

Groundfish Committee

Webinar

December 2, 2022



Groundfish Outlook by Quarter in 2022 , updated November 7, 2022, NEFMC Staff

Council Priority	Jan – Mar	Apr - Jun	July - Sept	Oct - Dec
Amendment 23	Submit correction (Jan.)	GARFO approval letter (Apr.)		GARFO implementation
	Develop A23 review metrics			
Framework Adjustment 63	Preliminary & Final Submissions		GARFO implementation	
Recreational Measures	Develop recommendations to GARFO: GOM cod & haddock recreational measures		GARFO implementation	
Framework Adjustment 65		Initiate action, develop specifications & measures	Develop specifications & measures, conduct analysis	Take final action
Atlantic Cod Management	Receive report from 2021 Workshops - NEFMC/NEFSC/UNH-NH SeaGrant (Feb.)	Add priority, discuss approach	Draft white paper on allocating GB cod to the recreational fishery	
2022-2026 Research Priorities		Make additions / revisions to research priorities		
Stock Assessments	Research Track (RT) – GOM haddock (Jan.), GB/EGB haddock (Mar.)	Management Track (MT) – SNE/MA winter flounder (Jun.)	TRAC– EGB cod, EGB haddock, GB yellowtail flounder (Jul.) RT – American Plaice (Jul.) MT – 13 stocks (Sept.)	
2023 Priorities			Make additions to possible priorities	Final priorities

Draft Framework Adjustment 65

Framework Adjustment 65

Goal:

Discuss development of draft specifications and measures

Outcome:

Motions to recommend development of alternatives or select preferred alternatives.

Scope

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

- Revise rebuilding plan for Gulf of Maine (GOM) cod,
- 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 GB cod,
- Revise acceptable biological catch (ABC) control rules, in consultation with the SSC.

Objectives

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

Draft Alternatives

Range of Alternatives:

1. Revisions to formal rebuilding plan for GOM cod
2. 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)
3. Revisions to ABC control rules
4. Additional commercial and recreational management measures to promote stock rebuilding for GOM cod
5. Additional commercial and recreational management measure to promote stock rebuilding for GB cod

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
APR 12-14	Council initiates framework
APR 20	TRAC Intercessional
MAY 23-24	Assessment Oversight Panel meets (13 groundfish stocks)
JUN 1	Recreational Advisory Panel meets
JUN 2	Groundfish Advisory Panel meets
JUN 14	Groundfish Committee meets
JUN 27-30	Peer review - SNE/MA winter flounder Management Track assessment
JUN 28-30	Council receives update on development of draft alternatives
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 4	SSC discusses rebuilding plan for GOM cod and an update on possible ABC control rule revisions
AUG 25	SSC recommends OFLs/ABCs for GB yellowtail flounder, GB cod, and SNE/MA winter flounder
AUG 31	Groundfish Advisory Panel meets; Recreational Advisory Panel meets

SEP 12-14	TMGC/SC meets to recommend TACs for US/CA management units/stock
SEP 15	Groundfish Committee meets
SEP 19-23	Peer review - 9 groundfish stocks Management Track Assessments
SEP 26-29	Council receives TMGC recommendations and reviews progress on developing draft alternatives
OCT 12	SSC recommends OFLs/ABCs for 3 groundfish stocks
OCT 26-27	SSC recommends OFLs/ABCs for 6 groundfish stocks
NOV 8	Groundfish Advisory Panel meets
NOV 9	SSC recommends OFLs/ABCs for 4 groundfish stocks
NOV 14	Recreational Advisory Panel meets
NOV 22	Groundfish Committee meets
DEC 1	Recreational Advisory Panel meets; Groundfish Advisory Panel meets;
DEC 2	Groundfish Committee meets
DEC 5-8	Council receives draft alternatives and takes final action
2023	
JAN	Preliminary submission of framework document to NMFS
FEB	Final submission of framework document to NMFS
MAY 1	Target implementation

4.1 ACTION 1 – FORMAL REBUILDING PLAN FOR GULF OF MAINE COD

Which rebuilding plan option do you recommend?

