#4

New England Fishery Management Council
Groundfish Advisory Panel
Meeting Summary

October 4, 2012

The Groundfish Advisory Panel met in Peabody, MA. The GAP reviewed draft Framework 48 management measures, Council priorities for 2013 and mitigation measures for anticipated FY 2013 ACLs. Members present were Mr. William Gerencer (Chair), Mr. Carl Bouchard, Mr. Christopher Brown, Mr. Richard Canastra, Mr. Aaron Dority, Mr. Gary Libby, Ms. Emilie Litsinger, Mr. Jan Margenson, Ms. Jackie Odell, Mr. Paul Parker and Ms. Maggie Raymond. They were supported by Council staff Tom Nies and Fiona Hogan, and NERO staff Ms. Melissa Hooper.

The Committee discussions referred to Draft Framework 48 measures dated October 2, 2012, Groundfish Committee Meeting Summaries dated August 2, 2012 and September 19, 2012 (draft), preliminary Council priorities for 2013, FY 2011 catch summary, Options and Alternatives to minimize the effects of fishing on EFH (draft, September 10, 2012), Groundfish Advisory Panel Meeting Summary dated May 22, 2012 and a series of correspondence received by the New England Fishery Management Council.

Overview of the Recreational Advisory Panel Meeting

The RAP vice chair provided a brief overview of the RAP meeting. The RAP heard an overview of Framework (FW) 48 draft management measures and passed 2 motions about the closed areas. NEFSC staff gave a presentation on the bioeconomic model of the recreational GOM cod and haddock fishery that was used to develop the current regulations of the 19" size limit and 9 fish bag limit. The RAP passed no motions regarding the model. The RAP discussed potential management measures for 2013 and passed 4 motions. Staff presented information on fishing effort in SA514 that some slight changes since 2010 for larger boats but comparable to levels back in the 1990s and passed one motion. Council priorities were also discussed but no motions were made.

Overview of FY 2013 ABCs/ACLs

Staff provided an overview of the ABCs/ACLs for FY 2013. A range was presented for GOM cod and for GB cod because a benchmark assessment is scheduled in December 2012. There are a number of stocks where the FY 2013 ACL is higher than that in FY 2012 but for other stocks it is lower. Based on the ACL range for GOM cod, there is the potential that if the FY 2013 catch is similar the GOM boats could reach their cod allocation by late September.

The GAP discussed the current zero possession regulation for SNE winter flounder while the ACLs continue to increase. They discussed the potential of allocating SNE winter flounder to provide the groundfish fleet with another income source in the upcoming year. Staff explained that the PDT has not reviewed the sub-components for these ACLs, e.g. state landings for SNE winter flounder. State landings were considered an issue as they are estimated based on previous

years needs but there is no mechanism to transfer any unused state allocation back to the federal fleet (the state landings are estimated after the end of the FY) and the Accountability Measure (AM) applies only to the federal commercial fleet if the ACL is exceeded even if the overage is due to the state landings. One GAP member related anecdotal evidence of lobstermen in RI waiting to target winter flounder with gillnets once the fishery is reopened, which could be a large source of mortality on this stock. The GAP was opposed to, in light of the fishery disaster declaration, a stock being unallocated to sectors but the state fishery can land SNE winter flounder without any AMs. The GAP discussed sending a letter to the state managers requesting the states be accountable and under a hard TAC. Staff informed the GAP that two letters have already been sent regarding this matter and because states are not subject to federal jurisdiction the Council is unable to allocate to them.

> **Motion:** To pursue a letter to the NMFS and the state directors recommending an allocation of SNE winter flounder to the states on an annual basis. (Mr. Parker/Ms. Odell).

