

# Framework Adjustment 65 and 2022 Council Priorities

**Groundfish Committee**

**March 16, 2022**

# Framework Adjustment 65 - Meeting Goals

- Discuss specifications and measures anticipated to be included in this action
- Make a motion to recommend to the Council initiating FW65 with list of items to include



# Draft Scope

Fishing year (FY) 2023- FY2025 Specifications/Management Measures, to:

- Revise status determination criteria, as appropriate,
- Revise rebuilding plans for Gulf of Maine (GOM) cod and Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic (SNE/MA) winter flounder,
- Set FY2023-FY2024 total allowable catches for US/Canada management units of Eastern Georges Bank (GB) cod and Eastern GB haddock, and the GB yellowtail flounder stock,
- Set FY2023-FY2024 specifications for GB cod, including a catch target for the recreational fishery
- Set FY2023-FY2025 specifications for GB haddock, GOM haddock, CC/GOM yellowtail flounder, SNE/MA yellowtail flounder, GB winter flounder, GOM winter flounder, SNE/MA winter flounder, American plaice, witch flounder, pollock, white hake, Atlantic halibut, ocean pout, and Atlantic wolffish,
- Adopt additional measures to promote stock rebuilding for GOM cod and SNE/MA winter flounder,
- Revise acceptable biological catch (ABC) control rules, in consultation with the SSC.

# Draft Objectives

To meet regulatory requirements to prevent overfishing, ensure rebuilding, and help achieve optimum yield in the commercial and recreational groundfish fishery.



# Draft Range of Alternatives

## Range of Alternatives:

1. Revisions to status determination criteria
2. Revisions to formal rebuilding plans for GOM cod and SNE/MA winter flounder
3. Updates to annual catch limits
  - Specifications for sixteen groundfish stocks (GB cod, GB haddock, GOM haddock, GB yellowtail flounder, CC/GOM yellowtail flounder, SNE/MA yellowtail flounder, GB winter flounder, GOM winter flounder, SNE/MA winter flounder, American plaice, witch flounder, pollock, white hake, Atlantic halibut, ocean pout, and Atlantic wolffish)
  - Total allowable catches for transboundary stocks (EGB cod, EGB haddock, and GB yellowtail flounder)
  - Recreational fishery catch target for GB cod
  - Sub-annual catch limits for Atlantic Sea scallop, small-mesh multispecies, and herring fisheries
  - Review and possibly adjust sub-components (other fisheries and state)
4. Revisions to ABC control rules
5. Additional commercial and recreational management measures to promote stock rebuilding for GOM cod and SNE/MA winter flounder

# Draft Timeline

2022	
JAN 25-27	Peer review - Gulf of Maine haddock Research Track assessment
FEB 24	Assessment Oversight Panel meets (SNE/MA winter flounder)
MAR 16	Groundfish Committee meets
MAR 28-31	Peer review - Georges Bank /Eastern Georges Bank Research Track assessment
<b>APR 12-14</b>	<b>Council initiates framework</b>
MAY 24	Assessment Oversight Panel meets (13 groundfish stocks)
JUN 27-30	Peer review - SNE/MA winter flounder Management Track assessment
<b>JUN 28-30</b>	<b>Council receives update on development of draft alternatives</b>
JUL 12-14	TRAC assesses US/CA management units of EGB cod and EGB haddock, and the GB yellowtail flounder stock
JUL 18-22	Peer review – American plaice Research Track assessment
AUG 3	Assessment Oversight Panel meets (American plaice)
AUG/SEP TBD	SSC recommends OFLs/ABCs for GB yellowtail flounder, GB cod, and SNE/MA winter flounder, discusses rebuilding plans for GOM cod and SNE/MA winter flounder, discusses possible ABC control rule revisions
SEP 13-15	TMGC/SC meets to recommend TACs for US/CA management units/stock
SEP 19-23	Peer review - 13 groundfish stocks Management Track Assessments
<b>SEP 27-29</b>	<b>Council receives TMGC recommendations and reviews progress on developing draft alternatives</b>
OCT/NOV TBD	SSC recommends OFLs/ABCs for 13 groundfish stocks
<b>DEC 6-8</b>	<b>Council receives draft alternatives and takes final action</b>
2023	
JAN	Preliminary submission of framework document to NMFS
FEB	Final submission of framework document to NMFS
MAY	Target implementation