Alternative 1/ No Action

Alternative 2 Revised Rebuilding Strategy for Gulf of Maine Cod

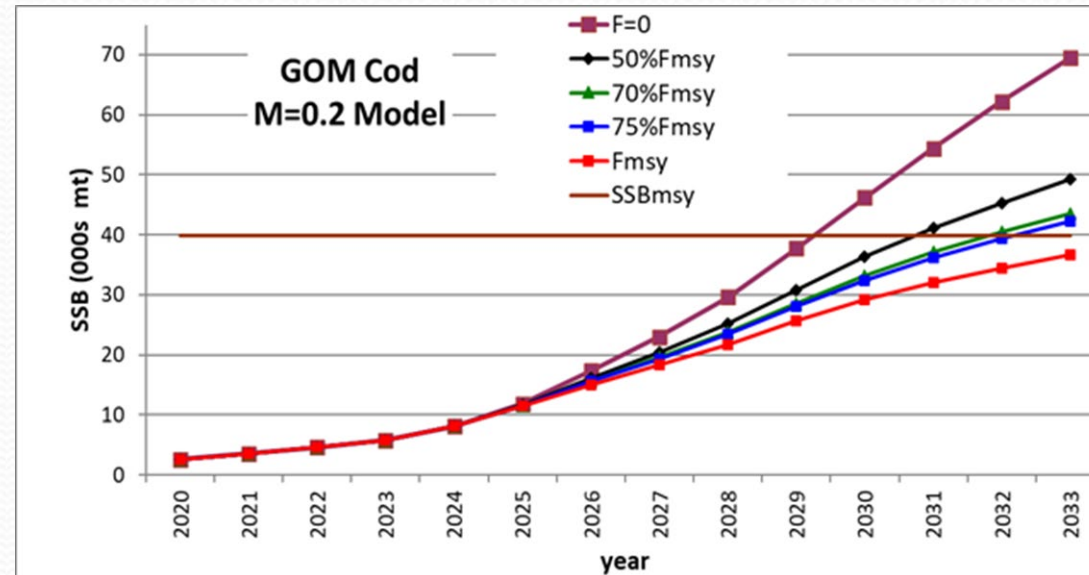
Option A. T_{target} of 10 years, rebuilding by 2033, at F_{rebuild} of 50%FMSY = 0.087, which results in a 77% probability of achieving B_{MSY} ,

Option B. T_{target} of 10 years, rebuilding by 2033, at F_{rebuild} of 70%FMSY = 0.121, which results in a 62% probability of achieving B_{MSY} , or

Option C. T_{target} of 10 years, rebuilding by 2033, at F_{rebuild} of 75%FMSY = 0.130, which results in a 58% probability of achieving B_{MSY} .

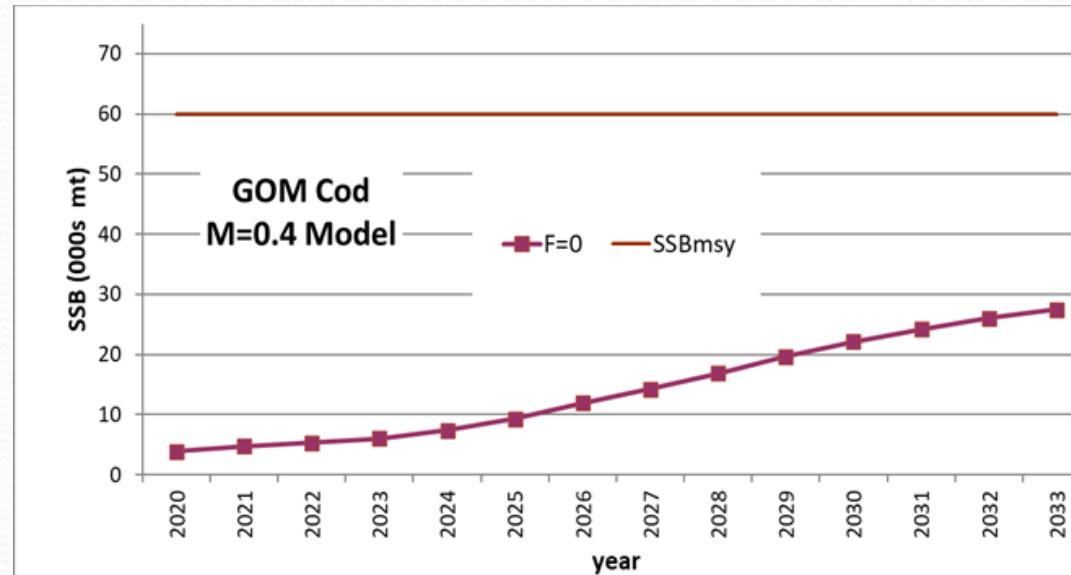
M=0.2 Model Standard Projections

With the same assumptions used in the 2021 stock assessment using the M=0.2 model at F=0, 50%FMSY, 70%FMSY, 75%FMSY, and FMSY.



