

November 1, 2012

Extract of GF FW48 -
Only measures relevant to the
scallop fishery

Framework Adjustment 48 To the Northeast Multispecies FMP Draft Management Measures

*These measures are under development and will be modified
November 1, 2012*

Prepared by the
New England Fishery Management Council
In consultation with the
Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council
National Marine Fisheries Service

Initial Framework Meeting:
Final Framework Meeting:
Date Submitted:

2.0 Contents

2.1 Table of Contents

1.0	Executive Summary.....	4
2.0	Contents.....	9
2.1	Table of Contents	9
2.2	List of Tables.....	14
2.3	List of Figures.....	17
2.4	List of Appendices.....	19
2.5	List of Acronyms	20
3.0	Introduction and Background.....	25
3.1	Background	25
3.2	Purpose and Need for the Action.....	26
3.3	Brief History of the Northeast Multispecies Management Plan.....	27
3.4	National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).....	28
4.0	Alternatives Under Consideration	29
4.1	Updates to Status Determination Criteria, Formal Rebuilding Programs and Annual Catch Limits	29
4.1.1	Revised Status Determination Criteria for GOM cod, GB cod, SNE/MA yellowtail flounder, and White Hake.....	29
4.1.1.1	Option 1: No Action	29
4.1.1.2	Option 2: Revised Status Determination Criteria for GOM cod, GB cod, SNE/MA yellowtail flounder, and White Hake.....	29
4.1.2	SNE/MA Windowpane Flounder Sub-ACLs	30
4.1.2.1	Option 1: No Action	31
4.1.2.2	Option 2: Scallop Fishery SNE/MA Windowpane Flounder Sub-ACL.....	31
4.1.2.3	Option 3: Other Sub-Components Sub-ACL.....	32
4.1.3	Scallop Fishery Sub-ACL for Georges Bank GB Yellowtail Flounder.....	32
4.1.3.1	Option 1: No Action	32
4.1.3.2	Option 2: Scallop Fishery Sub-ACL for GB Yellowtail Flounder Based on Estimated Catch.....	33
4.1.3.3	Option 3: Scallop Fishery Sub-ACL for GB Yellowtail Flounder Specified Based on Catch History	33
4.1.4	U.S./Canada Resource Sharing Understanding TACs.....	34
4.1.4.1	Option 1: No Action	34
4.1.4.2	Option 2: U.S./Canada TACs TBD	34
4.1.5	Annual Catch Limit Specifications.....	36
4.1.5.1	Option 1: No Action	36
4.1.5.2	Option 2: Revised Annual Catch Limit Specifications.....	41
4.2	Commercial and Recreational Fishery Measures	50
4.2.1	Management Measures for the Recreational Fishery	50
4.2.1.1	Option 1: No Action	50
4.2.1.2	Option 2: Revised Accountability Measure for the Recreational Fishery	50
4.2.2	Groundfish Monitoring Program Revisions	51
4.2.2.1	Option 1: No Action	51

Contents
Table of Contents

4.2.2.2	Option 2: Monitoring Program Goals and Objectives.....	51
4.2.2.3	Option 3: ASM Coverage Levels	52
4.2.2.4	Option 4: Industry At- Sea Monitoring Cost Responsibility	54
4.2.2.5	Dockside Monitoring Requirements.....	54
4.2.3	Commercial Fishery Minimum Size Restrictions.....	55
4.2.3.1	Option 1: No Action	55
4.2.3.2	Option 2: Changes to Minimum Size Limits	56
4.2.3.3	Option 3: Full Retention.....	56
4.2.4	GB Yellowtail Flounder Management Measures	58
4.2.4.1	Option 1: No Action	58
4.2.4.2	Option 3: Revised Discard Strata for GB Yellowtail Flounder.....	58
4.2.5	Sector Management Provisions – Allowed Exemption Requests.....	59
4.2.5.1	Option 1: No Action	59
4.2.5.2	Option 2: Exemption from Year-Round Mortality Closures	60
4.2.6	Commercial Fishery Accountability Measures	63
4.2.6.1	Option 1: No Action	63
4.2.6.2	Option 2: Change to AM Timing for Stocks Not Allocated To Sectors.....	63
4.2.6.3	Option 3: Area – Based Accountability Measures for Atlantic Halibut, Atlantic Wolfish, and SNE/MA Winter Flounder.....	64
4.2.6.4	Option 4: Modifications to the Accountability Measures for SNE/MAB Windowpane Flounder	69
4.2.6.5	Option 5 : Revised HA and HB Permit Accountability Measures	70
4.2.7	Trawl Gear Stowage Requirements.....	70
4.2.7.1	Option 1 – No Action	70
4.2.7.2	Option 2 – Removal of Trawl Gear Stowage Requirements	71
5.0	Alternatives Considered and Rejected.....	72
5.1.1	At –Sea Monitoring Funding Mechanisms.....	72
5.1.2	Scallop Fishery Sub-ACL for GB Yellowtail Flounder Specified Based on Catch History	72
5.1.3	Modified Access to Year-Round Groundfish Closed Areas.....	73
5.1.4	GB Yellowtail Flounder Sector Fishing Area	76
5.1.5	Prohibition on Possession of GB Yellowtail Flounder.....	76
6.0	Affected Environment	77
6.1	Physical Environment/Habitat/EFH	77
6.1.1	Affected Physical Environment.....	78
6.1.1.1	Gulf of Maine	78
6.1.1.2	Georges Bank	80
6.1.1.3	Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic Bight.....	81
6.1.2	Habitat	83
6.1.3	Essential Fish Habitat (EFH).....	87
6.1.4	Gear Types and Interaction with Habitat.....	87
6.1.4.1	Gear Types.....	87
6.1.4.2	Trawl Gear.....	88
6.1.4.3	Gillnet Gear	89
6.1.4.4	Hook and Line Gear	90
6.1.4.5	Longlines	90
6.1.4.6	Gear Interaction with Habitat	90
6.1.5	Assemblages of Fish Species.....	92
6.2	Target Species	93
6.2.1	Description of the Managed Species	94