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# 2022 Council Priorities – Meeting Goals

- Receive a progress report from the Groundfish Plan Development Team and
- Discuss a Council motion to consider adding to the priorities a transition plan for Atlantic cod management from the current two management units to up to five management units
- Recommendation to the Council on 2022 priorities.



# PDT Progress Report – FW65

## Rebuilding Plans for GOM Cod and SNE/MA Winter Flounder:

- GOM cod:
  - Work to begin in the spring
  - Given that stock structure might change, perhaps consider another set of protections - more of a focus on spawning protections rather than a focus on the percent of  $F_{MSY}$  alone
- SNE/MA winter flounder:
  - Work to begin after spring peer review of the management track assessment
  - The rebuilding plan and management measures changes should focus on improving the probability of spawning and recruitment success.

# PDT Progress Report – FW65

## Annual Catch Limits:

- The majority of stock assessments will be done in the fall management track, but SNE/MA winter flounder, GB cod and GB yellowtail flounder will be available sooner.
- Update the risk policy matrix for all stocks with the most recent assessment results and an additional update with the assessments done later this year
- Sub-component reviews - skipped in FW63 but appropriate to include in this FW since most stocks are included
- Review of the GB haddock sub-ACL for the herring fishery
- Examination of management uncertainty buffers as part of the specifications process – specifically for sectors post-implementation of A23



# PDT Progress Report – FW65

## **ABC Control Rules:**

- A sub-group of PDT and SSC members will start with the current control rule and look at a range of options with input from the PDT and the Committee.
  - Consider the control rule policies summarized in the GMRI report
- The subgroup will present a summary white paper in July/August to the full PDT.

# PDT Progress Report – FW65

## **Additional Measures to Promote Stock Rebuilding for GOM Cod and SNE/MA Winter Flounder:**

- The PDT asks the Groundfish Committee - Should the focus in this section be on spawning protections or ways to promote spawning? Or some other aspect of rebuilding these stocks?
- As an initial step, the PDT could summarize spawning based on recent reports, publications, and potentially a new PDT analysis to identify times/areas.



# PDT Progress Report – A23 Review Metrics

**Purpose:** evaluate the efficacy of sector monitoring coverage rates, including establishing metrics and indicators of how well the monitoring program improved accuracy while maximizing value and minimizing costs

## Possible timeline:

2022	PDT develops possible review metrics and indicators for the Committee/Council to consider
2023	SSC input on possible metrics and indicators, complete preliminary analysis, Committee/Council determines metrics
2024	Review occurs (after two full years of data, assuming May 2022 implementation)

# PDT Progress Report – A23 Review Metrics

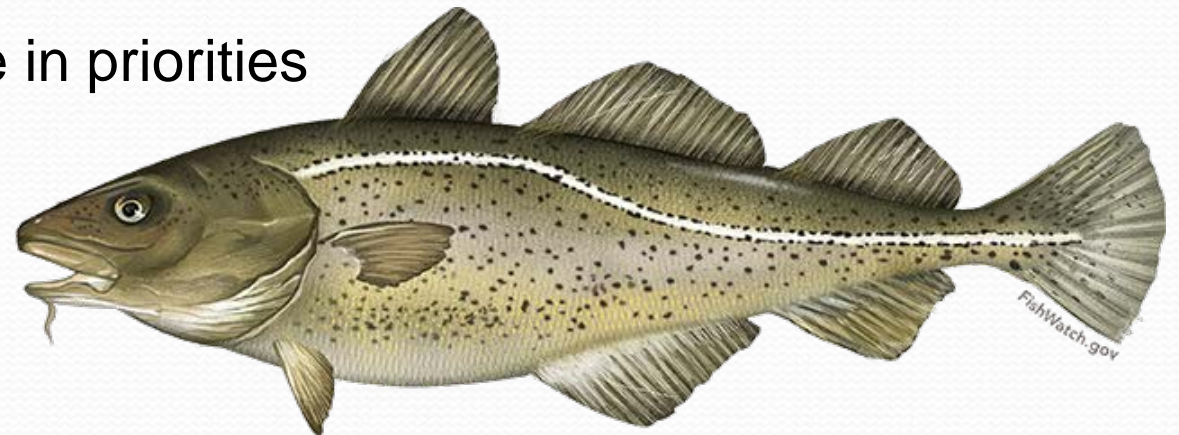
## **Initial discussion questions for PDT sub-group:**