The Groundfish Committee Chair informed the GAP of a recent letter sent by the Council to the state directors regarding sub-ACLs. Under the ASMFC process there's a winter flounder addendum to raise the winter flounder trip limit because the state ACL was hardly approached. The final decision will be at the commission meeting in a couple of weeks. One GAP member noted that in the past the states have tried to match the federal regulations but not in this example. Another GAP member thought this situation could contribute to the retrospective patterns that are affecting stock assessments. A friendly amendment was made to the motion suggesting the Council pursue in its priorities allocating a fixed percentage of stocks to the states. A GAP member suggested treating each state be treated as a separate sector.

> **Motion as friendly amended**: To pursue a letter to the NMFS and the state directors recommending an allocation, of a fixed percentage based on defined time frame, of groundfish stocks to the states on an annual basis. This should be one of the Council's groundfish priorities for 2013. (Mr. Parker/Ms. Odell).

The motion **carried** on a show of hands (10/0/0).

Discussion of SNE winter flounder continued, with a series of questions regarding the stock assessment, comparing it to the current SNE yellowtail flounder situation where a more recent time series was selected by the SSC that reflected a lower recruitment regime and wondering if that would apply to SNE winter flounder. Based on staff knowledge of the assessments, the stock-recruitment relationship is good for winter flounder indicating the same situation doesn't exist. The increasing TAC for SNE winter flounder was considered to be a potentially important opportunity for fishermen. Allocation was also seen as a protective measure for the stock; if vessels are forced to move effort off of GB cod they may shift to areas of mixed yellowtail and winter flounder.

Some public comment included:

- Vito Giacalone, Northeast Seafood Coalition: For the SNE winter flounder stock, it seems like we went to zero possession because of a "can't get there from here" in the rebuilding plan that started in 2004; we were halfway there and went to zero fishing mortality. In the light of this disaster and all the "can't get there from here" stocks there's more flexibility in the Act. I think the way the Council's looking at this is, where are the places where they're staying below the OFL what kind of yield could be extracted from that stock so that's pretty high. Considering some of the TACs we're looking at it's pretty decent. They're looking at the productivity of recent recruitment so there must be a reason why that stock can't be rebuilt. I just didn't want to see the GAP overlook it.

Draft Framework 48 management measures

> **Motion**: The GAP supports the option to allocate a sub-ACL to the scallop fishery for SNE/MA windowpane flounder. (Ms. Raymond/Ms. Litsinger).

Rationale: The catch is significant in some years and in 2010 it was 40% and I haven't heard anything from the scallop industry about any measures that they're currently doing to try to mitigate the catch of that as they have done with yellowtail flounder. So I think it's similar to the state waters allocation, you have to deal with it, you can't just take it off the rest of the fleet.

One GAP member questioned whether that 40% catch was inflated by the zero retention. Staff indicated that based on the time series examined, the scallop fleet does have the potential to catch that quantity of windowpane flounder.

The motion **carried** on a show of hands (10-0-0).

Staff explained the management measure regarding the sub-ACL for GB yellowtail flounder for the scallop fleet. The options include status quo, a sub-ACL based on the estimated needs of the scallop fishery or a fixed percentage of the ABC based on catch history. There was some discussion amongst the GAP members regarding the fixed percentage as the Council motion from the September Council meeting included a range. The GAP agreed that 8% and 16% should be examined and a decision on which should be approved would be dependent on an analysis of those percentages. It was suggested that this should be applied to other stocks caught in the scallop fishery and included in the Council priorities to be completed in a future action.

> **Motion**: The GAP recommends Option 3 (of section 4.1.3) for the scallop fishery sub-ACL of Georges Bank yellowtail flounder. Analysis should focus on 8 and 16 percent. If this option is not selected, the GAP recommends selection of Option 2 as Option 1 is not acceptable. (Mr. Canastra/Ms. Raymond).

The motion **carried** on a show of hands (10/0/0).

