

#6

Issue Summary: Research catch accounting

How do we account for research related mortality?

- Dealer LOA codes
- VTR EFP codes
- EFP/LOA database

How should research related mortality be considered with respect to assessments and setting quotas?

- We are developing a Northeast Region policy so research related mortality is accounted for consistently across all FMPs.
- Two primary types of research mortality from RO perspective with respect to quotas and assessments.
 1. Research mortality during commercial fishing trips, including trips operating under an EFP or other research permit.
 - Part of commercial fishery, attributed to appropriate commercial quota.
 2. Mortality during scientific research conducted by scientific research vessels
 - Not part of commercial fishery, which raises the question of where are these fish considered with respect to ACLs and stock assessments.

LOA fish: How to account for mortality that results from scientific research conducted by scientific research vessels.

Issue Summary: Projects that are selling, or intend to sell, research catch

EFFECTIVE

1. Testing of the Rope Separator Haddock Trawl on Georges Bank – SMAST, He. 15 sea-days, Georges Bank.
2. Modified Groundgear to Reduce the Catch of Juvenile plaice in the Large Mesh Groundfish fishery – SMAST, He. 14 sea-days
3. Southern New England Winter Flounder Gear Modification – SMAST, He. 3 sea-days.
4. Design and test of an innovative large mesh trawl to reduce spiny dogfish bycatch in the southern New England whiting fishery – SMAST, He. 10 sea-days
5. Testing a Detaching Codend within a Groundfish Trawl Net – DMF, Pol. 3 sea-days.
6. A Method to Reduce Butterfish Retention in the Offshore Loligo Squid Fishery Through the Use of a Bycatch Reduction Device (BRD) – Hasbrouck, Cornell. 26 sea-days
7. The Immediate and Short-Time Post-Release Mortality of Species in the Northwest Atlantic Skate Complex Captured by Gillnet and Otter-Trawl – NEAq, Mandelman. 60 sea-days
8. Spiny Dogfish Habitat Utilization and Interspecies Competition – UNE, Sulikowski. 24 sea days

Total sea-days acknowledged: 155

PENDING

1. Haddock and Flounder Behavior near Regular and Floating Bridles and its Application in Reducing Flounder Catch on Georges Bank – SMAST, He 8 sea-days
2. The University of Maine, in collaboration with the Penobscot East Resource Center, submitted an LOA application to the Regional Office in support of a study that is proposing, to conduct a sentinel fishery in the Eastern Gulf of Maine. The primary objective is to enhance the understanding of groundfish stocks in this region where there has been virtually no directed fishery for the past 10 to 15 years. Two vessels will fish a combined 60 days,

Total sea-days pending: 68

DENIED

1. Investigating the biology of the thorny (*Amblyraja radiata*) within the Gulf of Maine: Potential new ways to understand, stop, and reverse the decline of this species of concern – UNE, NEAq, Sulikowski, Mandelman. 144 sea days per year proposed. Only study where proceeds from catch would fully fund study.

OUTLOOK

The cooperative research community is largely aware that catch incidental to research (LOA fish) may be sold. This awareness is likely to expand. We are expecting several new LOA applications where the investigators intend to sell research catch. Some researchers are looking for ways to present their research so that it meets LOA qualification criteria so they can take advantage of these provisions. Our approach has been to scrutinize LOA applications that intend to sell catch very closely to ensure the project activities and objectives are clearly consistent with experimental fishing regulations, and that the scope is necessary to achieve the research objectives. Further review of experimental fishing regulations

and what considerations shall be made by the RO prior to issuing an LOA may be warranted. However, LOA qualification criteria are relatively broad, leaving little discretion to the RO.

Per §600.745: When reviewing an LOA application, the Regional Administrator or designee shall consider the following: The merits of the individual proposal and the institution(s) involved; whether the proposed activity meets the definition of scientific research activity; and whether the vessel meets all the requirements for a scientific research vessel.