- The review is to be done following the first two full fishing years once A23 is implemented. The PDT should determine a “before A23” range of years for comparison. What years should those be?
- Start to brainstorm an initial list of metrics and indicators. These may be different for the proposed higher coverage up to 100% vs. a lower coverage rate (i.e., the proposed default minimum coverage of 40%).
- Consider issues raised in the A23 proposed rule regarding measures that affect coverage rates (e.g., exclusions from monitoring coverage). How do these factor into development of the review metrics?

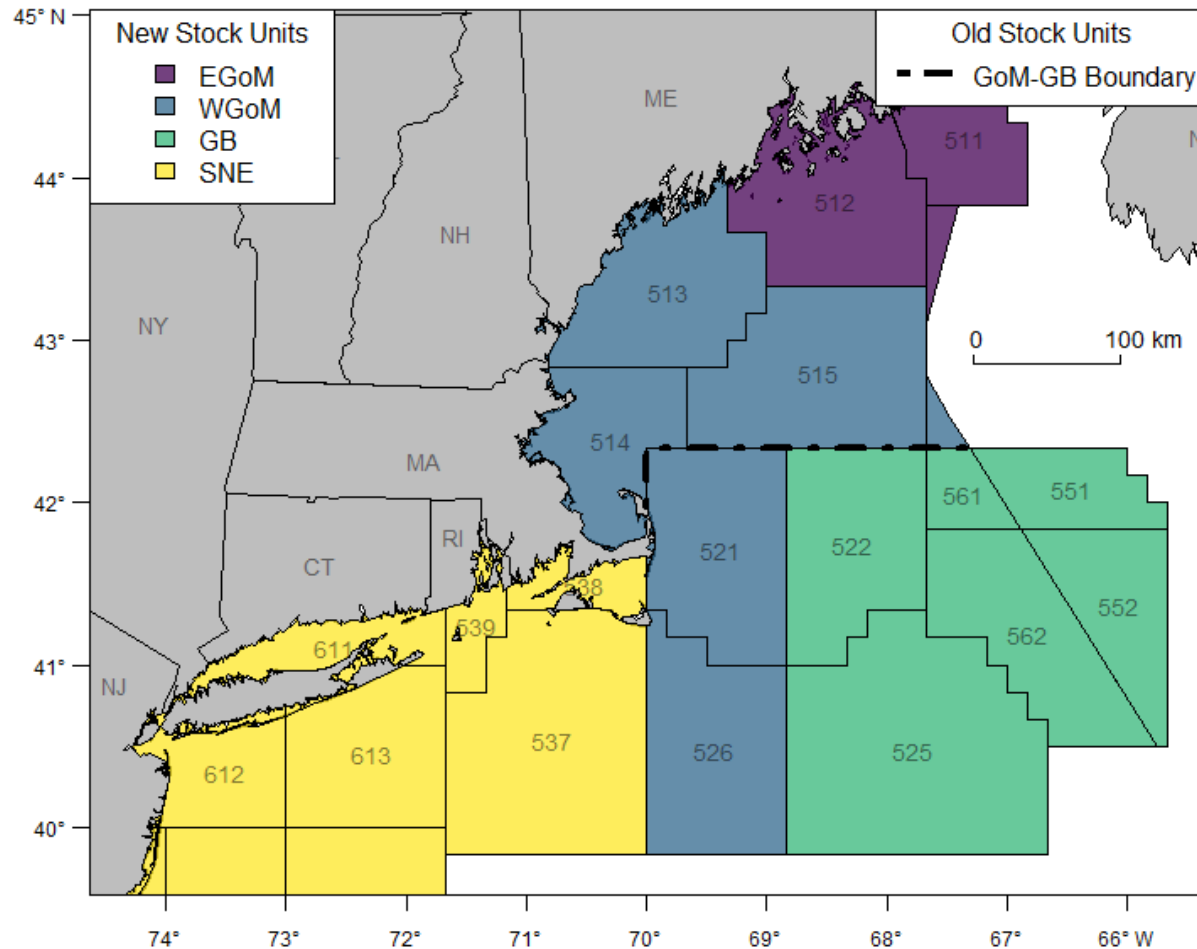


# February 2022 Council Meeting Recap

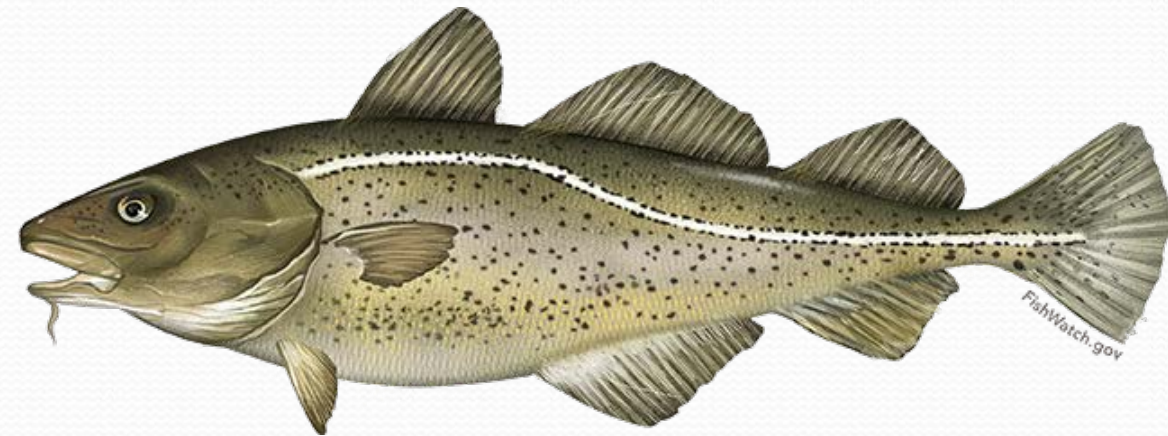
- Received the final report on the 2021 Atlantic Cod Stock Structure workshops
- Received an update from the Atlantic Cod Research Track Working Group
- Discussed management implications:
  - February 2022 – held a preliminary discussion and discussed next steps
  - For April 2022 – will consider a change in priorities



