

**GB Cod Fixed Gear Sector**  
**October 12, 2011**  
**Answers to Council Questions regarding Sector Ops**

1. What ran smoothly in your sector?
  - a. An understanding of what it meant to work together as a Sector.
  - b. Business planning collaboration/communication.
  - c. Organization and development of Sector policies.
  - d. Timely access to needed ACE (transferability).
  - e. Reporting (as a result of a necessary hire of additional sector staff).
  - f. Communication with NMFS staff.
  
2. What are the top five problems your sector encountered that impeded operations from running smoothly?
  - a. Data Quality and Availability**
    - i. Inaccuracy of dealer-reported landings.
    - ii. Imputed data assumptions.
    - iii. Lengthy resolution process that was occasionally incomplete.
    - iv. Lack of process for accepting (confirmed) correct sector data in lieu of incorrect NMFS data.
  - b. Reporting Redundancy and Inefficiency**
    - i. Six overlapping data streams generated by Sector Members, five of which are/were required for every trip:
      1. PTNS
      2. VMS Declaration
      3. Trip Start Hail
      4. Trip End Hail
      5. VMS Catch Report
      6. VTR(s)
    - ii. Requirement for reports to flow from Sector Member to NMFS to Manager to NMFS.
    - iii. Broad Reporting Areas ignore specific ecosystem management.
  - c. Mid-Season NMFS Decisions Requiring Sector Database Revisions**
    - i. Changes made to reports/specs after the beginning of the fishing year.
    - ii. Additional costs (time, *money*) to update sector hardware/software.
  - d. ASM/Observer Coverage Deployed on Non-Groundfish Trips**
    - i. Broad-brush approach for “gear capable” of catching groundfish while used in a groundfish stock area.
    - ii. Unnecessary costs/burden to deploy ASMs/observers on trips in fisheries with insignificant groundfish catch.
    - iii. Shifts resources away from intent of A16 ASM program.

- e. **Lack of Discard Survivorship Data Incorporated into Codfish Discard Rates for Hook Gear**
  - i. Peer-reviewed, published results ignored.
  - ii. Lack of ownership on how to resolve this problem.
  - iii. Disincentive for hook fishing, especially for those using handgear.
- 3. What potential modifications to the FMP do you think would be helpful for sector operations?
  - a. **Elimination of the requirement that sectors pay for ASM (TOP PRIORITY).**
    - i. Sectors have not achieved a level of profitability that will allow them to fund an ASM program.
  - b. **Approval of EM as an at-sea monitoring tool.**
    - i. EM provides a cost-effective, accountable management tool that operates successfully in numerous quota-managed fisheries throughout the world.
  - c. **Clarification of “reporting” requirements to allow granting of sector exemption requests.**
    - i. Allow for exemptions/modifications to be made to reporting and monitoring requirements to reduce redundancy and inefficiency and promote cost-savings/accountability.
  - d. **Independent Third-Party Data Management.**
    - i. Permit the approval of sector contracts with independent third-party providers that handle all data management (vessel, dealer, ASM/observer reporting).