

GROUNDFISH COMMITTEE REPORT

Council Meeting

Mystic, CT and by Webinar

June 24, 2026



New England Fishery
Management Council

Groundfish Outlook by Quarter in 2026, updated June 9, 2026, NEFMC Staff

Council Priority*	Jan – Mar	Apr - Jun	July - Sept	Oct - Dec
Amendment 25	Final Submission		GARFO implementation	
Recreational Measures	Develop recommendations for cod & haddock	GARFO implementation		
Framework Adjustment 72	Preliminary & Final Submissions		GARFO implementation	
Amendment 23 Review	Conduct review analyses	Complete review		Consider recommendations for follow-up actions
Redfish Sector Exemption Review	Conduct review analyses	Complete review		Consider recommendations for follow-up actions
ABC Control Rules Framework (68)	Contract work conducted to evaluate integration of revised Risk Policy with revised ABC CRs			Develop revised ABC CRs from simulation testing, conduct analysis
Framework Adjustment 74		Develop scope Initiate action	Develop specifications & measures, conduct analysis	Final action
Atlantic Cod Management			Continue to develop transition plan; planning for IRA #2 groundfish management transition visioning sessions (spring 2027)	
White Hake Rebuilding			Conduct rebuilding plan analyses & review biological reference points	
Stock Assessments		MT- GB haddock (Jun.)	Domestic updates for transboundary mgmt. (cod, haddock, yellowtail flounder) (Jul.)	MT- GOM haddock, plaice Data updates- pollock, witch flounder, halibut (Sept.)

*Additional: Participate in TMGC, coordinate on EFH designation updates, and make recommendations for 2027 Council priorities

FOR TODAY

Framework 74 / Specifications and Management Measures (*to be initiated*)

- Receive a report on the draft scope and alternatives.
- Initiate the action.

Framework 68 / Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) Control Rules

- Receive a brief update.

Amendment 23 Monitoring Review

- Receive an overview of the PDT's draft report on the review.
- Discussion.



FRAMEWORK ADJUSTMENT 74 / SPECIFICATIONS AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES (*TO BE INITIATED*)



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Management Council

FOR TODAY

- Receive a report from the PDT on the draft scope and alternatives.
- Motion to initiate the action and identify the items for inclusion.



DRAFT SCOPE

Fishing year (FY) 2027-2031 Specifications and Management Measures, to:

- Revise status determination criteria, as appropriate,
- Set FY2027 total allowable catches (TACs) for US/Canada management units of Eastern Georges Bank (GB) cod and Eastern GB haddock, and FY2027-FY2028 TACs for the GB yellowtail flounder stock,
- Set FY2027 specifications for GB cod and GB haddock,
- Set FY2027-FY2028 specifications for GB yellowtail flounder,
- Set FY2027-FY2031 specifications for Gulf of Maine (GOM) haddock, American plaice, witch flounder, pollock, northern windowpane flounder, southern windowpane flounder, and Atlantic halibut,
- Review sub-component analysis for stocks with revised specifications, others as time permits,
- Review GB haddock sub-ACL in the mid-water trawl/herring fishery,
- Re-evaluate approach used for Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic (SNE/MA) yellowtail flounder scallop fishery sub-ACL and,
- Simplify the criteria for reducing the size of the southern windowpane flounder accountability measures area

DRAFT RANGE OF ALTERNATIVES

1. Revised Status Determination Criteria (*if necessary*)
2. Specifications
 - FY2027 TACs for US/Canada management units of Eastern GB cod and Eastern GB haddock, and FY2027-FY2028 TACs for the GB yellowtail flounder stock,
 - FY2027 specifications for GB cod and GB haddock,
 - FY2027-FY2028 specifications for GB yellowtail flounder,
 - FY2027-FY2031 specifications for GOM haddock, American plaice, witch flounder, pollock, northern windowpane flounder, southern windowpane flounder, and Atlantic halibut,
 - Sub-component analysis for stocks with revised specifications, others as time permits,
 - Review of GB haddock sub-ACL in the mid-water trawl/herring fishery,
 - SNE/MA yellowtail flounder scallop fishery sub-ACL [re-evaluate approach used in FW72 with updated data]
3. Commercial Fishery Management Measures - Southern Windowpane Flounder Accountability Measures
 - Simplify the criteria to reduce the size of the AM area so that if the Large AM Area has been triggered and the stock is rebuilt, only the Small AM Area is implemented – for the Groundfish Fishery and Large-Mesh Non-Groundfish Trawl Fisheries

DRAFT TIMELINE

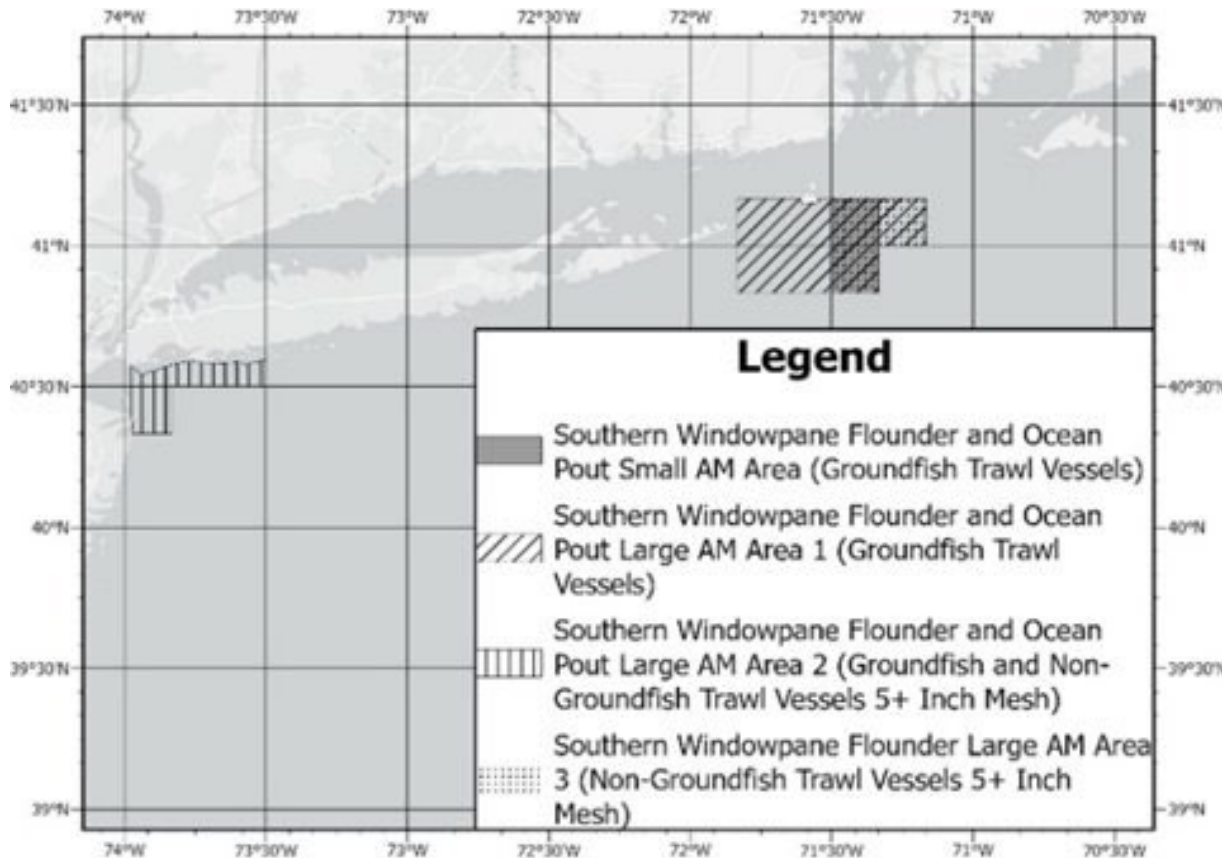
2026	
MAY-JUN	Committee/AP/PDT preliminary discussion
JUN 23-25	Council initiates framework
JUN 29	Peer Review – Management Track Assessment for GB haddock
JUL-SEP	Committee/AP/PDT develop draft alternatives
SEP 15-17	Council reviews progress on developing draft alternatives
SEP 22-23	Peer review – Management Track Assessments for GOM haddock and American plaice
OCT 14-16	TMGC/SC meets to recommend TACs for US/CA management units of EGB cod and EGB haddock, and GB yellowtail flounder stock
OCT 7 and 27-28	SSC recommends OFLs/ABCs for GOM haddock, American plaice, witch flounder*, pollock*, windowpane flounder (northern and southern)*, and Atlantic halibut*
OCT-NOV	Committee/AP/PDT continue developing draft alternatives and complete impact analysis
DEC 8-10	Council receives draft alternatives and takes final action
2027	
JAN	Preliminary submission of framework document to NMFS
FEB	Final submission of framework document to NMFS
MAR	NMFS publishes proposed rule
MAY 1	Target Implementation

*Data update



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SOUTHERN WINDOWPANE FLOUNDER ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES



- Applies to **groundfish trawl vessels** (sectors and common pool) fishing on a sector or DAS trip and **non-groundfish trawl vessels fishing with codends 5" mesh or greater**
- Provision to reduce size of the AM area implemented from Large to Small
 - Two criteria: 1) stock rebuilt and 2) biomass criterion
 - **FY2024 overage – biomass criterion not met**
- Gear-restricted areas – vessels may only use a haddock separator trawl, a Ruhle trawl, or a rope separator trawl
- Provision to reduce duration of AM – on or after September 1, if Year 2 ACL is not exceeded



SOUTHERN WINDOWPANE FLOUNDER ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES

Council Motion – April 16, 2026:

That the Council include in the groundfish action to be initiated in June (FW74), an alternative to modify the southern windowpane flounder accountability measure trigger so that the **criteria for determining a reduction in the size of the AM implemented is the stock being rebuilt (i.e., when the stock is rebuilt, only the small AM area is applied)**, for both the groundfish fishery and large-mesh non-groundfish fisheries.

Rationale:

- Allow for more efficient way to reduce the size of the necessary AM to account for overages, provide economic relief to the fishing industry.
- Serve as a bridge between current and future planned priority work: IRA # 3.3 - Ecosystem Component Species (southern windowpane flounder is a candidate), and EO 14276 - Revisions to Reactive Accountability Measures.



PDT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FW74 SCOPE

Administrative Measures - Regulatory Clean-up / Streamlining

- The PDT recommends for inclusion in FW74 two administrative items to address regulatory clean-up and/or streamlining of two programs in the Northeast Multispecies (Groundfish) Fishery Management Plan (FMP) - identified and included within EO 14276 recommendations.
- *Longer term* => broader regulatory clean-up action desirable as the Council considers the utility of these programs
- **Short term** => administrative changes provide a temporary way to reduce the annual workload, address recent challenges faced with implementation of these programs, and better align with how these programs have been operating.



PDT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FW74 SCOPE

1) Regular B DAS Program

Issue: This program has been **closed annually for almost a decade** due to very low quota allocated into the Incidental Catch TAC, but **requires an annual determination by the Regional Administrator (RA)** and notification in the *Federal Register* to implement.

Suggested measure: **Change the administration of the program such that it's by default closed** unless the RA determines that sufficient quota is allocated to the Incidental Catch TACs to allow the program to operate in a given fishing year.

This ensures that the program remains closed when necessary but alleviates the current need for GARFO to include closure of the program in annual rulemaking.



PDT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FW74 SCOPE

2) Closed Area II Yellowtail Flounder/Haddock SAP

Issue: This program **requires annual determination by the RA** and notification in the *Federal Register* of whether this Special Access Program (SAP) is open in the upcoming fishing year to “Target Yellowtail Flounder” or to “Target Haddock”.

Open to “Target Yellowtail Flounder” is the default, but for at least a decade the determination has been made to open to “Target Haddock.”

Suggested measure: **Modify the administration of the SAP so that “Target Haddock” is the default status** not requiring RA declarations, which would eliminate rulemaking requirements in the busy buildup to May 1.

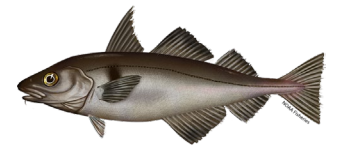
Also **consider updating the naming conventions applied to this SAP**, as these names are 1) very difficult to write out concisely in text and 2) result in misinterpretation about the requirements present in each mode.



PDT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FW74 SCOPE

Georges Bank Haddock Mid-Water Trawl/Herring Fishery Sub-ACL

- The PDT recommends for inclusion in FW74 the consideration to **set the sub-ACL to remain at a fixed percentage amount (e.g., the current 2%) and discontinue the requirement to review the sub-ACL.**
- MWT/herring fishery catches of GB haddock have been very low in recent years, and Atlantic herring fishery effort has declined under low herring ACLs.
- Would be consistent with how groundfish catches are evaluated in other fisheries (e.g., scallops, small-mesh) and for the Gulf of Maine (GOM) haddock MWT/herring fishery sub-ACL, whereby the PDT would continue to monitor catches and make recommendations to the Council as appropriate.



KEY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Consider PDT recommendations on draft scope for the action.
 - Consider including two administrative measures to streamline administration of:
 1. Regular B DAS Program
 2. Closed Area II Yellowtail Flounder/Haddock SAP
 - GB haddock MWT/herring fishery sub-ACL:
 - Consider discontinuing review requirement and setting allocation at fixed percentage
- Recommend initiating the action and identify the items for inclusion.



COMMITTEE/GAP/RAP DISCUSSION – JUNE 10TH

- Support for including administrative measures as recommended by the PDT
- Concerns raised on Atlantic halibut – likely overage in FY2025



FOR TODAY

- Receive a report from the PDT on the draft scope and alternatives.
- Motion to initiate the action and identify the items for inclusion.