# Preliminary Discussion: Main Question

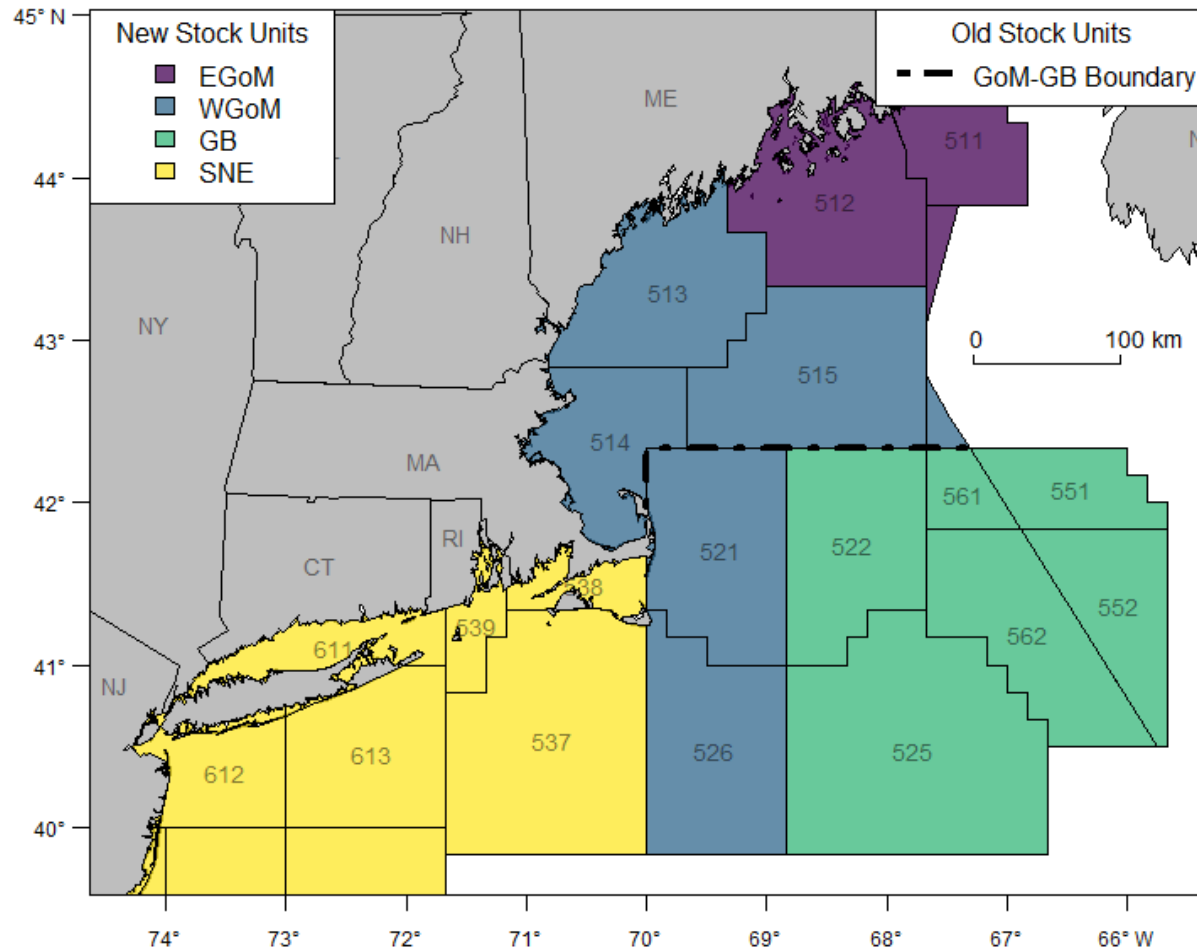


Does the Council support the Atlantic Cod Research Track Working Group's initial proposal for 4 biological units as the new paradigm for management units?





# Preliminary Discussion Questions



1. Given the information, what makes this difficult to discuss at present?
2. What needs to be clarified at this point? Elaborate.
3. Is there a maximum number of management units the Council should consider?
4. Are there combinations of biological units the Council cannot support?
5. Do you prefer fewer stocks with analytic assessments, or more stocks even if that means several have empirical assessments?

# When is the transition?

Current/Anticipated Specifications for FY2022- FY2024:

- GOM cod – FY2022-FY2024 (FW63)
- GB cod – FY2022 (FW63)
- GB cod – FY 2023-FY2024 (would be though FW65)

Next Stock Assessments for use in FY2024—FY2026 specifications:

- Atlantic Cod Research Track peer review – March 2023
- Management Track peer review – September 2023



# PDT Recommendation

PDT recommends a change in priorities this year in 2022 – to start developing a transition plan from management of Atlantic cod from 2 management units to up to 5 management units. This would be a multi-year priority.

# February 2022 Council Motion

That the Groundfish Committee consider whether priorities should be changed to develop a plan for transitioning from the current two cod management units to from 2 to 5 revised management units.



# 2022 Council Priorities – Meeting Goals

- Receive a progress report from the Groundfish Plan Development Team and
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- Recommendation to the Council on 2022 priorities.