M-ramp, $M=0.4$ Model Standard Projections

With the same assumptions used in the 2021 stock assessment using M-ramp, $M=0.4$ model at $F=0$. This assumes natural mortality remains high during the projections.



SSC Feedback, Meeting Aug 4, 2022

1. The SSC supported the PDT approach to using current ABCs for fishing years 2022 to 2024 in the rebuilding plan. In 2021, the SSC set constant ABCs for GOM cod for fishing years 2022 to 2024 with an aim to reduce the likelihood of overfishing and promote rebuilding for the stock.
2. The SSC supported the PDT's approach to develop 10-year rebuilding strategies for GOM cod with the suggestion that the PDT consider developing alternative rebuilding strategies for 10 years that consider the uncertainties in natural mortality and recruitment
3. The SSC recommended that the PDT develop the rebuilding strategies based on the current Gulf of Maine cod stock structure. The SSC highlighted that rebuilding strategies may need to pivot to reflect results from the Research Track assessment in the future.

Recreational Advisory Panel 12/1/22

The Recreational Advisory Panel recommends as preferred to the Groundfish Committee Alternative 2 , Option B – 70%FMSY for the Gulf of Maine cod rebuilding strategy.

- Alternative 2 Revised Rebuilding Strategy for Gulf of Maine Cod
- Recommends: Option B. T_{target} of 10 years, rebuilding by 2033, at F_{rebuild} of 70%FMSY= 0.121, which results in a 62% probability of achieving B_{MSY}

Groundfish Advisory Panel 12/1/22

The Groundfish Advisory Panel did not have a quorum at the start of the meeting.

Discussion Summary

The Groundfish Advisors in the room supported in Section 4.1.2 Revised rebuilding for GOM Cod: Alternative 2- Revised rebuilding strategy for GOM Cod, Option B.

- Alternative 2- Revised rebuilding strategy for GOM Cod
- Option B. T_{target} of 10 years, rebuilding by 2033, at F_{rebuild} of $70\%F_{\text{MSY}} = 0.121$, which results in a 62% probability of achieving B_{MSY}

The Groundfish Advisors in the room supported moving to considered but rejected in Section 4.1.2 Revised rebuilding for GOM Cod: Alternative 2- Revised rebuilding strategy for GOM Cod, Option A.

- Alternative 2- Revised rebuilding strategy for GOM Cod
- Option A. T_{target} of 10 years, rebuilding by 2033, at F_{rebuild} of $50\%F_{\text{MSY}} = 0.087$, which results in a 77% probability of achieving B_{MSY}

4.1 ACTION 1 – FORMAL REBUILDING PLAN FOR GULF OF MAINE COD

Which rebuilding plan option do you recommend?

Alternative 1/ No Action

Alternative 2 Revised Rebuilding Strategy for Gulf of Maine Cod

Option A. T_{target} of 10 years, rebuilding by 2033, at F_{rebuild} of 50%FMSY = 0.087, which results in a 77% probability of achieving B_{MSY} ,

Option B. T_{target} of 10 years, rebuilding by 2033, at F_{rebuild} of 70%FMSY = 0.121, which results in a 62% probability of achieving B_{MSY} , or

Option C. T_{target} of 10 years, rebuilding by 2033, at F_{rebuild} of 75%FMSY = 0.130, which results in a 58% probability of achieving B_{MSY} .

ACTION 2 –REVISED SPECIFICATIONS

Which alternatives/options do you recommend?

Alternative 1/ No Action

Alternative 2 Revised Specifications

- Most groundfish stocks would have new specifications based on recent stock assessments.
- Option A – Georges Bank cod ABC for FY2023 and FY2024
 - Option A1 – 754 mt
 - Option A2 – 904 mt
- Option B– Remove the management uncertainty buffer for sectors if the ASM target coverage rate is set at 99% or greater for fishing year 2023
 - Option B1- Gulf of Maine haddock
 - Option B2- White hake