FRAMEWORK ADJUSTMENT 68 / ACCEPTABLE BIOLOGICAL CATCH (ABC) CONTROL RULES



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FOR TODAY

Framework 68 / Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) Control Rules

- Receive a brief update



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Risk Policy Tool / ABC Control Rules

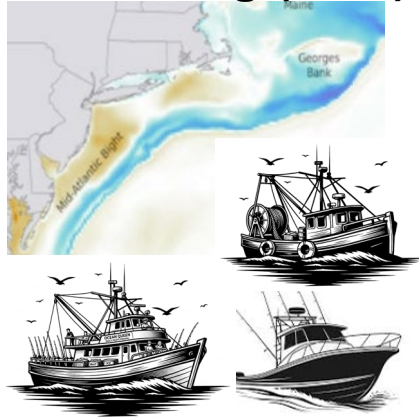
Risk Policy Concept (Tool)

Factors (5)

1. Global Weighting 2. Scoring (data)



Weights apply to all stocks



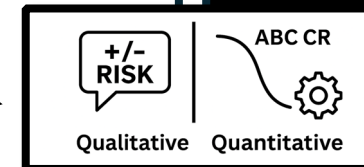
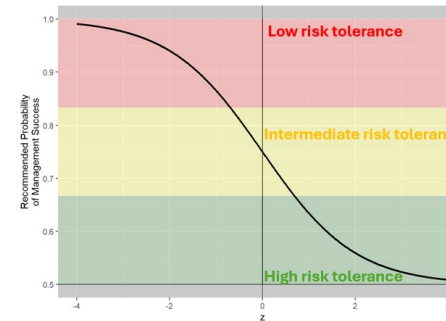
3. Z-Score

Combination of weights and scores.

$$Z = \sum (w_i s_i)$$

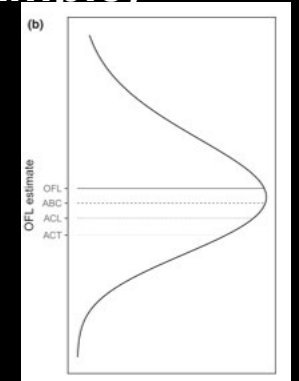
w = weights
 s = scores

4. Risk Tolerance



ABC Control Rule

5. Set ABC using Risk Policy + HCR (Example)



Potential Risk Policy Integrated ABC Control Rules



Two distinct approaches for determining the scientific uncertainty buffer

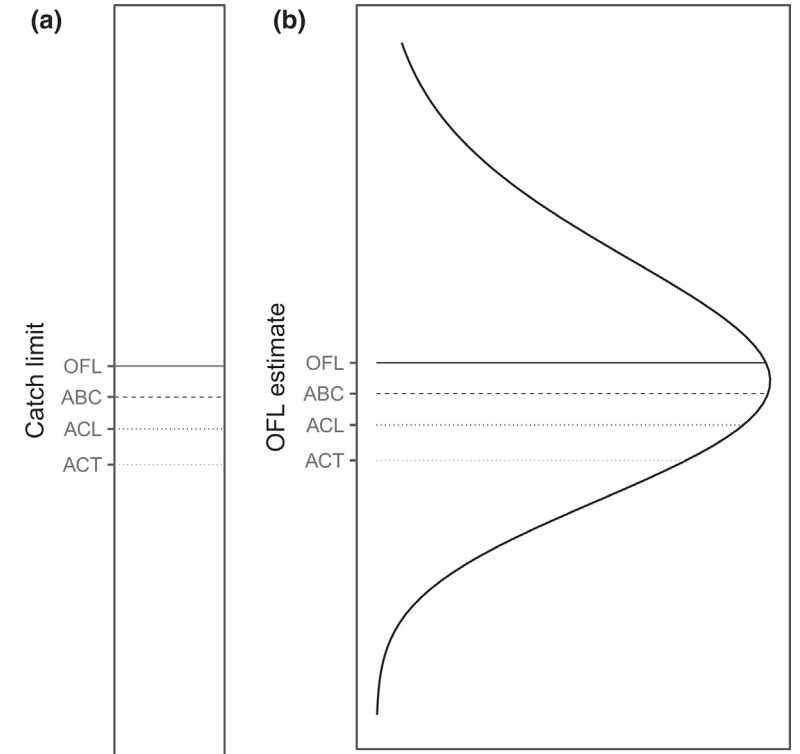
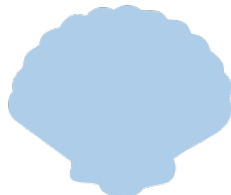
a) A simple percentage buffer

- For example: the ABC is 75% of the OFL



b) A distribution/probability-based approach

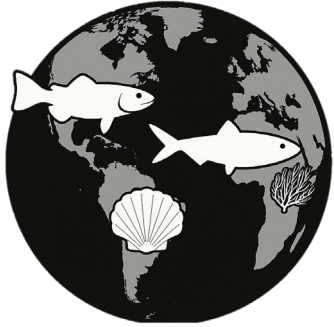
- ABC is determined by an acceptable probability of overfishing (e.g., $P^* = 0.25$)



Risk Policy Concept and ABC Control Rules

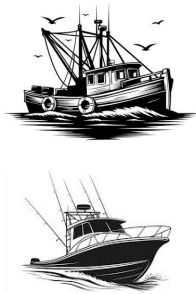
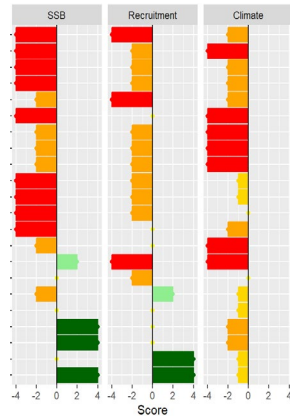
Risk Policy with Five Factors

1. Factor Weighting

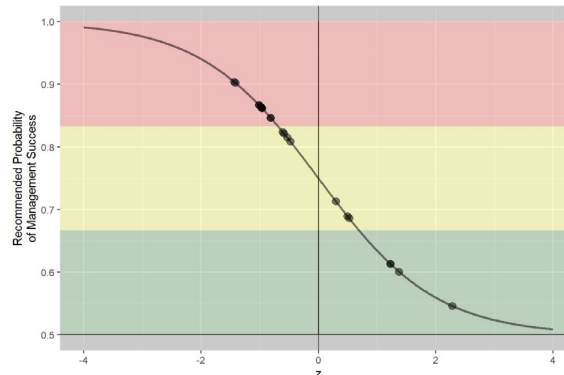


Weights apply to all stocks

2. Factor Scoring (Data)



3. Factors Combined into a single Z-Score

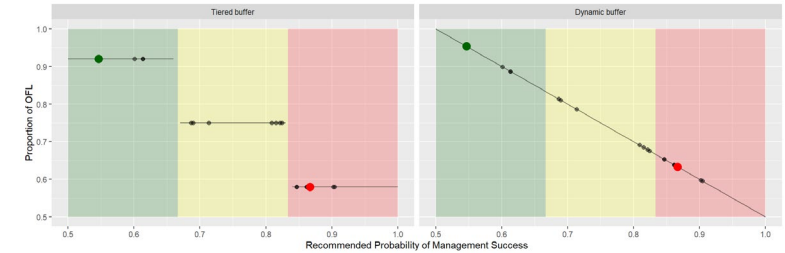


4. Risk Tolerance

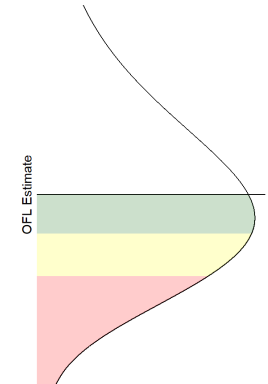
Potential Risk Policy Integrated ABC Control Rules

5. Determine Scientific Uncertainty Buffer

a) Risk Policy Informed Proportion of OFL



Risk Policy Informed P^*



b) Probability-based approach

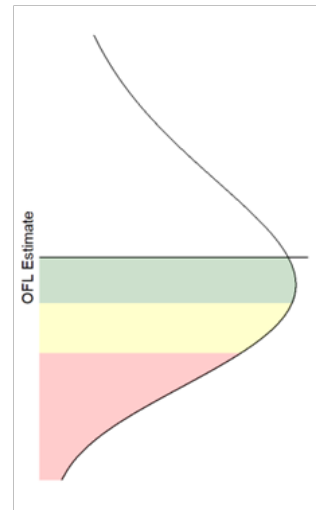
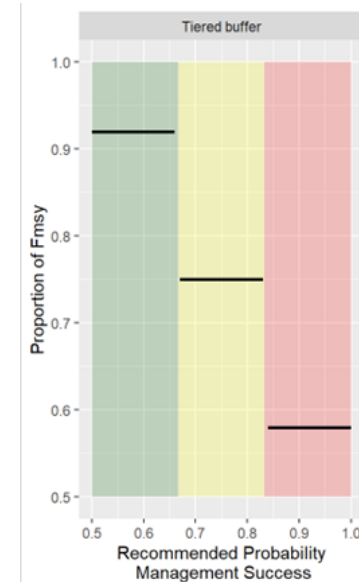
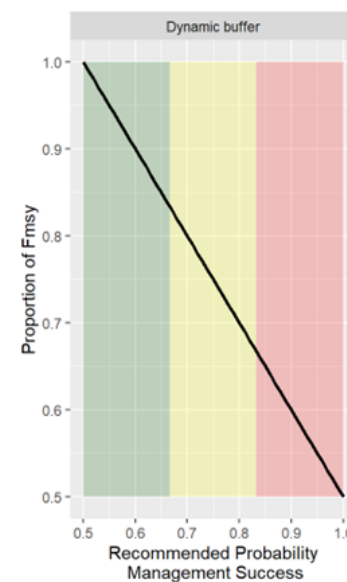
Simulating Alternative Groundfish Control Rules

Status Quo

- ABC specified as % of OFL
- Percentage changes with status

3 Risk Policy Integrated Alternatives

- Dynamic buffer
- Tiered approach
- Probability-based option (P^*)



Framework Adjustment 68

ACCEPTABLE BIOLOGICAL CATCH (ABC) CONTROL RULES
(aka Harvest Control Rules [HCR])



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Management Council

HISTORY

- The Council added development of revised groundfish ABC control rules (CRs) to its priorities in 2023. Framework 68 was initiated in June 2023.
- August 2023, a facilitated meeting discussed draft goals and objectives.
 - Participants from the Groundfish Committee, the SSC, the Groundfish PDT, the GAP, the RAP, the Risk Policy Working Group, and the public.
- The Council paused development of ABC CRs / FW 68 to first revise its Risk Policy. The Council approved the revised [Risk Policy Statement and Risk Policy Concept](#) in September 2024, and implementation began on January 1, 2025.
- Continued development of Risk Policy Concept in 2025 and 2026.
- Ongoing simulation testing of potential ABC CRs for Groundfish through contract work under Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) initiatives #1 and #3.



GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- The goal of FW68 is to **modify/replace the existing groundfish ABC CRs** to better address the goals and objectives of the FMP considering increasing uncertainty/variability in stock assessments, changing environmental conditions, and National Standard Guidelines. The new CR should produce catch advice that prevents overfishing, rebuilds stocks, improves attainment of optimum yield, and seeks to minimize large changes in catch advice as appropriate.
- **Develop a tiered groundfish ABC control rule which considers**, but is not limited to, potential categories, including:
 - 1) **Stock status**, including unknown and rebuilt;
 - 2) Stock assessment **model type** and sources or level of **uncertainty**; and
 - 3) **Productivity regime**. The control rule should also consider **stability in the ABCs**, with decision rules for when to use **constant ABCs** and the ability to use **phasing-in ABCs** consistent with National Standard 1 guidelines.



APPROACH

- Since development of the draft goals and objectives, some topics the Committee and Council are interested in have been incorporated into the revised Risk Policy.

Develop a tiered groundfish ABC control rule which considers, but is not limited to, potential categories, including: 1) stock status, including unknown and rebuilt; 2) stock assessment model type and sources or level of uncertainty; and 3) productivity regime. The control rule should also consider stability in the ABCs, with decision rules for when to use constant ABCs and the ability to use phasing-in ABCs consistent with National Standard 1 guidelines.

Incorporated into revised Risk Policy

To be considered through revised groundfish ABC CRs / FW 68

*2025 Risk Policy focus on considering stability to harvesters primarily by avoiding abrupt shifts in fisheries management.



FW68 NEXT STEPS

- Today, Council approves revised Risk Policy Concept, conducts weighting exercise, and discusses use of the new Risk Policy.
- Contractor: continue work on multiple ABC CR approaches including simulations.
- PDT
 - Draft alternatives for FW68 targeting final decision in ~~September 2026~~ April 2027.*
 - Include new (2016) NS 1 Guidance:
 - Phased-in ABCs to foster industry stability (not to exceed 3 years),
 - Carryover to foster safety and market stability, and
 - Constant ABCs. (^See PDT/SSC subgroup 11/22 and SSC 5/23.)



AMENDMENT 23 MONITORING REVIEW

REVISED presentation – This differs from the draft presentation sent out on June 12, 2026

For more details, please see presentations for the Groundfish Committee and Groundfish Advisory Panel on [May 27](#) and [June 10](#), 2026. A detailed written report will be available this summer.



FOR TODAY

Amendment 23 Monitoring Review

- Receive an overview of the PDT's draft report on the review
- Discussion
- There is no decision to be made today

Next Steps:

- PDT completes final written report in July.
- Council considers potential future actions to modify the groundfish sector monitoring program
 - *To be discussed during 2027 Council priorities recommendations later this year*



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Review Timeline

Complete the Amendment 23 review in the first half of 2026 to inform future funding decisions and management actions.

June 2025	Completed development of review metrics. Council paused work.
Spring 2026	Conduct review
June 2026	Complete review, report out to Council
July 2026	Complete report



Legend:
 (#) Review Theme
 ○ **Core metric**
 ➤ Supporting metric
 ➤ Secondary metrics**

Pared down list of metrics (6/4/2025)

A23 Review Metrics and Indicators

Evaluate efficacy of monitoring program in meeting A23 goals:

- A23 Goal:** Improve documentation of catch (“improved catch accounting”)
 Objective 1: determine total catch and effort of target or regulated species
 Objective 2: achieve coverage to minimize effects of potential bias, maintaining flexibility to enhance fleet viability

(1) Program Reach / Efficacy	(2) Data Impacts	(3) Fishery Impacts
○ Achieved coverage ➤ ASM coverage targets ○ Coverage equitability ➤ Waiver counts ➤ Acceptance rates ➤ Refusals ➤ Incidents ➤ PTNS notification compliance ➤ PTNS cancellations ○ Distribution of vessels ➤ EM video review rates	○ Observer bias ➤ Biased vessels ➤ Magnitude of observer bias ➤ Spatial observer bias** ○ Discard estimates ➤ Catch allocation by statistical area / broad stock area reporting** ○ Exclusion catch estimates ○ Management uncertainty buffers	○ Total monitoring costs ➤ Industry monitoring costs ○ Cost efficiency

Data Impacts Results

Data Impacts

- M1 Observer Bias
- M2 Biased Vessels
- M3 Magnitude of Observer Bias
- M6 Discard Estimates
- M10 Exclusion Catch Estimates
- M11 Management Uncertainty Buffers
- ~~M9 Catch Allocation by Statistical Area/Broad Stock Area Reporting~~

Fishery Impacts

Program Reach

- Observer bias has declined.
 - Not eliminated but ameliorated by high coverage.
 - Past patterns of catch bias absent.
 - Vessels still show bias on unobserved trips.
 - Observed trips land more total lbs, GF lbs, and less non-GF lbs*
- Accuracy and precision of catch data has improved.
 - Most discards are now observed rather than calculated.
- Trips excluded from ASM have lower discard rates.
- There is no single coverage target <100% to address bias.
- There is an approach to set coverage based on expected bias.



