

Groundfish Committee Report: FW 56 and Monitoring Action

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Framework Adjustment 56



Credit: Paul Nitschke, NEFSC

Objectives

- To meet regulatory requirements to prevent overfishing, ensure rebuilding, and help achieve optimum yield in the fishery.
- To evaluate an appropriate level of northern windowpane flounder catch in the scallop fishery.
- To evaluate an appropriate level of Georges Bank haddock catch in the mid-water Atlantic herring fishery.

These include regulatory requirements:

- Stock status changes, if any
- Specifications:
 - US/CA stocks – Georges Bank cod, haddock, and yellowtail flounder for FY 2017- FY 2018
 - Witch flounder for FY 2017 – FY 2019



Timeline for Framework 56

2016-2017	June, 2016	Council initiates action
	Jul-Jan	Develop specifications and management measures
	Sep	Council receives an update on progress
	Oct-Jan	Develop NEPA analysis
	Nov	Council takes final action (except for witch flounder specifications)
	Jan, 2017	Council takes final action on witch flounder specifications



Likely Range of Alternatives

4.1 Updates to status determination criteria and annual catch limits

4.1.1 Revised Status Determination Criteria (if any)

4.1.2 Annual Catch Limits

- US/CA stocks and witch flounder, sub-component analysis for all stocks
- Establish a Sub-Annual Catch Limit for northern windowpane flounder for the scallop fishery
- Increase the Sub-Annual Catch Limit for Georges Bank haddock for the Atlantic herring mid-water trawl fishery

4.2 Management measures for commercial and recreational fisheries

4.2.1 Revise the recreational management measures process

4.2.2 Modify Atlantic halibut management



Groundfish Assessments

- **TRAC Assessments (July 2016)**
 - Georges Bank yellowtail flounder,
 - Eastern Georges Bank cod,
 - Eastern Georges Bank haddock

- **SAW/SARC 62 (Sept. – Dec. 2016)**
 - Witch Flounder Benchmark

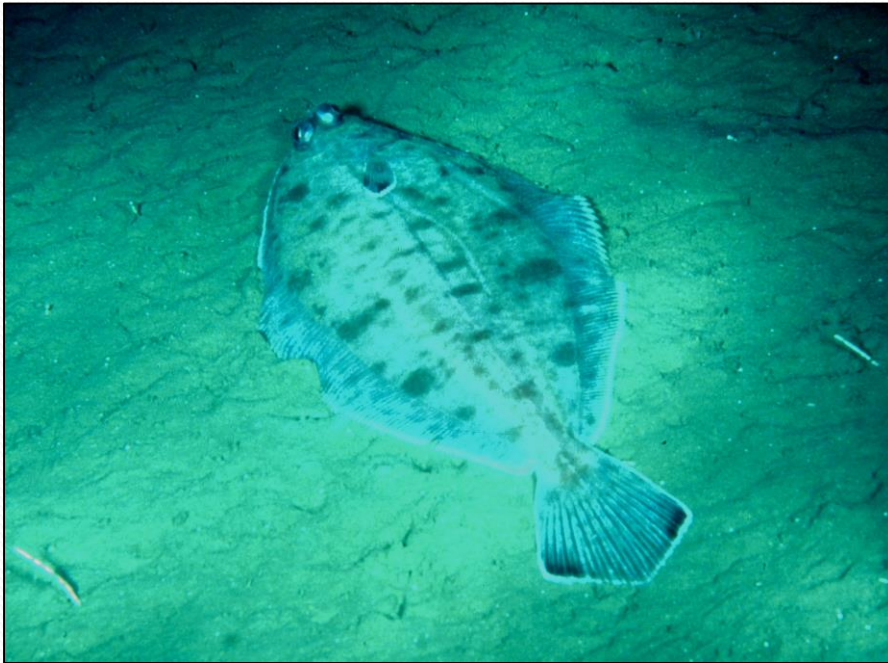


4.1 Updates to Status Determination Criteria and Annual Catch Limits

4.1.1 Revised Status Determination Criteria (to be completed)

4.1.1.1 Option 1: No Action

4.1.1.2 Option 2: Revised Status Determination Criteria



Witch Flounder. Image courtesy of Steve W. Ross, UNC-W.
http://oceanexplorer.noaa.gov/explorations/12midatlantic/background/canyons/media/witch_flounder.html

Anticipating updates to the **numerical estimates** of the status determination criteria for witch flounder following the benchmark