Follow-Up Atlantic Halibut - PDT Memo Nov 28, 2022

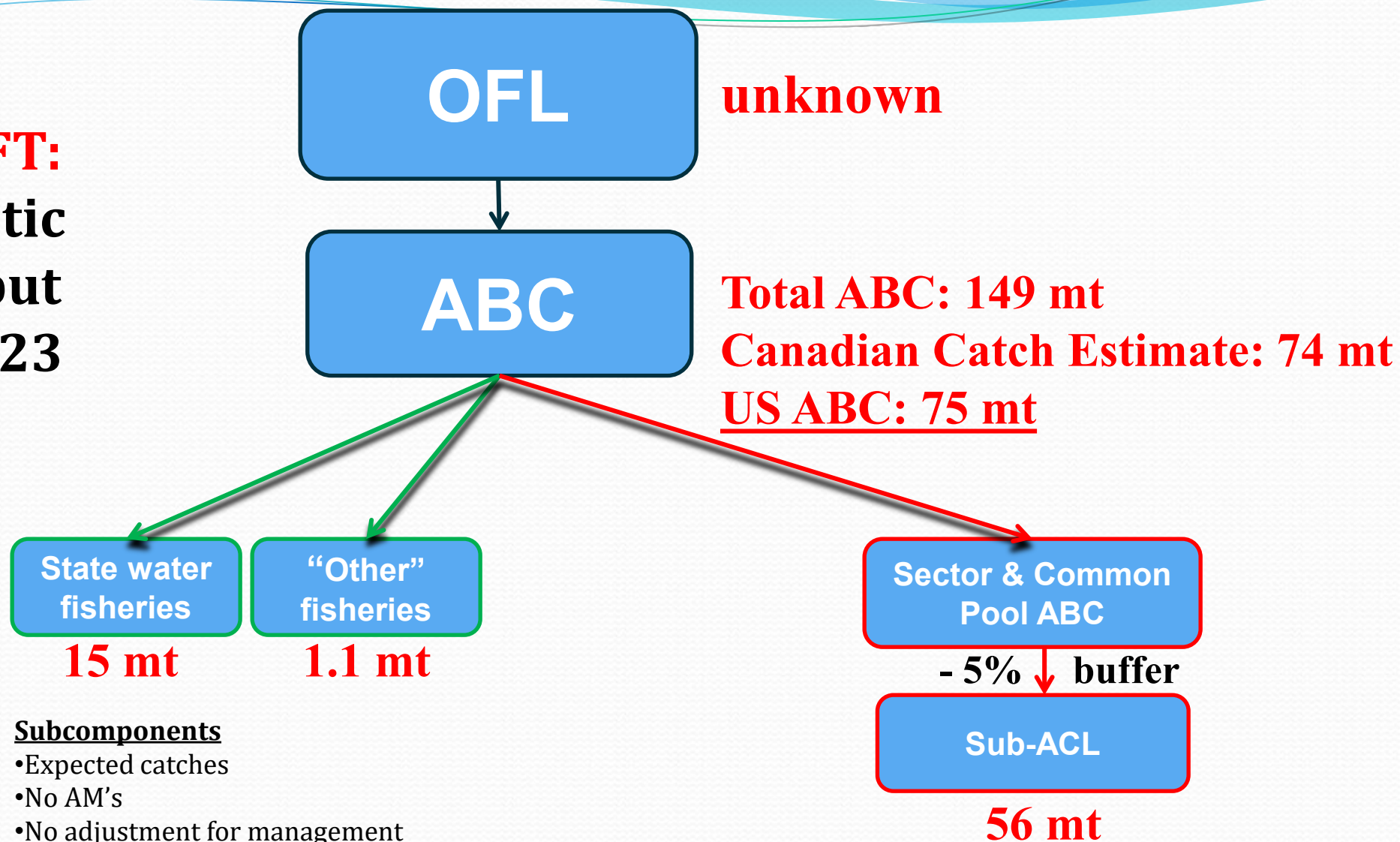
Table 2- Summary of recent Canadian catches (mt) of Atlantic halibut in the 2022 stock assessment, and preliminary 2022 as of Nov. 18, 2022, personal communication from DFO.

Atlantic Halibut - 2022 Assessment	
Calendar Year	CA landings (mt)
2016	34
2017	35
2018	46
2019	54
2020	156
2021	120
2022 (prelim)	93
2019-21 Avg	110
2019&2022 Avg	74

Table 3- Comparison for Atlantic halibut of the current sub-component values and the revised PDT's recommendation using the three-year (FY2019-FY2021) average and justification.

Stock	Sub-Component – Percentage of ABC					
	State waters (%)			Other (%)		
	FY22	Recommendation	Justification	FY22	Recommendation	Justification
Atlantic halibut	20% 20mt	20% 15mt	The FY2019-FY2021 average catch is 15.3mt. Maintain to cover the recent 3-year average. In addition, FW57 established precedent that the state-water subcomponent should not exceed 20%.	3.5% 3.5mt	1.5% 1.1mt	Decrease by 2% to cover the FY2019-FY2021 average catch of 1.1mt.