4.0 Alternatives Under Consideration

4.1 Updates to Status Determination Criteria, Formal Rebuilding Programs and Annual Catch Limits

4.1.1 Revised Status Determination Criteria for GOM cod, GB cod, SNE/MA yellowtail flounder, and White Hake

4.1.1.1 Option 1: No Action

If no action is adopted, there will be no revisions to status determination criteria for the Georges Bank and Gulf of Maine cod stocks, the Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic yellowtail flounder stock, or white hake. Please note that this option could be selected for all of these stocks, or only some of these stocks. The following criteria would apply:

Table 1 – No Action status determination criteria

Stock	Biomass Target (SSB _{MSY} or proxy)	Minimum Biomass Threshold	Maximum Fishing Mortality Threshold (F _{MSY} or proxy)
Gulf of Maine Cod	SSB _{MSY} : SSB/R (40% MSP)	½ Btarget	F40%MSP
Georges Bank Cod	SSB _{MSY} : SSB/R (40% MSP)	½ Btarget	F40%MSP
SNE/MA Yellowtail Flounder	SSB _{MSY} : SSB/R (40% MSP)	½ Btarget	F40%MSP
White Hake	SSB _{MSY} : SSB/R (40% MSP)	½ Btarget	F40%MSP

Table 2 – No action numerical estimates of SDCs

Stock	Model	Bmsy or proxy (mt)	F _{MSY} or proxy	MSY (mt)
Gulf of Maine Cod	ASAP	61,218	0.20	10,392
Georges Bank Cod	VPA	148,084	0.25	31,159
SNE/MA Yellowtail Flounder	VPA	27,400	0.25	6,100
White Hake	SCAA	56,254	0.13	5,800

4.1.1.2 Option 2: Revised Status Determination Criteria for GOM cod, GB cod, SNE/MA yellowtail flounder, and White Hake

The M-S Act requires that every fishery management plan specify “objective and measureable criteria for identifying when the fishery to which the plan applies is overfished.” Guidance on this requirement identifies two elements that must be specified: a maximum fishing mortality threshold (or reasonable proxy) and a minimum stock size threshold. The M-S Act also requires that FMPs specify the maximum sustainable yield and optimum yield for the fishery. Amendment 16 adopted status determination criteria for regulated groundfish stocks as determined by the GARM III (NEFSC 2008). Framework 45 updated status determination criteria for Atlantic pollock to reflect the results of an additional assessment conducted in 2010.

The NEFSC conducted new assessment for the GOM cod, GB cod, and SNE/MA yellowtail flounder stock in 2012. An assessment for white hake will be conducted in 2013. This action adopts the revised status determination criteria for these stocks. The review panel recommended the criteria and numerical values in Table 3 and Table 4.

This option considers a range of values since the assessments will not be completed until after the Council vote on this action

Table 3 – Option 2

Stock	Biomass Target (SSB _{MSY} or proxy)	Minimum Biomass Threshold	Maximum Fishing Mortality Threshold (F _{MSY} or proxy)
Gulf of Maine Cod	SSB _{MSY} or a proxy for SSB _{MSY}	½ B _{target}	F _{MSY} or a proxy for F _{MSY}
Georges Bank Cod	SSB _{MSY} or a proxy for SSB _{MSY}	½ B _{target}	F _{MSY} or a proxy for F _{MSY}
SNE/MA Yellowtail Flounder	SSB _{MSY} : SSB/R (40% MSP)	½ B _{target}	F40%MSP
White Hake	SSB _{MSY} or a proxy for SSB _{MSY}	½ B _{target}	F _{MSY} or a proxy for F _{MSY}

Table 4 – Option

Stock	Model	B _{msy} or proxy (mt)	F _{MSY} or proxy	MSY (mt)
Gulf of Maine Cod	ASAP	TBD	TBD	TBD
Georges Bank Cod	VPA	TBD	TBD	TBD
SNE/MA Yellowtail Flounder	ASAP	<u>2,995</u>	<u>0.316 (fully recruited ages 4-5)</u>	<u>773</u>
White Hake	SCAA	TBD	TBD	TBD

Rationale: This option would update the status determination criteria for these stocks to reflect the best available scientific information. This will provide the most appropriate mortality and biomass targets as the basis for management.

4.1.2 SNE/MA Windowpane Flounder Sub-ACLs

More than one alternative to No Action/Option 1 can be adopted from this section.