4.1 Updates to Status Determination Criteria and Annual Catch Limits

4.1.2 Annual Catch Limits

4.1.2.1 Option 1: No Action

4.1.2.2 Option 2: Revised Annual Catch Limit Specifications

- Updated sub-component analysis (to be completed)
- U.S./Canada TACs for FY 2017 – Georges Bank cod, haddock, and yellowtail flounder
- Witch flounder specifications for FY 2017- FY 2019 (to be completed)
- Sub-Option 1: Atlantic sea scallop fishery allocation for northern windowpane flounder
- Sub-Option 2: Mid-water trawl Atlantic herring fishery allocation for Georges Bank haddock



Groundfish Advisory Panel Input

Aug. 30, 2016

The Groundfish Advisory Panel supports the SSC recommendation of FY 2017 – FY 2018 GB yellowtail flounder ABC should not exceed 354 mt.

Carried 4/0/2.



4.1.2 Annual Catch Limits

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4.1.2.2.1 Sub-Option 1: Develop an Atlantic Sea Scallop Fishery Allocation for GOM/GB (Northern) Windowpane Flounder

- **4.1.2.2.1.1 Sub-Option 1A**: Fixed percentage based on the 90th percentile of scallop catch rates of northern windowpane flounder
 - Using **CY 2005- 2014** results in fixed percentage of **21%**
 - Using **CY 2010 -2014** results in a fixed percentage of **35%**
- **4.1.2.2.1.2 Sub-Option 1B**: Select a percentage from a range of recent scallop catches
 - Using **CY 2005- 2014** results in range of **2% to 46%**
 - Using **CY 2010 -2014** results in range of **6% to 46%**



4.1.2 Annual Catch Limits

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4.1.2.2.1 Sub-Option 1: Develop an Atlantic Sea Scallop Fishery Allocation for GOM/GB (Northern) Windowpane Flounder

- **4.1.2.2.1.3 Sub-Option 1C**: Use a dual fixed percentage baseline
 - **Low** fixed percentage of **10%**
 - **High** fixed percentage of **51%**
 - Groundfish PDT and Scallop PDT need to develop criteria for “low” versus “high” windowpane year
 - Scallop PDT would need to conduct annual catch projections

Recommendations:

- **Groundfish AP supports** this approach but **with a cap of 50%** (8/30/2016, vote:5/0/1).
- Groundfish **Committee does not support** the approach (9/12/2016, vote: 8/0/1).
- Committee received additional information to consider from the Groundfish and Scallop PDTs.



4.1.2 Annual Catch Limits

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4.1.2.2.2 Sub-Option 2: Increase the Mid-water Trawl Atlantic Herring Fishery Sub-ACL for Georges Bank Haddock

- **4.1.2.2.2.1 Sub-Option 2A**: Increase the sub-ACL from 1% of the U.S. ABC to 1.5% or 2%
- **4.1.2.2.2.2 Sub-Option 1B**: Increase the sub-ACL from 1% of the U.S. ABC to 1.5% or 2%, with a transfer provision.

Recommendations:

- **Groundfish AP supports** sub-option 2A but with a cap of 2% and the addition of a review process (8/30/2016, vote: 6/0/0).
- **Groundfish Committee** suggests **modifying sub-option 2A** to include the review process and removing sub-option 1B. (9/12/2016, vote: 7/1/2)



4.2 Commercial and Recreational Fishery Measures

4.2.1 Recreational Fishery Measures

4.2.1.1 Option 1: No action.

Revised Recreational Fishery Measures - options to be discussed. No options developed in the draft alternatives.

Item #1: Timing for Final Measures for the Recreational Fishing Year

Item # 2: Measures in Response to Projected Underage in Harvesting Recreational Catch

Recommendations:

- **Two issues** (above) raised by the **Recreational Advisory Panel**. (8/2/2016)
- **Committee** tasked **PDT with drafting some discussion** on these. (8/3/2016)
- **Committee recommends in-season changes to not be pursued in FW 56** and for the **Council to write a letter** regarding timing. (9/12/2016, vote- 6/0/4)
- Unclear if the Committee and Council is interested in adding something to the framework to address concerns regarding the timing of measures (Item #1).