Data Impacts

- M1 Observer Bias
- M2 Biased Vessels
- M3 Magnitude of Observer Bias
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- ~~M9 Catch Allocation by Statistical Area/Broad Stock Area Reporting~~

Fishery Impacts

Program Reach

Patterns of Bias Declined

- Persistent patterns from 2012 through 2017 for **observed trips**.
 - Gulf of Maine trips landed MORE cod.
 - Georges Bank trips landed LESS Haddock.
 - Stat Area 521 trips landed LESS haddock, but MORE winter flounder.
- Those patterns are gone from 2022 through 2025.
 - Georges Bank trips landed MORE redfish.
- **Lack of bias patterns suggests higher coverage reduces bias.**



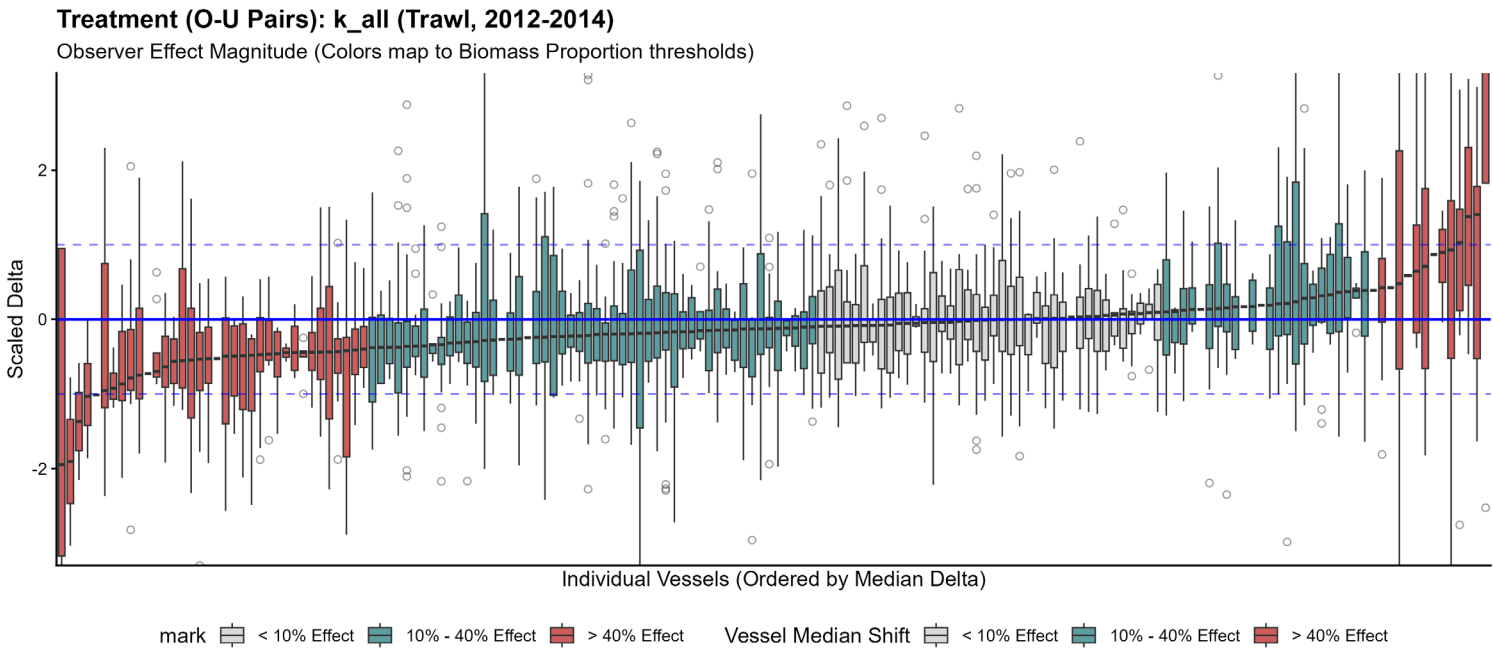
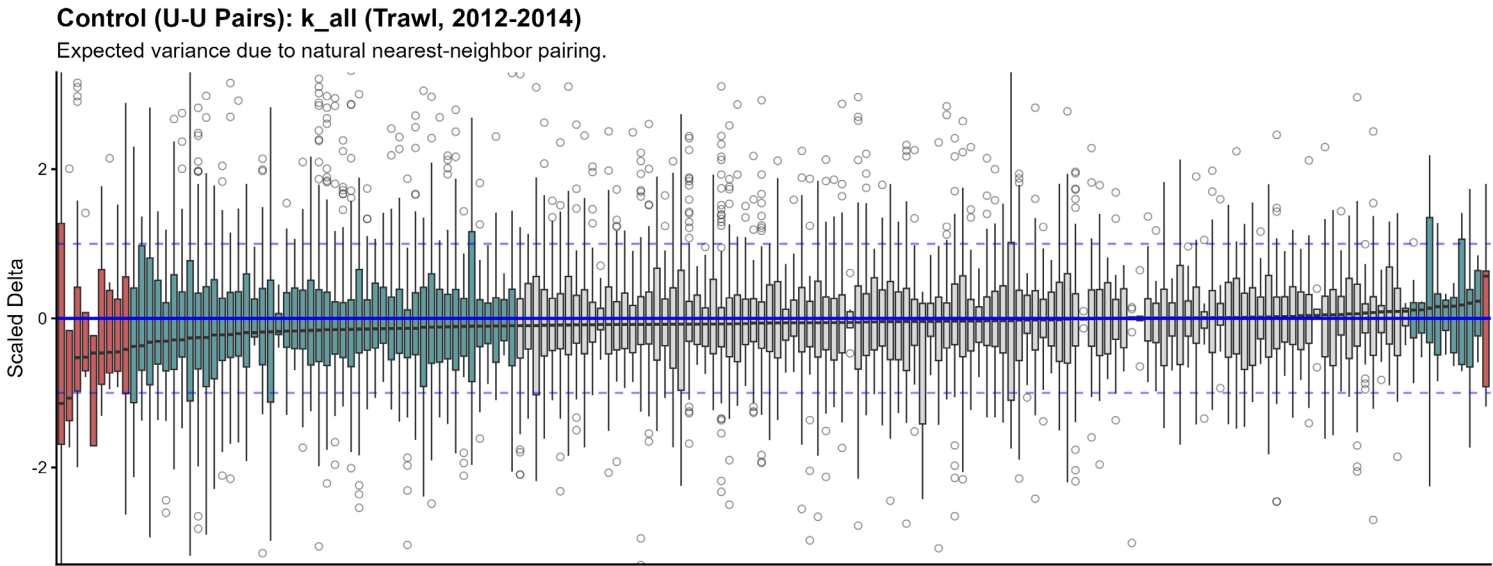
- Data Impacts**
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Fishery Impacts

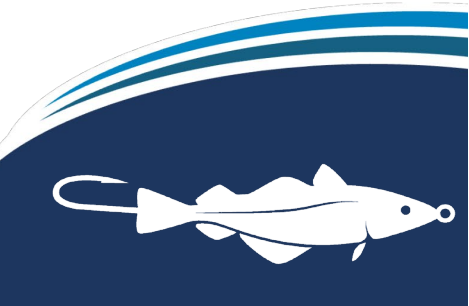
Program Reach

2012-2014

Bias Continues But Minimized



mark < 10% Effect 10% - 40% Effect > 40% Effect Vessel Median Shift < 10% Effect 10% - 40% Effect > 40% Effect



- Data Impacts**
- M1 Observer Bias
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Fishery Impacts

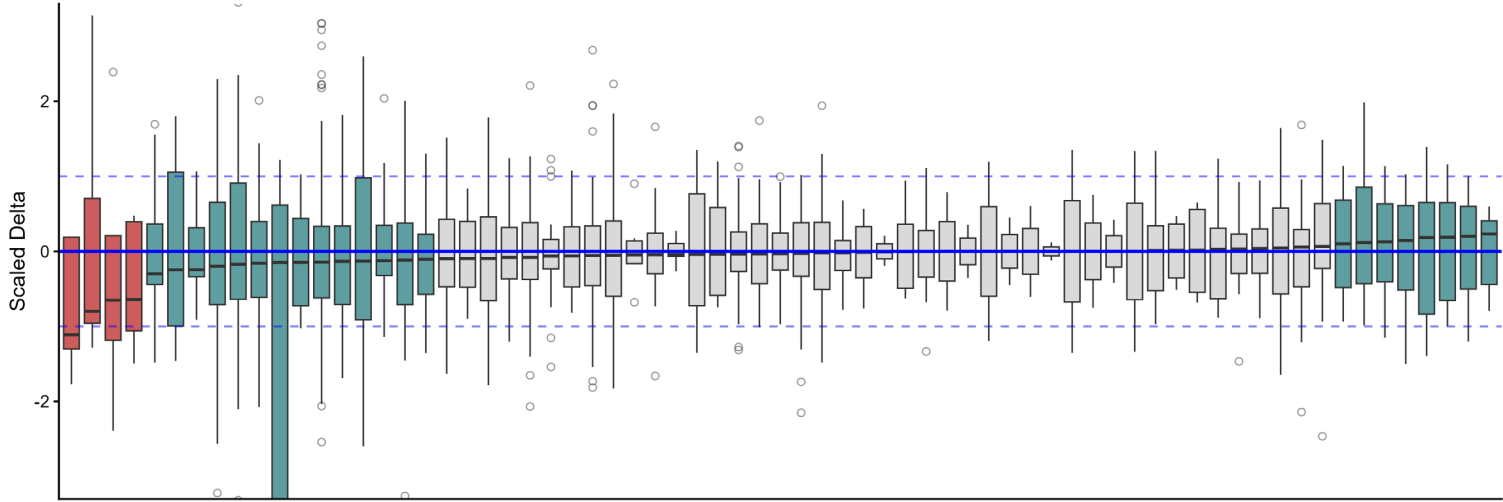
Program Reach

2022-2025

Bias Continues But Minimized

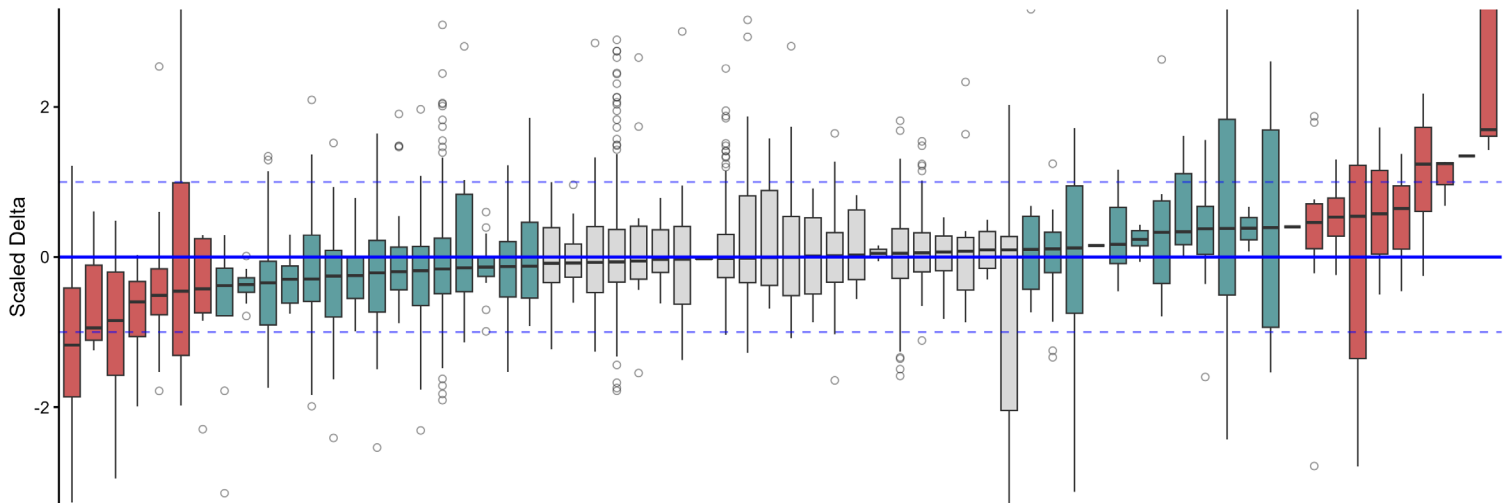
Control (U-U Pairs): k_all (Trawl, 2022-2025)

Expected variance due to natural nearest-neighbor pairing.



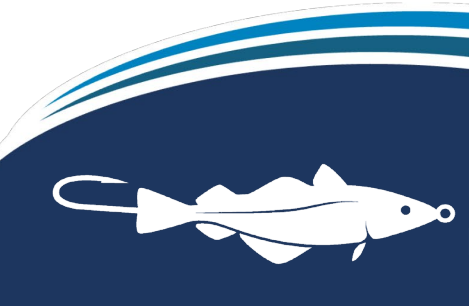
Treatment (O-U Pairs): k_all (Trawl, 2022-2025)

Observer Effect Magnitude (Colors map to Biomass Proportion thresholds)



Individual Vessels (Ordered by Median Delta)

mark < 10% Effect 10% - 40% Effect > 40% Effect Vessel Median Shift < 10% Effect 10% - 40% Effect > 40% Effect



Magnitude of Bias Has Declined

Data Impacts

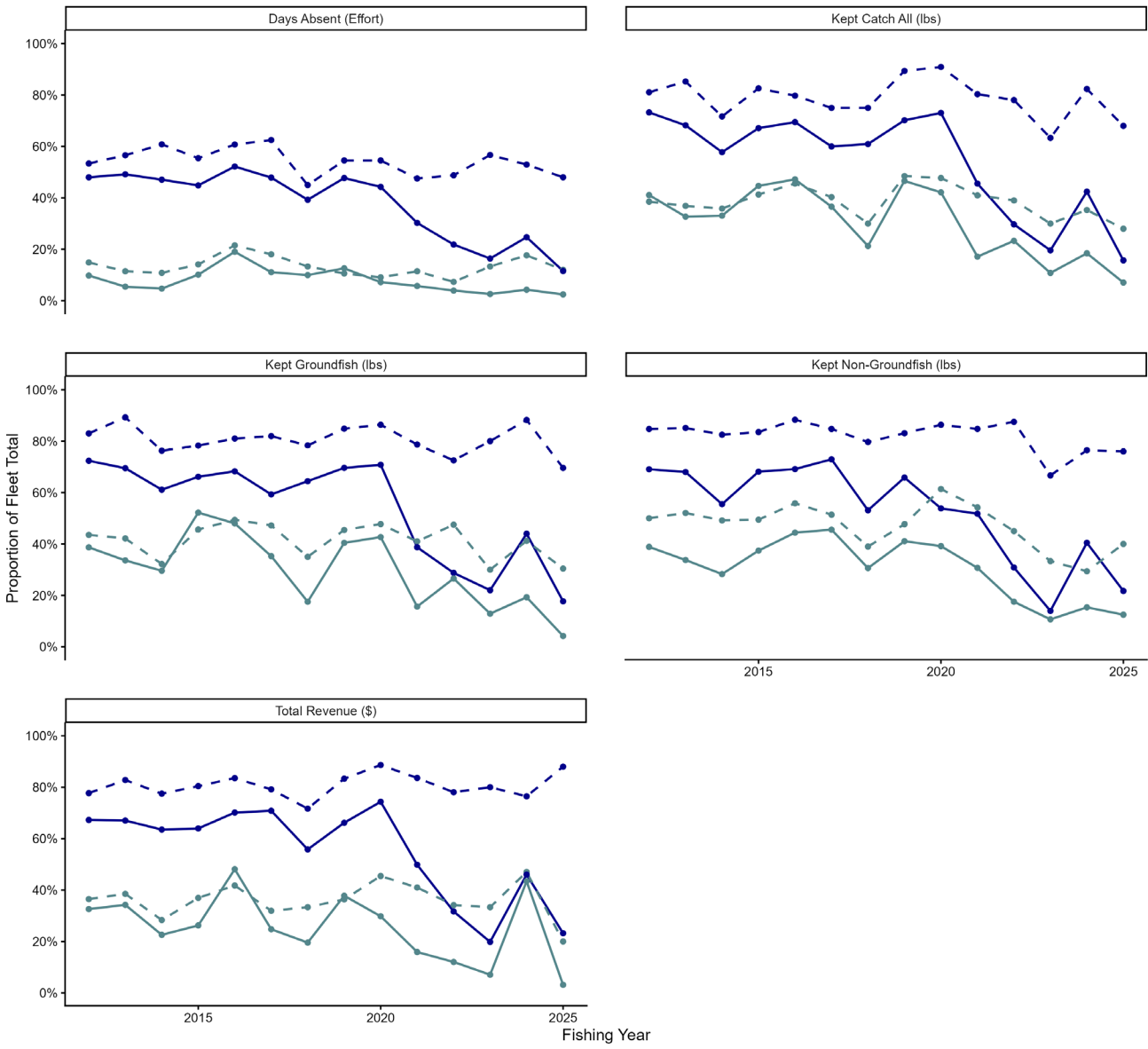
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Fishery Impacts

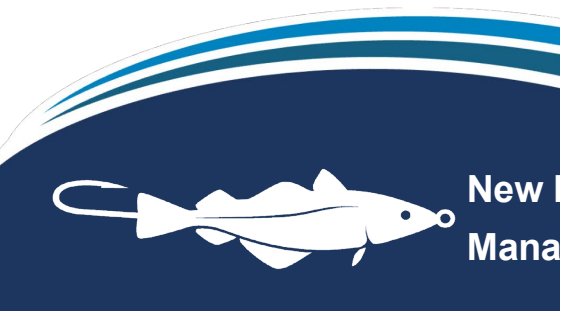
Program Reach

Impact (Unobserved Only): Trawl Fleet

Solid lines = proportion of pool total driven by shifting vessels. Dashed = vessel count.