Staff explained the uncertainties if the Council adopted the 1150mt TAC for GB yellowtail flounder as suggested by the SSC instead of the 500 mt TAC agreed upon by the TMGC. The Council can reject it and have the TMGC revisit it but the TMGC might not come to a conclusion and the Council would have to. The 1150 mt TAC would be difficult to justify it not

exceeding the overfishing level. If the assessment is thought to be accurate, the OFL is approximately 850mt but the unreliability of the assessment was the SSC's basis for the1150 mt TAC; the SSC didn't specify an OFL for the 1150 mt TAC. If the Council did adopt it, the Service might object to it. A GAP member was in favor of requesting the TMGC revisit the TAC number because of the high uncertainty of the assessment and the lack of a benchmark since 2005. The U.S. has a directed fishery and the Canadians have a discard fishery; this low TAC could result in closures in the U.S. groundfish and scallop fisheries. The retrospective pattern in the assessment has been getting worse and a benchmark assessment was thought necessary; the economic impacts this would have on the fleets were thought too severe to base off an assessment with such a strong retrospective pattern. Another GAP member suggested fishing to the overfishing level because of the potential emergency. A GAP member thought wrong assessments, both over- and under-estimations of a stock were detrimental and more frequent or annual stock assessments were necessary.

> **Motion**: The GAP recommends that a Georges Bank yellowtail flounder benchmark assessment be conducted as soon as possible. The GAP also urges the Committee and Council to reject the 500 mt US/CA quota and ask the TMGC to revisit this quota. (Ms. Odell/Mr. Canastra).

The motion **carried** on a show of hands (10/0/0).

Some of the groundfish stocks were presented with a single TAC (i.e., without a range); those were the final numbers. Stocks with a range are pending scheduled benchmark assessments and will be approved at a Council meeting in early 2013 for insertion into this FW. The assessment for white hake is scheduled for February and those numbers may not be final before May 1, 2013. Staff explained the frustration by the RAP of having to generate management measures based on a range of TACs.

Staff described the ongoing work revising the at-sea monitoring program. Vessels behave differently on observed and unobserved trips but while this difference is statistically significant it is extremely difficult to apply in a practical manner to revise the program. The Council restricted the industry cost responsibilities to what the observer does on the boat at the April 2012 Council meeting.

> **Motion**: The GAP endorses ASM (section 4.3.2) Option 4, limiting industry ASM cost responsibility (Ms. Raymond/Mr. Parker)

Discussion centered on proposing a fixed amount or percentage, or a combination of the two, of the at sea monitoring costs that the industry would pay depending on an analysis of the issue. GAP members agreed that the industry could not afford to pay monitoring costs in FY 2013. Staff described ongoing work being conducted by the GMRI Monitoring Working Group that examines the magnitude of discards and the associated observer coverage costs. The analysis identifies different components of the fishery to determine which ones have a higher cost per discards. This strategy would allow you to put more coverage on boats that generate more discards; you can observe more of your catch for a different amount of observer costs. A major drawback of this strategy is it increases the number of components that don't have adequate

observer coverage. One GAP member was interested in knowing how the analysis accounts for the variability introduced by changes in where each vessel or sector fishes over time.

The motion **carried** on a show of hands (10/0/0).

A GAP member thought full retention or changes to the minimum sizes could make monitoring more efficient, and potentially make electronic monitoring feasible, but the incentive to discard was currently minimal. Staff detailed the PDT analysis on full retention and the length frequency of discard analysis. The main issue with full retention is if fishermen's behavior changes and they target smaller fish then full retention will reduce yield, reference points, MSY values and increase BMSY value. However, whether behavior will change is unknown. The data on price by market category was examined; there is a difference for some species but not for others. The PDT identified species where it could lead to a change in selectivity for some stocks; the fishermen might be driven by what's cheaper to catch. For some stocks the smaller fish are more abundant. No change in mesh size is currently proposed but this could create incentives to catch smaller fish. One advantage of full retention is the reduction of discards on observed trips. A GAP member didn't think a market for small fish was a big concern especially since a hard TAC system is in place. The GAP discussed a previous request to investigate lowering the minimum size for yellowtail flounder from 13" to 12" because of the high quantity of just sub-legal fish being discarded. The GAP referred to a table presented to the Committee at the August 2, 2012 meeting containing minimum fish sizes that correspond to the greatest reduction in regulatory discards. The GAP found some of these numbers to be too low but was in favor of full retention. Small reductions in minimum fish sizes, e.g. 1 inch, would greatly reduce discards. Staff explained that the original fish sizes were biologically based to select for fish that were at 50% maturity but that relationship was changed when mesh size was changed instead of modifying DAS.

