

DECISION DOCUMENT

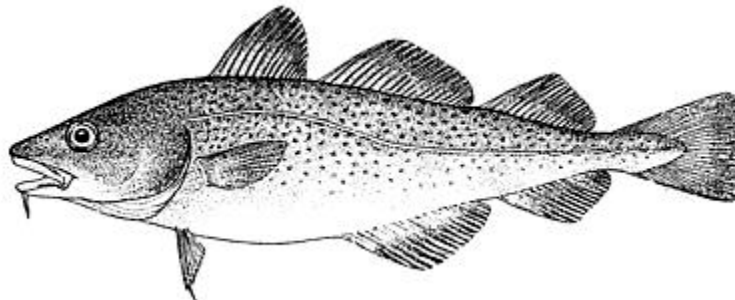
for

Framework Adjustment 48

to the

Northeast Multispecies

Fishery Management Plan (FMP)



December 2012 Groundfish Committee Meeting

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The following decision tables in this document appear in the same order as the sections in the Draft Framework 48 document; page numbers are provided for reference.

The document will be updated with Committee motions after the December 19, 2012 Committee meeting.

**Section 4.1.1 – Revised Status Determination Criteria for GOM cod, GB cod, SNE/MA yellowtail flounder, and white hake
(p. 41)**

Groundfish Committee Motions:

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Alternatives/Options Under Consideration	Description *Two Alternatives
Option 1	No Action
Option 2	Revised Status Determination Criteria Consistent With Recent Assessments
Decisions/Questions to Consider	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Values for GOM cod, GB cod, and white hake will be determined after SAW 54 benchmark assessment is • SNE/MA yellowtail flounder SSB_{MSY} based on SSC determination 	
Groundfish Committee Recommendations	
Groundfish AP Comments/Recommendations	
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Recreational Advisory Panel Comments/Recommendations	
• No specific recommendations	
Other Important Considerations/DEIS References	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SNE/MA yellowtail flounder not overfished under Option 2 SSB_{MSY} • Biological impacts: p. 424 • Habitat impacts: p. 523 • Economic impacts: p. 553 • Social impacts: p. 632 	

Section 4.1.2 – SNE/MA Windowpane Flounder Sub-ACLs

(p. 43)

Groundfish Committee Motions

Alternatives/Options Under Consideration	Description *Three Alternatives (more than one can be selected)
Option 1	No Action option
Option 2	Scallop Fishery SNE/MA Windowpane Flounder Sub-ACL (<i>Preferred Alternative</i>)
Option 3	Other Sub-Components Sub-ACL
Additional Decisions/Questions to Consider	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option 2 selected as a preferred alternative at the November 2012 Council meeting and does not need to be revisited • Option 3 changes the “other sub-components” category to a sub-ACL so that AMs can be applied; no specific allocation is specified by this measure 	
Groundfish Committee Recommendations	
Groundfish AP Recommendation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GAP recommended sending a letter to the NMFS and the state directors recommending an allocation, of a fixed percentage based on defined time frame, of groundfish stocks to the states on an annual basis. This should be one of the Council’s groundfish priorities for 2013. • GAP supported the option to allocate a sub-ACL to the scallop fishery 	
Recreational Advisory Panel Comments/Recommendations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No specific recommendation 	
Other Important Considerations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option 3 could result in AMs for fisheries managed by the MAFMC if the SNEMA windowpane flounder sub-ACL is exceeded • AMs for Option 3 are proposed in section 4.2.6.4 • Biological impacts: p. 426 • Habitat impacts: p. 524 • Economic impacts: p. 554 • Social impacts: p 633 	