Metric — Proportion of Catch/Value/Effort — Proportion of Vessels Magnitude — > 10% Effect — > 40% Effect



Coverage Can Address Bias

Data Impacts

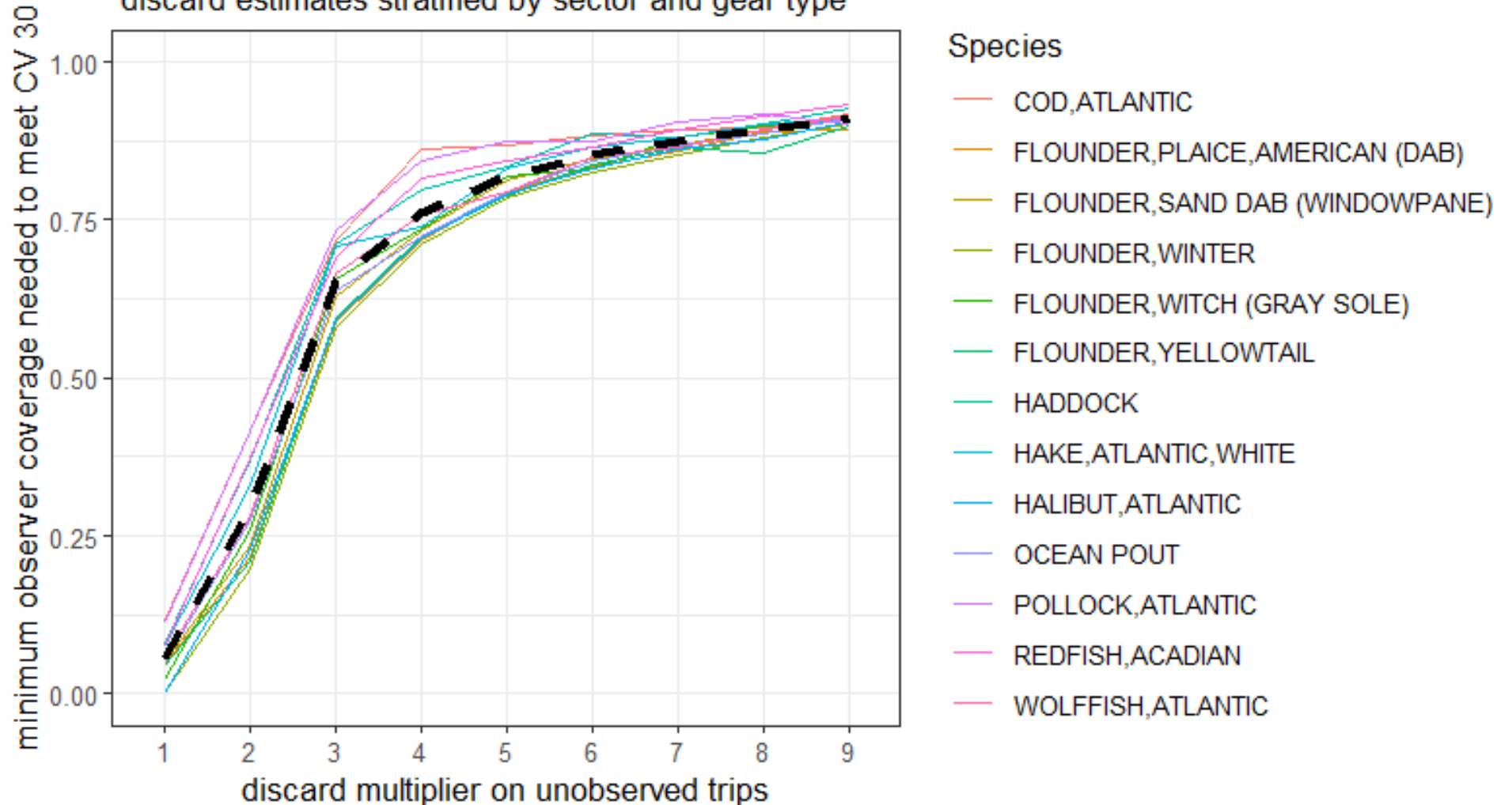
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Fishery Impacts

Program Reach

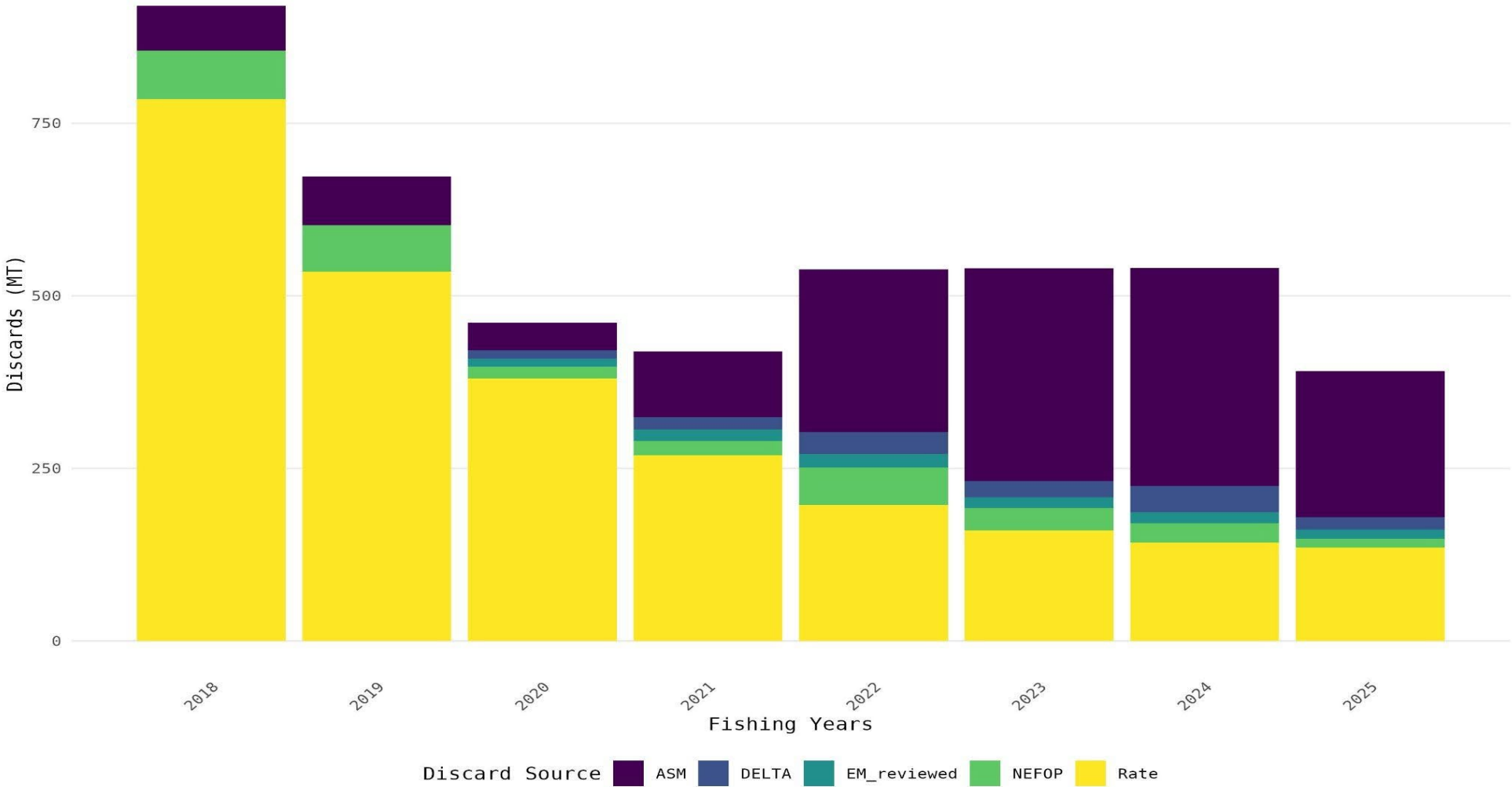
Groundfish FY25

excluding common pool, EM vessels, and all ASM-exempted trips (but includes redfish trips)
discard estimates stratified by sector and gear type



Discard Estimates for Sector Trips

Discards On Commercial Groundfish Sector Trips
Groundfish Species



*2025 estimates are preliminary and subject to change.

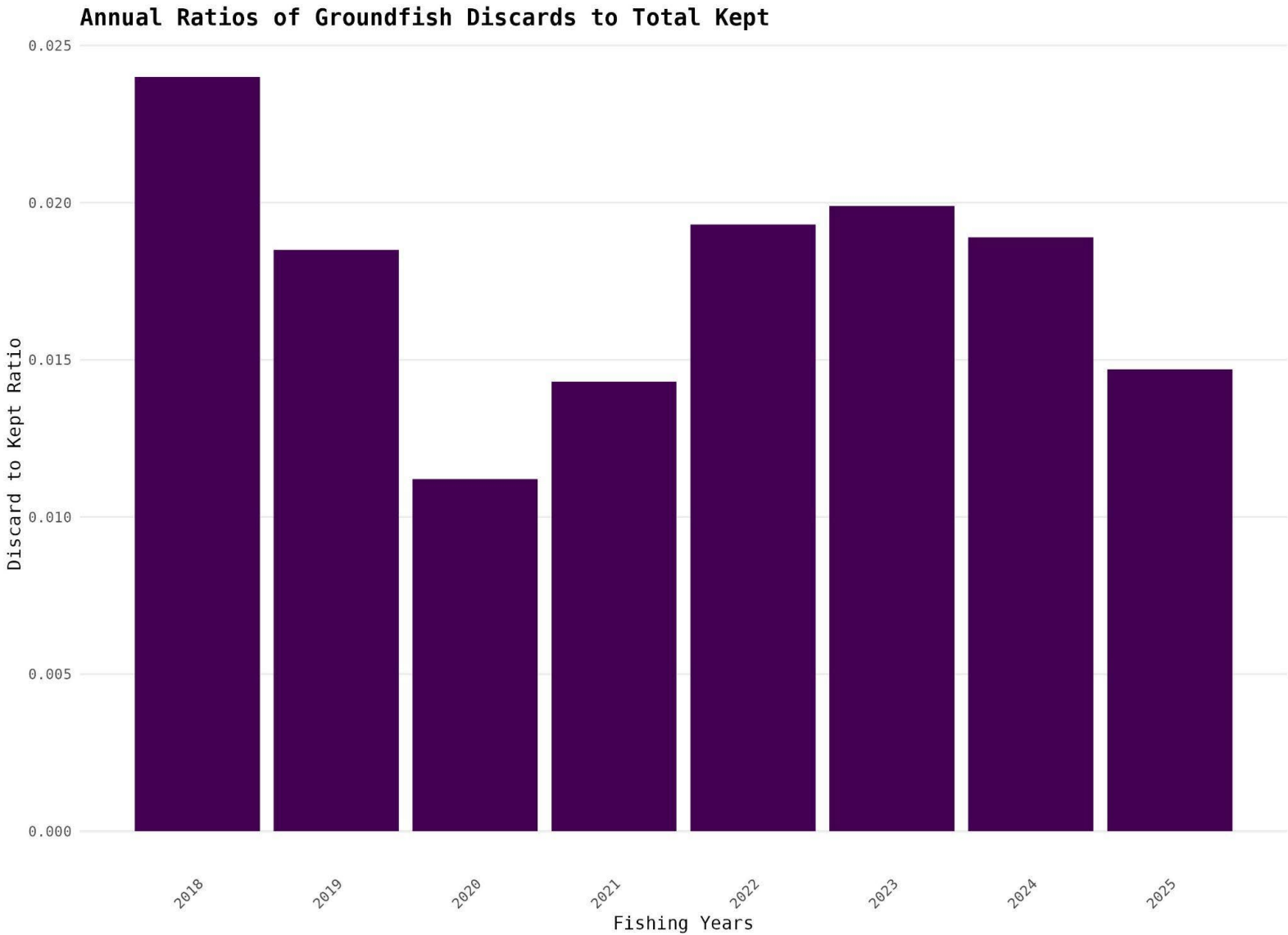
Discard Percentage of Kept Catch

Data Impacts

- M1 Observer Bias
- M2 Biased Vessels
- M3 Magnitude of Observer Bias
- **M6 Discard Estimates**
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- ~~M9 Catch Allocation by Statistical Area/Broad Stock Area Reporting~~

Fishery Impacts

Program Reach



Data Impacts

- M1 Observer Bias
- M2 Biased Vessels
- M3 Magnitude of Observer Bias
- M6 Discard Estimates
- **M10 Exclusion Catch Estimates**
- M11 Management Uncertainty Buffers
- ~~M9 Catch Allocation by Statistical Area/Broad Stock Area Reporting~~

Fishery Impacts

Program Reach

Trips Excluded from ASM Have Lower Groundfish Discards.

Exclusion trip discard rates were lower for all caught groundfish stocks than discard rates for trips subject to the monitoring requirement*.

71 30 Exclusion 2023-2025:

- 4 - 8 permits
- 17 - 45 trips
- 0.6 - 0.7 mt of groundfish discards

Extra Large Mesh Gillnet Exclusion 2023-2025:

- 15 - 17 permits
- 842 - 939 trips
- 2.4 – 5.4 mt of groundfish discards

***One exception was SNE/MA winter flounder for XLG Gillnets in 2023.**



- Data Impacts**
- M1 Observer Bias
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 - M6 Discard Estimates
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 - **M11 Management Uncertainty Buffers**
 - ~~M9 Catch Allocation by Statistical Area/Broad Stock Area Reporting~~

Fishery Impacts

Program Reach

Management Uncertainty Buffers Removed Annually

Fishing Year	MUB Removed?	Effect ¹
2023	2	³ Groundfish Revenue, Total Revenue, and Operating Profit all below predicted levels.
2024	Yes	⁴ Groundfish Revenue (+\$2.2M), Total Revenue (+\$4.5M), and Operating Profit (+\$2.7M) all above predicted levels with or w/o MUB.
2025	Yes	⁵ Groundfish Revenue (+\$1.2M), Total Revenue (+\$2.6M), and Operating Profit (+\$1.6M) all predicted to be higher with MUB removed.



Fishery Impacts

- M12 Total Monitoring Costs
- M13 Industry Monitoring Costs
- M14 Cost Efficiency
- ~~M18 Spatial Observer Bias~~

Fishery Impacts Results

- Total monitoring costs have increased.
 - More due to increased achieved coverage
 - Industry costs per observed ASM day increased ~6%.
- EM is more cost efficient than ASM per day absent, per completed trip, and per landed pound*
- More work is underway on spatial observer bias.