DRAFT:
Atlantic
Halibut
FY2023



Total ABC: 149 mt
Canadian Catch Estimate: 74 mt
US ABC: 75 mt

Subcomponents

- Expected catches
- No AM's
- No adjustment for management uncertainty

Sub-ACLs

- Subject to AM's
- Management uncertainty adjustment

Draft Revised Specifications – Groundfish ACLs

	Stock	Commercial groundfish sub-ACLs (mt)		
		FY2022	Draft FW65	% Change
			FY2023	
Allocated Stocks	GB Cod	244	<i>See options.</i>	
	GOM Cod	270	304.3	13%
	GB Haddock	75,382	11,080	-85%
	GOM Haddock	7,056	1,149	-84%
	GB Yellowtail Flounder	97	84.3	-13%
	SNE/MA Yellowtail Flounder	16	33.3	108%
	CC/GOM Yellowtail Flounder	692	985	42%
	American Plaice	2,630	5,360	104%
	Witch Flounder	1,317	1,145	-13%
	GB Winter Flounder	563	1634	190%
	GOM Winter Flounder	281	607	116%
	SNE/MA Winter Flounder	288	447	55%
	Redfish	9,559	9,469	-1%
	White Hake	1,990	1,735	-13%
	Pollock	14,135	13,124	-7%

	Stock	Commercial groundfish sub-ACLs (mt)		
		FY2022	Draft FW65	% Change
			FY2023	
Non-allocated Stocks	GOM/GB Windowpane Flounder	108	105	-3%
	SNE/MA Windowpane Flounder	43	45	5%
	Ocean Pout	50	49	-2%
	Atlantic Halibut	73	56	-23%
	Atlantic Wolffish	86	86	0%

Draft Revised Specifications

Fishery	Stock	FY2022 sub-ACL (mt)	Draft FW65 FY2023 sub-ACL (mt)	% Change
Recreational Groundfish	GOM Cod	192	192	0%
	GOM Haddock	3,634	610	-83%
Sea Scallop	GB Yellowtail Flounder	19	16.5	-13%
	SNE/MA Yellowtail Flounder	2	2.7	35%
	GOM/GB Windowpane Flounder	31	31	0%
	SNE/MA Windowpane Flounder	129	129	0%
Midwater Trawl	GB Haddock	1,514	221	-85%
	GOM Haddock	107	18	-83%
Small-Mesh	GB Yellowtail Flounder	2.3	2	-13%
Other Sub-component ¹	SNE/MA Windowpane Flounder	177	184	4%

¹ The other sub-component for SNE/MA Windowpane Flounder is used to evaluate AMs for large-mesh non-groundfish trawl fisheries (e.g., summer flounder and scup trawl fisheries).

Recreational Advisory Panel 12/1/22

The Recreational Advisory Panel recommends as preferred to the Groundfish Committee

Alternative 2 Revised Specifications (including changes for Gulf of Maine haddock FY2023-FY2025 OFLs and ABCs and OFLs/ABCs for most groundfish stocks) and under

- Option A – Georges Bank cod ABC for FY2023 and FY2024
- Recommends: Option A1 – 754 mt

The Recreational Advisory Panel recommends to the Groundfish Committee to oppose removal of management uncertainty buffers and specifically under

Alternative 2 Revised Specifications

Opposes: Option B– Remove the management uncertainty buffer for sectors when ASM target coverage rate is set at 99% or greater

- Option B1- Gulf of Maine haddock
- Option B2- White hake

Groundfish Advisory Panel 12/1/22

The Groundfish Advisory Panel did not have a quorum.

Discussion Summary

The Groundfish Advisors in the room supported in Section 4.2.2 Revised specifications: Alternative 2 with Option A2 for Georges Bank Cod and Option B both Options B1 and B2 for management uncertainty.