> **Motion:** The GAP recommends modifying option 3 to adopt a 12 inch across the board minimum fish size for flatfish (other than halibut). (Ms. Odell/Ms. Raymond).

A GAP member informed the group that 12" flatfish are marketable, with the exemption of grey sole (14" is marketable). The goal in reducing the flatfish minimum size was to convert discards into landings.

The GAP also discussed changing roundfish minimum sizes but reductions for haddock and pollock were not widely accepted. The Canadian fishery lands 16" haddock and is landing more haddock than the US. Another GAP member was concerned about fishing on smaller haddock and fishing out a year class despite being under a hard TAC. If the incentive is there in terms of the profit margin then they will bring in the smaller fish and reduce stock productivity. There was concern over the lack of an annual specifications process so you may not have short term options if this was approved. There was some support for full electronic monitoring and full accountability because of the concerns of fishing on smaller sized fish. Staff provided the GAP with a table showing the size at 50% maturity for allocated groundfish.

> **Motion as friendly amended:** The GAP recommends modifying Option 2 (section 4.3.3, minimum fish sizes) for requiring a 13 inch minimum size for grey sole and a 12 inch

across the board minimum fish size for other flatfish (other than halibut). Do not reduce minimum size for pollock. (Ms. Odell/Ms. Raymond).

Staff provided data showing that the 2010 haddock year class is exhibiting similar growth to the 2003 year class.

The motion **carried** on a show of hands (7/3/0).

> **Motion**: The GAP recommends option 3 (section 4.3.3.3), full retention, as the preferred option (minimum size limits, section 4.3.3). (Mr. Dority/Ms. Raymond).

Rationale: The minimum sizes need work but we've expressed some intent to move in the direction of full retention.

The motion **carried** on a show of hands (8/0/2).

> **Motion**: The GAP recommends that if the Council recommends full retention of allocated groundfish stocks that one hundred percent dockside monitoring is essential (with specific attention to undersized fish) to have full catch accountability. (Ms. Raymond/Ms. Litsinger).

Rationale: This level of coverage provides an opportunity to collect more and better landings information that can be included in the assessment.

The motion **carried** on a show of hands (7/0/3)

> **Motion**: The GAP recommends the Committee and Council adopts Option 2 (Section 4.3.5, allowed sector exemption requests), which would allow sectors to request exemptions from year round mortality closures. If the Council selects the No Action alternative due to concerns about status of the resource, the GAP recommends the Council also restrict recreational access to those areas. (Ms. Raymond/Mr. Bouchard).

Rationale: The increased catch of healthy stocks should relieve some pressure on inshore areas by giving boats a place to go.

A GAP member expressed concern at opening up the Gulf of Maine (GOM) closed areas because of the stock status of cod in the region and long-term impacts on fishing. Staff answered questions regarding the existing SAPs in CAII for haddock and yellowtail flounder; the yellowtail flounder SAP has only been opened once because of stock status. NERO staff described the general process for sector EA evaluation.

> **Motion to amend**: To recommend NOAA-funded 100% observer coverage on sector trips into opened portion of closed areas, if NOAA funding is available. (Mr. Dority/Ms. Litsinger).

Rationale: We want a level of funding from NMFS up to 100% in these areas.

