

NEW ENGLAND FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Habitat/Marine Protected Areas/Ecosystems

I. STATUS

MEETINGS AND ONGOING WORK

The Habitat PDT met on December 7 and January 4, and had a conference call on January 12 to further develop alternatives to protect deep-sea corals in the Northeast Region, and to discuss options to minimize the adverse effects of fishing on EFH.

Meeting outcomes:

- Developed advice to Habitat Committee about which areas to recommend as deep-sea coral protection zones on the basis of (1) documented coral presence, and/or (2) inferred presence of suitable habitat
- Discussed metrics to be used for evaluating adverse effect options/areas
- Developed a list of habitat research objectives/questions and generic design for dedicated habitat research areas

The Habitat Advisory Panel and Habitat Committee will meet jointly on January 24 review (1) PDT-recommended deep-sea coral alternatives and (2) options to minimize the effects of fishing on EFH. The Habitat Committee meeting that was scheduled for January 25 will be rescheduled for a later date.

II. COUNCIL ACTION

No Council action on Omnibus Amendment alternatives at this meeting. The Habitat Committee chair and Council staff will provide an update on Omnibus Amendment progress.

III. INFORMATION

1. Meeting summaries – December 7 PDT meeting, January 4 PDT meeting, January 12 PDT call, January 24 Advisory Panel/Committee meeting (packet will be provided at meeting)