4.1.2.1 Option 1: No Action

If this option is adopted, there will not be any additional sub-ACLs adopted for SNE/MA windowpane flounder. Only the multispecies fishery will have a sub-ACL for this stock and the AMs for the multispecies fishery must be sufficient to account for overages of the overall ACL.

Rationale: This option would not distribute the ACL for SNE/MA windowpane flounder to other fisheries. This would simplify accounting, but would mean that the groundfish fishery would be responsible for any overages of the ACL.

4.1.2.2 Option 2: Scallop Fishery SNE/MA Windowpane Flounder Sub-ACL

If this option is adopted, a sub-ACL of SNE/MA windowpane flounder will be allocated to the scallop fishery. The sub-ACL will be based the 90th percentile of the scallop fishery catches (as a percent of the total) for the period calendar year 2001 through 2010. This change reduces the amount allowed for other sub-components.

The GARM III and 2012 Assessment Update for SNE/MA windowpane flounder only included catches from limited access scallop dredges and trawls. This value is 32 percent (rounded up from 31.9 pct of catches as shown in Table 5). Prior to 2004, there was limited observer coverage of General Category scallop dredge and trawl trips. From 2004 to 2011, the average General Category catch of this stock was 22 mt. In order to determine the scallop fishery sub-ACL, 22 mt was added to each year 2001-2010 and the scallop fishery share computed. The combined total is 36 percent.

Specific scallop fishery AMs for this sub-ACL would be adopted in a future scallop management action during 2013. The AMs will be implemented in time to be effective in 2014. If there is an overage in the scallop fishery sub-ACL that is allocated in 2013, any overage of the 2013 sub-ACL will be subject to the AMs that are adopted. Consistent with a policy adopted in FW 47 for other stocks, any scallop fishery AMs for this sub-ACL will only be triggered if the overall ACL is exceeded and the scallop fishery sub-ACL is exceeded.

The Scallop FMP will develop AMs for this sub-ACL.

Table 5 – Limited access scallop fishery discards of SNE/MAB windowpane flounder, 2001-2010. Landings were less than 1 metric ton in all years.

Calendar Year	Catch	Limited Access Scallop Dredge/Trawl Discards	Limited Access Scallop Fishery Catches as Percent of Total	General Category (Trawl/Dredge) Scallop Fishery Catch Assumption	Total Scallop Fishery Catch As Percent of Total
2001	184	7	3.8%	22	14.1%
2002	339	50	14.7%	22	19.9%

Alternatives Under Consideration

Updates to Status Determination Criteria, Formal Rebuilding Programs and Annual Catch Limits

2003	522	73	14.0%	22	17.5%
2004	400	44	11.0%	22	15.6%
2005	330	103	31.2%	22	35.5%
2006	431	63	14.6%	22	18.8%
2007	349	41	11.7%	22	17.0%
2008	321	53	16.5%	22	21.9%
2009	463	55	11.9%	22	15.9%
2010	490	187	38.2%	22	40.8%
		Average, 2001-2010	16.8%		21.7%
		90th percentile, 2001-2010	31.9%		36.0%

Rationale: The scallop fishery catches of this stock are large enough that the effectiveness of the AM system could be undermined if those catches are not constrained and subject to an AM. This measure would create a sub-ACL, based on recent scallop fishery catches. Because of the lack of General Category observer coverage from 2001 to 2003, an assumption is used to estimate those catches based on catches since 2004. AMs for the scallop fishery will be adopted in a future action and will be applicable to any overage that occurs in 2013.

4.1.2.3 Option 3: Other Sub-Components Sub-ACL

The portion of this stock allocated to other sub-components in federal waters will be treated as a sub-ACL and will be renamed “other fisheries sub-ACL.”

Rationale: This is an administrative measure which makes it possible to adopt an AM that applies to catches by other fisheries. That AM is proposed in section 4.2.6.4.

4.1.3 Scallop Fishery Sub-ACL for Georges Bank GB Yellowtail Flounder

4.1.3.1 Option 1: No Action

If this option is adopted, there will not be any changes to how the scallop fishery sub-ACL for GB yellowtail flounder is determined. The amount will be determined when groundfish specifications are set and will consider such information as is available and appropriate.

Rationale: Allocations of GB yellowtail flounder to the scallop fishery would be made each time the scallop management program is established in a framework action. No specific policy would be adopted on the amount that is allocated to each fishery, which would allow the most flexibility in considering the management of each fishery when setting the allocations.

4.1.3.2 Option 2: Scallop Fishery Sub-ACL for GB Yellowtail Flounder Based on Estimated Catch

If this option is adopted, on an annual basis, the Scallop and Groundfish Plan Development Teams will estimate the amount of GB yellowtail flounder that the scallop fishery is expected to catch in the following year while harvesting the available scallop yield. The sub-ABC of GB yellowtail flounder would be 90 percent of this estimate, and the sub-ACL would be specified by adjusting this sub-ABC for management uncertainty. These values would be provided to the Council at the September Council meeting. The allocation of GB yellowtail flounder to the scallop fishery would be changed using procedures that are consistent with the APA without the need for a Council vote. Should the Council wish to revise this allocation, a change must be adopted through a specification change or other management action.