Recreational Measures Management Process – DRAFT

Council Staff White Paper July 27, 2016

- 1) Overview
- 2) The recreational measures management process for Gulf of Maine cod and haddock
- 3) Perspectives on the process
 - a) Recreational Advisors – 8/2 discussion
 - i) What had been addressed?
 - ii) What has not been addressed?
 - b) Groundfish Committee- 8/3 discussion
 - i) What had been addressed?
 - ii) What has not been addressed?
- 4) Approaches to addressing current concerns – 8/2 and 8/3 discussions
 - a) Regulatory process – via a Council action – what would be included as alternatives in FW 56?
 - b) Outside regulatory process- are there steps that can be taken to address process concerns independent of FW 56?
- 5) Appendices



Background

Recreational accountability measures -

- Framework 48 revised the recreational AM so that the Regional Administrator may proactively adjust recreational management measures to ensure the recreational fishery will achieve, but not exceed, its sub-ACL.
- To the extent possible, any changes to the recreational management measures would be made prior to the start of the fishing year
- The Administrator would consult with the Council, or the Council's designee, and would tell the Council, or its designee, what recreational measures are under consideration for the upcoming fishing year.



Background

Recreational accountability measures -

- If time allows, the Council would also provide its Recreational Advisory Panel (RAP) an opportunity to meet and discuss the proposed management measures.
- These AMs require development in consultation with the Council, because the appropriate suite of measures (e.g., bag limit, minimum fish size, season) depends on the ACL specified.



Background

Recreational accountability measures -

- The Council provided guidance on its preference of measures that NMFS should consider if additional recreational effort controls are necessary to reduce GOM cod or GOM haddock catches, though this guidance does not restrict NMFS's discretion in selecting management measures that would best achieve, but not exceed, the recreational sub-ACL.
 - COD: If additional effort controls are necessary to reduce cod catches, the Council's non-binding preference is that NMFS first consider increases to minimum fish sizes, then adjustments to seasons, followed by changes to bag limits.
 - HADDOCK: If additional effort controls are necessary to reduce haddock catches, the Council's non-binding preference is that NMFS first consider increases to minimum size limits, then changes to bag limits, and adjustments to seasons last.



4.2 Commercial and Recreational Fishery Measures

4.2.2 Commercial Fishery Measures

4.2.2.1 Option 1: No action.

Revised Atlantic Halibut Management Measures – options to be discussed. No options developed in the draft alternatives.

Recommendations:

- **Groundfish AP and Committee support the Council writing a letter to the State of Maine** (8/30/2016 – vote: 6/0/0; 9/12/2016)
- Draft letter in briefing materials for consideration.
- **Groundfish AP requests reconsidering of the OFLs/ABCs for FY 2017- FY 2018** (8/30/2016 – vote: 6/0/0)
- Unclear if the Committee and Council is interested in adding something to the framework to address concerns regarding Atlantic halibut accountability measures.



Overview of Atlantic halibut accountability measures (AM)

Timing

Implemented in a subsequent year (not in-season), depending on the availability of reliable data

