

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

**I. STATUS**

- A. Meetings: The Groundfish Oversight Committee met August 8, 2011; a meeting summary is attached. The Groundfish Plan Development Team (PDT) held a conference call on August 5, 2011; the meeting summary is attached. The PDT also conducted conference calls for setting ABCs on July 6 and July 11, and held a meeting on August 31, 2011; reports from those discussions are included with the SSC discussion items.
- 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 proposed rule should be published in the near future.
- C. Accumulation Limits/Fleet Diversity: At the June Council meeting the Council directed the Groundfish Oversight Committee to continue development of the scoping process for an amendment to consider accumulation limits and fleet diversity issues. The Committee will present a draft scoping document for Council approval.
- 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 will receive a report on framework progress and will consider Committee motions for several measures. In a related agenda item the Science and Statistical Committee report will provide the recommended Acceptable Biological Catches (ABCs) for FY 2012 – FY 2014. PDT documents relevant to those decisions are in the SSC section of the binder.
- E. Assessment Updates: During development of ABCs for FY 2012 – 2014, the SSC expressed concern with using medium-term projections (5-7 years after the terminal year) to set ABCs. As a result the SSC is expected to recommend ABCs only for FY 2012 for the stocks last assessed at GARM III. The Groundfish Committee will ask the Council to endorse a request that this winter the Northeast Fisheries Science Center update assessments for stocks last assessed at GARM III so that ABCs for these stocks can be updated. The Council request is a formality – the NEFSC already notified the Council it will perform these assessments. The Council will need to consider adoption of the results while setting priorities.
- F. U.S./Canada Resource Sharing Understanding: The Council will receive a report on the 2011 Transboundary Resource Assessment Committee (TRAC) assessments for Eastern Georges Bank cod and haddock, and Georges Bank yellowtail flounder. The Transboundary Management Guidance Committee (TMGC) met September 7-8, 2011 to develop recommended quotas for 2012. The Council will review and may approve the recommendations.
- G. Framework Adjustment 46: This framework would adjust haddock catch cap provisions for the herring fishery. The comment period for the proposed rule ended August 3, 2011. A final decision on the framework is pending.

## **II. COUNCIL ACTION**

- A. Approval of accumulation limits amendment scoping document
- B. Approval of U.S./Canada Resource Sharing Understanding quotas for 2012
- C. Approval of additional measures to be considered in FW 47

## **III. MOTIONS**

- A. That the scoping document for A17 be forwarded to the Council for their review and approval.
- B. FW 47 Measures:
  - a. To recommend that the Council adopt the recommendations of the PDT regarding the revised rebuilding strategy options for GB yellowtail flounder in FW 47
- C. The Council requests NEFSC perform updated assessments for GARM III stocks but not limited to updates if other assessment methods are available and can be applied for the setting of ABCs.
- D. That the Council approve the following 2012 quotas for the U.S./Canada resource sharing understanding: (1) EGB cod – 675 mt (U.S. share 162 mt, Canadian share 513 mt), (2) EGB haddock – 16,000 mt (U.S. share 6,880 mt, Canadian share 9,120 mt), (3) GB yellowtail flounder - 900 mt (U.S. share 441 mt, Canadian share 459 mt).

## **III. INFORMATION**

- 1. Draft accumulation limits scoping document
- 2. Council sector workshop agenda/plan (to be distributed)
- 3. Groundfish Oversight Committee meeting summary, August 11, 2011
- 4. Groundfish Plan Development Team call summary dated August 5, 2011
- 5. TRAC status reports for GB yellowtail flounder (2011/01), EGB cod (2011/02), and EGB haddock (2011/03)
- 6. TMGC Guidance Document for 2012
- 7. Groundfish catch reports
- 8. Draft Framework 47 measures
- 9. Report for Fishing Year 2010 on the Performance of the Northeast Multispecies (Groundfish) Fishery (May 2010 - April 2011) (to be distributed)
- 10. A Review of Observer and Monitoring Programs in the Northeast, West Coast, and Alaska; Environmental Defense Fund, September 2011 (to be distributed)
- 11. Correspondence