

**NEW ENGLAND FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**  
**Groundfish Committee**

**I. STATUS**

- A. Meetings: The Groundfish Oversight Committee met January 18, 2012; a meeting summary will be provided. The Groundfish Plan Development Team (PDT) held a meeting on December 8, 2011 and a conference call on January 9, 2012; a report of those calls is attached.
- B. Amendment 17/State-Operated Permit Banks: The Council approved Amendment 17 at the June Council meeting. Formal submission and deeming of the regulations was completed September 7, 2011. The comment period on the proposed rule closed January 23, 2012.
- C. Amendment 18 - Accumulation Limits/Fleet Diversity: Scoping hearings for this amendment were held in January and a report will be provided to the Council.
- D. Framework 47: This framework will set ABCs for 2012-2014, address Accountability Measure (AM) issues, and will consider removing the current cap on yellowtail flounder that the scallop fishery can harvest from the GB access areas. The Council approved the framework in November 2011 and staff is preparing the document for submission.
- E. GOM Cod Assessment and Working Group: GOM cod was assessed as part of SARC 53 in December, 2012. The Council will receive a report on the assessment at this meeting. Preliminary information indicates that this stock is overfished, overfishing is occurring, and it cannot rebuild by 2014. Because this change in the stock's status was unexpected, NOAA Fisheries convened a GOM cod working group in December to explore possible responses to the assessment. The Council also asked its Science and Statistical Committee to discuss the assessment. The Council will consider all of this information and may request emergency action for FY 2012 in order to provide time to prepare a more comprehensive management response.
- F. MRIP Briefing: NOAA Fisheries will provide an update on the Marine Recreational Information Program.
- G. Sector framework: The Committee has begun work on the sector framework and will report on developments to date.
- H. Redfish Experiment: The Council will receive a report on Project REDNET, an effort to identify measures to be used in a redfish fishery.
- I. FY 2012 Sector Exemptions: NOAA Fisheries anticipates publishing a proposed rules asking for comments on regulatory exemptions requested by sectors for FY 2012. Should the rule be published before the Council meeting the Council may consider comments on the requests.
- J. Groundfish Assessment Updates: Assessment updates of twelve groundfish stocks are planned for mid-February. These assessments will be used to set ABCs for FY 2013 – FY 2014.

## **II. COUNCIL ACTION**

- A. Possible request for emergency action on GOM cod
- B. Possible comment on FY 2012 sector exemption requests

## **III. MOTIONS**

TBD - after the Committee Meeting

## **III. INFORMATION**

1. Groundfish Oversight Committee Meeting Summary, January 18, 2012 (to be distributed)
2. Groundfish Plan Development Team meeting report dated January 12, 2012
3. Summary of the Findings of SARC 53 (pre-publication copy)
4. Project Rednet Overview
5. Amendment 18 scoping hearing summary (to be distributed)
6. Groundfish Catch Reports
7. Correspondence