

INITIATE SCALLOP FRAMEWORK 24

New England Fishery Management Council
January 2012

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PURPOSE AND NEED

1. Set specifications for 2013-2014 and default measures for 2015

Council identified additional items in priority order:

2. Consider modification of GB access area opening dates
3. Address sub-ACL of yellowtail flounder for the LAGC trawl fishery
4. Leasing LAGC IFQ mid-year

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FISHERY SPECIFICATIONS

- Overall ABC (SSC must approve)
- DAS and access area allocations
- IFQ, Incidental Target-TAC, NGOM Hard-TAC
- Set-asides for observer and RSA program
- Measure for turtle RPMs
- Updated YT catch projections
- Committee direction to PDT about year 2 specs:

Robins/Preble

Identify and include contingency mechanisms in FW24 for the management of access areas in the event that biomass in access areas falls below specified thresholds.

Vote: 7:0:1, carries

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#1 - CONSIDER MODIFICATION OF GB ACCESS AREA OPENING DATES

- Based on recent analyses of observer data for FW23 and current RSA funded project looking at seasonal bycatch on GB - There may be support for modifying the June 15 date (GB areas closed Feb 1 - June 14)
- Range of measures will focus on various opening dates to optimize scallop yield and reduce YT bycatch
- Modifying the seasonal closure is in the scallop regs, but references the GF regs. Unclear if this would need to be a joint action.

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#2 - YT AM FOR LAGC TRAWL FISHERY

- During FW23 the Council learned that a substantial portion of total YT catch was from the LAGC trawl fishery
- It was premature to take action in FW23 so delayed for FW24
- FW24 - Should the YT sub-ACL be divided further, should specific AMs be adopted for the LAGC IFQ trawl fishery
- Possible AMs could include area/seasonal restrictions, gear restricted areas, bycatch hard-TACs, etc.
- The Committee passed several motions at recent meeting to further clarify the range of AM options:
 - 1) no continued use of trawl gear; or
 - 2) areas in which trawl gear would be prohibited.

In addition, the Committee passed a motion to develop an alternative to prohibit all LAGC IFQ vessels from targeting scallops with trawl gear.

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#3 - LEASING LAGC IFQ MIDYEAR

- Currently LAGC IFQ vessels are not permitted to lease IFQ mid-year.
- A11 – reduce administrative burden and help prevent speculative purchase and re-sale of quota
- This action will likely consider the No Action (no leasing mid-year), allow leasing up until a certain date, or potentially another option with additional restrictions to address the original concerns with leasing mid-year.

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ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE MOTIONS (COUNCIL WILL NEED TO TAKE ACTION)

■ **Motion 4: Dempsey/Avila**

Recommend that the Council consider including the following topics in FW24.

- First, YT AMs should trigger in Year 2 following an average compared to the subsequent year.
- Second, the observer set-aside program be expanded to cover LAGC vessels in open areas.

Vote: 8:0:1, passes

These two additions were recommendations from the PDT, January 5, 2011.

■ **Motion 1: Preble/Avila**

Committee requests the Agency REQUIRE than an observer provide a copy of raw data to the Captain before leaving the vessel.

Vote: 7:0:2, motion passes

(Not clear if this has to be added to Framework or just done administratively and change observer protocols)

Initial input from Observer Program is that changes like this do not have to be made through a framework action, but there may be more effective ways to improve data quality.

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2012 TIMELINE COUNCIL MILESTONES

- Jan 2012 – Initiate Framework 24
- April 2012 – Approve research priorities for 2013 and 2014 RSA announcement
- June and Sept 2012 – update on FW24
- November 2012 – final action
- Possible Implementation – May 2013
- Jan 2013 – Report on LAGC IFQ performance review

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WHY FINAL ACTION IN NOVEMBER?

