

Northeast Multispecies (Groundfish)

Framework Adjustment 59/Specifications

Council Staff

**Groundfish Advisory Panel and
Groundfish Committee Meetings**
September 16-17, 2019
Boston, MA



Specifications

Framework Adjustment 59 would:

Set 2020 total allowable catches (TACs) for US/Canada management units of Eastern Georges Bank (GB) cod, Eastern GB haddock, and the GB yellowtail flounder stock,

Set 2020-2022 specifications for fifteen groundfish stocks,

Address commercial/recreational allocation issues if raised by new Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) data, and

Revise the GB cod Incidental Catch TAC to remove the allocation to the Closed Area I (CAI) Hook Gear Haddock Special Access Program (SAP).

Specifications

The fifteen groundfish stocks include:

- 1) GB cod
- 2) Gulf of Maine (GOM) cod
- 3) GB haddock
- 4) GOM haddock
- 5) GB yellowtail flounder
- 6) Cape Cod/GOM yellowtail flounder
- 7) Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic yellowtail flounder
- 8) GB winter flounder
- 9) American plaice
- 10) Witch flounder
- 11) Pollock
- 12) White hake
- 13) Atlantic halibut
- 14) Northern windowpane flounder
- 15) Southern windowpane flounder.

Assessment-Related Meetings

- **Assessment Oversight Panel** - June 20, Woods Hole, MA
- **Transboundary Resource Assessment Committee**- July 9-11, St. Andrews, New Brunswick – US/CA: Eastern GB cod, Eastern GB haddock , and GB yellowtail flounder
- **Peer Review**, September 9-12, Woods Hole, MA- 10 groundfish stocks
- **Scientific and Statistical Committee:**
August 21, Providence, RI - GB yellowtail flounder:
October 17-18, Boston, MA- 14 groundfish stocks
- **Transboundary Management Guidance Committee/Steering Committee** – September 10-12, Halifax, Nova Scotia – US/CA TACs

Assessment Oversight Panel Recommendations

Level	Stocks
1	GB cod, Southern windowpane flounder, witch flounder, and Atlantic halibut
2	American plaice, GOM haddock, GB haddock, CC/GOM yellowtail flounder, SNEA/MA yellowtail flounder, Northern windowpane flounder, GB winter flounder, pollock, and white hake
3	GOM cod

SSC Summary – GB yellowtail flounder

- OFL - unknown
- ABC-
 - should not exceed 162 mt for FY2020 and FY2021
 - expectation that the FY2021 catch specifications will be revisited and possibly adjusted following the 2020 TRAC assessment

TMGC/SC Recommendations Summary

- Eastern GB cod: **2020 TAC of 650 mt**
- Eastern GB haddock: **2020 TAC of 30,000 mt**
- GB yellowtail flounder: **2020 TAC of 162 mt**

Georges Bank (5Zhjmn) Yellowtail Flounder

- **2020 TAC of 162 mt**

Year	TAC	Canada Share	Canada TAC	U.S. Share	U.S. TAC
2019	140	24%	34	76%	106
2020	162	26%	42	74%	120

- The 2020 TAC of 162 mt is a small increase from 140 mt in 2019, and corresponds with roughly a 5% exploitation rate. This is within the TRAC recommended upper bound of 199 mt, which corresponds with a 6% exploitation rate.
- Sought to balance stock conditions and utilization of other species
- The declining trend of the stock remains; total mortality remains high despite record low catches
- Current levels of catch are not primary factor affecting stock rebuilding

Eastern Georges Bank (5Zjm) Cod

- **2020 TAC of 650 mt**

Year	TAC	Canada Share	Canada TAC	U.S. Share	U.S. TAC
2019	650	71%	461	29%	189
2020	650	71%	461.5	29%	188.5

- TRAC reviewed fishery and biological indicators. TRAC provided no new catch advice for cod in 2020, and saw no reason to change catch advice from that provided for 2019 (602 – 676 mt)
- 2020 TAC is status quo from 2019, consistent with the TRAC catch advice for 2019.
- TMGC sought to balance the utilization of other species and signals of the survey indices
- The status of stock remains poor

Eastern Georges Bank (5Zjm) Haddock

- **2020 TAC of 30,000 mt**

Year	TAC	Canada Share	Canada TAC	U.S. Share	U.S. TAC
2019	30,000	50%	15,000	50%	15,000
2020	30,000	46%	13,800	54%	16,200

- There was no analytically-based catch advice, as the model failed at TRAC. TRAC provided catch advice based on fisheries & biological indicators and an evaluation the 2003 year class, which is similar to the 2013 year class.
- 2020 TAC is status quo from the 2019 quota and is consistent with TRAC advice not to increase the quota in 2020.
- Account for the expected decline of the 2013 year class while still acknowledging that biomass remains high.

