

NEW ENGLAND FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Groundfish Committee

I. STATUS

- A. Meetings: The Groundfish Committee met on Sept. 3, 2025, by webinar. The Groundfish Advisory Panel (GAP) and Recreational Advisory Panel (RAP) met jointly on Sept. 3, 2025, also by webinar. The Groundfish Plan Development Team (PDT) met on July 29, 2025, by webinar.
- B. Revised Amendment 25: GARFO sent a decision letter on May 19, 2025, notifying the Council that Amendment 25 was disapproved by NOAA. In response, the Council voted on June 25, 2025, to reinstate Amendment 25, focusing only on reformatting the cod-specific management measures as previously submitted in Amendment 25 (Sept. 2024 Council final action) and Framework 69 (Dec. 2024 Council final action). This revised action includes: incorporating the four revised Atlantic cod stock units of Eastern Gulf of Maine (EGOM) cod, Western Gulf of Maine (WGOM) cod, Georges Bank (GB) cod, and Southern New England (SNE) cod into the Northeast Multispecies Fishery Management Plan (FMP); status determination criteria for the four new cod stocks; Fishing Year (FY) 2026-2027 specifications for EGOM cod, WGOM cod, and SNE cod, and FY2026 specifications for GB cod; WGOM cod and SNE cod recreational sub-ACLs; WGOM cod ABC apportionment; management uncertainty buffers for the four cod stocks; common pool accountability measures (trimester TAC distributions and closure areas and baseline trip limits) for the four cod stocks; SNE cod recreational measures; and regulatory process for the Regional Administrator to adjust recreational measure for EGOM cod and GB cod. The Council is anticipated to take final action on the revised action at its September meeting.
- C. Framework Adjustment 69/Specifications and Management Measures: Council staff sent the final submission to GARFO on Mar. 11, 2025. The proposed rule has not yet been published.
- D. Framework Adjustment 72/Specifications and Management Measures: This action includes: status determination criteria (if necessary); fishing years (FY) 2026-2027 specifications for GB cod and GB haddock, FY2026-FY2028 specifications for GB yellowtail flounder, Cape Cod/Gulf of Maine (CC/GOM) yellowtail flounder, Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic (SNE/MA) yellowtail flounder, GB winter flounder, GOM winter flounder, SNE/MA winter flounder, white hake, Acadian redfish, ocean pout, and Atlantic wolffish; FY2026 U.S./Canada total allowable catches (TACs) for Eastern GB cod, Eastern GB haddock, and GB yellowtail flounder; and measures to address recreational management as part of Phase 1 of Atlantic cod management transition (i.e., regulatory process for the Regional Administrator to adjust recreational measures for cod and haddock). The Council will receive a brief update on development of the action.

II. COUNCIL ACTION

- A. Revised Amendment 25 – final action.

III. INFORMATION

1. Presentation, Council Staff
2. Council's Groundfish Priorities Quarterly Outlook for 2025
3. Groundfish Committee Motions
4. Revised Amendment 25 / Atlantic Cod Specifications and Management
 - a. Draft outline of alternatives
 - b. Draft Environmental Assessment
 - c. Draft Appendices
5. Framework Adjustment 72 / Specifications and Management Measures
 - a. Draft outline of alternatives
6. Meeting Summaries
 - a. Joint Groundfish Advisory Panel and Recreational Advisory Panel, September 3, 2025
 - b. Groundfish Committee, September 3, 2025
7. Correspondence