

NEW ENGLAND FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Monkfish Committee

I. STATUS

- A. Meetings: The Monkfish Committee met on July 30 in Portsmouth, NH. The purpose of the meeting was to continue development of Amendment 5, including a re-evaluation of the scope of measures being considered.
- B. Amendment 5 to the Monkfish FMP: The Council initiated work on Amendment 5, primarily to consider alternatives for Annual Catch Limits (ACLs) and Accountability Measures (AMs) pursuant to the 2007 re-authorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, and to adopt multi-year specifications of target total allowable catch levels (TTACs). The current TTACs were adopted in Framework 4 for fishing years 2007 – 2009, although a provision exists for the TTACs to continue in effect until replaced through regulatory action. Amendment 5 would implement new specifications for 2011-2013, or beyond. The Council also directed the Monkfish Committee to develop alternatives for sector management programs and Individually Transferrable Quotas (ITQs) for the monkfish fishery, time permitting. The Committee initially considered including catch share alternatives, but at its July 30 meeting concluded that due to the complexity of issues, required analyses and other considerations, attempting to include those alternatives would jeopardize meeting the ACL and AM deadline.

At this meeting the Council will review the recommendations of the Monkfish Committee to narrow the range of alternatives being considered in Amendment 5 to only those measures that address the reference points, specifications and some administrative changes to the plan. The Council is scheduled to approve the draft document at its November meeting prior to holding public hearings. The target date for approval of final measures for Amendment 5 is June, 2010 so the amendment can be implemented at the start of the 2011 fishing year.

II. COUNCIL ACTION

- A. **Committee Motion** – To split Amendment 5, and defer consideration of the fully shaded measures in the 7/15 version of the decision document to the next management action on monkfish, with the exception of the definition of OY, and to make consideration of catch shares for the monkfish fishery the priority for the next management action.

III. INFORMATION

1. Amendment 5 decision document dated 7/15
2. Summary of the July 30 Committee meeting
3. Amendment 5 timeline