- Numerous surveys expected for Spring/Summer 2012
- Results due August 1 – best case
- Final package needed by Sept 14 for final action in September (6 weeks later)
- Not enough time to combine and develop biomass projections; then complete turtle RPM, YT and economic analyses; pull package together with decision document for final input from PDT, AP and Cmte meetings
- Center is planning to finalize method for including Habcam results before 2012 survey season
- Scallop PDT and Cmte will need to work on several GF FMP and Habitat Omnibus issues in 2012 as well

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COUNCIL ACTION ON FW24

- Initiate FW24
- Decide whether to include additional recommendations from Committee or not (Motions #4 and #1)
- No need to take action on Motions #2, #3 and #6 – direction to PDT for FW24 development

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COMMITTEE REQUEST FOR EMERGENCY ACTION

Scallop Committee Meeting
January 19, 2012

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DELMARVA EMERGENCY ACTION

- PDT met on Jan 5 and reviewed 2011 surveys
- Cmte received letter from FSF requesting the Council address reduced biomass in Delmarva (Doc #6)
- **Motion 5: Dempsey/Ramsden**
Committee recommends that the Council request that NMFS implement an emergency action for FY2012 to convert Delmarva access area trips into either open area DAS to be used in FY2012 or into Hudson Canyon access area trips in FY2012.
Vote: 7:0:2, carries
- Committee requested that the PDT have a conference call to discuss a possible Emergency Action and identify pros and cons of potential measures prior to Council meeting (Doc #6)

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NO ACTION - MARCH 1, 2012

- LA Full time vessels will be allocated 34 DAS
- 4 Access Area trips

	CA1	CA2	NL	HC	Del	ET	Total	Channel	OA DAS
2011	1.5	0.5	-	1	1	-	4	open	32
2012	0.5	1	0.5	1.5	0.5	-	4	open	34

- PDT developed split trips in order to provide more access and reduce bycatch in order to optimize yield.
- Prior to March 1, NMFS will notify vessels which areas they have access to based on a lottery system.
- Vessels can trade trips and if a trip is started within the last 60 days of the FY it can be carried into the first 60 days of the following FY.

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PDT INPUT – JAN 24 CONFERENCE CALL

- The PDT discussed that ideally the split trip in 2012 should not be fished in Delmarva.
- Biomass is lower than anticipated from 2010 projections in that area and there are signs of recruitment.
- Catch rates expected to be below average in 2012 with increased area swept and associated impacts
- PDT discussed pros and cons of several options
- Did not have time to reach consensus on the call, individual members provided input by email
- **Overall, PDT most supportive of Option 4 - Close Delmarva and redistribute 1.5 HC trips evenly across the fleet**

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4 BASIC OPTIONS (EA FOR 2012 AND FW24 FOR 2013)

1. Close Delmarva and convert trips to open area (about 5 DAS)
2. Close Delmarva and convert trips to Hudson Canyon
3. Close Delmarva and give vessels access to DEL in 2014
4. Close Delmarva and redistribute 1.5 HC trips evenly across the fleet (27,000 pounds per vessel)

Could do these in FW24 as well – similar impacts except if action delayed until 2013 could potentially impact 2013 allocations or increase risk of exceeding ACL. Arguably, FW24 would be more streamlined administratively (no staff resources spent on EA).

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#1 - CLOSE DELMARVA AND CONVERT TRIPS TO OPEN AREA

- PDT estimates that 5 DAS appropriate
Updated estimates of OA LPUE for 2011 are about 3,100 pounds. Even if LPUE higher in 2012, 5 DAS cautious
- **Pros:** Biomass is high in MA open areas; impacts more spread out; some effort could shift to areas with less turtles
- **Cons:** Some effort could shift to areas with higher YT bycatch; increased impacts on open area biomass which is expected to be lower in coming years – potential impacts on future allocations, higher risk of exceeding 2012 LA scallop sub-ACL compared to access area trip with max catch
- Complication that YT AM areas will likely be closed Mar-May (at a minimum)

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#2 - CLOSE DELMARVA AND CONVERT TRIPS TO HUDSON CANYON

- Pros: Allocations would be equal; turtles in HC area as well but trips should be fished faster than in Delmarva so reduced area swept; no YT in HC compared to OA DAS option; same projected catch from these trips so no impact on ACL
- Cons: Concern about adding effort in HC (only area with high biomass in MA - could impact future allocations for that area)