A number of GAP members were opposed to the motion to amend as they did not like the open ended request and wanted to focus observer coverage on groundfish trips. A GAP member expressed frustration that the closed areas, which were supposed to sunset, remained closed. Support for the motion to amend was based on the level of risk associated with opening all the closed at once.

The motion to amend **failed** on a show of hands (3/6/1).

The main motion **carried** on a show of hands (8/2/0).

> **Motion**: With regard to considering access for closed areas, the GAP recommends the Committee direct the PDT and CATT to include the consideration of the work done by Graham Sherwood showing age structure differences inside closed areas as well as his cod morphometric work for Cashes Ledge Closed Area. (Mr. Dority/Mr. Libby).

Rationale: The maker of the motion did not want important scientific evidence to be overlooked in the rush to get some mitigation measures in place. Older fish are more successful at spawning; that value needs to be factored in before moving forward.

A number of GAP members were opposed to the motion because of the disaster situation, the industry is under a hard TAC and because the CATT already has a lot of analysis to conduct. One member reasoned that if they're not a spawning or habitat area then they should be opened; another didn't believe they contained any large cod.

The motion **failed** on a show of hands (4/6/0).

> **Motion**: The GAP asks the Committee to reconsider removing the gear restrictions for trawl vessel access to Closed Area I and Closed Area II. (Ms. Raymond/Mr. Bouchard).

Rationale: Because this quota on yellowtail flounder is so small, one sector could take the entire quota for next year. I understand the concept of allowing sectors to manage themselves but I have concerns about next year. I think we should consider that idea in areas on GB using selective gear.

Staff reviewed the accountability measure for GB yellowtail flounder under the US/CA Understanding. An in season overage could lead to no access to the GB access area but the scallopers could continue fishing. A GAP member did not want gear restrictions to prevent vessels from landing their winter flounder allocation given the huge reductions they're facing next year.

The motion **carried** on a show of hands (6/2/2).

> **Motion**: The GAP recommends that clarification be provided in the Framework document which specifies the Council's intent of the Monitoring Goals and Objectives. The Framework document should include rationale which states that when the Agency is

evaluating monitoring programs against these goals and objectives each element of the program be evaluated in a manner to see if all elements (ASM, DSM, NEFOP and EM) collectively meet these goals versus each element independently being required to meet these goals. (Ms. Odell/Ms. Raymond).

The motion **carried** on a show of hands (10/0/0).

A GAP member supported maximum observer funding in order to determine whether full retention and access to the closed areas are jeopardizing stocks.

Motion: Given the risk and uncertainty associated with the shift to full retention in the groundfish fishery, and also opening the groundfish closed areas, the GAP supports maximum NOAA-funded at-sea observer coverage that is available on directed groundfish trips until it can be determined that full retention and Closed Area access do not jeopardize groundfish rebuilding. (Mr. Parker/Ms. Litsinger).

Rationale: The intent is to signal to the Agency that we'd be receptive to their coverage rates and acknowledge that full retention and access to closed areas are risky. The current system provides inadequate protection despite being under hard TACs. Directed dogfish trips have an unnecessarily high coverage rate.

Some GAP members were concerned about setting the standard at this stage as the adequate level of coverage is still unclear. However, other GAP members wanted to indicate that 100% coverage may be necessary given the risks associated with full retention and closed area access. Another benefit of increased coverage is they could better account for total mortality at a time when some assessments are exhibiting a strong retrospective pattern.

Motion as perfected: The GAP recommends NMFS prioritize observer coverage to the closed areas and to the directed GF trips (away from trips that are targeting dogfish monkfish and skates). (Mr. Parker/Ms. Litsinger).

Staff indicated that it may be difficult to identify trips for non-targeted fish as a large portion of their catch can be allocated groundfish. A GAP member provided anecdotal evidence of vessels in an exempted dogfish fishery targeting groundfish; another did not think there would be any groundfish in the closed areas based on the longline SAP.