Rationale: This measure would adopt a standard approach for the amount of GB yellowtail flounder that is allocated to the scallop fishery. As new data is collected on bycatch rates and scallop and GB yellowtail flounder stock size, this measure would create a process to adjust the allocation so the best estimate is used without requiring a specific Council action.

4.1.3.3 Option 3: Scallop Fishery Sub-ACL for GB Yellowtail Flounder Specified Based on Catch History

If this option is adopted, the scallop fishery sub-ACL for GB yellowtail flounder would be specified as a fixed percentage of the U.S. ABC based on recent catch history. The Council would select a percentage for this action that would apply to all future allocations. Recent catch history is shown in Table 6. The percentage would be selected from a range of 8-16 percent and once defined by FW 48 this percentage would be used unless changed in a future action.

Rationale: This measure would adopt an allocation based on recent catch history. This simplifies determination of the GB yellowtail flounder allocation for this fishery. It also gives the scallop fishery a fixed percentage for an allocation. This will facilitate that fishery developing ways to avoid yellowtail flounder while maximizing its catch of scallops.

Table 6 – Scallop dredge discards of GB yellowtail flounder, 1997-2011. Based on TRAC 2012 assessment of GB yellowtail flounder.

Calendar Year	Landings (metric tons)	Discards (metric tons)	Catch (metric tons)	Scallop Discards (metric tons)	Scallop Landings (metric tons)	Scallop Discards As Pct of Catch
2002	2,476	53	2,529	29	0.2	1.2%
2003	3,236	410	3,646	293	0.1	8.0%
2004	5,837	460	6,297	81	3.0	1.3%
2005	3,161	414	3,575	186	8.1	5.4%
2006	1,196	384	1,580	251	2.6	16.1%
2007	1,058	493	1,551	120	1.5	7.8%
2008	937	409	1,346	128	0.3	9.5%
2009	959	759	1,718	170	1.9	10.0%
2010	654	289	943	8	0.2	0.9%
2011	904	192	1,096	104	8.6	10.3%
				Average, 2002 - 2011		7.1%
				Average, 2007-2011		7.7%

4.1.4 U.S./Canada Resource Sharing Understanding TACs

Comment [TAN1]: Document has been restructured to incorporate this section into the ABC/ACL section.

4.1.4.1 Option 1: No Action

If no action is taken on specifications, the recommendations of the TMGC would not be implemented and there would be no TAC for EGB cod, haddock, or GB yellowtail flounder in the U.S./Canada area for FY 2013. Vessels would still be constrained by the other regulations of the FMP, including days at sea (DAS), sector regulations, and closed areas.

Rationale: This option would not adopt the recommendations of the TMGC for US/CA stocks.

4.1.4.2 Option 2: U.S./Canada TACs – TBD

This alternative would specify TACs for the U.S./Canada Management Area for FY 2013 as indicated in Table 7 below. These TACs would be in effect for the entire fishing year, unless NMFS determines that FY 2012 catch of GB cod, haddock, or yellowtail flounder from the U.S./Canada Management Area exceeded the pertinent 2012 TAC. If the TAC in a particular fishing year is exceeded, the Understanding and the regulations require that the TAC for the subsequent fishing year is reduced by the amount of the overage. In order to minimize any

disruption to the fishing industry, NMFS would attempt to make any necessary TAC adjustment in the first quarter of the fishing year.

Table 7—Proposed FY 2012 U.S./Canada TACs (mt) and Percentage Shares

TAC	Eastern GB Cod	Eastern GB Haddock	GB Yellowtail Flounder
Total Shared TAC	600 mt	10,400 mt	500/1150 mt
U.S. TAC	96 mt	3,952 mt	215 / 495
Canada TAC	504 mt	6,448 mt	285/656

A comparison of the proposed FY 2012 U.S. TACs and the FY 2011 U.S. TACs is shown in Table 8. Changes to the U.S. TACs reflect changes to the percentage shares, stock status, and the TMGC recommendations.

Table 8—Comparison of the Proposed FY 2012 U.S. TACs and the FY 2011 U.S. TACs (mt)

Stock	U.S. TAC		Percent Change
	FY 2013	FY 2012	
Eastern GB cod			
Eastern GB haddock			
GB yellowtail			

Rationale: The U.S. and Canada coordinate management of three stocks that overlap the boundary between the two countries on Georges Bank. Agreement on the amount to be caught is reached each year by the Transboundary Management Guidance Committee (TMGC). This measure would adopt the recommendations of the TMGC. It makes sure that catches are consistent with the most recent assessments of those stocks.

4.1.5 Annual Catch Limit Specifications

4.1.5.1 Option 1: No Action

If the No Action option is selected, the specifications for FY 2013-FY 2014 would remain as adopted by FW 47. For many stocks there would not be any specifications for these years. The FY 2013- FY 2014 ABCs would be as specified in Table 9.

If this option is selected, there would be no specific allocations made for the US/CA Resource Sharing Understanding quotas for FY 2013. These quotas are specified annually.

If this option is selected, there would be no specific allocations to the scallop fishery. While these allocations are typically made for a multi-year period, none have been specified beyond FY 2012.