Fishery Impacts

- **M12 Total Monitoring Costs**
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- ~~M18 Spatial Observer Bias~~

Monitoring Costs Scale with Achieved Coverage

- Total monitoring costs increase with days monitored
 - 2021: 4.2M days \$2.3M
 - 2022: 6.0M days \$5.2M
 - 2023: 7.2M days \$6.9M
 - 2024: 7.4M days \$6.6M



Fishery Impacts

- M12 Total Monitoring Costs
- M13 Industry Monitoring Costs
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Program Reach

EM is Cheaper than ASM

- EM is less expensive per day absent than ASM
- EM price/day shows decreasing trend since A23 implementation
- ASM prices for industry increased about 6% (controlling for inflation).

FY	ASM Days (K)	ASM Cost (M)	Cost/ASM Day (\$)	EM Days (K)	EM Cost (M)	Cost/EM Day (\$)
2021	2.7	\$2.0	\$756	1.5	\$0.3	\$233
2022	4.7	\$4.4	\$926	1.3	\$0.8	\$585
2023	6.1	\$6.4	\$1,054	1.1	\$0.5	\$461
2024	5.8	\$6.0	\$1,028	1.6	\$0.6	\$383



Fishery Impacts

- M12 Total Monitoring Costs
- M13 Industry Monitoring Costs
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- ~~M18 Spatial Observer Bias~~

Program Reach

EM is Cheaper than ASM

- EM is less expensive per completed trip than ASM
- EM price/trip shows decreasing trend since A23 implementation

FY	ASM Trips (K)	ASM Cost (M)	Cost/ASM Trip (\$)	EM Trips (K)	EM Cost (M)	Cost/EM Trip (\$)
2021	1.2	\$2.0	\$1,750	0.8	\$0.3	\$413
2022	1.8	\$4.4	\$2,495	0.8	\$0.8	\$922
2023	2.2	\$6.4	\$2,885	0.8	\$0.5	\$611
2024	2.2	\$6.0	\$2,768	1.0	\$0.6	\$608



Fishery Impacts

- M12 Total Monitoring Costs
- M13 Industry Monitoring Costs
- M14 Cost Efficiency
- M18 Spatial Observer Bias

Program Reach

EM is Cheaper than ASM

- EM is less expensive per pound landed than ASM
- Price per pound landed has fluctuated for both ASM and EM

FY	ASM Pounds (M)	ASM Cost (M)	Cost/ASM Lb (\$)	EM Pounds (M)	EM Cost (M)	Cost/EM Lb (\$)
2021	12.7	\$2.0	\$0.16	9.5	\$0.3	\$0.04
2022	24.2	\$4.4	\$0.18	5.7	\$0.8	\$0.13
2023	29.9	\$6.4	\$0.22	3.0	\$0.5	\$0.17
2024	30.3	\$6.0	\$0.20	5.7	\$0.6	\$0.10



Fishery Impacts

- M12 Total Monitoring Costs
- **M13 Industry Monitoring Costs**
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- ~~M18 Spatial Observer Bias~~

Industry ASM Costs Increased

- Costs per ASM day absent increased by 6% in the A23 period.
- This has a small effect on total at-sea cost increases under A23.
- Increase is primarily due to higher observer coverage rates.

	2016-2018	2023-2025
At-Sea Cost (2025 USD)	\$707,308	\$4,482,624
ASM Observed Days Absent	857	5,101
Cost per ASM Observed Day Absent (2025 USD)	\$826	\$879
Realized Coverage Rate	16%	83%



Fishery Impacts

- M12 Total Monitoring Costs
- M13 Industry Monitoring Costs
- **M14 Cost Efficiency**
- ~~M18 Spatial Observer Bias~~

Cost Efficiency is Complex

- EM is drastically cheaper across every single metric
 - Per trip, EM is nearly a fifth of the cost of ASM (\$608 vs. \$2,768).
 - Per pound of fish, EM costs half as much (\$0.10 vs \$0.20).
 - EM equipment purchased before A23 is **not** included in these costs.
- EM adoption seems to have plateaued.
- Most EM vessels fish shorter trips and less volume than ASM vessels.
- If the current EM vessels are the best candidates for EM, then expanding EM to other vessels may have higher costs for each metric.



Program Reach

- M20 Achieved Coverage
- M19 Achieved Coverage
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- M34 PTNS Cancellations
- M27 Coverage Equitability
- M28 Distribution of Vessels
- M39 EM Video Review Rates

PROGRAM REACH RESULTS

- Expanding monitoring succeeded - Highest monitoring coverage ever.
- Targets: 90% to 100%. Achieved 81% to 86%.
- MUBs removed for some or all stocks each year (2023-2025).
- Provider trip acceptance has increased and become less variable.
- PTNS compliance between 95% and 97%. Trip cancelations minor.
- Incident reports increase with coverage, but proportions consistent.
- Waivers declined with most waivers related to safety.
- Achieved coverage increases with target, varies between sectors.
- Coverage equitability is subjective and up to the Council.



Achieved Coverage Tracks Targets

Fishing Year	Coverage Target (%)	Coverage Achieved (%)	Date Announced	Notes
2021	40	32 ¹	1/26/2021	COVID-related waivers ended June 17, 2021.
2022	99	60	12/14/2021	99% target set to address bias and to prepare for A23. Reduced to 80% based on appropriations for NMFS' costs.
	80		11/29/2022	
2023 ⁴	90	81	3/16/2023	Confirmed 9/26/2023.
2024 ⁵	100	86	2/20/2024	A23 set coverage at 100% for 2022-2025, when federal funding can support industry and agency costs. Target defaults to 40% in 2026, but may be increased if federal funding is available.
2025 ⁶	100	81 ²	3/21/2025	
2026	100	3	3/13/2026	

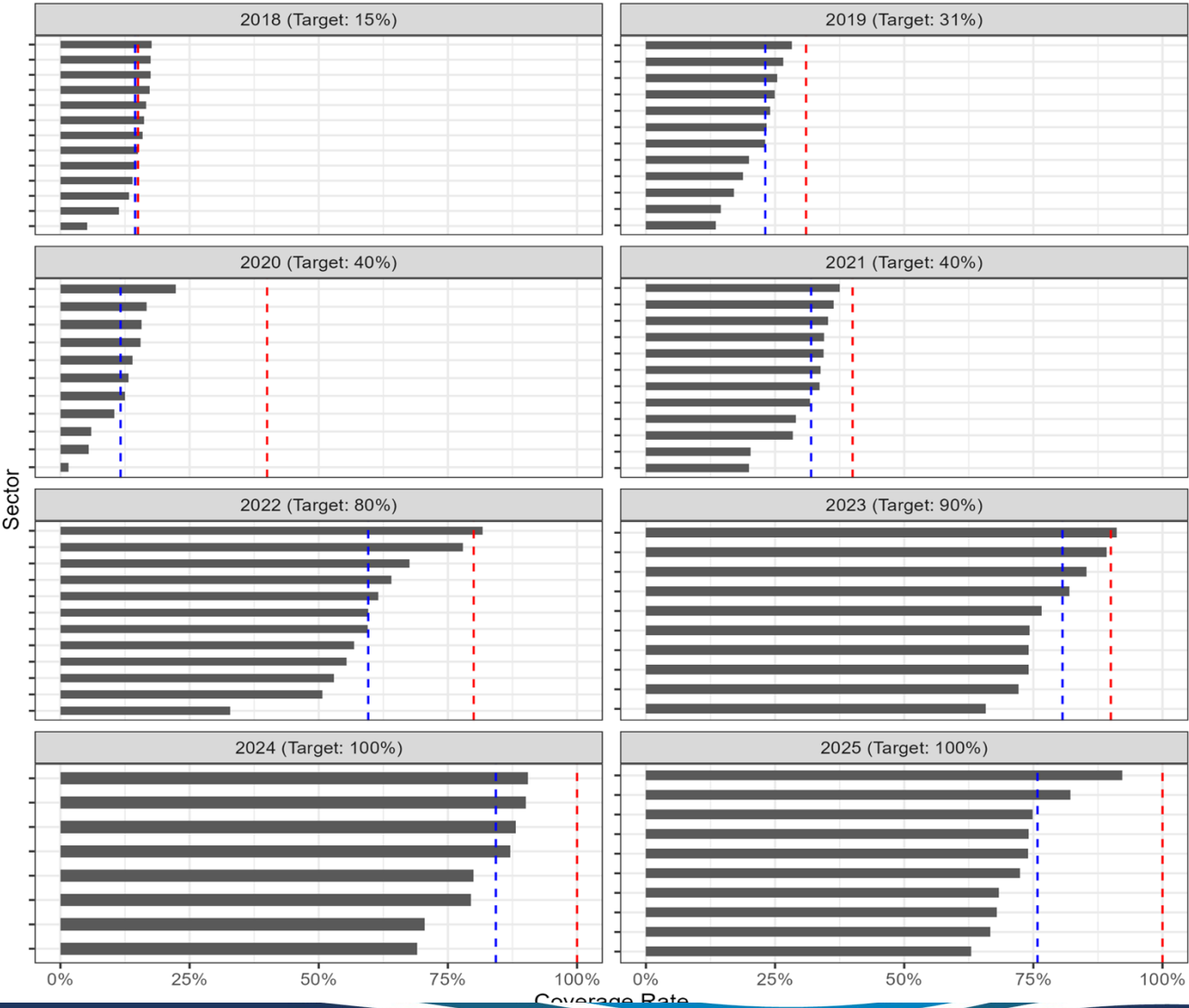


Program Reach

- M20 ASM Coverage Targets
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Achieved Coverage Tracks Target

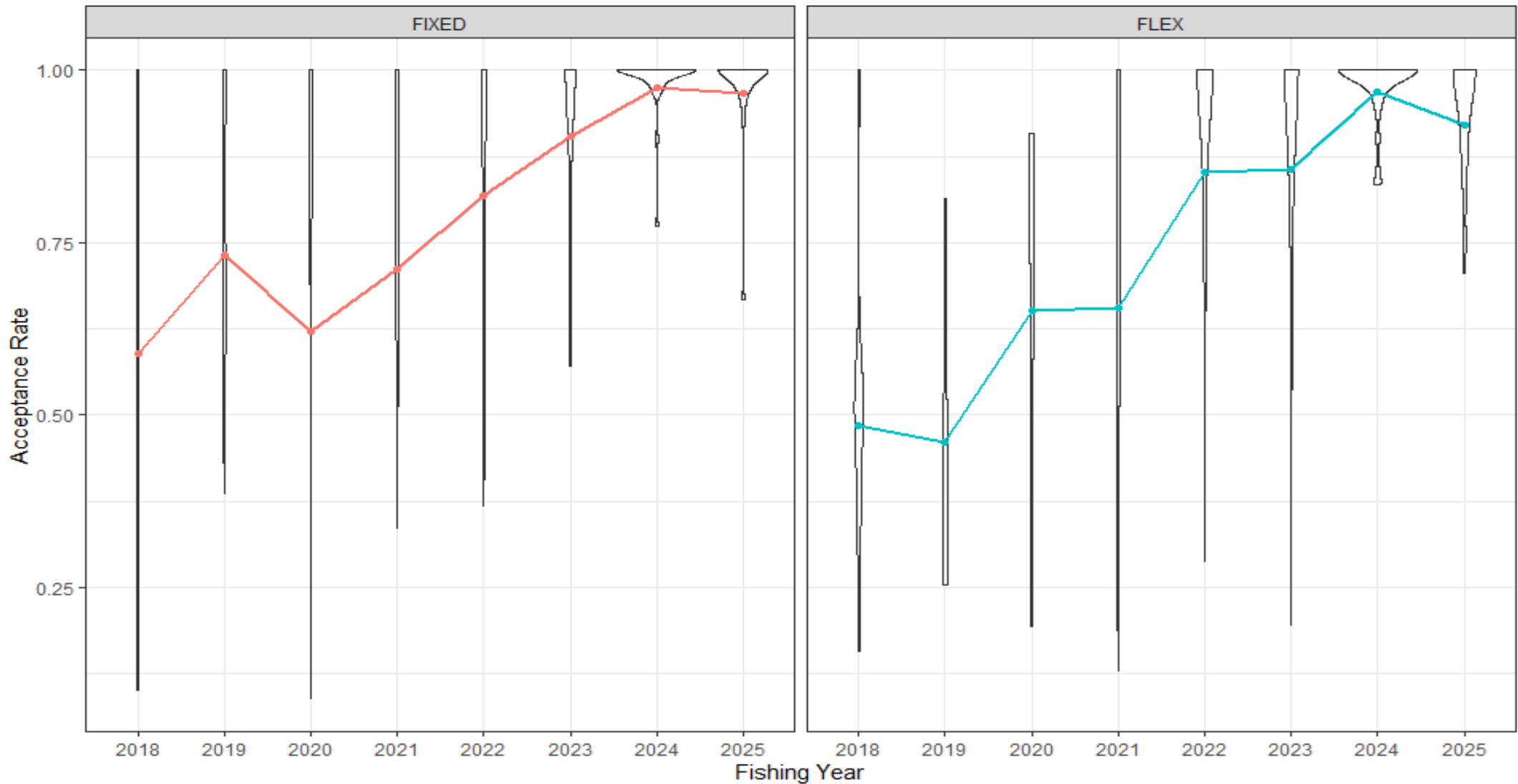
COMBINED ASMTNET OF Sector Observer Coverage: FY 2018-FY 2025
Red line = Target Coverage Rate | Blue line = Sector Combined Realized Coverage Rate.
Source: GARFO Sector Coverage Report, supplemented with PTNS ASM Exemptions.



