



New England Fishery Management Council

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John Pappalardo, *Chairman* | Paul J. Howard, *Executive Director*

**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** September 16, 2010  
**TO:** Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC)  
**FROM:** Paul J. Howard, Executive Director  
**SUBJECT:** Terms of Reference - Development of ABC Recommendations to Council; Review Northeast Multispecies Acceptable Biological Catches (Pollock, Georges Bank Yellowtail Flounder, Southern Windowpane Flounder, Northern Windowpane Flounder, Ocean Pout and Gulf of Maine Winter Flounder)

**Pollock**

Pollock was assessed using the AIM assessment model in GARM III (2008). Survey indices were updated in 2008 and the stock was determined to be overfished and subject to overfishing. In 2009, the SSC established the ABC for fishing years 2010 – 2012 by applying the proxy for 75 percent of FMSY to the most recent estimate of stock size (determined as the centered three-year moving average of the NMFS fall trawl survey).

The stock was assessed again in June, 2010 using an age-structured production model (ASAP). Stock status was revised to not overfished and overfishing not occurring (SAW-50, NEFSC 2010). NMFS revised the ABC for FY 2010 through an emergency action. Based on the results of the new assessment, status determination criteria need to be revised and ABCs for FY 2011 through FY 2014<sup>1</sup> need to be recommended to the Council.

Terms of Reference for the setting of pollock status determination criteria and ABCs for FY 2011 – 2014:

1. Consider the assessment results of SAW-50 and provide the Council FY 2011 – 2014 ABC recommendations consistent with the interim control rules adopted in Amendment 16 and the following levels of risk:
  - a. An ABC that has approximately a 40 percent probability of overfishing (i.e. less than a median risk of overfishing) in any single year for FY 2011 – FY 2014.
  - b. An ABC that has approximately a 10 percent probability of overfishing in any single year for FY 2011 – FY 2014.
  - c. Low risk that the stock will be overfished during FY 2011 – FY 2014.

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<sup>1</sup> By setting ABCs for FY 2011 through 2014 at this meeting, the SSC will not need to consider Pollock ABCs in 2011 when the ABCs for other multispecies stocks are established for FY 2012 – 2014.

### **Gulf of Maine Winter Flounder**

GARM III attempted to assess GOM winter flounder but none of the alternative assessment models was accepted by the review panel. Panelists concluded that the "...it is highly likely that biomass is below BMSY, and that there is a substantial probability that it is below ½ BMSY." The SSC set the FY 2010 – FY 2012 ABC as 75 percent of the three-year average catch.

In June 2010, the Council asked the SSC to examine any recent fisheries independent and fisheries dependent data collected since GARM III for GOM winter flounder and to evaluate whether this new information would affect their current ABC recommendation for GOM winter flounder.

A benchmark assessment is scheduled for spring 2011.

Terms of Reference for the review of the GOM winter flounder ABCs FY 2011 – 2012:

1. Review GOM winter flounder catches for 2009 and additional survey information collected since GARM III and evaluate whether this information affects the current ABC recommendation. If so, provide an updated ABC recommendation for FY 2011 – 2012.

### **Georges Bank Yellowtail Flounder**

Georges Bank yellowtail flounder was assessed by the Trans-Boundary Resource Assessment Committee (TRAC) in July, 2010. The Council is considering a change in the rebuilding strategy for this stock. Based on the new assessment and the rebuilding alternatives under consideration, the SSC is asked to review the ABC for this stock and recommend new ABCs consistent with the assessment and the fishing mortality that is consistent with the rebuilding strategies under consideration.

This stock is assessed annually by the TRAC and the SSC will be asked to reconsider the SSC FY 2012 ABC in 2011.

Terms of Reference for the setting of GB yellowtail flounder ABCs for FY 2011 – 2012:

1. Review the 2010 assessment of GB yellowtail flounder (TRAC 2010) and recommend ABCs for the fishing mortality that is consistent with the following rebuilding strategies under Council consideration:
  - a. Rebuild by 2014 with a 75 percent probability of success (this is current approved rebuilding strategy and must be considered as the No Action alternative).
  - b. Rebuild by 2016 with a 50 percent probability of success.
  - c. Rebuild by 2016 with a 60 percent probability of success.
  - d. Rebuild by 2016 with a 75 percent probability of success.

### **Index-Based Stocks**

Ocean pout and the two windowpane flounder stocks are assessed using a trawl survey index. In 2009 the SSC recommended ABCs for FY 2010 – FY 2012 based on 75 percent of the FMSY proxy applied to the most recent estimate of stock size (a three-year moving average) and agreed to review these ABCs as new survey information became available.

