

# **FW 47 Decision Document**

**November 16, 2011**

Groundfish Committee recommendations are in **bold** type

Groundfish AP recommendations are in *italics*

Please note that this brief summary cannot capture all of the impacts described in the draft FW 47 document.

Section 3.1 – Updates to Status Determination Criteria, Formal rebuilding Programs, and Annual Catch Limits

Section	Alternative	Ecological Impacts	Economic/Social Impacts
<b>3.1.1</b>	<b>Revised SDCs for winter flounder stocks and GOM cod</b>		
	Option 1: No Action	Not best available science. Lower $F_{MSY}$ proxies could lead to higher stock sizes than Option 2.	Long-term, lower MSY values for GB and SNEMA WFL limit possible catches when compared to Option 2.
	<i>Option 2: Adopt new SDCs based on assessment results</i>	Best available science. Numerically higher mortality targets for two stocks.	Long-term, higher MSY values for GB and SNEMA WFL increase possible catches when compared to Option 1.
<b>3.1.2</b>	<b>Revised GB YTF Rebuilding Strategy</b>		
	Option 1: No Action (2016/50%)	Most rapid rebuilding scenario.	Reduced catches, loss of revenues, reduced scallop fishing opportunities possible. Likely disagreement with Canadian position at TMGC.
	Option 2A: 2023/50%	Slower stock rebuilding.	Higher catches than Option 1, less than Option 2; positive social impacts from increased opportunities; more flexibility to negotiate US?CA TACs
	<i>Option 2B: 2032/50%</i>	Slowest stock rebuilding.	Largest possible catches most flexible approach for TMGC negotiations. Other impacts simulator to Option 2 but larger in magnitude,
<b>3.1.3</b>	<b>Identification of Additional Sub-ACLs</b>	<b>Committee moved these options to considered but rejected – to be considered in a future action</b>	
	Option 1: No Action		
	Option 2: SNE/MA Windowpane Flounder Sub-ACLs		
	Option 3: SNE/MA Winter Flounder Sub-ACL for the Scallop Fishery		

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<b>3.1.4</b>	<b>U.S./Canada TACs</b>		
	Option 1 : No Action	Negative, catches would not represent current stock status.	Greater revenue than Option 2 in short term, but expected long-term negative economic impacts as US/CA area catches would not reflect stock status.
	<b>Option 2: Adopt TACs recommended by TMGC and previously approved by the Council</b>	TACs consistent with most recent assessments. For GB YTF and EGB cod, meeting mortality targets will depend on whether retro pattern persists.	Severely constrained GB YTF and EGB cod TACs would reduced fishing opportunities in US/CA area. Substantially lower revenues expected from area. Low quotas could reduce support for Understanding.
<b>3.1.5</b>	<b>Mixed Stock Exception for SNE/MA Windowpane Flounder</b>	<b>Committee moved these options to considered but rejected – to be considered in a future action</b>	
	Option 1: No Action		
	<i>Option 2: Invoke MSE</i>		
<b>3.1.6</b>	<b>Administration of Scallop Fishery Sub-ACLs</b>		
	Option 1: No Action	Most control over YTF catches of the three options, more likely for catches to remain below ACL; higher probability or meeting mortality targets	Possible loss of yield of both groundfish and scallops. Likely derby effects in scallop fishery access area program, leading to increased costs and less profitability.
	<i>Option 2: Scallop Fishery AM only triggered if (a) overall ACL exceeded, or (b) scallop sub-ACL exceeded by 50 percent or more</i>	Little difference in mortality impacts between Option 1 and Option 2 in any single year; mortality might be marginally higher but not likely to exceed targets. May have greater risk of overfishing over the long-term because slows reaction to scallop fishery exceeding its sub-ACL.	Reduces risk of scallop fishery AMs being triggered; this reduces risk of derby effects, loss in yield.
	<i>Option 3: Re-estimate GB YTF scallop fishery sub-ACL</i>	Might increase mortality of GB YTF compared to No Action since more of ACL may be caught. Not likely to exceed mortality target unless scallop catch is mis-estimated.	Better utilization of available GB YTF catch, groundfish fishery may increase revenues. If scallop catch mis-estimated and ACL exceeded as a result, will lead to reduce groundfish fishery access in year immediately following.