Acceptance Rates Increasing

Program Reach

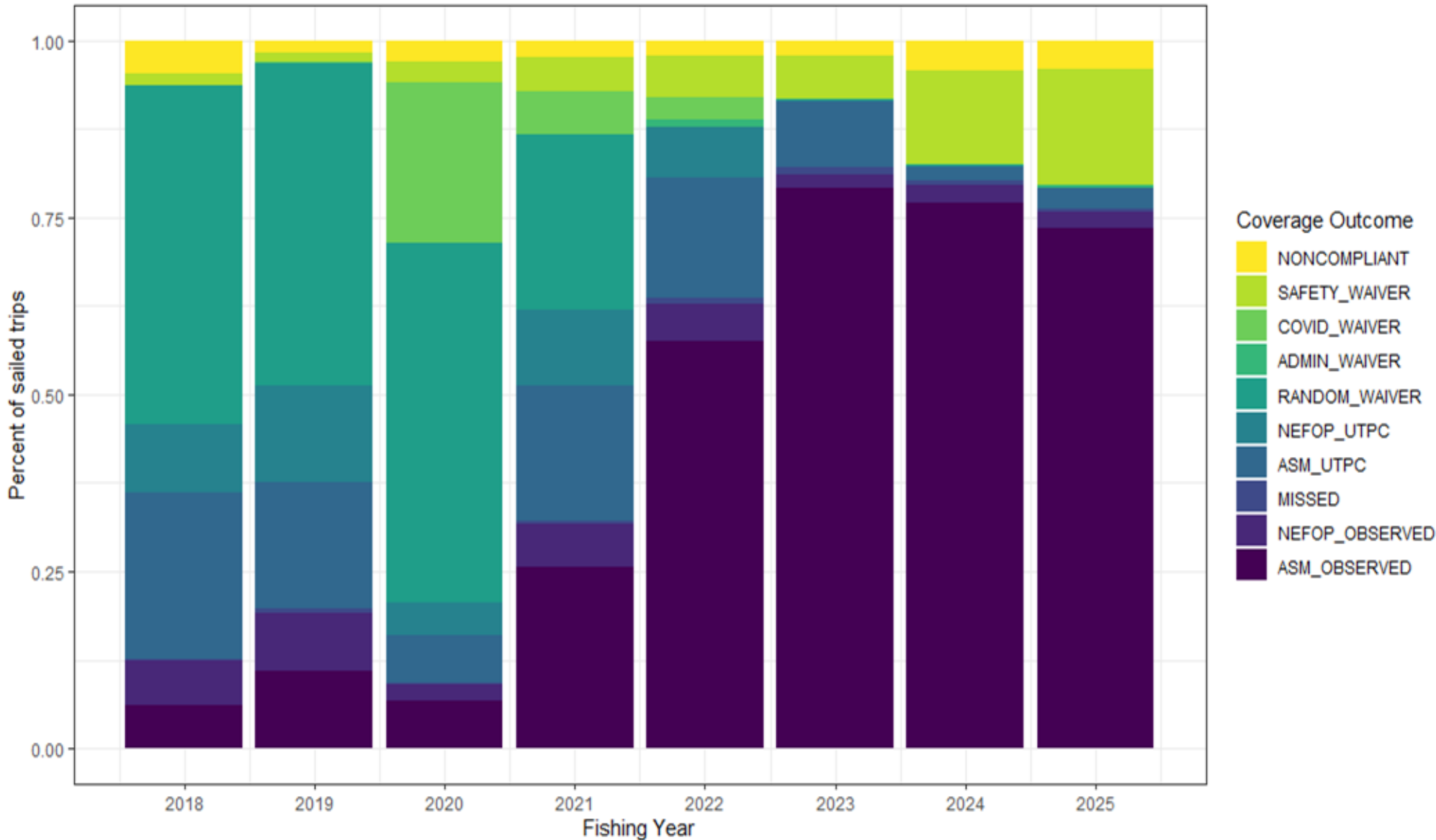
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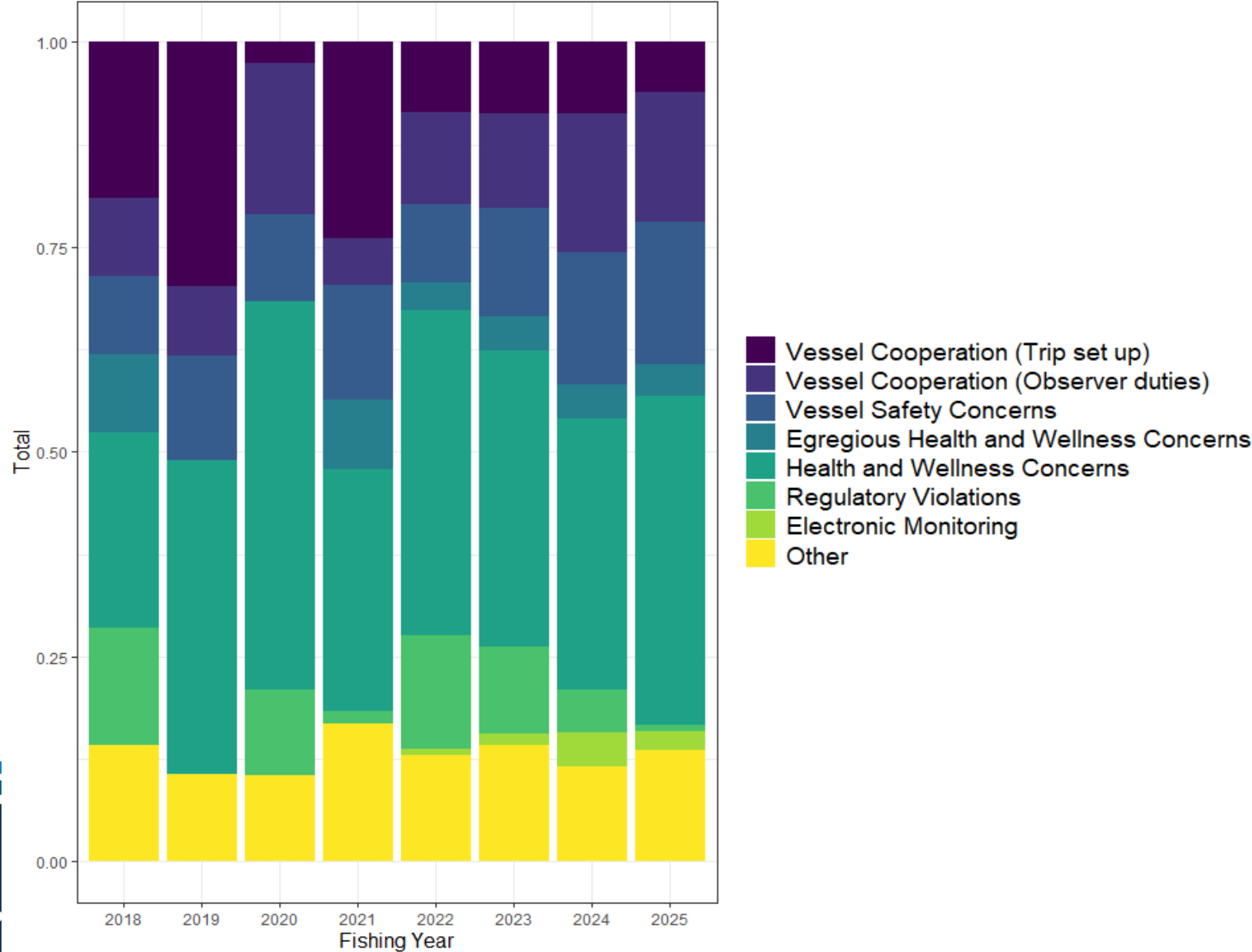
Most Waivers are for Safety



Program Reach

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Refusals and Incident Reports



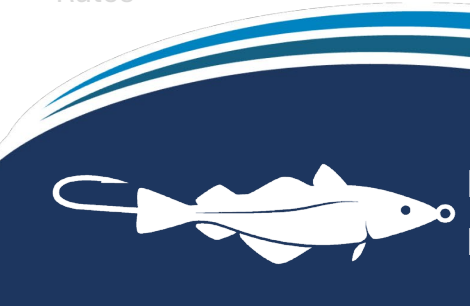
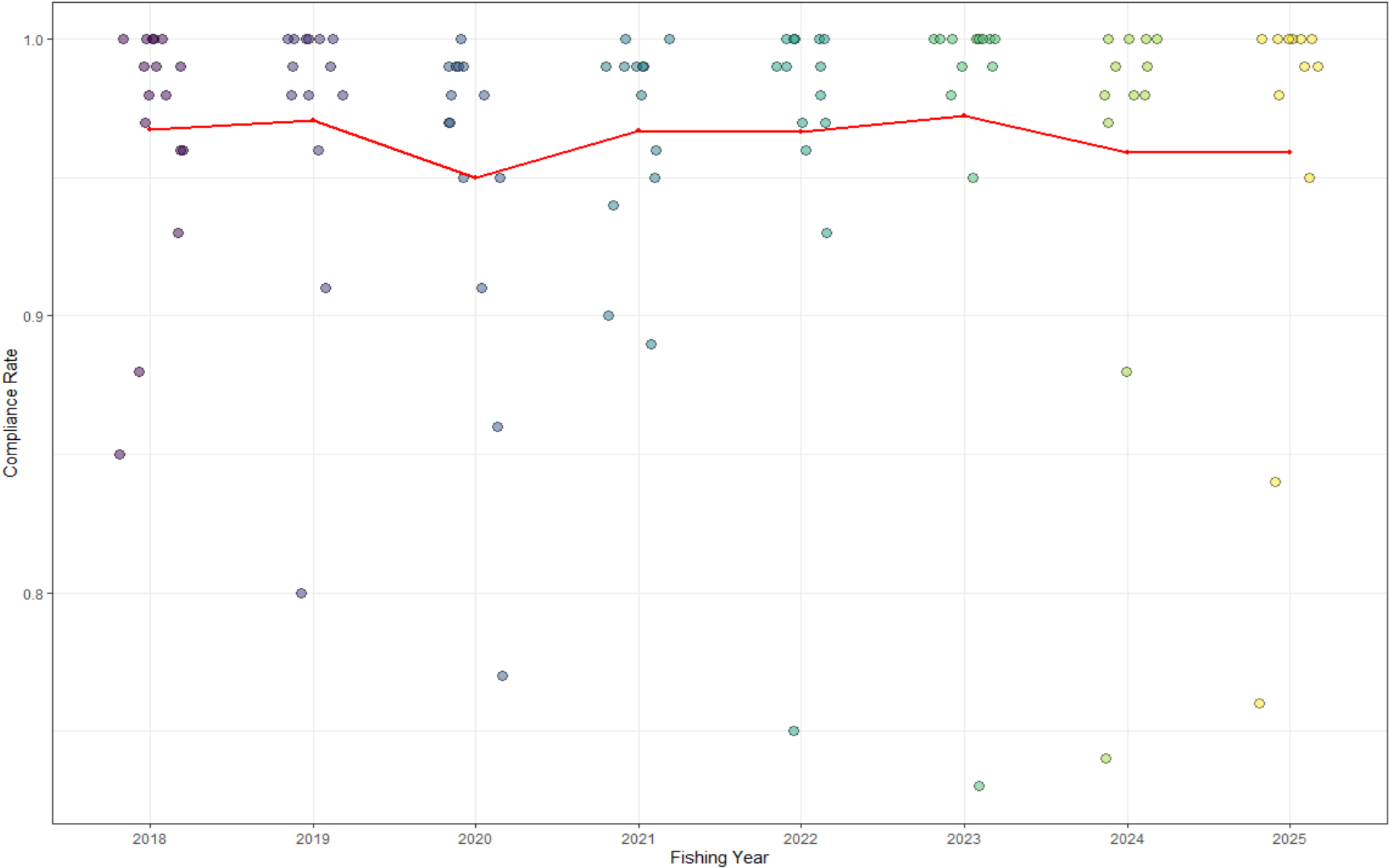
PTNS Compliance is Consistently High

Data Impacts

Fishery Impacts

Program Reach

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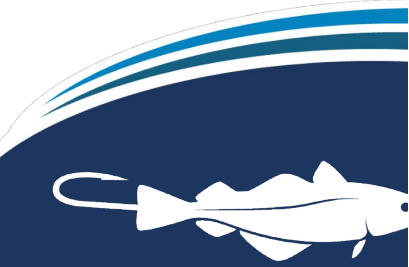
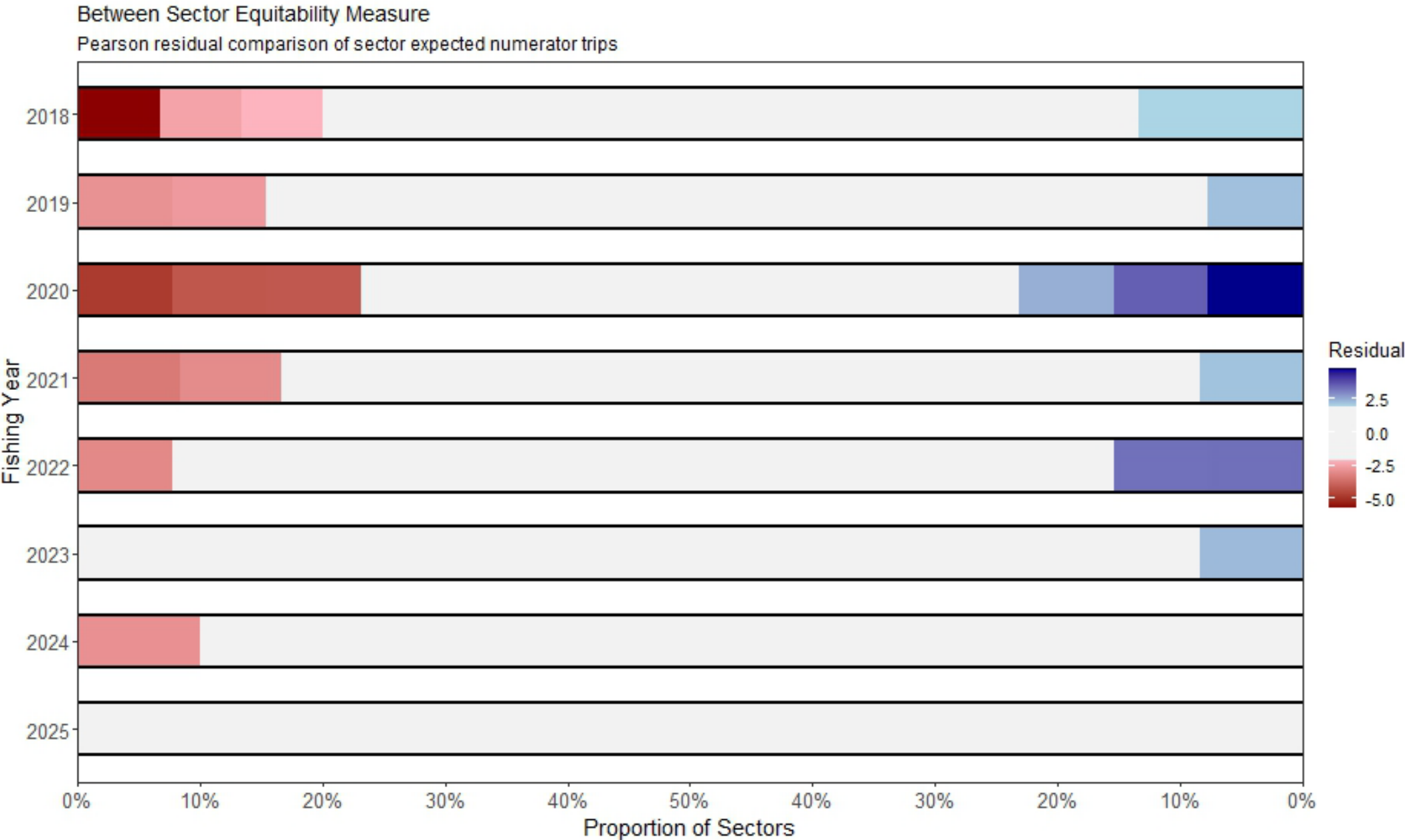
Cancellation Rates Declined



Program Reach

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Coverage Is More Equitable



Program Reach

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- **M28 Distribution of Vessels**
- M39 EM Video Review Rates

ASM decreases & EM increases

Fishing Year	ASM Vessels	EM Vessels
2020	94	16
2021	109	18
2022	103	21
2023	92	22
2024	84	33
2025	73	29



Program Reach

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Smaller Vessels Choose EM

Fishing Year	Vessel Length	ASM Vessels	EM Vessels
2020	<= 50.0	37	14
2020	50.1 - 75.0	28	2
2020	> 75.0	29	NA
2021	<= 50.0	48	13
2021	50.1 - 75.0	32	5
2021	> 75.0	29	NA
2022	<= 50.0	42	14
2022	50.1 - 75.0	31	7
2022	> 75.0	30	NA



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- **M39 EM Video Review Rates**

EM Review Rates are Performance-Based

Fishing Year	Experienced / Currently Enrolled Vessels	New / Newly Enrolled Vessels
2021	50%	50%
2022	35%	50%
2023	35%	50%
2024	35%	50%
2025	35%	50%



Data Impacts Results

Data Impacts

- M1 Observer Bias
- M2 Biased Vessels
- M3 Magnitude of Observer Bias
- M6 Discard Estimates
- M10 Exclusion Catch Estimates
- M11 Management Uncertainty Buffers
- ~~M9 Catch Allocation by Statistical Area/Broad Stock Area Reporting~~

Fishery Impacts

Program Reach

- Observer bias has declined.
 - Not eliminated but ameliorated by high coverage.
 - Past patterns of catch bias absent.
 - Vessels still show bias on unobserved trips.
- Accuracy and precision of catch data has improved.
 - Most discards are now observed rather than calculated.
- Trips excluded from ASM have lower discard rates.
- There is no single coverage target $<100\%$ to address bias.
- There is an approach to set coverage based on expected bias.



