

NEW ENGLAND FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
Small Mesh Multispecies (Whiting) Committee

I. STATUS

- A. Meetings: The committee met on August 19, 2021 to receive the Annual Monitoring Report for Fishing Year 2020 and develop management priority recommendations. Based on information in the report and a PDT recommendation, the committee recommended that the Council advise the Regional Administrator to not make the automatic adjustment to the southern red hake TAL trigger because of uncertain discard estimates, transitory effects of the Covid pandemic measures, and unknown effects of Framework 62 and the 2021-2023 specifications.
- B. Southern Red Hake rebuilding (FW62): Staff is working with GARFO to address some protected species impacts issues that have been raised. A final rule is pending approval.
- C. Specifications: The Council received additional comments on the Final Specifications Document which the Council submitted on June 29, 2021, concerning impacts on protected species from the potential for vessels to shift fishing effort from mid-water trawl herring and mackerel to small-mesh bottom trawl with a 15,000 lb. whiting possession limit. Staff is working with GARFO to analyze this potential and address the issue.
- D. The Whiting PDT met on July 28, 2021 to develop the Annual Monitoring Report.

II. COUNCIL ACTION

Consider advising the Regional Administrator to not make the automatic adjustment to the southern red hake TAL trigger. (see information under item A above)

III. INFORMATION

- 1. Small-Mesh Multispecies Committee meeting summary, August 19, 2021
- 2. Annual Monitoring Report for Fishing Year 2020
(<https://s3.amazonaws.com/nefmc.org/2020-Annual-Monitoring-Report-Final.pdf>)
- 3. Correspondence:
 - a) Final submission of the Small-Mesh Multispecies Fishing Year 2021-2023 Specifications to the Northeast Multispecies Fishery Management Plan, June 29, 2021