

NEW ENGLAND FISHERY MANAGEMENT Council
Multispecies (Skate) Committee

I. STATUS

- A. Meetings: The Skate PDT met twice in March to develop management advice based on the benchmark assessment and the 2006 survey indices. The Skate PDT also outlined some alternatives that could address skate management issues. A productive discussion with Sea Sampling Observer Program managers was held that explained why unidentified skate species were in the observer data and how the program was addressing this issue. Dr. Gedamke, a PDT member from VIMS, presented an overview of a new assessment model applied to barndoor and winter skate, addressing some criticisms of the SAW.

The Multispecies Oversight Committee met on April 6 to discuss and evaluate the PDT recommendations and review a draft scoping document.

- B. Assessment: The SAW/SARC reported at the January Council meeting that winter and thorny skates were overfished.

II. COUNCIL ACTION

- A. Approve draft scoping document and hearings for a skate amendment.

III. INFORMATION

- A. Letter from the Regional Administrator notifying the Council that winter skate has become overfished and giving the Council one year to develop a management action to address it.
- B. Skate management advice, memo from Skate PDT.
- C. Strawman alternatives for consideration in a skate management action, memo from Skate PDT
- D. Draft scoping document for a skate amendment (to be handed out).