the Council send the red crab ABC back to the SSC for further analysis after new peer review information is available and that a quorum is present throughout SSC deliberations