



New England Fishery Management Council

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C.M. "Rip" Cunningham, *Acting Chairman* | Paul J. Howard, *Executive Director*

**To:** Paul J. Howard, Executive Director  
**From:** Scientific and Statistical Committee  
**Date:** September 23, 2011

**Subject: SSC Comments on SARC 54 Draft Terms of Reference**

The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) was asked to:

1. Comment on terms of reference for the 2012 herring and Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic yellowtail flounder stock assessments to be conducted during SARC 54.

In order to meet this term of reference, the SSC met September 14, 2011 in Providence, RI and considered the following:

1. Draft Stock Assessment Terms of Reference for SAW/SARC-54 (file vers.: 8/30/2011, "Longer version")

In June 2012, the Atlantic herring and Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic yellowtail flounder stocks will be assessed through the SAW/SARC process. The draft Terms of Reference were discussed by the SSC through correspondence.

**The SSC recommends the following changes to the SAW/SARC-54 Terms of Reference.**

1. **Herring - Repeat previous recommendations September 2009: "The SSC suggests that the next benchmark assessment should revise MSY reference points to be consistent with the assessment method and consider including estimates of consumption and spatial structure in the assessment."**
2. **SNEMA YT – GARMIII Research Recommendation "The use of 'windows' of biomass rather than the breakpoint should be explored to create the stanzas in the stock – recruitment relationship. This may better address inconsistencies in rebuilding plans that might arise as the biomass grows from the lower to the higher stanza."**