**Section 4.1.3 – Scallop Fishery Sub-ACL for GB Yellowtail Flounder
(p. 45 of public hearing document)**

Alternatives/Options Under Consideration	Description *Three Alternatives
Option 1	No Action option
Option 2	Scallop Fishery Sub-ACL for GB yellowtail flounder based on estimated catch
Option 3	Scallop fishery sub-ACL for GB yellowtail flounder specified based on catch history (<i>Preferred Alternative</i>)
Decisions/Questions to Consider	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Option 3 selected as a preferred alternative at the November 2012 Council meeting Two clarifications to discuss: (1) does Council intend 16 percent to be in effect beyond FY 2015? (2) how is percentage calculated if there is an overage in the previous year? (see discussion below) 	
Groundfish Committee Recommendations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	
Groundfish AP Recommendation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GAP supported Option 3 and recommended analysis of 8 and 16 percent. If this option is not selected, the GAP recommends selection of Option 2 as Option 1 was unacceptable. 	
Recreational Advisory Panel Recommendations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No specific recommendation 	
Other Important Considerations/DEIS References	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> November Council motion specified 16 percent allocation for FY 2014 and 2015; did Council intend this value to carry beyond those two years? Clarification is needed on how an overage of the GB YTF ACL would be handled. Current regulations require that if there is an overage of the overall ACL in year 1, the groundfish sub-ACL is reduced in year 2 to account for the overage regardless of what component caused the overage. Absent Council action, presumably this would continue. Biological impacts: p. 428 Habitat impacts: p. 525 Economic impacts: p. 555 Social impacts: p 635 	

Section 41.4 – Small-mesh Fisheries Sub-ACL for GB Yellowtail Flounder

(p. 47)

Groundfish Committee Motions:

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Alternatives/Options Under Consideration	Description *Two Alternatives
Option 1	No Action Option
Option 2	Small-mesh fisheries sub-ACL for GB yellowtail flounder
Decisions/Questions to Consider	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option 2 would affect loligo squid and whiting fisheries in GB yellowtail flounder stock area • Note sub-ACL applies to small-mesh bottom trawls only (not mid-water trawls in the herring fishery) • Option 2 imposes requirement to develop AMs by the relevant FMPs within one year • Amount of sub-ACL needs to be specified • Option 2 should apply to bottom trawls with mesh size <u>equal to or larger</u> than 5 inches 	
Groundfish Committee Recommendations	
Groundfish AP Recommendation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No GAP comments available. 	
Recreational Advisory Panel Recommendations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No specific recommendations 	
Other Important Considerations/DEIS References	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catches by this gear have been 26-110 mt between 2004 and 2011, but with low GB yellowtail ACL could be a relatively large proportion of the catch • FW 48 also considers a gear requirement for small-mesh bottom trawl fisheries in the GB yellowtail flounder stock area; see section 4.2.4.3 on p 74. • Biological impacts: p. 432 • Habitat impacts: p. 525 • Economic impacts: p. 563 • Social impacts: p 636 	

Section 4.1.5 – Annual Catch Limit Specifications
(p. 49)

Groundfish Committee Motions:

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Alternatives/Options Under Consideration	Description *Two Alternatives
Option 1	No Action option
Option 2	Revised Annual Catch Limit Specifications
Decisions/Questions to Consider	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection of ACLs for FY 2013 and beyond • Council selected GB yellowtail flounder ABC of 1150 mt at the November Council meeting as a preferred alternative; no action on this stock is necessary • Council selected SNE/MA yellowtail flounder sub-ACL at the November 2012 Council meeting as a preferred alternative; no action on this stock is necessary • GOM cod and GB cod ABCs/ACLs are specified as a range based on preliminary assessment results and will be finalized in January 2012 	
Groundfish Committee Recommendations	
Groundfish AP Recommendation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GAP recommends that a Georges Bank yellowtail flounder benchmark assessment be conducted as soon as possible. The GAP also urges the Committee and Council to reject the 500 mt US/CA quota and ask the TMGC to revisit this quota. 	
Recreational Advisory Panel Recommendations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No specific recommendation 	
Other Important Considerations/DEIS References	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SSC concluded GB yellowtail flounder OFL is unknown • Biological impacts: p. 433 • Habitat impacts: p. 526 • Economic impacts: p. 563 • Social impacts: p 636 	