Terms of Reference for the setting of ABCs for index-based stocks for FY 2011 – 2012:

1. Review additional survey information, if available, and recommend revised FY 2011-2012 ABCs for ocean pout, as well as northern and southern windowpane flounder, as appropriate.

References:

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1a). Groundfish PDT memo dated August 6, 2010 (with attachments): Multispecies ABCs for 2011-2014

2). Northeast Fisheries Science Center. 2010. 50<sup>th</sup> Northeast Regional Stock Assessment Workshop (50<sup>th</sup> SAW): Assessment Summary Report. NEFSC Ref. Do. 10-09. Available at: <http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/publications/crd/crd1009/index.html>

3). NEFSC 2010. 50<sup>th</sup> Northeast Regional Stock Assessment Workshop: (50<sup>th</sup> SAW) Assessment Report. When published, will be available at: <http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/nefsc/saw/>.

4). O'Boyle, Robert. 2010. SARC 50 Panel Summary Report. Available at: <http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/nefsc/saw/SAW%2050/Reviewer%20Reports/SARC-50%20Panel%20Summary%20Report-2010-FINAL.pdf>

5). Bell, Michael C. 2010. 50<sup>th</sup> Northeast Regional Stock Assessment Workshop (50<sup>th</sup> SAW): reviewer comments. Available at: [http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/nefsc/saw/SAW%2050/Reviewer%20Reports/SARC-50%20Bell%20Reviewer%20Report-2010\\_07\\_08.pdf](http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/nefsc/saw/SAW%2050/Reviewer%20Reports/SARC-50%20Bell%20Reviewer%20Report-2010_07_08.pdf)

6). Sullivan, Patrick J. 2010. 50<sup>th</sup> Northeast Regional Stock Assessment Workshop (50<sup>th</sup> SAW): reviewer comments. Available at: [http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/nefsc/saw/SAW%2050/Reviewer%20Reports/SARC-50%20Sullivan%20Reviewer%20Report-2010\\_07\\_02.pdf](http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/nefsc/saw/SAW%2050/Reviewer%20Reports/SARC-50%20Sullivan%20Reviewer%20Report-2010_07_02.pdf)

7). Trzcinski, M. Kurtis. 2010. 50<sup>th</sup> Northeast Regional Stock Assessment Workshop (50<sup>th</sup> SAW): reviewer comments. Available at: [http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/nefsc/saw/SAW%2050/Reviewer%20Reports/SARC-50%20Trzcinski%20Reviewer%20Report-2010\\_07\\_08.pdf](http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/nefsc/saw/SAW%2050/Reviewer%20Reports/SARC-50%20Trzcinski%20Reviewer%20Report-2010_07_08.pdf)

8). Wheeler, John P. 50<sup>th</sup> Northeast Regional Stock Assessment Workshop (50<sup>th</sup> SAW): reviewer comments. Available at: [http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/nefsc/saw/SAW%2050/Reviewer%20Reports/SARC-50%20Wheeler%20Reviewer%20Report-2010\\_07\\_08.pdf](http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/nefsc/saw/SAW%2050/Reviewer%20Reports/SARC-50%20Wheeler%20Reviewer%20Report-2010_07_08.pdf)

9). Northeast Fisheries Science Center. 2008. Report of the 3rd Groundfish Assessment Review Meeting (GARM III): I. Gulf of Maine Winter Flounder. NEFSC Ref. Doc. 08-16.

10). Transboundary Resource Assessment Committee. 2010. Georges Bank Yellowtail Flounder: TRAC Status Report 2010/03.

11). Assessment of GB Yellowtail Flounder for 2010. TRAC Ref. Doc. 2010/06. Available at: [http://www2.mar.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/science/trac/documents/TRD\\_2010\\_06\\_E.pdf](http://www2.mar.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/science/trac/documents/TRD_2010_06_E.pdf)

- 12). Northeast Fisheries Science Center. 2008. Report of the 3d Groundfish Assessment Review Meeting (GARM III): O.: Ocean Pout. NEFSC Ref. Doc. 08-16.
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- 14). Northeast Fisheries Science Center. 2008. Report of the 3d Groundfish Assessment Review Meeting (GARM III): Q.: Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic Bight Windowpane Flounder. Gulf of Maine Winter Flounder. NEFSC Ref. Doc. 08-16.
- 15). Groundfish PDT memo dated July 13, 2009: Groundfish ABCs/OFLs
- 16). Groundfish PDT memo dated August 7, 2009: Groundfish ABCs/OFLs