Alternative 2 – Revised specifications

- Option A – Georges Bank cod ABC for FY2023 and FY2024
 - Option A2 – 904 mt
- Option B – Remove the management uncertainty buffer for sectors when ASM target coverage rate is set at 99% or greater
 - Option B1- Gulf of Maine haddock
 - Option B2- White hake

ACTION 2 –REVISED SPECIFICATIONS

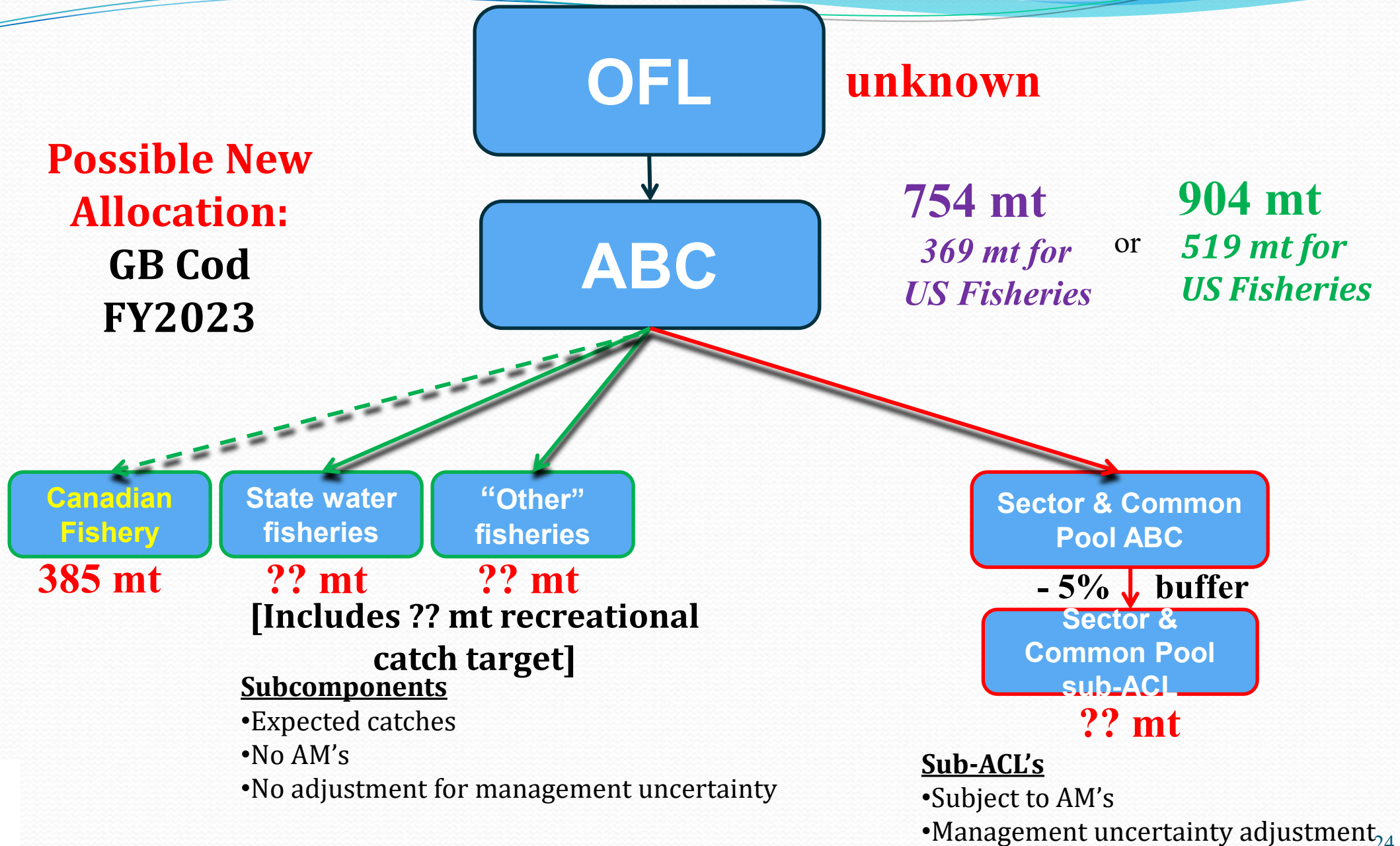
Which alternatives/options do you recommend?

Alternative 3 – Recreational Catch Target for Georges Bank Cod

- Option 1 – No Action
- Option 2 – Maintain the Status Quo
- Option 3 - Revised Recreational GB Cod Catch Target Based on Recent Catches
- Option 4– Revised Recreational GB Cod Catch Target Based on Recent Percentage of US Fisheries Catches
- Option 5 – Revised Recreational GB Cod Catch Target Based on a Reduction from Recent Catches

	Alt 2. Option A1	Alt 2. Option A2
Total ABC	754 mt	904 mt
US ABC	369 mt	519 mt
Alt. 3		
Option 1	230 mt	230 mt
Option 2	75 mt	75 mt
Option 3	66 mt	92 mt
Option 4	113 mt	159 mt
Option 5	81 mt	113 mt

**Possible New
Allocation:
GB Cod
FY2023**



Commercial Fishery

Table 1- Summary of recent catches (mt) of Georges Bank cod by the US commercial groundfish fishery, FY2015-FY2021, and in-season FY2022. Sources: FY2015 – FY2021 final year-end multispecies catch reports, GARFO, FY2022 in-season catch report, GARFO, November 8, 2021.

