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## SELECTION OF PROPOSED ACTION FOR GROUND FISH FRAMEWORK 45

### DECISION DOCUMENT

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This 'decision document' lists alternatives in Framework 45 that require action (and some 'automatic' alternatives that do not). Alternatives are broken up by section and listed in table form with a summary of impacts analysis and outstanding clarifications needed.

*Disclaimer: It is impossible to capture the detailed analyses of these alternatives in a sentence or two. It is important to reference the full EA.*

## Section 3.2 Measures to comply with reauthorized Magnuson Act

### Group 1. Updates to SDCs, ACLs, Rebuilding Strategies. (4.1, page 20)

SECTION	ALTERNATIVE	ECOLOGICAL IMPACTS (Scallop resource, EFH. Protected resources)	ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACTS
4.1.1	Revised Pollock SDCs Option 1: No Action Option 2: Revised SDCs (preferred)	Adopts best scientific information on SDC based on SAW 50 results.	Impacts transmitted through effects on ABCs/ACLs.
4.1.2	Revised GB YTF Rebuilding Strategy Option 1 No Action (2014/75%) Option 2: Revised strategy A: 2016/50% (preferred) B: 2016/60% C: 2016/75% D: 2019/60%	All options to No Action delay rebuilding of GB yellowtail flounder. Options A – C will rebuild within M-S Act 10 year timeline.	Most options to No Action increase fishery revenues, with exception of Option C. Ranking: D/A/B/No Action/C.
4.1.3	Annual Catch Limits Option 1: No Action Option 2: Revised ACLs (preferred)	Revised ACLs are based on best scientific information. Higher catches will increase pollock mortality as compared to No Action, but overfishing not expected. Other ACLs will achieve rebuilding mortality targets.	Increased pollock ACL will increase revenues. Under Option 2 overall revenues would decline because of reduced GB haddock ACL.
4.1.4	U.S./Canada Resource Sharing Understanding Option 1: No Action Option 2: Accept TMGC recommendations (Council decision made in September)	Catches consistent with mortality strategy of US/CA Resource Sharing Understanding.	Reduced US/CA area revenues from reduced TACs.
4.1.5	Yellowtail Flounder Allocations to the Scallop Fishery Option 1: No Action Option 2: Revised allocations (decision made during Scallop Committee discussion)	Decision not expected to affect yellowtail flounder mortality as total ACL does not change.	Revised allocations may marginally increase groundfish revenues compared to No Action. Scallop revenues may be higher under No Action since it appears scallop fishery will catch less yellowtail flounder than estimated in FW 44 and under No Action YTF would not be expected to limit scallop catches.

#### Comments:

4.1.3: GB YTF ACL determined by choice of rebuilding strategy in 4.1.2.

4.1.4: US/CA TACs accepted at the September Council meeting; decision does not need to be revisited unless the Council wants to make a change.

Group 2: Fishery Program Administration. (4.2, page 31)

SECTION	ALTERNATIVE	ECOLOGICAL IMPACTS (Scallop resource, EFH. Protected resources)	ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACTS
4.2.1	Implementation of Additional Sectors Option 1: No Action Option 2: Implement seven additional sectors	Not expected to increase fishing mortality above targets. May increase uncertainty of discard estimates. Adoption of state permit banks may shift location of fishing effort.	Creates additional, flexibility for sector participants. May increase portion of sub-ACL that is caught as a result of increased transfers between sectors.
4.2.1	Monitoring Requirements for HA, HB, and Small Vessel Exemption Permits Option 1: No Action Option 2: Exempt these permit categories from dockside monitoring requirements	May increase uncertainty for handgear catches, but these are a minute portion of overall catch. May affect 15 percent of common pool GOM cod catch in FY 2011.	Removes burden of reporting costs from small vessels. May be viewed as unfair by other participants.
4.2.3	Monitoring Requirements for Commercial Groundfish Vessels Option 1: No Action Option 2: Remove requirement for dockside monitoring Option 3: Remove requirement for industry funding of at-sea monitoring in FY 2012 Option 4: Continue trip-end hail requirement	Eliminating dockside monitoring may increase uncertainty over landings info. Impacts of Option 3 depend on whether other funding sources are identified; could increase uncertainty over discard estimates in FY 2012; this would increase risk catch is not accurately known.	Removes burden of dockside monitoring costs. Estimated dockside monitoring costs for FY 2010 are \$616K, or \$0.8 of gross revenues. At 20 percent of trips costs in FY 2011 would be about \$281K, or 0.4% of estimated revenues. Cost per pound will average about \$0.02, but will vary among sectors depending on number of trips and average landings per trip. Delays industry responsibility for at-sea monitoring costs. In short-term will increase profitability compared to No Action.
4.2.4	Distribution of PSC from Cancelled Permits Option 1: No Action Option 2: Redistribute PSC to remaining permits	No substantial biological impacts expected.	No change in revenue expected. Social impacts positive but minor s small increases in PSC benefit all remaining permits.
4.2.5	Submission of Sector Rosters Option 1: No Action (September 1) Option 2: Revise date to December 1	No biological impacts expected.	Increases permit owner flexibility to change sector membership decisions by giving more time before roster commitment. May delay ability of sectors to finalize plans for next fishing year.

*Comments*

*4.2.1: Two proposed new sectors have not submitted operations plans to operate in FY 2010 (SHS and NESC 14). Several state permit bank sectors (RI, MA, NH) submitted operations plans after September 1. Groundfish Committee recommends not approving sectors that have not submitted operations plans; if this recommendation is followed the Council needs to be clear which sectors are not authorized.*

**Group 3. Commercial and Recreational Measures. (4.3, page 35)**

<b>SECTION</b>	<b>ALTERNATIVE</b>	<b>ECOLOGICAL IMPACTS (Scallop resource, EFH. Protected resources)</b>	<b>ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACTS</b>
4.3.1	General Category Scallop Dredge Exemption Option 1: No action Option 2: Eliminate Great South Channel spawning closures	Marginal increases in yellowtail flounder discards and adverse effects on spawning activity. Small relative to other activity in area.	Increased opportunities to target scallops in spring may benefit GC vessels.
4.3.2	Gulf of Maine Cod Spawning Protection Area Option 1: No Action Option 2: Adopt Cod Spawning Protection Area	Reduces fishing impacts on cod spawning in a well-defined area in the inshore GOM.	May reduce number of party/charter trips in the GOM. Impacts small on fishery as a whole but small group of operators may have ~6-10% revenues reduced. Commercial vessels in sectors lose some opportunities to fish in a small area in June.
4.3.3	Handgear Permit Measures Option 1: No Action Option 2: Exempt Handgear A vessels from GOM rolling closures and GB seasonal closure Option 3: Handgear A Vessels subject to same GOM rolling closures as sector vessels Option 4: Handgear A cod trip limit adjusts by stock area Option 5: Handgear B trip limit adjusts by stock area	Rolling closure exemptions likely to increase cod catches of Handgear A permit holders and absent in-season adjustments may lead to these permit holders exceeding PSC brought to common pool. Trip limit changes improve link between measures and desired cod catches	Increased opportunities to target cod will benefit handgear A permit holders, but may lead to view allowing these vessels into spawning closures is unfair.

*Comments:*

*4.3.3: If Option 3 select, need to be clear on HA access to GB seasonal closure.*