Rationale:

Table 9 – No Action/Option 1 Northeast Multispecies OFLs, ABCs, ACLs, and other ACL sub-components for FY 2012 (metric tons, live weight). Values are rounded to the nearest metric ton.

(1) Grayed out values may be adjusted as a result of future recommendations of the TMGC. Values shown for GB haddock and cod are preliminary estimates subject to change.

Stock	Year	OFL	U.S. ABC	State Waters Sub-component	Other Sub-Components	Scallops	Groundfish Sub-ACL	Comm Groundfish Sub-ACL	Rec Groundfish Sub-ACL	Preliminary Sectors Sub-ACL	Preliminary Non_Sector Groundfish Sub-ACL	MWT Sub_ACL	Total ACL
GB Cod ⁽¹⁾	2013												
	2014												
	2015												
GOM Cod	2013												
	2014												
	2015												
GB Haddock ⁽¹⁾	2013												
	2014												
	2015												
GOM Haddock	2013												
	2014												
	2015												
GB Yellowtail Flounder ⁽¹⁾	2013												
	2014												
	2015												
SNE/MA Yellowtail Flounder	2013												
	2014												
	2015												

Alternatives Under Consideration
 Updates to Status Determination Criteria, Formal Rebuilding Programs and Annual Catch Limits

Stock	Year	OFL	U.S. ABC	State Waters Sub-component	Other Sub-Components	Scallops	Groundfish Sub-ACL	Comm Groundfish Sub-ACL	Rec Groundfish Sub-ACL	Preliminary Sectors Sub-ACL	Preliminary Non_Sector Groundfish Sub-ACL	MWT Sub_ACL	Total ACL
CC/GOM Yellowtail Flounder	2013												
	2014												
	2015												
Plaice	2013												
	2014												
	2015												
Witch Flounder	2013												
	2014												
	2015												
GB Winter Flounder	2013	4,819	3,750	0	188	0	3,384		0	3,361	23	0	3,572
	2014	4,626	3,598	0	180	0	3,247		0	3,225	22	0	3,427
	2015												
GOM Winter Flounder	2013	1,458	1,078	272	54	0	715		0	679	36	0	1,040
	2014	1,458	1,078	272	54	0	715		0	679	36	0	1,040
	2015												
SNE/MA Winter Flounder	2013	2,637	697	195	139	0	337		0	0	337	0	672
	2014	3,471	912	255	182	0	441		0	0	441	0	879
	2015												
Redfish	2013	12,036	9,224	92	369	0	8,325		0	8,285	40	0	8,786
	2014												
	2015												

Alternatives Under Consideration
 Updates to Status Determination Criteria, Formal Rebuilding Programs and Annual Catch Limits

Stock	Year	OFL	U.S. ABC	State Waters Sub-component	Other Sub-Components	Scallops	Groundfish Sub-ACL	Comm Groundfish Sub-ACL	Rec Groundfish Sub-ACL	Preliminary Sectors Sub-ACL	Preliminary Non_Sector Groundfish Sub-ACL	MWT Sub_ACL	Total ACL
White Hake	2013												
	2014												
	2015												
Pollock	2012	19,887	15,400	754	1,370	0	12,612		0	12,518	94	0	14,736
	2013	20,060	15,600	756	1,380	0	12,791		0	12,695	95	0	14,927
	2014	20,554	16,000	760	1,400	0	13,148		0	13,050	98	0	15,308
N. Window-pane Flounder	2013												
	2014												
	2015												
S. Window-pane Flounder	2013												
	2014												
	2015												
Ocean Pout	2013												
	2014												
	2015												
Atlantic Halibut	2013												
	2014												
	2015												
Atlantic Wolffish	2013												
	2014												
	2015												

Table 10 – Option 1 preliminary incidental catch TACs for Special Management Programs (metric tons, live weight). These values may change as a result of changes in sector membership.

Stock	Cat B (regular) DAS Program			CAI Hook Gear Haddock SAP			EUS/CA Haddock SAP		
	2013	2014	2015	2013	2014	2015	2013	2014	2015
GB cod									
GOM cod									
GB Yellowtail									
CC/GOM yellowtail									
SNE/MA Yellowtail									
Plaice									
Witch Flounder									
White Hake									
SNE/MA Winter Flounder									
GB Winter Flounder									
Pollock									

Table 11 – Proposed CAI Hook Gear Haddock SAP TACs, FY 2013-2014

Year	Exploitable Biomass (thousand mt)	WGB Exploitable Biomass	B(year)/B2004	TAC (mt, live weight)
2013- 2014				

4.1.5.2 Option 2: Revised Annual Catch Limit Specifications

If Option 2 is selected, the specifications for FY 2013 through FY 2015 would be as specified in Table 16.

The specifications in Table 16 reflect two other decisions that influence the values in the table. The first is the specification of quotas for EGB cod, EGB haddock, and GB yellowtail flounder for the U.S./Canada Resource Sharing area. The second is the identification of sub-ACLs for the scallop fishery for three stocks: GB yellowtail flounder, SNE/MA yellowtail flounder, and SNE/MAB windowpane flounder.