Fishing Year	<u>Commercial Groundfish Fishery- Georges Bank Cod</u>					Percentage of sub-ACL
	Sub-ACL	Landings	Discards	Catch		
2015	1,787	1,608.5	28.3	1,636.8		91.6%
2016	608	571.9	24.6	596.6		98.1%
2017	531	432.8	13.1	446.0		84.0%
2018	1,360	833.2	4.7	837.9		61.6%
2019	1,568	524.5	7.9	532.4		34.0%
2020	1,073	417.4	7.8	425.3		39.6%
2021	1,093	463.6	7.2	470.8		43.1%
*2022	243.9	*38.8	*3.3	*42.1		*17.3%

Recreational Fishery

Table 2- Summary of recent Georges Bank cod recreational catch (mt), FY2015-FY2021, and in-season FY2022. Sources: FY2015 – FY2021 final year-end multispecies catch reports, GARFO. Preliminary FY2022, available MRIP data through Nov. 8, 2022, NEFSC personal communication.

Fishing Year	<u>Recreational Fishery – Georges Bank Cod</u>					
	Federal Waters Recreational Catch	State Waters Recreational Catch	All Recreational Catch	Recreational Catch Target	Total US Catch	Recreational Portion of Total US Catch (Percent)
2015	132.1	33.0	165.1	n/a	1,835.4	9.0%
2016	419.7	57.8	477.5	n/a	1,125.5	42.4%
2017	50.1	2.8	52.9	n/a	522.5	10.1%
2018	31.6	5.5	37.1	138	887.3	4.2%
2019	88.9	11.0	99.9	138	641.7	15.6%
2020	152.6	141.8	294.4	138	731.2	40.3%
2021	191.8	44.2	236.0	138	718.6	32.8%
*2022			*83	75		

*Preliminary in-season

Recreational Advisory Panel 12/1/22

The Recreational Advisory Panel recommends as preferred to the Groundfish Committee under Alternative 3 – Recreational Catch Target for Georges Bank Cod

- Recommends: Option 4– Revised Recreational GB Cod Catch Target Based on Recent Percentage of US Fisheries Catches

If under a 754 mt ABC, the GB cod recreational catch target would be set for fishing years 2023 and 2024 using the method as follows:

- The 3-year (CY2019-CY2021) average percentage of recreational catches relative to US fisheries total catches (30.7%) applied to the possible FY2023 US ABC (369 mt) under a 754 mt ABC.
- This results in a GB cod recreational catch target of 113 mt.

Groundfish Advisory Panel 12/1/22

The Groundfish Advisors recommend as preferred to the Groundfish Committee in Section 4.3 Recreational Catch Target for Georges Bank Cod: Option 4.2.3.3, Option 3 Revised recreational GB cod catch target based on recent catches.

Alternative 3 – Recreational Catch Target for Georges Bank Cod

- *Option 3 - Revised Recreational GB Cod Catch Target Based on Recent Catches*

The GB cod recreational catch target would be set for fishing year 2022 using the method as follows:

- The 3-year (CY2019-CY2021) average of recreational catch (233mt), reduced by the percent change between FY2021 US ABC to the proposed FY2023 US ABC (40%).
- Under a 904 mt ABC, this results in a GB cod recreational catch target of 92 mt.

In addition, the recreational GB cod catch target should be at least 75 mt.

ACTION 2 –REVISED SPECIFICATIONS

Which alternatives/options do you recommend?

Alternative 3 – Recreational Catch Target for Georges Bank Cod

- Option 1 – No Action
- Option 2 – Maintain the Status Quo
- Option 3 - Revised Recreational GB Cod Catch Target Based on Recent Catches
- Option 4– Revised Recreational GB Cod Catch Target Based on Recent Percentage of US Fisheries Catches
- Option 5 – Revised Recreational GB Cod Catch Target Based on a Reduction from Recent Catches

	Alt 2. Option A1	Alt 2. Option A2
Total ABC	754 mt	904 mt
US ABC	369 mt	519 mt
Alt. 3		
Option 1	230 mt	230 mt
Option 2	75 mt	75 mt
Option 3	66 mt	92 mt
Option 4	113 mt	159 mt
Option 5	81 mt	113 mt

ACTION 3 – ACCEPTABLE BIOLOGICAL CATCH CONTROL RULES

Do you have any recommendations of alternatives to add in this section?

