



New England Fishery Management Council

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 16, 2020
TO: Monkfish Committee and Advisory Panel Members
FROM: Chris Kellogg, Deputy Executive Director
SUBJECT: Monkfish Priorities and EO 13921 Streamlining Recommendations

Monkfish Management Priorities for 2021

The Monkfish committee and AP recommended the following priorities for the Council to consider for 2020.

2020 Council Priorities 1/17/2020

FMP/Time	Annual	Comm.	Executive Committee	Council	Rank
Monkfish					
	Conduct an analysis of alternative methods for estimating discards of monkfish to apply to future specifications and consider available information on discard mortality. If warranted, consider adjusting specifications for FY 2021-2022	✓	x	✓	79
	<i>Revisit use of RSA DAS and ability to flip a directed DAS to an RSA DAS while at sea</i>	✓			58
	<i>Consider permit latency</i>	✓			71

As can be seen from the table, the Council approved the recommendation to conduct an analysis of alternative methods for estimating discards of monkfish, and a contractor, Dr. Cate O’Keefe completed the work and reported the results to the Council on June 24, 2020.

Following report, the Council decided to refer the evaluation methods for estimating total allowable landings (TAL), back to the Monkfish Committee and AP to consider the next steps while developing the 2021 priorities.

The rationale for this decision was that examination of fishing year 2019 discard data is essential to confirm the report’s recommendation for using the longer time period mean or median discard percent of catch under average recruitment conditions since the 2015 year class will be entering the fishery starting in 2019.

As a result of the Council discussion, the Contractor's report was updated to include a brief description of the next steps needed for the Monkfish Committee and Advisors to consider for 2021 monkfish priorities, including:

- Analysis of FY2019 data to determine if the long-term mean/median is appropriate to apply under average recruitment periods
- Analysis to define "strong" recruitment and derivation of a predictive function that would use the recruitment index as a variable to indicate what discard estimate should be used when strong recruitment occurs

Based on information from fishing year 2019, the committee may want to consider updating the specifications a year earlier than scheduled and start developing new specifications in 2021 that would include the new discard estimation approaches. Alternatively, the committee could recommend suggesting the analysis of FY 2019 data be conducted in 2021 with the results being reported back to the committee for utilization in the specification process scheduled for 2022.

E.O. 13921 on Promoting American Seafood Competitiveness and Economic Growth (5/7/20)

- Purpose
 - "to strengthen the American economy; improve the competitiveness of American industry; ensure food security; provide environmentally safe and sustainable seafood; support American workers; ensure coordinated, predictable, and transparent Federal actions; and remove unnecessary regulatory burdens"
- Request of the Council
 - By **November 2, 2020**, "...submit a prioritized list of recommended actions to reduce burdens on domestic fishing and to increase production within sustainable fisheries, including a proposal for initiating each recommended action within 1 year of the date of this order."
- Other information
 - Can include changes to regulations, orders, guidance documents, or other similar agency actions
 - Must accomplish "within existing appropriations." No new resources for the Councils or NMFS.
 - Must comply with applicable law (MSA, ESA, MMPA, etc.).
 - "Initiate" actions by May 2021 (not implement)
 - Distinct from the 2017 order to identify regulations that are unnecessary, outdated, or ineffective.