DRAFT OPTIONS: Revisions to the GB cod Incidental Catch TAC to remove the allocation to the Closed Area I (CAI) Haddock Special Access Program (SAP)

	GB Cod Incidental Catch TAC - % of Common Pool sub-ACL	B DAS Program- % of GB Cod Incidental Catch TAC	Eastern US/CA Haddock SAP- % of GB Cod Incidental Catch TAC	CAI HGH SAP- % of GB Cod Incidental Catch TAC
Option 1/No Action	2% (1.1 mt)	50% (0.5 mt)	34% (0.4 mt)	16% (0.2 mt)
Option 2 – Remove CAI HGH SAP allocation	1.68% (0.9 mt)	60% (0.5 mt)	40% (0.4 mt)	0% (0 mt)

For Today:

- Discuss the draft alternatives, and
- Make recommendations as appropriate.

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Possible Council Priorities for 2020

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Priority/Task Title	Status	Multi_Year	Legal/Regulatory Requirement?
<u>Set ABCs/ACLs for half of groundfish stocks for FY2021-2023 and US/CA stocks for FY 2021</u>			Y
Complete Amendment 23/Groundfish Monitoring action	Ongoing	Y	
Cod Stock Structure Working Group: review results and develop management approach	Ongoing	Y	
Amendment to adopt limited access for the party/charter fishery		Y	
Possible recreational sub-ACL for GB cod			
Address SDC issue when analytic assessments fail		Y	
Address commercial/recreational allocation issues if raised by new MRIP data	Ongoing	Y	
Modify the GF control rule for stocks without analytical models – i.e., empirical and index-based (see SSC list below, item 7 above)			
Get input on different ways to manage recreational fishery in light of highly variable catch estimates: for example, consideration of catch error estimates under MRIP, and errors in bioeconomic model used to determine measures	Ongoing		
Consider sub-ACL of haddock for the small-mesh multispecies fishery			
Explore alternative ways to manage yellowtail flounder for the groundfish and scallop fisheries			
US/CA trading provisions			
Action to adopt electronic reporting for party/charter vessels			
Complete sector five-year review	Ongoing	Y	
Groundfish operational assessments			
TRAC/TMGC			

Groundfish Advisory Panel, Sept. 18, 2018

Initial Discussion of Possible 2019 Priorities

To add to the list for discussion, examine the issue of leased fish and possible changes to management system.

Motion *carried* 4/0/2.

To add to the list for discussion, process for U.S./Canada quota trading.

Motion *carried* 5/0/1.

Groundfish Advisory Panel, Nov. 8, 2018

Discussion of Possible 2019 Priorities

The Groundfish Advisory Panel recommends to the Groundfish Committee removing from the list of 2019 priorities for consideration: to examine the issue of leased fish and possible changes to management system.

Motion carried 5/2/0.

The Groundfish Advisory Panel recommends to the Groundfish Committee that the catch share review includes some discussion on if the leasing program is meeting the objectives of the FMP.

Motion carried 7/0/0.

The Groundfish Advisory Panel recommends to the Groundfish Committee that: at the top of the priorities list across all fisheries should be to create permit separability.

Motion carried 7/0/0.

To move “specify allocation review triggers” to a low priority for groundfish for 2019.

Motion carried 4/0/2 (one out of the room).

Groundfish Advisory Panel, Sept. 16, 2019

Initial Discussion of Possible 2020 Priorities

XXX

XXX

XXX

(To be provided).

Recreational Advisory Panel, Oct. 29, 2018

Discussion of Possible 2019 Priorities

The Recreational Advisory Panel recommends to the Groundfish Committee for 2019 priorities, in ranked order of highest importance:

1. Review the recreational allocations for Gulf of Maine cod and Gulf of Maine haddock using the most recent information from the 2019 assessments, and if determined necessary, make changes through the annual framework action with 2020-2022 specifications.
2. Develop a Recreational Committee/Working Group to focus on groundfish and non-groundfish recreational management issues.
3. Continue to hold listening sessions for possible limited entry for party and charter in the recreational Northeast Multispecies (groundfish) fishery to help the Council determine next steps.

Recreational Advisory Panel, by correspondence, Sept. 12, 2019

Initial Discussion of Possible 2020 Priorities

XXX

XXX

XXX

(To be provided).

Groundfish Committee, Nov 8, 2018

Discussion of Possible 2019 Priorities

The Groundfish Committee recommends to the Council to prioritize for 2019 Groundfish Priorities:

1. Any regulatory requirements,
2. Amendment 23/Groundfish Monitoring for 2019, and
3. Review the allocations for Gulf of Maine cod and Gulf of Maine haddock using the most recent information from the 2019 assessments, and if determined necessary, make changes through the next appropriate action.

Motion carried 9/0/2.

For Today:

- Discuss the draft list of possible 2020 groundfish priorities, and
- Make recommendations on items to be added to the draft list.

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Amendment 23/Groundfish Monitoring

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A23 Purpose and Need Statement

To implement measures to improve reliability and accountability of catch reporting and to ensure a precise and accurate representation of catch (landings and discards).

