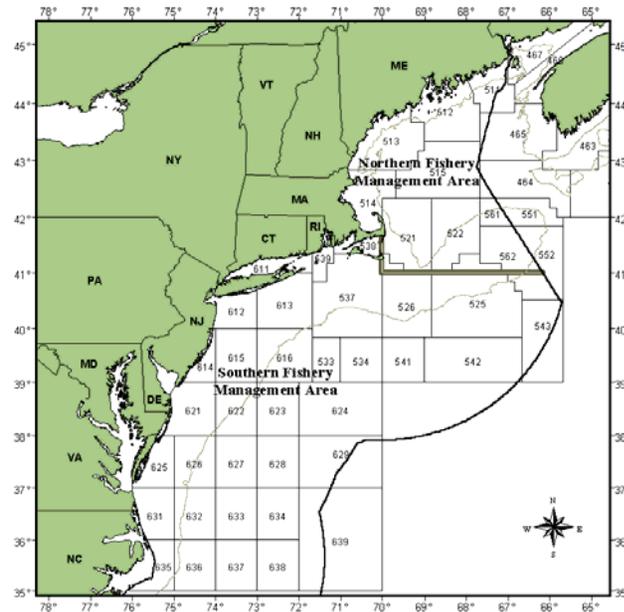


Two-Area Monkfish Management White Paper

Issues and Considerations with Separating Northern and Southern Fisheries Management



June, 2011

Discussion Outline

- Areas of Considerations: Biological, Legal, Operational, Socio-Economic, Administrative/Enforcement, and ACL/AM implications
- Summary of Conclusions
- Next steps

Purpose of the White Paper

- Monkfish AP and OS Committee reviewed Amendment 6 scoping comments – generally, views on catch shares were geographically divergent
- Different fisheries and circumstances in the two areas may be better served by different management approaches

Biological Considerations

- Evidence suggests a single stock
- Same growth rates; age and length at maturity similar but not identical
- Different recruitment patterns may be due to early stage survival
- Fish from both areas genetically related
- Monkfish capable of extensive movement at all life stages

Legal Considerations

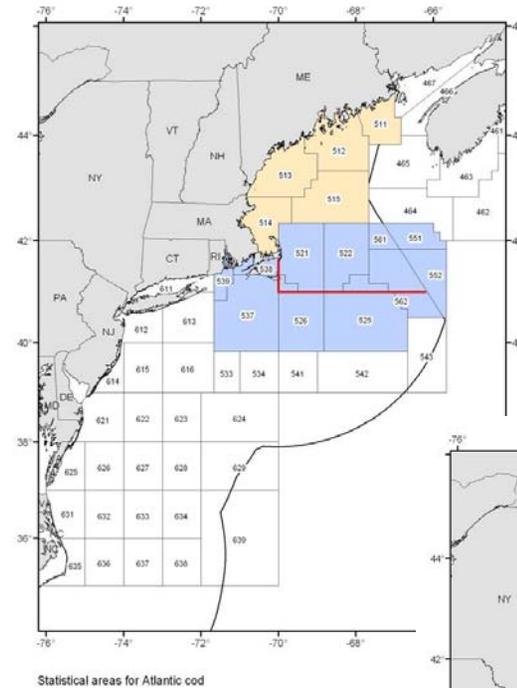
- NS 3 – to the extent practicable, a stock shall be managed as a unit throughout its range, or in close coordination
- NS 3 Guidelines – while single stock management is preferred, stocks may be managed differently by area if FMP justifies, and management is coordinated
- Choice of management unit may be organized around biological, geographic, economic, technical, social or economic basis

Operational Considerations (cont'd.)

- Currently, except for Category H, permits are not area based
- Under one FMP, vessel permits allow fishing in both areas but under history based allocation some vessels would be excluded from one area
- Vessels with a history in both areas in different years, may qualify to fish in both areas, but also may have a reduced allocation depending on how history is used
- Mass. abuts both areas, plans will need to coordinate and account for state waters fishing

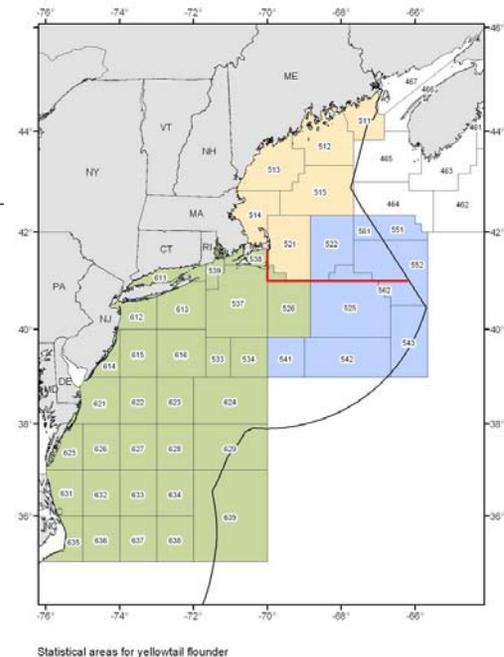
GF Sector vessels

- Sector vessels have ACE for stocks that overlap MF boundary
- Accommodation will be needed for sector vessels to fish for groundfish in both areas



Cod

Yellowtail Fl.



Permit Qualification and Transfers

- Under 2 FMP approach, Councils will need to coordinate permit qualification for both areas so all current permit holders qualify
- Can vessels be permitted in both areas?
- Can a vessel without a permit in one area be transferred to that area? If so, what happens to other permits on that vessel?
- If one area is under an allocation system, permit categories rendered obsolete, but probably should be retained for future cross-area transfers

Socio-economic Considerations

- Most of the direct impacts likely to affect vessels that currently fish in both areas
- Whether two rules in one FMP, or two FMPs, those vessels would have to change fishing and business plans
- If such vessels are excluded from one area, potential loss of income
- Under two FMPs, qualifying vessels will have to participate in two FMP processes, and potentially two reporting/administrative procedures
- Net socio-economic impact depends on the specifics of the two management programs

Administrative/Enforcement

- Two FMPs or two sets of rules increases plan complexity; requires coordination
- Increased importance of accuracy of catch monitoring by area, particularly on trans-boundary trips
- Increased NMFS and Council resources to develop and administer two FMPs or two sets of rules

ACLs and AMs

- Will require allocation of ACLs to the two areas, especially under two FMP approach if stock is determined to be a single unit or there is substantial mixing,
- Possible approach could be modeled after TMGC, but negotiations about dividing the ACL will add to lead time in specifications process
- Plan coordination should consider setting AMs so that one area does not become accountable for overages in the other, or that effort shifts occur as a result of restrictive AMs in one area

Summary

- Two approaches considered: different rules or separate FMPs for North and South
- Single biological stock/extensive mixing but no legal impediments to separate management of a single stock
- Substantial number of vessels fish in both areas, within a trip, year, or year-to-year
- Groundfish stock areas overlap monkfish boundary

Summary (cont'd.)

- Permit qualification and permit transfers between areas need addressing
- Could require vessels that fish both areas to change fishing and business strategies
- Will likely increase FMP complexity, add to administrative burden and Councils/NMFS' workloads
- Enforcement considerations
- Allocation process for ACLs
- Separate AMs

Next Steps

- Committee recommends managing under a single FMP
- Councils to decide whether to proceed with one or both separation alternatives
- If two FMP approach is preferred, procedure for splitting FMP needs to be clarified
- If single FMP with two different sets of rules, may be done in Amendment 6 but will still require justification and coordination
- Committee and AP to work on defining issues and recommending goals and objectives for Amendment 6