The motion **carried** on a show of hands (9/1/0).

Staff described the proposed change in the Accountability Measure (AM) timing for non-allocated stocks. If information is available that an overage occurred for a non-allocated stock the AM could be implemented in the year immediately following the overage, instead of two years after the overage, which is the timing when information is not available. A GAP member was concerned that the AM for SNE winter flounder was only applied to the groundfish fleet. The PDT has suggested these stocks be allocated but that approach has not been adopted because the low allocations could restrict fishing for other species. Concern was raised over the quality of

the data being used to declare an overage as there were too many opportunities for errors. A one-day GAP meeting was proposed to discuss AMs on all non-allocated stocks.

> **Motion**: The GAP supports Option 2 for AM timing for non-allocated stocks (section 4.3.6.2). (Mr. Libby/Mr. Brown).

The motion **failed** on a show of hands (1/4/4).

> **Motion**: The GAP recommends approval of Option 2 for gear stowage requirements (4.3.7.2). (Mr. Bouchard/Mr. Libby).

Staff clarified that this measure would remove any requirement to cover gear. A GAP member related that enforcement officers had difficulties distinguishing between vessel types and being able to see from the air if gear was covered properly.

The motion **carried** on a show of hand (8/0/1).

> **Motion**: The GAP recommends approval of the priorities for groundfish (1-7) in the order listed in the document form the Executive Committee. (Mr. Dority/Mr. Libby).

Staff explained that at current staff levels and requirements for other Fishery Management Plans that the entire list of priorities for groundfish could not be completed in one year. The Groundfish Committee Chair confirmed this and informed the GAP that the Executive Committee was meeting to match priorities with the budget.

> **Motion to substitute**: To set as groundfish priorities items 1, 4 and 5 and allocation of SNEMA winter flounder to sectors, allocate groundfish bycatch by the scallop fleet by a fixed percentage for all stocks and allocate a fixed percentage of groundfish stocks in state waters, fix the industry share of observer costs to a percentage of the total or a specific dollar amount and find a legal way to kill more elasmobranchs, revise the SNEMA winter flounder reference points to reflect recent productivity of the stock and to split Amendment 18 to prioritize an action to address accumulation caps by limiting the number of permits that an individual can own. (Ms. Raymond/Mr. Brown).

Rationale: This expands the list of priorities to cover a number of important issues identified by the GAP. The intent for splitting Amendment 18 is to get something done quickly to address accumulation caps.

A GAP member was opposed to the wording regarding Amendment 18 based on scoping hearing comments that indicated that people were more concerned about accumulation caps instead of the number of permits held. It was assumed that given the control date for permits that anyone over the accumulation limits would be grandfathered in. The other Amendment 18 issues would remain in the queue but accumulation caps could be dealt with in a timely manner. One GAP member was anxious about accumulation caps and capping PSCs because we don’t have a LAPP.

Motion to amend the motion to substitute: Change the motion to substitute by putting a period after “caps”. (Mr. Dority/Ms. Litsinger).

The motion to amend the substitute motion **failed** on a show of hands (2/6/1).

The motion to substitute the motion carried on a show of hands (7/1/1).

The main motion as substituted **carried** on a show of hands (7/2/0).

Motion: As one means of mitigating the reductions in groundfish annual catch limits pending for 2013, the GAP requests that the Committee/Council support a request for emergency action to allow landing of barndoor skates in the Northeast skate wing fishery. The intent of this motion is to treat catch and landings of barndoor skate under the existing trip limits and management measures of the other stocks in the Northeast Skate Complex. (Mr. Margeson/Mr. Brown).

