

NEW ENGLAND FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
Groundfish Committee

I. STATUS

- A. Meetings: The Groundfish Oversight Committee met October 11, 2012; a meeting summary is attached. The Committee also met November 5, 2012; a meeting summary will be provided at the Council meeting. The Recreational Advisory Panel met October 3, 2012, and the Groundfish Advisory Panel met October 4, 2012; meeting summaries are attached. The Groundfish Plan Development Team (PDT) held a meeting on October 12, 2012, and a conference call on October 1 and October 24, 2012; a PDT report is attached.
- B. Amendment 18 - Accumulation Limits/Fleet Diversity: Scoping hearings for this amendment were held in January and a report was provided to the Council at the June Council meeting.
- C. Framework Adjustment 48: The Committee is working on measures to improve sector operations, ABCs for FY 2012 - 2014, modifications to closed area access for sector vessels, and several AM issues. A progress report will be provided. The framework document will not be ready for a final vote at this meeting, and a special Council meeting is scheduled for December. The Council will, however, make a decision on allocations of GB and SNE/MA yellowtail flounder to the scallop fishery so that Scallop Framework 24 can proceed with management decisions for FY 2013. Please note there are three memos in the Scallop Committee tab that provide information relevant to this decision.
- D. Closed Area Technical Team (CATT): A Closed Area Technical Team (CATT) was formed and has held several meetings to begin considering the role and effectiveness of closed area management for groundfish. The Groundfish Oversight Committee is recommending goals and objectives that the Closed Area Technical Team (CATT) and Groundfish PDT developed for groundfish management in the Omnibus Habitat Amendment. The CATT is analyzing the potential effects of the sector exemption area option in Framework 48, focusing on fishery catch rates, biological characteristics of groundfish and other species (e.g. skates, monkfish, lobster) from survey data as well as literature sources, EFH and vulnerable bottom habitat characteristics, protected species impacts, economic impacts, and social impacts. The CATT held meetings to evaluate Framework 48 alternatives on September 12 and November 6. An additional meeting is being planned for later in November to work on Framework 48 analyses and Omnibus Habitat issues.

II. COUNCIL ACTION

- A. Adoption of GB and SNE/MA yellowtail flounder allocations for the scallop fishery, and possible adoption of a scallop fishery sub-ACL for SNE/MA windowpane flounder
- B. Possible action on Committee recommendations for FW 48 alternative measures.
- C. Possible action on goals and objectives for the development of groundfish areas that will be considered in the Omnibus Habitat Amendment

III. INFORMATION

- 1. Groundfish Oversight Committee Meeting Summary, October 11, 2012
- 2. Groundfish Oversight Committee Meeting Summary, November 5, 2012 (to be distributed)
- 3. Recreational Advisory Panel Meeting Summary, October 3, 2012
- 4. Groundfish Advisory Panel Meeting Summary, October 4, 2012
- 5. Groundfish Plan Development Team meeting report dated October 31, 2012
- 6. PDT/CATT memo dated October 5, 2012, on goals and objectives for groundfish closed areas
- 7. Draft framework management measures (to be distributed)
- 8. Transboundary Management Guidance Committee Guidance Document for 2013
- 9. Groundfish Catch Reports
- 10. Brief Summary of the Northeast Skate Complex
- 11. Correspondence