



New England Fishery Management Council

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**To:** Tom Nies, Executive Director  
**From:** Scientific and Statistical Committee  
**Date:** September 23, 2013

**Subject: Scallop OFL and ABC recommendations for fishing years 2014 and 2015.**

The SSC met on September 16, 2013 to review information provided by the Scallop Plan Development Team (PDT) and provide OFL and ABC recommendations for the Sea Scallop Fishery for 2014 and 2015 (default) to be included in Framework 25.

The SSC considered the following documents in its deliberations:

- 1) September 16, 2013 SSC Meeting Terms of Reference for Sea Scallops
- 2) Hart, D.R. Quantifying the tradeoff between precaution and yield in fishery reference points. ICES Journal of marine Science, doi.10.1093/icesjms/fss204.
- 3) 2013 Summary of Sea Scallop stock status and fishery since last assessment in 2010
- 4) Draft Framework 25 measures under consideration
- 5) Scallop PDT recommendations for 2014-2015(default) ABC.

The SSC reviewed the objectives stated in Framework 25, namely:

- To prevent overfishing and improve yield-per-recruit from the fishery.
- To set specifications to adjust the day-at-sea (DAS) allocations, general category fishery allocations and area rotation schedule for 2014 and 2015 (default).
- To address the issues of
  1. Addressing 2013 CA1 access area trips.
  2. Implementing AMs for SNE/MA windowpane sub-ACL.

The PDT reviewed the control rules developed in A15 and used for FW21-24 with updated survey and fishery data. The SSC has previously agreed that:

- OFL - equivalent to the catch associated with  $F_{msy}$  –currently estimated at  $F= 0.38$
- ABC control rule – catch set at 25% probability of exceeding OFL. Risk is evaluated in terms the probability of overfishing compared to the fraction loss of yield.

Based on the control rule and updated survey and fishery information, the SSC recommends the following:

Year	OFL	ABC (including discards)	Discards	ABC available to fishery = ACL (after discards removed)
2014	29,848	25,680	6,193	19,487
2015	36,693	31,730	7,069	24,662

The SSC also made the following recommendations:

The Terms of Reference for the next benchmark assessment should include provisions for both pooled and regional assessment outputs so that mortality rates and the general health of the population can be examined regionally and as a whole. These could also include biological reference points if applicable.

At the next benchmark, it may be useful to examine the process by which days at sea are calculated in the context of stock projections. LPUE appears to be underestimated and a review may highlight methods that are more robust to uncertainties in these estimates.

When no benchmark assessment has been done immediately prior to setting ABCs it is recommended that updates go through an operational assessment process for peer review prior to presentation to the SSC. In addition, providing documentation on any changes that have occurred since the previous ABC setting process (e.g. model settings, data inputs, or updated additional diagnostics) would improve understanding and increase transparency.