Benchmark assessments are being completed for GB cod and GOM cod. Because the results of these assessments will not be available until January 2013, the Council is considering a range of ABCs for these two stocks for FY 2013. Table 16 reflects the range and shows a high and low value. When the assessment is completed, the Council's SSC will recommend ABCs for these two stocks, the Council will select an ABC, and NMFS will implement the ABC for FY 2013 through procedures consistent with the APA.

U.S./Canada TACs

This alternative would specify TACs for the U.S./Canada Management Area for FY 2013 as indicated in Table 12 below. These TACs would be in effect for the entire fishing year, unless NMFS determines that FY 2012 catch of GB cod, haddock, or yellowtail flounder from the U.S./Canada Management Area exceeded the pertinent 2012 TAC. If the TAC in a particular fishing year is exceeded, the Understanding and the regulations require that the TAC for the subsequent fishing year is reduced by the amount of the overage. In order to minimize any disruption to the fishing industry, NMFS would attempt to make any necessary TAC adjustment in the first quarter of the fishing year.

Two alternatives are being considered for GB yellowtail flounder. The TMGC recommended a 500 mt total quota for 2013. The Council asked to see an analysis of an 1150 mt quota as well. This second value is based on an SSC decision that this could be a backstop ABC if measures are adopted to allow only a bycatch fishery.

A comparison of the proposed FY 2012 U.S. TACs and the FY 2011 U.S. TACs is shown in Table 13. Changes to the U.S. TACs reflect changes to the percentage shares, stock status, and the TMGC recommendations.

Table 12 - Proposed FY 2013 U.S./Canada TACs (mt) and Country Shares

TAC	Eastern GB Cod	Eastern GB Haddock	GB Yellowtail Flounder
Total Shared TAC	600 mt	10,400 mt	500/1150 mt
U.S. TAC	96 mt	3,952 mt	215 / 495
Canada TAC	504 mt	6,448 mt	285/656

Table 13 - Comparison of the Proposed FY 2012 U.S. TACs and the FY 2012 U.S. TACs (mt)

Stock	U.S. TAC		Percent Change
	FY 2013	FY 2012	
Eastern GB cod	96 mt	162 mt	-41%
Eastern GB haddock	3,952 mt	6,880	-43%
GB yellowtail	215 mt	564 mt	-62%
	495 mt		-12%

Scallop Fishery Sub-ACLs

This option would specify scallop fishery sub-ACLs for GB yellowtail flounder, SNE/MA yellowtail flounder, and possibly SNE/MAB windowpane flounder.

Sub-ACLs for the two yellowtail flounder stocks were adopted in Amendment 16. This action considers three alternatives for specifying how the sub-ACL for GB yellowtail flounder is calculated (see section 4.1.3). The possible values based on the alternatives are shown below. The two most likely alternatives that will be selected are Alternatives 2 and 4. For those alternatives that are based on the expected scallop fishery catch of yellowtail flounder, the amount that would be allocated depends on both the scallop management alternative selected and the overall GB yellowtail flounder ABC. These values are shown in Table 14. The values shown are for the sub-ABC, which is then reduced for management uncertainty.

For SNE/MA yellowtail flounder, the Council will select an allocation for the scallop fishery. For reference, the expected catches for the various scallop management alternatives are shown in Table 15. In FY 2010 – FY 2012, the sub-ACL for this stock was based on 90 percent of the estimated scallop fishery catch, but the Council is not bound by this decision. The 90 percent value is shown for illustration only.

For SNE/MA windowpane flounder this action may establish a scallop fishery sub-ACL (see section 4.1.2). If this sub-ACL is adopted, the scallop fishery would be allocated 36 percent of the ABC. These values are shown in Table 16.

Rationale: This measure would adopt new specifications for groundfish stocks that are consistent with the most recent assessment information. For most stocks, only one alternative to No Action is shown. This is because these catches represent the best scientific information, as determined by the Council’s Science and Statistical Committee, and the M-S Act requires that catches not be set higher than these levels.

The U.S. and Canada coordinate management of three stocks that overlap the boundary between the two countries on Georges Bank. Agreement on the amount to be caught is reached each year

Alternatives Under Consideration

Updates to Status Determination Criteria, Formal Rebuilding Programs and Annual Catch Limits

by the Transboundary Management Guidance Committee (TMGC). This measure would adopt the recommendations of the TMGC. It makes sure that catches are consistent with the most recent assessments of those stocks.

The specification of sub-ACLs for the scallop fishery will help ensure that bycatches of GB and SNE/MA yellowtail flounder, and SNE/MA windowpane flounder, are controlled and do not lead to overfishing.

Table 14 – Estimated scallop fishery catch of GB yellowtail flounder, 90 percent of that estimate, and 8 and 16 percent of the GB yellowtail flounder ABC. Italicized values exceed the U.S. share under an ABC of 500 mt; greyed out values exceed the U.S. share with an ABC of 1,150 mt. Note scallop sub-ABCs are reduced to account for management uncertainty.

