

October 31, 2006

## Monkfish Advisory Panel

Advisors Present: Timothy Froelich, David Fyrberg, Chris Hickman, Allyson Jordan, Louis Julliard, Jim Kendall, Stephen Lee, Matt Linnell, Dean Pesante, Ted Platz, Maggie Raymond (Chair).

Advisors Response to Decision Document:

**Decision 1 TAC Alternative:** Advisors support TAC alternative 1, primarily because it will provide more stability in terms of business planning than the yearly changes that result from the current TAC determination method (no action alternative).

**Decision 2 Moratorium on Directed Fishing** – Advisors do not support this option

**Decision 3 NMFA DAS Alternative** – The advisors support alternative 1, but only if administered exactly as proposed, that is, vessels will declare a monkfish DAS prior to entering port (not prior to leaving dock).

**Decision 4 Incidental Catch Limit** for multispecies & category E permits– The advisors were unable to reach a consensus. In general the lower incidental catch will discourage a directed fishery, while the higher incidental catch will discourage discards.

**Decision 5 SFMA DAS & Trip Limits** – The advisors were unable to reach consensus. In general, neither option works well for trip/offshore boats. Option 1 is more efficient for vessels that burn a lot of fuel, while the no action alternative allows boats to spread out the market and pick weather days to fish.

*However, the advisors would support development of an option that would allow vessels to make a yearly declaration choice between trip limit/DAS options 1 and 2.*

**Decision 6 NMFA Area Trip Limit & DAS** – The advisors were unable to reach a consensus. The discussion focused again on the pros and cons of the incidental catch limit, because the incidental catch limit impacts the trip limit for C&D permits.

**Decision 7 Backstop** – The advisors were unable to reach a consensus. The advisors expressed great concern regarding the inexact science used to assess the status of the resource, and reiterated the position that a industry cooperative survey is essential. 2 members of the advisory panel support a backstop provision, while 9 do not.

**Decision 8 DAS carryover** – The advisors recommend the no action alternative. As monkfish DAS are reduced, the economic need for carryovers becomes more urgent.

**Decision 9 – Permit Category H Fishery Boundary Adjustment** – The advisory panel supports alternative 1 in agreement with the objective to reduce the interaction of gillnet fishing gear with turtles.

**Monkfish DAS Leasing** – Initially, the advisors expressed concern about the potential for a

DAS leasing program to delay implementation of the FW. Several advisors from the SFMA were adamantly opposed to consideration of a DAS leasing program, at this time, due to concerns about the uncertain impacts of such a program on the status of the resource (exceeding the TAC, shifts of effort), but the advisors, in general, also recognize that DAS leasing would provide economic relief and mitigate discards. Ultimately, the advisors agreed to support consideration of a DAS leasing option, if the program can be limited to the NFMA, at this time.

**Monkfish Bycatch in Scallop Closed Access Area Program** – The advisors recommend that the scallopers be allowed the same monkfish bycatch level (for the closed area access programs) as currently allowed on a scallop DAS.

**Monkfish Bycatch in General Category Scallop Fishery** – the advisors recommend that general category scallop vessels fishing within the exemptions granted under the groundfish plan be allowed the same monkfish bycatch level allowed in small dredge fishery in other management areas (50 lbs/day up to a total of 150 lbs/trip).