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#3 - CLOSE DELMARVA AND GIVE VESSELS ACCESS TO DEL IN 2014

- Pros: Protects the biomass and recruitment that is in Delmarva until a time it should be fished; no change in terms of impacts on YT or turtle bycatch but area swept should be less compared to 2012
- Cons: primary concern is the potentially high economic cost of delaying income 2 years (uncertain prices and costs)

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#4 - CLOSE DELMARVA AND REDISTRIBUTE 1.5 HC TRIPS EVENLY ACROSS THE FLEET

- **Pros:** Allocations would be equal; no negative LT impacts on biomass from shifting Delmarva effort to another area; protects recruitment in Delmarva; reduced risk of exceeding 2012 ACL; reduced impacts on ecosystem in general
- **Cons:** Less total yield and associated short-term economic benefits (about \$25-30 million dollars)

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SUMMARY

- **Ecosystem** – No Action could increase area swept. Option 4 and 8 reduce impacts compared to others
- **Economics**
 - Options 1, 2, and 4 minimize distributional impacts but Option 4 is the most equitable
 - Options 1 and 2 could have some negative LT impacts
 - All the other options (3,5,6,7,8) have both negative distributional impacts and negative impacts in the ST
 - Option 4 could reduce the overall net benefits (about \$25 million in the ST (5% of revenue in 2011)), but higher LT benefits for the scallop fleet overall

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ADDITIONAL IDEAS

- **PDT identified several other potential options but did not develop them further**
 - a. Close Delmarva and take the 2012 split trip allocation away in HC to keep allocations even (EA)
 - b. Close Delmarva and allocate trips into Closed Area 1 in 2012 (EA) or 2013 (FW24)
 - c. Close Delmarva and give vessels as many options as possible for that trip to spread effort out (open area DAS, HC, or CA1)

- **FSF offered another option in recent correspondence**
 - Take all 2012 split trip allocations in Mid-Atlantic access areas (DEL and HC) and convert to open area DAS for all vessels

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SUMMARY OF IMPACTS

- **PDT most supportive of Option 4 but if Council does not want to reduce total catch shift effort to:**
 - Open Areas, Hudson Canyon, or Closed Area I
- **Impacts compared to Option 4**

Area	Blomass	Bycatch	Turtles	Economics
Open Area	OK - but nothing behind 2006 year class	Uncertain, possibly negative	Neutral or positive	Positive ST Negative LT, could impact FW24 DAS
Hudson Canyon	Riskier - want to protect for 2013 and 2014 but may want to harvest while there	Neutral	Neutral	Positive ST Negative LT, could impact 2013 and 2014 allocations
CA 1	Sufficient - portion not harvestable	Negative, but not substantial	Positive	Positive ST Neutral LT, could impact 2013

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OTHER ISSUES

- PDT notes that the LAGC IFQ fishery was also allocated 296 fleetwide trips in Delmarva for 2012. Action?
- **Does the Council agree with the Committee motion? If yes, which strategy is recommended?**

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ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE MOTION NOT RELATED TO FW24 OR DELMARVA

Scallop Committee Meeting
January 19, 2012

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COMMITTEE MOTION REGARDING HABCAM AND FUTURE OF FEDERAL SCALLOP SURVEY

- SSAP met in 2008 and 2009 to provide input on survey design, technology and implementation
- Jan 5 PDT meeting – NEFSC presented preliminary plan about future scallop survey and possible methods for including Habcam results
- Cmte and public voiced concerns about potential delays and changes to survey design

- **Motion 7: Peirce/Preble**

Recommend that the Council request NEFSC: 1) explain how it intends to integrate Habcam results into overall biomass estimates; 2) detail scientific/technical obstacles for successful integration of Habcam results; 3) provide a timeline for expected integration of those results; and 4) describe its intentions for continued use of other surveys for biomass estimates.

Vote: 7:0:2, carries

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