	Scallop FW 24 Management Alternative									
	No Action		Alt1		Alt2		Alt3		Alt4	
	2013	2014	2013	2014	2013	2014	2013	2014	2013	2014
<i>Expected scallop fishery catch of GB yellowtail flounder</i>										
LOW	105	165	77	70	64	109	70	90	35	52
MEDIUM	222	318	175	202	134	210	145	173	73	97
HIGH	400	<i>556</i>	319	385	240	364	260	299	129	166
<i>(Section 4.1.3.2) Scallop Sub-ABC at 90 percent of expected scallop fishery catch of GB yellowtail flounder</i>										
LOW	94.5	148.5	69.3	63	57.6	98.1	63	81	31.5	46.8
MEDIUM	199.8	286.2	157.5	181.8	120.6	189	130.5	155.7	65.7	87.3
HIGH	360	<i>500.4</i>	287.1	346.5	216	327.6	234	269.1	116.1	149.4
<i>(Section 4.1.3.3) Scallop Sub-ABC at a Fixed Percentage Allocation of GB YTF ABC</i>										
8 percent	17.2									
16 percent	34.4									

Table 15 – Estimated scallop fishery catch of SNE/MA yellowtail flounder and scallop fishery sub-ABC. Note these sub-ABCs are reduced to account for management uncertainty.

	Scallop FW 24 Management Alternative														
	No Action			Alt 1			Alt 2			Alt 3			Alt 4		
	2013	2014	2015	2013	2014	2015	2013	2014	2015	2013	2014	2015	2013	2014	2015
	<i>Estimated scallop fishery catches of SNE/MA yellowtail flounder</i>														
Low	34	35	40	23	33	30	27	33	31	23	33	32	27	33	30
Medium	39	39	45	28	38	35	33	38	36	28	38	37	32	39	36
High	43	43	49	34	43	41	38	43	41	34	43	42	38	44	41
	<i>Scallop Sub-ABC at 90 percent of estimated catches shown above</i>														
Low	30.6	31.5	36.0	20.7	29.7	27.0	24.3	29.7	27.9	20.7	29.7	28.8	24.3	29.7	27.0
Medium	35.1	35.1	40.5	25.2	34.2	31.5	29.7	34.2	32.4	25.2	34.2	33.3	28.8	35.1	32.4
High	38.7	38.7	44.1	30.6	38.7	36.9	34.2	38.7	36.9	30.6	38.7	37.8	34.2	39.6	36.9

Table 16 – Option 2 Northeast Multispecies OFLs, ABCs, ACLs, and other ACL sub-components for FY 2013 – FY 2015 (metric tons, live weight). All ACL values are preliminary and may change after FY 2012 catches are evaluated. Values are rounded to the nearest metric ton. Sector shares based on 2012 PSCs. UPDATED 11/01/2012.

- (1) Grayed out values will be adjusted as a result of future recommendations of the TMGC.
 (2) Assumes scallop sub-ABC of 119 mt at both ABC values: the average of 90 percent of medium scallop fishery catch estimates
 (3) Assumes scallop sub-ABC is 8 pct for both ABC values. 16 percent would be double, if selected, and groundfish sub-ACL would be reduced.

Stock	Year	OFL	U.S. ABC	State Waters Sub-component	Other Sub-Components	Scallops	Groundfish Sub-ACL	Comm Groundfish Sub-ACL	Rec Groundfish Sub-ACL	Preliminary Sectors Sub-ACL	Preliminary Non_Sector Groundfish Sub-ACL	MWT Sub-ACL	Total ACL
GB Cod ⁽¹⁾	2013		171	2	7	0	154		0	152	3	0	163
	2013		3,496	35	140	0	3,155		0	3,099	56	0	3,330
	2014												
GOM Cod	2013		750	50	25	0		402	235	394	8	0	711
	2013		4,000	265	133	0		2,141.5	1,254	2,100.9	40.6	0	3,793
	2014												
GB Haddock ⁽¹⁾	2013	46,185	29,335	293	1,173	0	26,196		0	26,124	72	273	27,936
	2014	46,268	35,699	357	1,428	0	31,879		0	31,792	87	332	33,996
	2015	56,293	43,606	436	1,744	0	38,940		0	38,833	107	406	41,526
GOM Haddock	2013	371	290	4	6	0		187	74	186	1	3	274
	2014	440	341	5	7	0		220	87	218	2	3	323
	2015	561	435	6	9	0		280	111	279	2	4	412
GB Yellowtail Flounder ⁽¹⁾ ⁽²⁾	2013		215	0	38.7	115.4	55.6		0	54.9	0.6	0	209.7
	2013		495	0	89.0	115.4	277.9		0.0	274.7	3.2	0.0	482.3
	2014												
GB Yellowtail Flounder ⁽³⁾	2013		215	0	38.7	16.7	154.3		0	152.6	1.8	0.0	209.7
	2013		495	0	89.0	38.4	355.0		0.0	350.9	4.1	0.0	482.3
	2014		0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0		0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
SNE/MA Yellowtail Flounder	2013	1,021	700	7	28	30	601		0	480	121	0	666
	2014	1,042	700	7	28	30	601		0	480	121	0	666
	2015	1,056	700	7	28	30	601		0	480	121	0	666

Alternatives Under Consideration
 Updates to Status Determination Criteria, Formal Rebuilding Programs and Annual Catch Limits

