

NEW ENGLAND FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
Groundfish Committee

I. STATUS

- A. Meetings: The Groundfish Oversight Committee met December 19, 2012. The Chair will provide a report at the meeting, and copies of the motions will be provided. A meeting summary will be prepared later. The Groundfish Plan Development Team (PDT) held a conference call November 28th to discuss completion of FW 48; a PDT report was not prepared.
- B. Amendment 18 - Accumulation Limits/Fleet Diversity: Scoping hearings for this amendment were held in January and a report was provided to the Council at the June Council meeting.
- C. Framework Adjustment 48: The Committee is working on measures to improve sector operations, ABCs for FY 2012 - 2014, modifications to closed area access for sector vessels, and several AM issues. The Council will select final preferred alternatives for this action. The Council made a decision on allocations of GB and SNE/MA yellowtail flounder to the scallop fishery at its last meeting.
- B. Closed Area Technical Team (CATT): A Closed Area Technical Team (CATT) was formed and has held several meetings to begin considering the role and effectiveness of closed area management for groundfish. The Groundfish Oversight Committee is recommending goals and objectives that the Closed Area Technical Team (CATT) and Groundfish PDT developed for groundfish management in the Omnibus Habitat Amendment. The CATT is analyzing the potential effects of the sector exemption area option in Framework 48, focusing on fishery catch rates, biological characteristics of groundfish and other species (e.g. skates, monkfish, lobster) from survey data as well as literature sources, EFH and vulnerable bottom habitat characteristics, protected species impacts, economic impacts, and social impacts. The CATT met several times to complete analyses for FW 48 and has begun to work on Omnibus Habitat issues.

II. COUNCIL ACTION

- A. Final action on Committee recommendations for FW 48 measures
- B. Possible adoption of Council comments on a proposed sector exemption for a redfish fishery

III. INFORMATION

- 1. Draft Framework Adjustment 48 (additional materials may be brought to the Council meeting)
- 2. Framework Adjustment 48 decision document (to be provided)
- 3. Science and Statistical Committee Report dated Dec 13, 2012 on GB yellowtail flounder OFL
- 4. Presentation on proposed redfish fishery exemption
- 5. FR: Proposed Rule to implement a targeted redfish fishery for sector vessels
- 6. Groundfish Oversight Committee Meeting Summary, November 5, 2012
- 7. Groundfish Catch Reports
- 8. Correspondence