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Management Council

Fishery Impacts

- M12 Total Monitoring Costs
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- ~~M18 Spatial Observer Bias~~

Fishery Impacts Results

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- Achieved coverage increases with target, varies between sectors.
- Coverage equitability is subjective and up to the Council.



FOR TODAY

Amendment 23 Monitoring Review

- Receive an overview of the PDT's draft report on the review
- Discussion
- There is no decision to be made today

Next Steps:

- PDT completes final written report in July.
- Council considers potential future actions to modify the groundfish sector monitoring program
 - *To be discussed during 2027 Council priorities recommendations later this year*



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Management Council

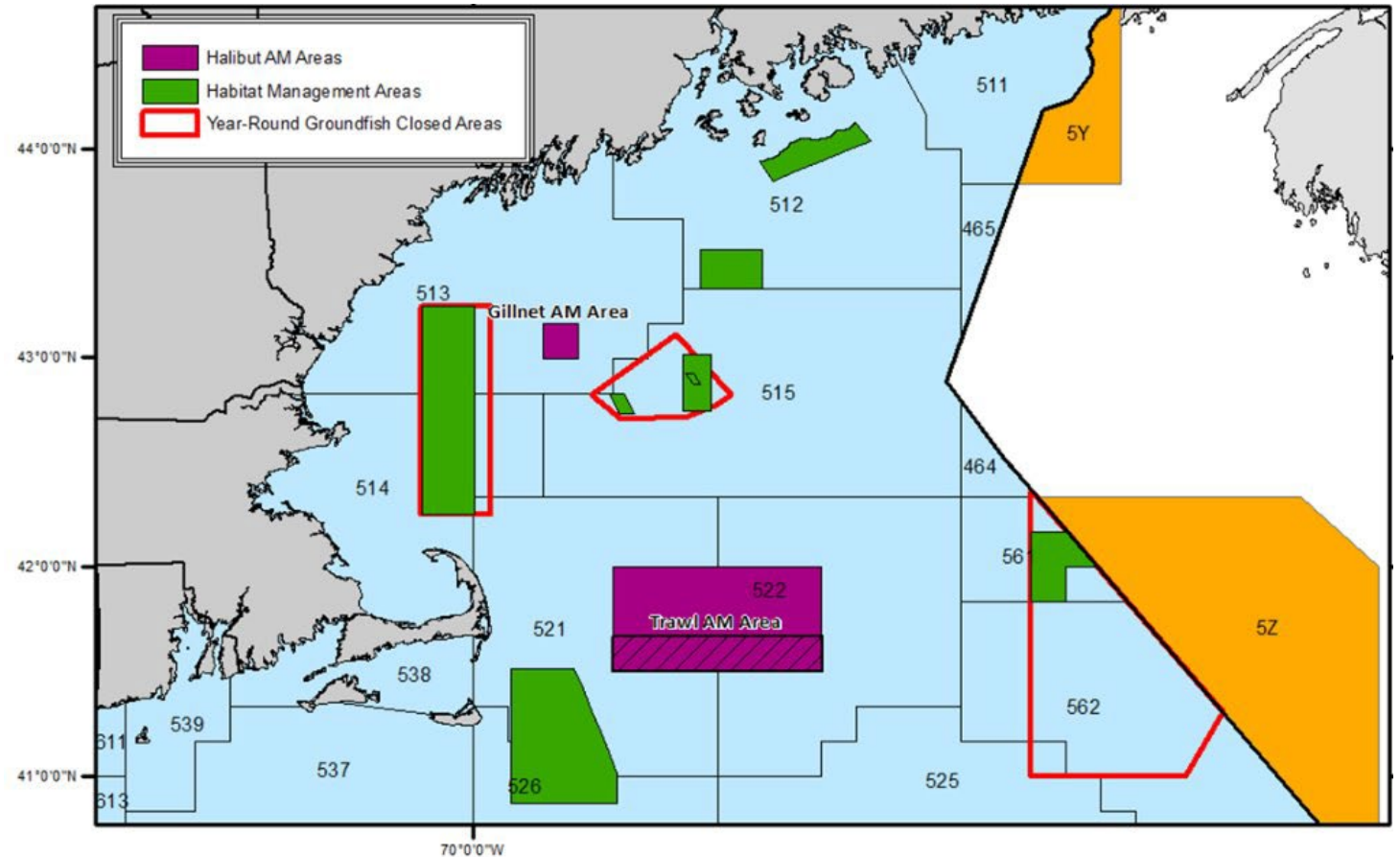
EXTRA SLIDES



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Management Council

ATLANTIC HALIBUT ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES

- Seasonal gear restricted areas
- No possession

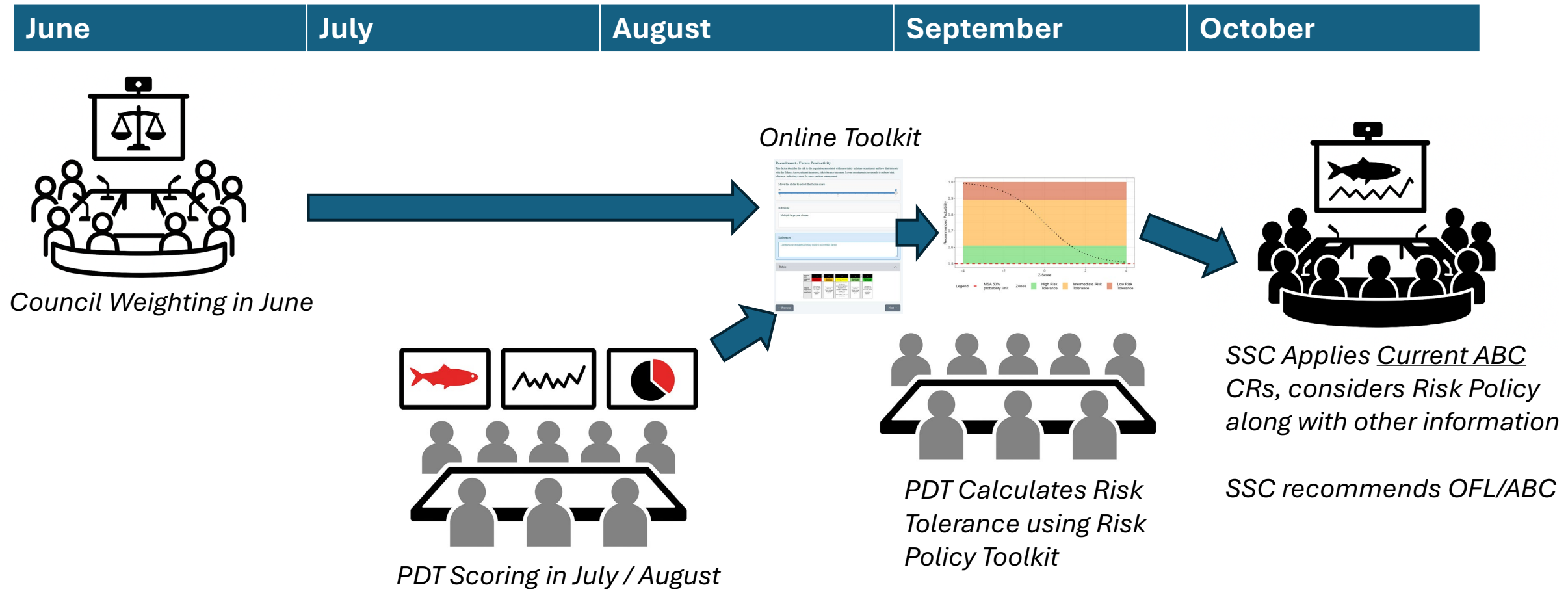


ATLANTIC HALIBUT - WHO DOES THE 'NO POSSESSION' ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURE APPLY TO?

- The **AM** applies to all federally permitted vessels, including scallop vessels, lobster vessels, Highly Migratory Species (HMS) general category vessels, and Northeast Multispecies and Category C or D limited access monkfish permit holders.
- Vessels that have been issued *exclusively* a party/charter, HMS angling category, and/or HMS charter/headboat permit are *exempt* from the reactive no-possession AM.
- If a vessel has one (or all) of these permits plus any of the other Federal permits not listed under the exemption, the vessel is subject to the reactive no-possession AM.



2026 GROUNDFISH PROCESS THROUGH OCTOBER SSC MEETING



CURRENT ABC CONTROL RULES

These ABC control rules will be used in the absence of better information that may allow a more explicit determination of scientific uncertainty for a stock or stocks. If such information is available - that is, **if scientific uncertainty can be characterized in a more accurate fashion -- it can be used by the SSC to determine ABCs**, these ABC control rules can be modified in a future Council action (an amendment, framework, or specification package):

- A. ABC should be determined as the catch associated with 75% of F_{MSY} .
- B. If fishing at 75% of F_{MSY} does not achieve the mandated rebuilding requirements for overfished stocks, ABC should be determined as the catch associated with the fishing mortality that meets rebuilding requirements ($F_{Rebuild}$).
- C. For stocks that cannot rebuild to B_{MSY} in the specified rebuilding period, even with no fishing, the ABC should be based on incidental bycatch, including a reduction in bycatch rate (i.e., the proportion of the stock caught as bycatch).
- D. Interim ABCs should be determined for stocks with unknown status according to case-by-case recommendations from the SSC.



2023 WORK

- May 2023 - Held a meeting of the full Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) with the goal of discussing the challenges they face when applying the ABC control rules and providing feedback on the different approaches
- June 2023 - Results of the SSC feedback to inform an approach(es) for the Groundfish Committee to recommend to the Council; Council initiated Framework Adjustment to revise ABC control rules (Framework 68)
- August 17, 2023 - Facilitated meeting to discuss draft goals and objectives for the action
- September 2023 – Council approved goals and objectives of ABC CRs; development of ABC CRs / FW 68 paused in order to first complete development of revised Risk Policy



Additional Information

See previous presentations for additional details on analyses:

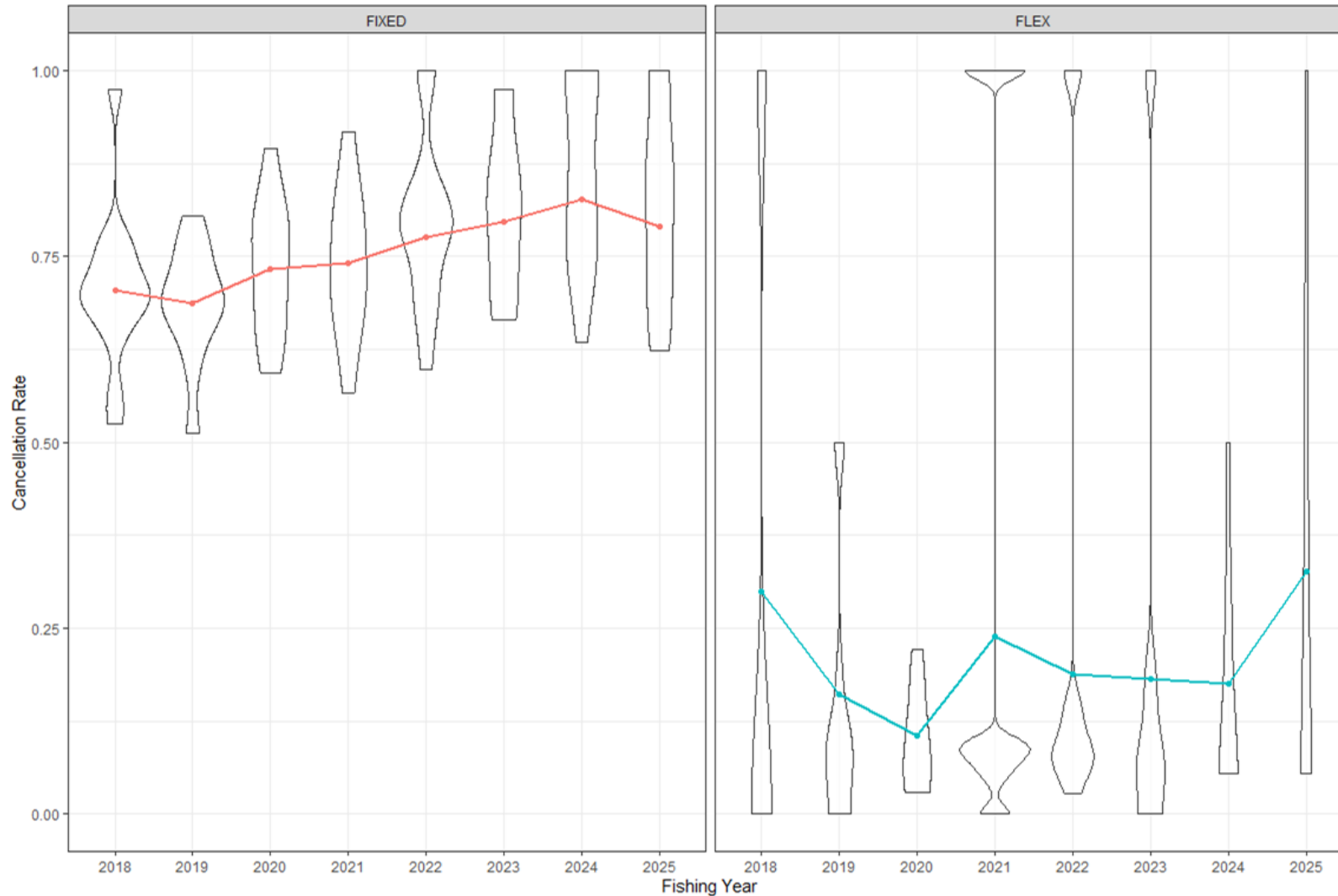
[May 27th joint Groundfish Advisory Panel/Groundfish Committee meeting](#)

[June 10th joint GAP/RAP/Groundfish Committee meeting](#)



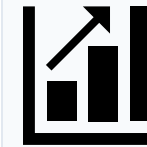
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Management Council

Cancellation Rates



Fixed vs. Flex

Fixed trip cancellation rates are higher and less variable than flex trip cancellations, consistent with PTNS rules.



Increasing Rates

Fixed trip cancellation rates are increasing but the ratio of vessel- to FMRD-initiated cancellations is decreasing. Flex trip cancellations are less predictable.