To improve the accuracy of collected catch data. Accurate catch data are necessary to ensure that catch limits are set at levels that prevent overfishing and to determine when catch limits are exceeded. To create fair and equitable catch reporting requirements for all commercial groundfish fishermen, while maximizing the value of collected catch data and minimizing costs for the fishing industry and the National Marine Fisheries Service.

A23 DEIS

- Part 1 - Sections 1-6: Introduction-Affected Environment
- Part 2 - Section 7: Impacts Analysis
- Part 3: Appendices (Supporting Analyses)

Introduction and Background

- Background on groundfish fishery
- Purpose and need of A23
- Goals and objectives
- Public scoping summary
- Glossary of key terms

Draft A23 Alternatives – September 5, 2019

4.1 Groundfish Monitoring

4.1.1 Groundfish Sector Monitoring Program Revisions

4.1.2 Groundfish Sector and Common Pool Monitoring Program Revisions

4.2 Sector Reporting

4.3 Funding/Operational Provisions of Groundfish Monitoring

4.4 Management Uncertainty Buffers

4.5 Exemptions from Groundfish Sector and Common Pool Monitoring Requirements

Management Uncertainty Buffers Alternatives

Option 2: Revise Management Uncertainty Buffers for Allocated Groundfish Stocks

- Three options to consider for each stock:
 - Option A* - Increase the mgmt. uncertainty buffer 2 times,
 - Option B* - Increase the buffer 5 times, or
 - Option C* - Increase 10 times

Option 3: Elimination of Management Uncertainty Buffer for Sector ACL with 100 Percent Monitoring of All Sector Trips

- Revise sector management uncertainty buffer to zero for allocated groundfish stocks if 100% coverage level selected

Affected Environment

- Physical Environment/EFH
- Regulated Groundfish and Non-Groundfish Species
- Protected Species
- Human Communities
 - Updated fishery data through 2018
 - Dealer data
 - Fishing communities/ports – classified by engagement, reliance, and social vulnerability indicators
 - Groundfish monitoring data
 - Summary of types of monitoring data, coverage levels, PDT monitoring analyses

Impacts Analysis

- Approach: qualitative and quantitative depending on the alternative and impacts section
- Draws from PDT monitoring analyses, PDT discussion papers, PDT memos
- Some sections to be completed

Biological Impacts Analysis Approach

- Biological impacts of improved monitoring data
 - Depends on the amount of unknown mortality from the missing catch
 - Short-term: improvements in monitoring reduces fishing mortality through better catch accounting
 - Long-term: analytical assessments should improve with better catch data
- Exemptions from DSM:
 - Ports that land 5% of groundfish
 - Vessels that land <5% of groundfish
- Exemptions based on fishing location:
 - Catch composition analysis

EFH Impacts Analysis Approach

- Impacts to EFH are based on expected changes in amount and location of fishing effort
- Options for monitoring coverage levels and monitoring tools have indirect EFH impacts, related to whether these influence fishing effort

Protected Species Impacts Analysis Approach

- Generally qualitative, but expect to update with quantitative analysis on protected species bycatch estimates with various coverage levels, and for exemptions options
- Improved at-sea monitoring provides indirect impacts to protected species
 - Increased information on protected species interactions with fishing gear
- Any expected changes in fishing effort have direct impacts on protected species

Economic Impacts Analysis Methods

- Compliance and Enforceability Scores:
 - Relies on discard incentive model and proportion of time information is independently verified as foundation, uses other documents as relevant, for discussion
- Management Uncertainty Buffer:
 - Uses PDT memo from August 6th GAP/Committee meeting
- Percentage of Catch Alternative:
 - Uses simulations to identify what coverage rate would reliably achieve catch target in FY 2018
- Exemptions from DSM:
 - Ports that land 5% of groundfish
 - Vessels that land <5% of groundfish

Social Impacts Analysis Approach

- Considers the potential changes to social impacts factors, including:
 - Size and Demographic Characteristics; Attitudes, Beliefs, and Values of fishermen; and Non-Economic Aspects of the fishery
- Crew survey (described in Affected Environment)
 - Characterizes attitudes and beliefs towards fishing regulations – such as changes in monitoring coverage levels

Appendices

- Appendix I: Draft Fishery Data for Stock Assessment Working Group Report and SSC Sub-Panel Peer Review Report
- Appendix II: Groundfish Plan Development Team Dockside Monitoring Discussion Paper
- Appendix III: Electronic Monitoring Programs in the Northeast Multispecies (Groundfish) Fishery
- Appendix IV: Groundfish Plan Development Team Groundfish Monitoring Analyses and SSC Sub-Panel Peer Review Report
- Appendix V: Cost Efficiency Analysis of Fisheries Monitoring for Catch Accounting in the New England Groundfish Fishery

For Today

- Receive an update on development of the Amendment 23 DEIS