Rationale: The current prohibition on landing of barndoor skate is leading to wasteful discarding of millions of pounds of barndoor skate and, consequently, millions of dollars of lost revenue for New England fishermen. For a decade, this stock has not been overfished and no overfishing was occurring. There has been continued increase in barndoor skate abundance in survey tows, expanded distribution of the range of this stock, increased size range and increased abundance of small barndoor skates and the barndoor survey index is currently higher than smooth, clearnose, rosette skate indices, which currently can be landed. All existing measures to protect against overfishing currently exist in the skate regulations including a landings limit, annual catch limits and accountability measures. The potential for overfishing is further reduced by the fact that emergency action emergency actions are implemented in 180 day periods, and the Council will be developing specifications for upcoming fishing years through a regulatory action developed in 2013.

The motion **carried** on a show of hands (9/0/0).

Motion: Due to the emergency situation with Georges Bank yellowtail flounder for FY 2013, the GAP recommends the Council request that the US/CA Steering Committee negotiate with our Canadian counterparts for a “one-off” request to swap up to 200 mt of EGB haddock from the US 2013 share in return for at least 60mt of GB yellowtail from the CA 2013 share. Additional fish would go to the groundfish fishery. (Ms. Odell/Ms. Raymond).

Rationale: The US groundfish fleet is in need of more yellowtail flounder allocation; if a trade occurs it should go to the groundfish fleet and not the scallop fleet. In terms of haddock, the motion leaves flexibility to allow up to 200mt of haddock to be transferred but it can be less if people don’t feel like that amount is appropriate. The important thing here is we’re handcuffed right now and desperately need yellowtail flounder in order to operate our fisheries. They have yellowtail flounder that they may not necessarily need.

Staff raised the point that there is a large haddock year class that will become available. The Groundfish Committee Chair informed the GAP that a similar motion was made at the September Council meeting but it didn't receive a second. There's an intercessional TMGC meeting in February and concern was expressed by the Regional Administrator that this would hinder the process. The issue was raised that the haddock proposed in the trade could be important to some individual fishermen but it was thought that they could have some input during the Council process if they were opposed to this. A GAP member emphasized that it had to be carefully structured as it wasn't likely to be a one-off trade and to ensure that the right people were benefiting.

Some public comment on the motion:

- Vito Giacalone, Northeast Seafood Coalition: This is a one off kind of deal because the EGB haddock is yielding around 16% and that's one of the benefits of sectors. There are fishermen that would benefit from this and could use their fish to cover the whole deal. We don't want someone not part of this meeting who would lose their EGB haddock and have to lease it. It would be a one off.

The motion **carried** on a show of hands (7/1/1).

> **Motion**: The GAP recommends that the Agency must fully fund sector monitoring costs in FY 2013, including 100% coverage required for redfish exemption. (Ms. Raymond/Mr. Bouchard).

Rationale: This motion has been made before and the GAP is still waiting for a response from the Agency. This would indicate to the Agency that the industry still needs this as they can't afford sector monitoring costs or the 100 percent coverage required in the redfish exemption.

The motion **carried** on a show of hand (9/0/0).

> **Motion**: As one means of mitigating the reductions in groundfish annual catch limits pending for 2013, the GAP requests that the Committee/Council support a request for emergency action to eliminate the monkfish trip limit (in the northern fishery management area) for limited access vessels fishing on a groundfish DAS under sector management rules. (Ms. Raymond/Mr. Bouchard)

Rationale: The monkfish total allowable landings are well below the annual catch target for two years in a row: 57% and 63% in the northern fishery management area; 88% and 65% in the southern fishery management area. Several safeguards to prevent overfishing are built into the plan. The monkfish FMP includes an accountability measure that provides for a reduction in the annual catch target (subsequent year) if the annual catch limit is exceeded, and the annual catch target includes a buffer to the annual catch limit. The potential for overfishing is further reduced by the fact that emergency action emergency actions are implemented in 180 day periods, and if NMFS projects that the landings will exceed the annual catch limit, they can chose not to renew the rule for an additional 180 days.

The motion **carried** on a show of hands (9/0/0).