Section 4.2.1 – Management Measures for the Recreational Fishery
(p. 63)

Groundfish Committee Motions:

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Alternatives/Options Under Consideration	Description *Two Alternatives
Option 1	No Action option
Option 2	Revised Accountability Measure for the Recreational Fishery
Decisions/Questions to Consider	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to recreational AM to facilitate adjustments before an overage occurs, and to allow relaxation of measures if catch is expected to fall short of sub-ACL • If Option 2 selected, intent is to use process to modify, if necessary, FY 2013 management measures for the recreational fishery. 	
Groundfish Committee Recommendations	
Groundfish AP Recommendation	
Recreational Advisory Panel Recommendations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RAP provided advice on preferred priority order for measures for cod and haddock, but did not comment on specific Option 2 measure • RAP supported development of separate measures for for-hire fleet and private anglers, if necessary 	
Other Important Considerations/DEIS References	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current AM only allows changes to recreational measures after the sub-ACL has been exceeded, and does not provide ability to relax measures if catch falls short of sub-ACL • May prove difficult to get RAP/Committee/Council input for FY 2013 given need to set ABCs for GOM cod based on recent benchmark assessment • Biological impacts: p. 458 • Habitat impacts: p. 529 • Economic impacts: p. 586 • Social impacts: p 638 	

Section 4.2.2 – Groundfish Monitoring Program revisions

(p. 64)

Groundfish Committee Motions:

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Alternatives/Options Under Consideration	Description Multiple Options Can Be Selected
Option 1	No Action
Option 2	Monitoring Program Goals and Objectives
Option 3 Multiple Options can be selected	ASM Coverage Levels: Coverage must address precision and accuracy
	Sub-Option A: Clarification of CV Standard Sub-Option A1: CV standard met for each stock at the stock level Sub-Option A2: CV standard met for each stock and each sector
	Sub-Option B: Removal of Requirement for Industry Funded At-Sea Monitoring for FY 2013
	Sub-Option C: Lower Coverage rates for sector trips using ELM gillnet gear on a monkfish DAS in the SNE broad stock area
Option 4	Industry funded At-Sea Monitoring Cost Responsibility
Decisions/Questions to Consider	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modifications to sector monitoring program goals and objectives • Acknowledgement that accuracy should be a consideration when determining ASM coverage • Option 2: Are goals meant to replace or clarify A16 discussion? • Option 3B: How does removal of requirement for industry funding of ASM affect coverage standards? • Option 3C: Modification of coverage levels for ELM sink gillnet trips in certain areas: does this apply to trips only in the area (i.e. no combined trips)? • Option 4: May be legal concerns with this approach as proposed 	
Groundfish Committee Recommendations	
Groundfish AP Recommendation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GAP endorses Option 4, limiting industry ASM cost responsibility • GAP recommends that clarification be provided in the Framework document which specifies the Council's intent of the Monitoring Goals and Objectives. The Framework document should include rationale which states that when the Agency is evaluating monitoring programs against these goals and objectives each element of the program be evaluated in a manner to see if all elements (ASM, DSM, NEFOP and EM) collectively meet these goals versus each element independently being required to meet these goals. • GAP recommends NMFS prioritize observer coverage to the closed areas and to the directed GF trips (away from trips that are targeting dogfish monkfish and skates). • GAP recommends that the Agency must fully fund sector monitoring costs in FY 2013, including 100% coverage required for redfish exemption. 	
Recreational AP /Recommendations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No specific comments 	
Other Important Considerations/DEIS References	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee/PDT extensively discussed possibility of monitoring effects on observed trips that might cause a bias in discard estimates. While PDT documented differences in behavior between observed and unobserved trips, no conclusions could be reached on how these differences affected discards. Further work is needed on this issue. • There may be unintended consequences on required coverage levels as a result of monitoring changes that are being proposed in this, and other, sections of the framework. • Biological impacts: p. 460 • Habitat impacts: p. 529 • Economic impacts: p. 587 • Social impacts: p 639 	