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<b>3.1.7</b>	<b>ACL Specifications</b>		
	Option 1: No Action	ABCs/ACLs for many stocks same as Option 2, no difference in biological impacts. Overfishing almost certain for GB YTF, not likely for three winter flounder stocks.	Revenues higher than Option 2 and increase from FY 2010 (\$112 million versus \$83 million).
	<i>Option 2: Revised ACLs</i>	ABCs/ACLs for many stocks same as Option 1, no difference in biological impacts. Expected GB YTF impacts depend on persistence of retro pattern in assessment – overfishing likely if pattern persists.	Economic impacts largely driven by assumption non GOM cod ABC. At low end of range, groundfish revenues likely 50% less than Option 1 (\$61 million); most affected would be small vessels from NH, Gloucester. At higher level, positive revenue impacts across most ports (\$170 million).

Section 3.2 – Commercial and Recreational Fishery Measures

Section	Alternative	Ecological Impacts	Economic/Social Impacts
<b>3.2.1</b>	<b>Measures for SNE/MA Winter Flounder</b>		
	<b>Option 1: No Action</b>	Current measure meets mortality objectives; less control than Option 2. More discarding than Option 2, fewer biological samples.	Reduced revenues. Less restriction on fishing activity than Option 2.
	Option 2: Allocated and allow landing by commercial vessels	Direct control over mortality for most of groundfish fishery. Mortality likely to increase over Option 1. More biological samples.	Perception that it will create additional choke stock. Increased revenues from landing SNEMAWWFL (\$4.7 million).
<b>3.2.2</b>	<b>Scallop Catch of YTF in GB Access Areas</b>		
	Option 1: No Action	Will not increase overall YTF mortality; could increase scallop mortality if smaller scallops caught, and so increase bottom time/EFH impacts	Increased derby fishing; lower ex-vessel value; reduced revenues in scallop fishery (no GF impacts)
	<b>Option 2: Remove 10% cap</b>	Will not increase overall YTF mortality; could concentrate catch in certain areas or seasons. Better predictability of scallop catches/mortality.	Reduced derby fishing; raised ex-vessel value and revenue; increased planning ability (no GF impacts)
<b>3.2.3</b>	<b>Atlantic Wolffish Landing Limit</b>		
	<b>Option 1: No Action</b>	High survivability so little biol. impact; no benefit from fishery-dependent data	No benefit from landings
	<i>Option 2: One fish per trip for commercial vessels</i>	Very slight mortality increase; increased fishery-dependent data	Marginal increase in revenue; possible safety benefit from reduced need for live handling
<b>3.2.4</b>	<b>Common Pool restricted Gear Areas</b>		
	Option 1: No Action	Reduced fishing mortality; esp. for SNE/MA winter and YTF; poor compliance	Reduced revenue; possible increased cost from purchasing gear
	<b>Option 2: Eliminate RGAs</b>	Increased common pool catches and mortality; catches will not exceed ACLs. Minor changes in fishing effort distribution – current reg only applies to a few vessels.	Possible increased landings/revenue up to \$370,000; seen as fair because of hard TACs; simplifies regulations.

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<b>3.2.5</b>	<b>Accountability Measures</b>		
	Option 1: No Action	May not effectively control fishing mortality; AMs only apply to part of catch caught by common pool vessels.	Possible increased derby fishing by common pool.
	<b>Option 2: Area-Based AMs for four stocks</b>	Reduced trawl catches; effort displacement; more effective control of mortality	Slight chance of decreased revenue; most can be made up by using selective gears; New Bedford most affected
	<i>Option 3: Atlantic Halibut No Possession AM</i>	More effective than No Action, less effective than Option 2; decreased mortality from discard survival	Revenues likely made up in other areas; costs may increase slightly
	<i>Option 4: Atlantic wolffish No Possession AM</i>	More effective than No Action, less effective than Option 2; decreased mortality from discard survival	Revenues likely made up in other areas; costs may increase slightly