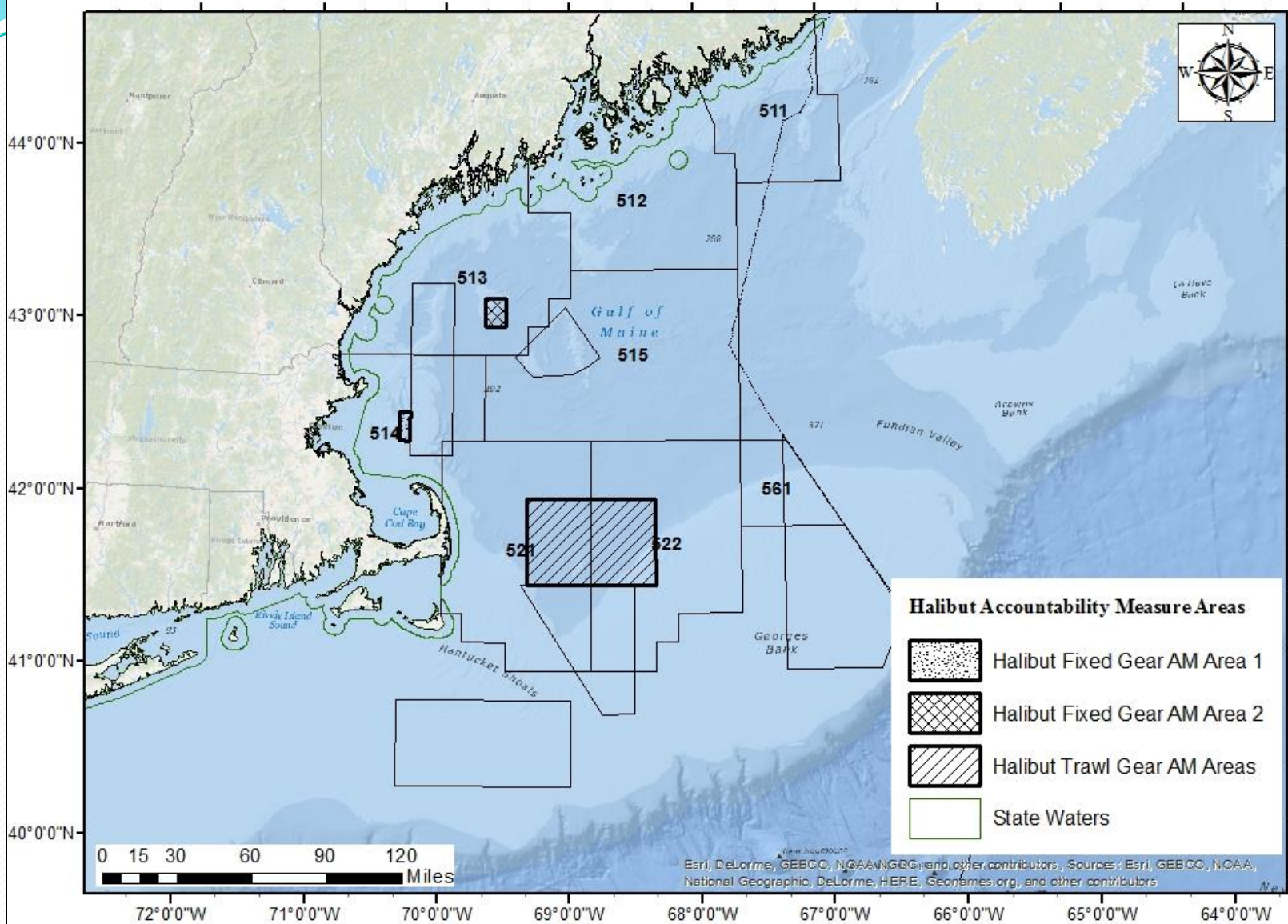
Trigger

Total ACL exceeded and projected to be exceeded by an amount that exceeds the management uncertainty buffer (essentially if the ABC is exceeded)

Accountability Measures

- No retention
- Trawl vessels required to use approved selective gear that reduces catch of flounders in the Atlantic Halibut Trawl Gear AM Area
- Sink gillnets and longlines would not be allowed to fish in the Atlantic Halibut Fixed Gear AM Areas





Groundfish Fishery Monitoring



Credit: NE Observer Program, NEFSC / NOAA

PDT White Paper Update

September 7, 2016

1. **Problem statement/Council motion and Committee tasking motion**
2. **Current monitoring system and assessment of meeting the goals and objectives**
3. **PDT recommendations on how to improve the system to achieve accuracy and secondarily precision of catch reporting**
4. **Other PDT recommendations**
5. **Appendices – in each explain how the findings link to the current goals and objectives for monitoring**
 - a) Overview of how fishery data is used in the groundfish stock assessments (ongoing)
 - b) Analysis of mis-allocation of catches for multi-stock trips (ongoing)
 - c) **Overview of sector reconciliation process (see Attachment #2)**
 - d) Compliance/enforcement analysis for groundfish reporting (ongoing)
 - e) **ASM - CV standard analysis¹ (see PDT memos dated April 13 and June 6, 2016)**
 - f) Analysis of observer bias (ongoing)
 - g) **Dockside monitoring summary and case studies (see PDT draft dated July 6, 2016)**
 - h) Overview of past sources of funding for groundfish monitoring programs (ongoing)
 - i) Summary of fishery dependent data vision project outcomes (ongoing)
 - j) Evaluation of costs of improving the monitoring system (ongoing)

Groundfish Committee

August 3, 2016

The Committee was interested in hearing from the Groundfish Advisory Panel on their perspectives regarding the 2010-2011 dockside monitoring program.

Groundfish Advisory Panel

August 30, 2016

The GAP discussed this topic and some members responded in writing to a questionnaire.

Any questions?



<http://www.decision-making-solutions.com/deAcision-making-in-uncertainty.html>