Stock	Year	OFL	U.S. ABC	State Waters Sub-component	Other Sub-Components	Scallops	Groundfish Sub-ACL	Comm Groundfish Sub-ACL	Rec Groundfish Sub-ACL	Preliminary Sectors Sub-ACL	Preliminary Non_Sector Groundfish Sub-ACL	MWT Sub-ACL	Total ACL
CC/GOM Yellowtail Flounder	2013	713	548	33	11	0	479		0	467	12	0	523
	2014	936	548	33	11	0	479		0	467	12	0	523
	2015	1,194	548	33	11	0	479		0	467	12	0	523
Plaice	2013	2,035	1,557	31	31	0	1,420		0	1,396	24	0	1,482
	2014	1,981	1,515	30	30	0	1,382		0	1,359	23	0	1,442
	2015	2,021	1,544	31	31	0	1,408		0	1,385	24	0	1,470
Witch Flounder	2013	1,196	783	23	117	0	610		0	601	9	0	751
	2014	1,512	783	23	117	0	610		0	601	9	0	751
	2015	1,846	783	23	117	0	610		0	601	9	0	751
GB Winter Flounder	2013	4,819	3,750	0	113	0	3,456		0	3,436	20	0	3,568
	2014	4,626	3,598	0	108	0	3,316		0	3,296	19	0	3,423
	2015												
GOM Winter Flounder	2013	1,458	1,078	272	54	0	714.7		0	690.3	24.4	0	1,040
	2014	1,458	1,078	272	54	0	714.7		0	690.3	24.4	0	1,040
	2015												
SNE/MA Winter Flounder	2013	2,637	697	195	139	0	337		0	0	337	0	672
	2014	3,471	912	255	182	0	441		0	0	441	0	879
	2015												
Redfish	2013	15,468	10,995	110	220	0	10,132		0	10,091	41	0	10,462
	2014	16,130	11,465	115	229	0	10,565		0	10,522	43	0	10,909
	2015	16,845	11,974	120	239	0	11,034		0	10,989	45	0	11,393

Alternatives Under Consideration
 Updates to Status Determination Criteria, Formal Rebuilding Programs and Annual Catch Limits

Stock	Year	OFL	U.S. ABC	State Waters Sub-component	Other Sub-Components	Scallops	Groundfish Sub-ACL	Comm Groundfish Sub-ACL	Rec Groundfish Sub-ACL	Preliminary Sectors Sub-ACL	Preliminary Non_Sector Groundfish Sub-ACL	MWT Sub-ACL	Total ACL
White Hake	2013	5,306	3,638	36	73	0	3,352		0	3,326	27	0	3,462
	2014		0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0
	2015		0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0
Pollock	2013	20,060	15,600	936	1,092	0	12,893		0	12,810	84	0	14,921
	2014	20,554	16,000	960	1,120	0	13,224		0	13,138	86	0	15,304
	2015												
N. Window-pane Flounder	2013	202	151	2	44	0	98		0	0	98	0	144
	2014	202	151	2	44	0	98		0	0	98	0	144
	2015	202	151	2	44	0	98		0	0	98	0	144
S. Window-pane Flounder	2013	730	548	55	384	0	102		0	0	102	0	540
	2014	730	548	55	384	0	102		0	0	102	0	540
	2015	730	548	55	384	0	102		0	0	102	0	540
S. Window-pane Flounder Scallop Sub-ACL	2013	730	548	55	186	183	102		0	0	102	0	527
	2014	730	548	55	186	183	102		0	0	102	0	527
	2015	730	548	55	186	183	102		0	0	102	0	527
Ocean Pout	2013	313	235	2	21	0	197		0	0	197	0	220
	2014	313	235	2	21	0	197		0	0	197	0	220
	2015	313	235	2	21	0	197		0	0	197	0	220
Atlantic Halibut	2013	164	99	40	5	0	52		0	0	52	0	96
	2014	180	109	44	5	0	57		0	0	57	0	106
	2015	198	119	48	6	0	62		0	0	62	0	116
Atlantic Wolffish	2013	94	70	1	3	0	62		0	0	62	0	65
	2014	94	70	1	3	0	62		0	0	62	0	65
	2015	94	70	1	3	0	62		0	0	62	0	65

Table 17 – Option 2 preliminary incidental catch TACs for Special Management Programs (metric tons, live weight). These values may change as a result of changes in sector membership.

Stock	Cat B (regular) DAS Program			CAI Hook Gear Haddock SAP			EUS/CA Haddock SAP		
	2013	2014	2015	2013	2014	2015	2013	2014	2015
GB cod	0.0/0.6			0.0/0.2			0.0/0.4		
GOM cod	0.1/0.4								
GB Yellowtail	0.0						0.0		
CC/GOM yellowtail	0.1	0.1	0.1						
SNE/MA Yellowtail	1.2	1.2	1.2						
Plaice	1.2	1.2	1.2						
Witch Flounder	0.5	0.5	0.5						
White Hake	0.5								
SNE/MA Winter Flounder	0.4	0.4							
GB Winter Flounder	0.2	0.2					0.2	0.2	

Table 18 – Proposed CAI Hook Gear Haddock SAP TACs, FY 2010- 2012

Year	Exploitable Biomass (thousand mt)	WGB Exploitable Biomass	B(year)/B2004	TAC (mt, live weight)
2013				
2014				
2015				