Vessel-Initiated Cancellation Frequency

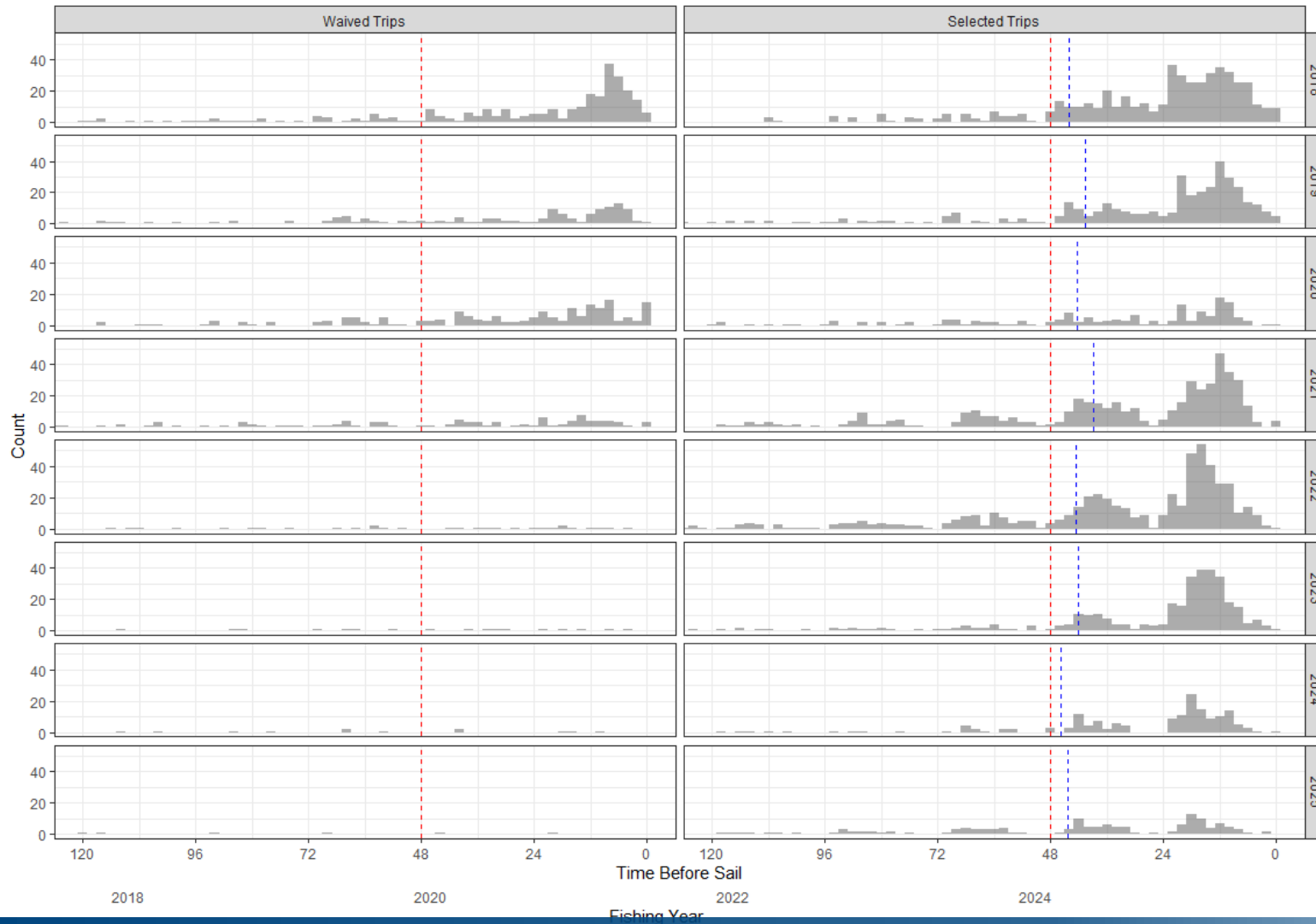
48-24 hrs: Peak correlated with observer assignment times.

24-0 hrs: Reasons likely operational.



NOAA
FISHERIES

Cancellation Rates



rule

Fixed vs. Flex

Fixed trip cancellation rates are higher and less variable than flex trip cancellations, consistent with PTNS rules.

trending_up

Increasing Rates

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schedule

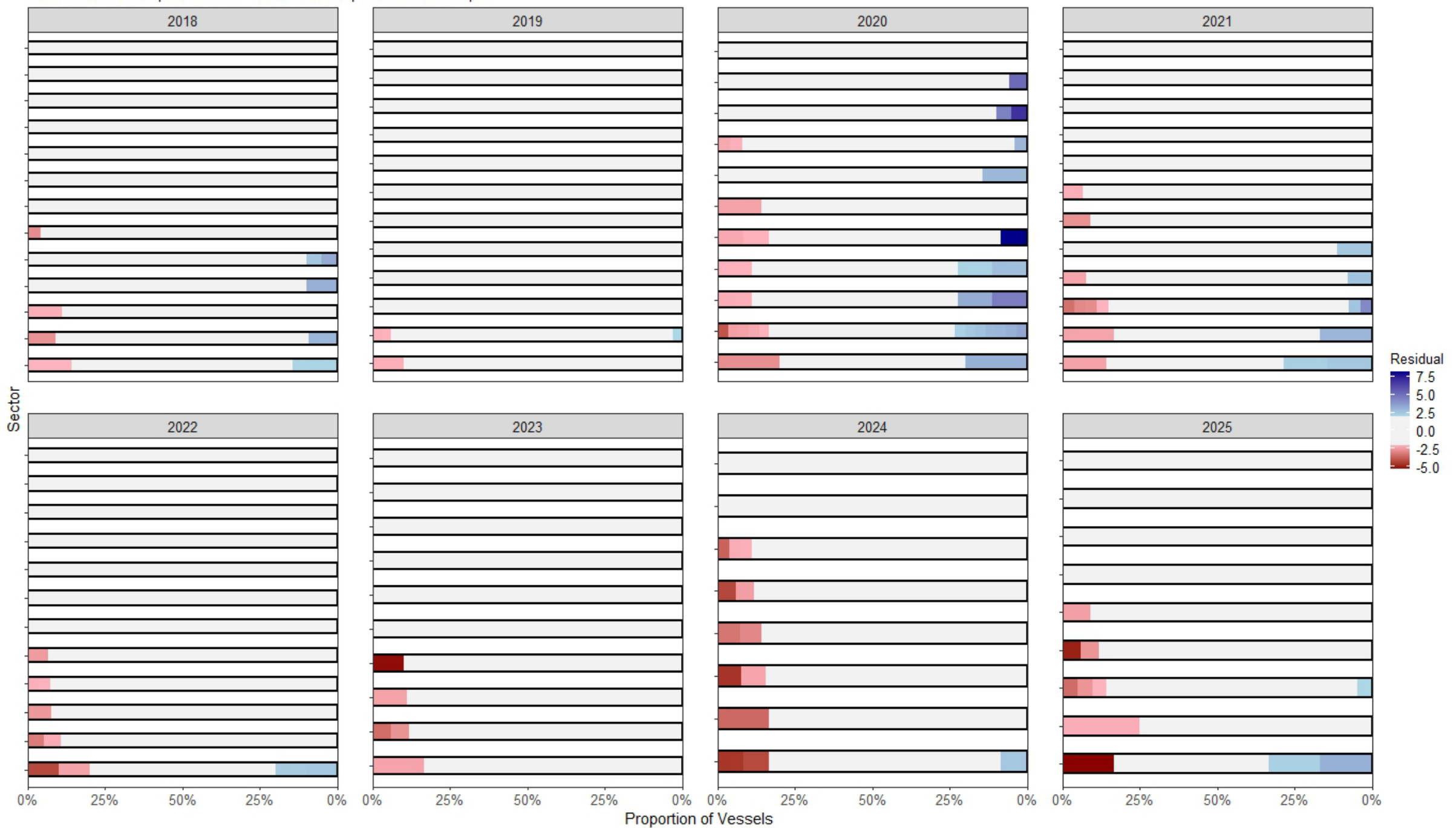
Vessel-Initiated Cancellation Frequency

48-24 hrs: Peak correlated with observer assignment times.

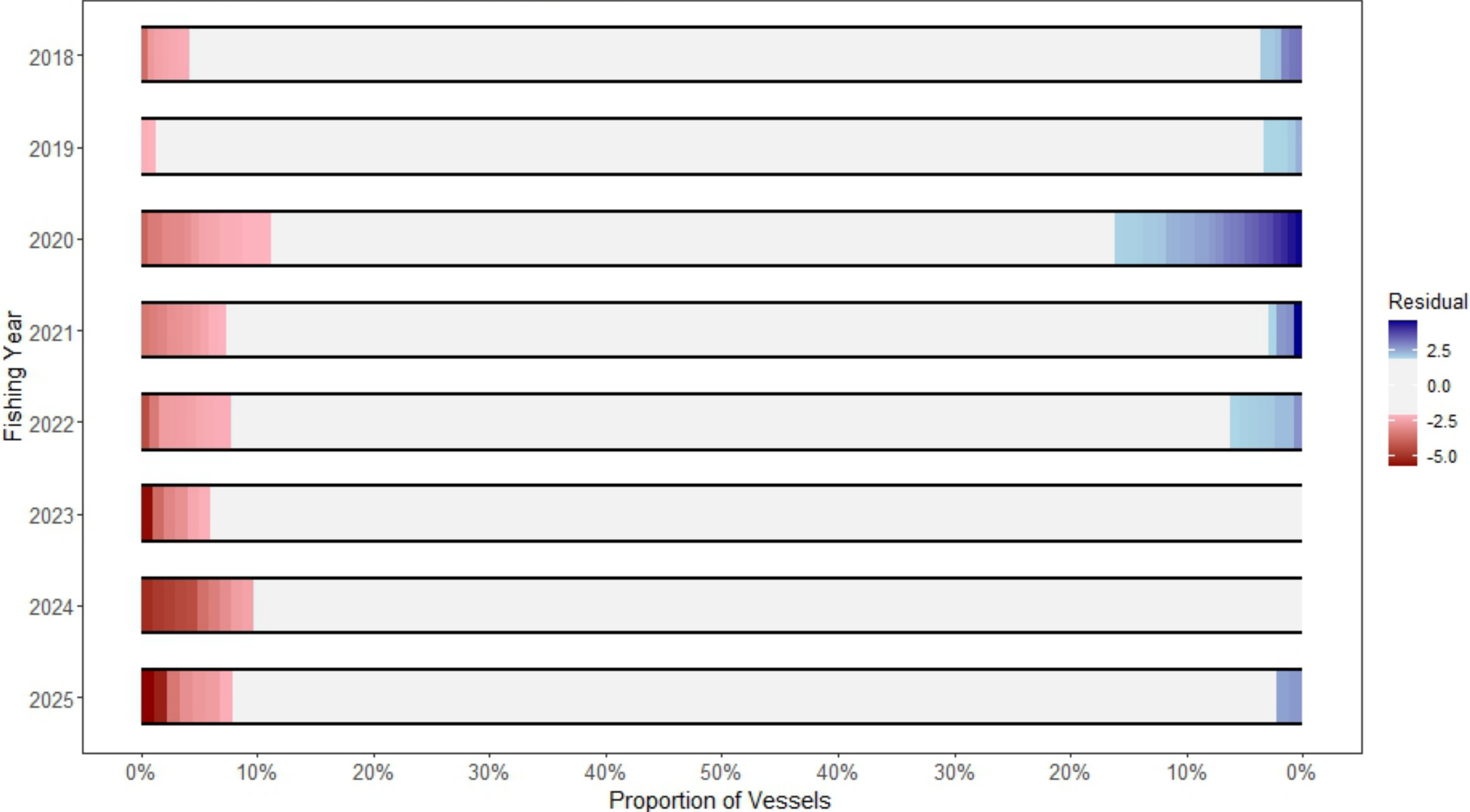
24-0 hrs: Reasons likely operational.

Within Sector Equitability Measure

Pearson residual comparison of within sector vessel expected numerator trips



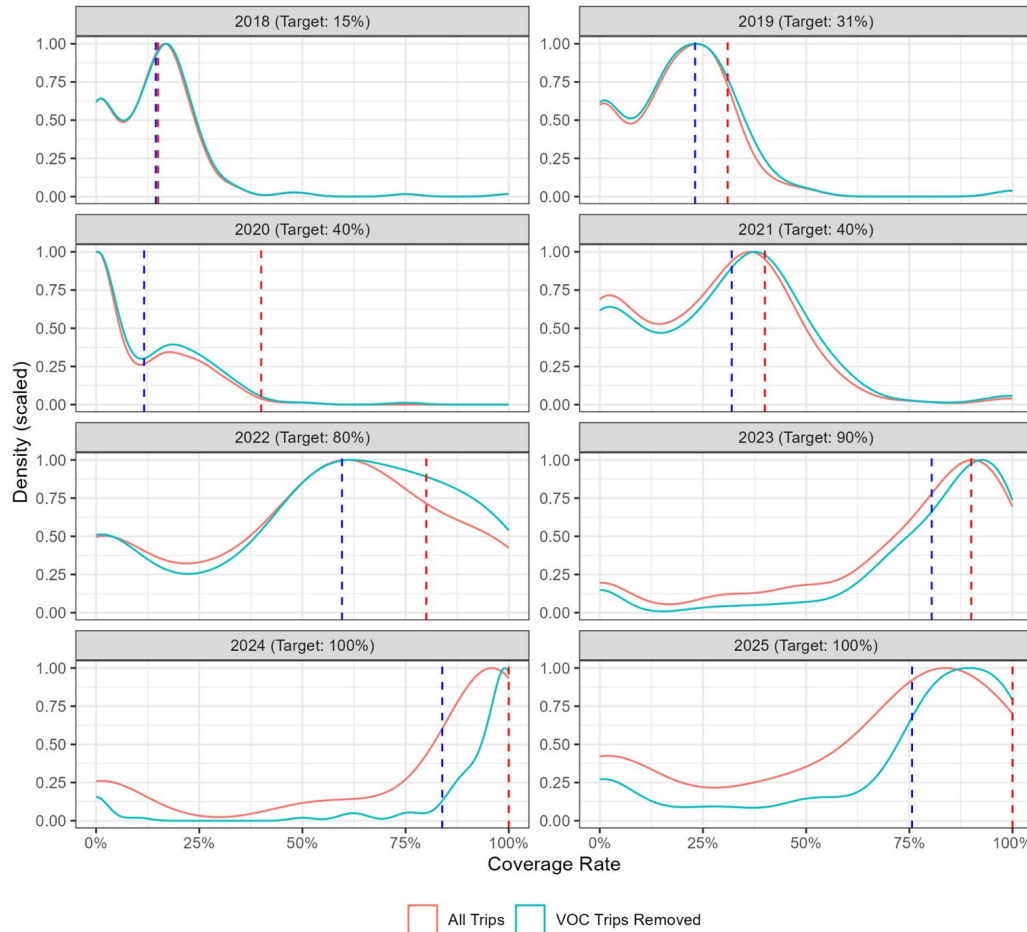
Between Vessel Equitability Measure (Fleet Wide)
Pearson residual comparison of vessel expected numerator trips



Realized Coverage: Vessel

Individual Sector Vessel Coverage Rate Distributions, FY2018-FY2025

Red line = Target Coverage Rate | Blue line = Sector Combined Realized Coverage Rate.
Source: GARFO Sector Coverage Report, supplemented with PTNS ASM Exemptions.



Key Coverage Observations

- Realized coverage rates varied between vessels across fishing years.
- The peak of the distributions follow target coverage rates.
- COVID-19 observer coverage waivers likely impacted these distributions.
- The distributions becomes less bimodal starting in FY2023.

Impact of Vessel of Concern (VOC) Trips

- Removal of VOC trips narrows and shifts the distribution closer to the coverage target.
- The effect of VOC trips becomes more evident as observer coverage targets increase because observers aren't deployed on VOC trips. Unobserved trips become more pronounced, especially at 100% coverage targets.