

NEW ENGLAND FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
Groundfish Committee

I. STATUS

- A. Meetings: The Plan Development Team held a conference call on December 10, 2010 and met on January 10, 2011. PDT reports based on those discussions are attached. The Groundfish Committee met January 19, 2011; a meeting summary is forthcoming.
- B. Transboundary Management Guidance Committee: On December 20, 2010, the International Fisheries Clarification Act was approved by the legislature, which clarifies that the Understanding can be considered an international agreement for the purposes of setting ACLs. NERO is attempting to schedule a conference call with the Canadian TMGC members to discuss the 2011 TACs in advance of the January Council meeting.
- C. Framework 45: The framework was submitted to NMFS for initial review on December 15, 2010. Minor modifications were completed and the final framework document was resubmitted in January 2011. The draft regulations for the Framework have been deemed by the Council chair. It is unlikely that the Council will discuss the proposed rule in January as it is not expected to be published before the Council meeting.
- D. Framework to the FMP Addressing Haddock Catch Cap in the Herring Fishery: The PDT met to conduct analysis on haddock bycatch rates in the herring fishery. The reports from the conference call and meeting are attached. The January Council meeting will initiate this framework and be the first of two meetings to discuss this action as required by NEPA.
- E. State-Operated Permit Banks: NMFS has submitted a draft Amendment 17 to address NOAA-sponsored state operated permit banks for the Council's review. This document is attached and will be discussed at the Council meeting.
- F. Fleet Diversity and Accumulation Limits: The Groundfish Committee discussed initiation of an amendment to the FMP addressed fleet diversity and accumulation limits. Details of that discussion will be provided at the Council meeting.

II. COUNCIL ACTION

- A. Initiate a framework adjustment to address issues related to a haddock catch cap for herring midwater trawl vessels; the committee will recommend alternatives for Council consideration. This will be the first of two meetings for this framework.
- B. Discuss an amendment to the Northeast Multispecies FMP that may authorize state-operated permit banks
- C. Discuss an amendment to the FMP to incorporate measures that address fleet diversity and accumulation limits; the discussion will cover approval of a draft scoping document
- D. Discuss and possibly take action on Transboundary Management Guidance Committee issues as they relate to the recent legislation concerning the U.S./Canada Resource Sharing Understanding.

III. INFORMATION

1. Groundfish Plan Development Team Conference Call Summary dated December 22, 2010
2. Groundfish Plan Development Team Report dated January 12, 2011
3. Draft Amendment 17 to address NOAA-sponsored, state-operated permit banks
4. Draft scoping document for accumulation limits amendment
5. US/CA Area reports
6. Groundfish catch reports
7. Correspondence