Section 4.2.2.5 – Dockside Monitoring Requirements

(p. 69)

Groundfish Committee Motions:

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Alternatives/Options Under Consideration	Description *Two Alternatives
Option 1	No Action option
Option 2	Elimination of dockside monitoring requirements
Decisions/Questions to Consider	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection of option for dockside monitoring in FY 2013 and beyond • Option 1/No Action results in requirement that 20 percent of trips be subject to DSM. Should this apply to the small number of common pool vessels that remain active? • Option 2: Does requirement for trip start/trip end hail remain in effect if DSM requirement is eliminated? 	
Groundfish Committee Recommendations	
Groundfish AP Recommendation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GAP recommends that if the Council recommends full retention of allocated groundfish stocks that one hundred percent dockside monitoring is essential (with specific attention to undersized fish) to have full catch accountability. 	
Recreational AP Recommendations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No RAP comments available. 	
Other Important Considerations/DEIS References	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biological impacts: p. 476 • Habitat impacts: p. 530 • Economic impacts: p. 589 • Social impacts: p 641 	

**Section 4.2.3 – Commercial Fishery Minimum Size Restrictions
(p. 70)**

Groundfish Committee Motions:

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Alternatives/Options Under Consideration	Description *Three Alternatives
Option 1	No Action option
Option 2	Changes to minimum size limits for sector and common pool vessels
Option 3	Full retention (i.e. no minimum size limits for sector vessels)
Decisions/Questions to Consider	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection of minimum size requirements 	
Groundfish Committee Recommendations	
Groundfish AP Recommendation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GAP recommends modifying Option 2 for requiring a 13 inch minimum size for grey sole and a 12 inch across the board minimum fish size for other flatfish (other than halibut). Do not reduce minimum size for pollock. • GAP recommends option 3, full retention, as the preferred option. 	
Recreational AP Recommendations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No RAP comments available. 	
Other Important Considerations/DEIS References	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vessels would still be subject to state minimum size limits; if full retention is adopted, how would this affect this measure? • Biological impacts: p. 477 • Habitat impacts: p. 531 • Economic impacts: p. 589 • Social impacts: p 642 	

**Section 4.2.4 – GB Yellowtail Flounder Management Measures
(p. 73)**

Groundfish Committee Motions:

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Alternatives/Options Under Consideration	Description *Three Alternatives (more than one can be selected)
Option 1	No Action option
Option 2 (note numbering error in FW 48 document)	Revised discard strata for GB yellowtail flounder
Option 3	Small-mesh fishery bottom trawl gear requirements
Decisions/Questions to Consider	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possible changes to discard strata used for GB yellowtail flounder quota monitoring (NOT for assessment purposes) Possible gear requirements for whiting and loligo squid fisheries in the GB yellowtail flounder stock area 	
Groundfish Committee Recommendations	
Groundfish AP Recommendation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GAP recommends the Council request that the US/CA Steering Committee negotiate with our Canadian counterparts for a “one-off” request to swap up to 200 mt of EGB haddock from the US 2013 share in return for at least 60mt of GB yellowtail from the CA 2013 share. Additional fish would go to the groundfish fishery. 	
Recreational AP Recommendations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Specific recommendations 	
Other Important Considerations/DEIS References	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Option 2: revised discard strata may result in insufficient trips to estimate in-season discards, particularly for common pool vessels or smaller sectors Option 3: Gears proposed for small-mesh fisheries have not been specifically tested on GB. The raised footrope trawl has been extensively used by the whiting fishery in other areas. Biological impacts: p. 499 Habitat impacts: p. 531 Economic impacts: p. 599 Social impacts: p 643 	

**Section 3.1.4 – Sector Management Provisions – Allowed Exemption Requests
(p. 75)**

Groundfish Committee Motions:

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Alternatives/Options Under Consideration	Description *Two Alternatives
Option 1	No Action option
Option 2	Exemption from Year-Round Mortality Closures
Decisions/Questions to Consider	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sector vessel access to existing year-round groundfish closed areas in FY 2013 and beyond • Option 2 would allow individual sectors to request access to parts of the year-round closed areas. In some cases sectors could only request access during specific seasons. • The option selected could be modified in the future as part of the Omnibus Habitat Amendment 2. 	
Groundfish Committee Recommendations	
Groundfish AP Recommendation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GAP recommends the Committee and Council adopts Option 2 (Section 4.3.5, allowed sector exemption requests), which would allow sectors to request exemptions from year round mortality closures. If the Council selects the No Action alternative due to concerns about status of the resource, the GAP recommends the Council also restrict recreational access to those areas. • GAP asks the Committee to reconsider removing the gear restrictions for trawl vessel access to Closed Area I and Closed Area II. • GAP requests that the Committee/Council support a request for emergency action to eliminate the monkfish trip limit (in the northern fishery management area) for limited access vessels fishing on a groundfish DAS under sector management rules. 	
Recreational AP Recommendations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RAP opposed commercial vessel access to the WGOM Closed Area • RAP supported status quo of all groundfish closed areas 	
Other Important Considerations/DEIS References	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biological impacts: p. 503 • Habitat impacts: p. 532 • Economic impacts: p. 600/601 • Social impacts: p 645 	

**Section 4.2.6 – Commercial Fishery Accountability Measures
(p. 79)**

Groundfish Committee Motions:

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Alternatives/Options Under Consideration	Description *Five Alternatives (more than one can be selected)
Option 1	No Action option
Option 2	Change to AM timing for stocks not allocated to sectors
Option 3	Area-based Accountability Measures for Atlantic halibut, Atlantic wolffish, and SNE/MA winter flounder
Option 4	Modifications to the Accountability Measures for SNE/MAB Windowpane Flounder
Option 5	Revised HA and HB Permit Accountability Measures
Decisions/Questions to Consider	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to AM system for commercial fishing vessels • Option 2: if adopted, AMs for certain stocks could be implemented in the year immediately following an overage • Option 3: imposes fishing restrictions in specific areas if ACLs are exceeded. Committee guidance needed on possible change to SNE/MA Winter Flounder AM area. • Option 4: applies SNE/MAB windowpane flounder AM to all large-mesh bottom trawl gear if ACL and sub-ACL exceeded • Option 5: HA and HB permits not subject to the trimester TAC AM for white hake 	
Groundfish Committee Recommendations	
Groundfish AP Recommendation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A GAP motion on timing of non-allocated AM failed. 	
Recreational AP Recommendations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No specific comments 	
Other Important Considerations/DEIS References	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biological impacts: p. 518 • Habitat impacts: p. 536 • Economic impacts: p. 625 • Social impacts: p 645 	

**Section 4.2.6.5 – Trawl Gear Stowage Requirements
(p. 89)**

Groundfish Committee Motions:

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Alternatives/Options Under Consideration	Description *Two Alternatives
Option 1	No Action option
Option 2	Removal of Trawl Gear Stowage Requirements
Decisions/Questions to Consider	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicability of trawl gear stowage requirements to groundfish fishing trips • Option 2 only applies to groundfish trips and does not eliminate stowage requirements adopted by other FMPs • Option 2 only applies to trawl gear 	
Groundfish Committee Recommendations	
Groundfish AP Recommendation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GAP recommends approval of Option 2 for gear stowage requirements. 	
Recreational AP Recommendations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No specific comments 	
Enforcement Committee Comments/Recommendations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforcement Committee recommended specific modifications to stowage requirements, not elimination of the requirement 	
Other Important Considerations/DEIS References	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biological impacts: p. 522 • Habitat impacts: p. 537 • Economic impacts: p. 630 • Social impacts: p 647 	