

NEW ENGLAND FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
Monkfish Committee

I. STATUS

- A. Meetings: The Monkfish Oversight Committee met on Nov. 2nd in Providence, RI.
- B. Amendment 5 to the Monkfish FMP: Amendment 5 proposes Annual Catch Limits (ACLs) and Accountability Measures (AMs), multi-year specifications of Annual Catch Targets (ACTS) and associated days-at-sea (DAS) and trip limits, as well as several administrative provisions. The Council approved Amendment 5 for submission to NMFS at the June meeting, and staff submitted the final document for formal review on Sept. 20. The target effectiveness date is the start of the 2011 fishing year on May 1.
- C. Framework Adjustment 7: In September, based on the results of the stock assessment this past summer, and the subsequent recommendations of the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC), the Council initiated Framework 7 to revise the 2011-2013 Annual Catch Target (ACT) and associated specification of DAS and trip limits for the Northern Management Area (NMA) originally proposed in Amendment 5. The SSC recommended Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) values that are lower than those considered in Amendment 5, and, for the NMA, also lower than the ACT, requiring a reconsideration of the ACT and management measures. The assessment review committee and the SSC also recommend a revision to the biomass reference points in the FMP so they are consistent with managing for maximum sustainable yield (MSY). These changes will not change the stock status. The final NEFMC meeting on this action will be January 2011.
- D. Amendment 6 (Catch Shares): While the Council considered development of a catch share management program for monkfish in Amendment 5, it split that part off so that work on the ACLs and AMs could be completed by the 2011 deadline. At the same time, it identified this work as the priority once Amendment 5 is completed. On Sept. 13, the NEFMC and MAFMC Chairs, Executive Directors, staff and Chair and Vice Chair of the Monkfish Committee held a conference call to strategize the approach to the amendment and to organize a series of scoping meetings or listening sessions to get early and broad stakeholder input. The principals agreed to collaborate in this effort, and to hold 8-10 meetings along the coast during the fall.

The staff has prepared an informational/scoping document and will be scheduling the hearings for later this year, following publication of a Notice of Intent and opening of the comment period.

II. COUNCIL ACTION

- A. **Initial action on Framework 7** – No action is required, but the Council may, after consideration of any recommendation from the Monkfish Committee, identify the range of alternatives, including, if appropriate, a preferred alternative, for further development and analysis in the Framework 7 document.

III. INFORMATION

1. Summary of the 11/2 Monkfish Oversight Committee meeting
2. Monkfish Plan Development Team analysis of DAS and trip limits under a range of ACT alternatives for the NMA
3. Monkfish Amendment 6 (Catch Shares) Scoping Document