

Analysis on Groundfish Committee's Proposed Monitoring Goals

On January 18, 2012, the Groundfish Committee voted to adopt the following goals for the multispecies monitoring program:

1. Improve documentation of catch;
2. Reduce cost of monitoring;
3. Incentivize reducing discards; and
4. Provide additional data streams for stock assessments.

These goals provide guidance on program development, but could be further defined as they are difficult to translate into data elements. For example, it is not clear for what stocks catch should be documented, what programmatic elements of monitoring can incentivize reduction of discards, and what types of data will be most desirable for stock assessments. In order to clearly illustrate how these goals would be translated into specific program objectives, the following table compares them to the example goals from the PDT white paper and notes cases of uncertainty.

Category	Goal	Adopted?
Science	Determine total catch and effort of target or regulated species	1
Science	Determine total catch and effort of non-target or non-regulated species	* (Goal 1?)
Science	Biological sampling	* (Goal 4?)
Science	Environmental parameters	0
Science	Monitor for high-grading	0
Science	Determine condition of caught and released species	0
Science	Protected species monitoring or sampling	* (Goal 1?)
Science	Determining gear effectiveness	* (Goal 3?)
Science	Estimates of pollution levels	0
Science	Production estimation	* (Goal 4?)
Science	Determine discard rate	* (Goal 1 or 3?)
Science	Quantify total mortality including discards	1
Science	Gather data to determine mortality rate	* (Goal 1 or 4?)
Science	Determine catch by area	* (Goal 1 or 4?)
Science	Obtain accurate catch and effort information	1
Science	Describe fishing practices	0
Compliance	Area and gear restrictions	0
Compliance	Illegal discarding	0
Compliance	Prohibited species	0
Compliance	Size limits	0
Compliance	Validate vessel logbooks	0
Compliance	Labeling of processed fish (?)	0
Compliance	Monitor overall ACL	0
Compliance	Monitor sector catch in order to prevent overage and coordinate ACE transfer	0
Compliance	Protection of non-biological resources	0
Other	Affordability	1
Other	Improved communication with fishermen	0
Other	Improve stock assessment inputs	1
Other	Promote fairness among industry participants	0
Other	Allow for improved business planning	0

Other	Provide greater operation flexibility	0
Other	Remove need for certain management measures	0
Other	Reduce management and/or biological uncertainty	1
Other	Improve asset value of allocations	0
Other	Develop timely entry of fishery data into searchable databases	0
Other	Review monitoring program for effectiveness	0
Other	Have individual accountability	0
Other	Transparency	0
Other	Consistency	0
Other	Tailored requirements for different fleet components	0
Other	Shared accountability and/or access	0

Key:

0 = Not adopted

1 = Primary goal

* = Unsure whether anticipated by goals

The PDT recommends either clarifying the above goals, or the adoption of concrete objectives to further define what is to be included in the goals. Specifically, they recommend:

Goal 1: Improve documentation of catch

Objectives:

- Determine total catch and effort, for each sector and common pool, of target or regulated species
- Determine total catch and effort, for each sector and common pool, of non-target or non-regulated species
- Determine catch by area to ensure accurate catch accounting
- Achieve coverage level sufficient to account for behavior of entire fleet

Goal 2: Reduce cost of monitoring

Objectives:

- Streamline data management and eliminate redundancy
- Explore options for cost-sharing and deferment of cost to industry

Goal 3: Incentivize reducing discards

Objectives:

- Determine discard rate by smallest possible strata while maintaining cost-effectiveness
- Collect information by gear type to accurately calculate discard rates

Goal 4: Provide additional data streams for stock assessments

Objectives:

- Reduce management and/or biological uncertainty
- Perform biological sampling if it may be used to enhance accuracy of mortality or recruitment calculations

Goal 5: Perform periodic review of monitoring program for effectiveness

Note: These suggested goals completely remove any compliance element from the monitoring program.