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 FMSY.
- B. If fishing at 75% of FMSY 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 (Frebuild).
- C. For stocks that cannot rebuild to BMSY 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.

ABC Control Rules – Council Staff

Key question: What type of approach(es) would the Committee like to consider in FW65?

Approach #1 – Refine the existing Control Rules – The current control rules would remain and clear decision rules on their application would be developed. For example, when/how to apply a constant ABC based on projections from analytical assessments and the results of empirical approaches.

Approach #2 – Modify the existing Control Rules – One or more control rules would be modified or dropped. For example, removing “option c” and refining “option d” and specifying how to use a fixed F_{rebuild} under “option b”.

Approach # 3 – Replace the existing Control Rules – Completely new control rules would be developed. For example, one alternative could be tiered control rules that consider the stock and its assessment. Furthermore, should the public participate in a MSE process like what was done for Atlantic herring? If so, this would be a much longer and more involved process beyond the timing for FW65.

Groundfish Committee - Meeting 6/14/22

Move that the Committee recommends to the Plan Development Team that work related to the ABC control rule in Framework 65 begin with Council staff approach #1 (*refine the existing control rules, including developing guidance on when to use a constant ABC*). The Committee continues to recognize the value of Council staff approaches #2 (*modify the existing control rules*) and #3 (*replace the existing control rules*); however, additional time and conversations with the SSC and Advisory Panels is warranted under these approaches and their more extensive nature may be best addressed under an additional priority in 2023.

Groundfish PDT Memo 11/30/22

Typically, constant ABCs means holding year 1 of the projected ABC constant when the ABCs in year 2 and 3 would otherwise increase. If recent recruitment is low, projections that are overly optimistic could overestimate SSB if drawn from a longer recruitment series.

Draft list for when to consider constant ABCs:

- When a stock is in a rebuilding plan and particularly when near the end of its rebuilding plan.
- When a stock is approaching an overfished condition.
- When a high level of uncertainty in the projections is anticipated.
- When a stock is recently considered rebuilt to help to maintain that status in the specifications period.

Groundfish PDT Memo 11/30/22

The PDT supports the Committee's motion to continue working on revising ABC control rules in 2023. There are several factors to consider in the other elements of the control rules.

For example:

- Should a large increase in ABC be put in place if a projection becomes a “fishing down” exercise to SSBMSY?
- How should the control rule deal with stocks that seem to be more influenced by climate change effects rather than reductions in fishing mortality and catch.
- Should the control rule be developed to lessen the large fluctuations in ABCs from one assessment to the next?

Groundfish Advisory Panel 12/1/22

The Groundfish Advisory Panel feels it should be a priority to revise the ABC control rules to lessen the large fluctuations in ABCs from one assessment to the next.

Rationale: To work on this for the next specifications cycle. The Advisors are concerned about the substantial changes in Gulf of Maine haddock and Georges Bank haddock ABCs for example this year.

ACTION 3 – ACCEPTABLE BIOLOGICAL CATCH CONTROL RULES

Do you have any recommendations of alternatives to add in this section?

ACTION 4 – COMMERCIAL AND RECREATIONAL FISHERY MANAGEMENT MEASURES – GULF OF MAINE COD

Do you have any recommendations of alternatives to add in this section?

Background

At its June 2022 meeting, the Committee passed the following motion:

The Groundfish Committee tasks the Plan Development Team to analyze the effectiveness of the management uncertainty buffer for the Gulf of Maine cod recreational fishery including consideration of how the uncertainty buffer could impact carryover determinations for sectors. June 14, 2022

Annual Catch Limits

Once the U.S. ABC is distributed to the various fishery components, sub-annual catch limits (sub-ACLs) are set by reducing the amount of the ABC distributed to each component to account for management uncertainty (i.e., the likelihood that management measures will result in a level of catch greater than the catch target).

For each stock, management uncertainty is estimated using the following criteria: Enforceability and precision of management measures, adequacy of catch monitoring, latent effort, and catch of groundfish in non-groundfish fisheries.

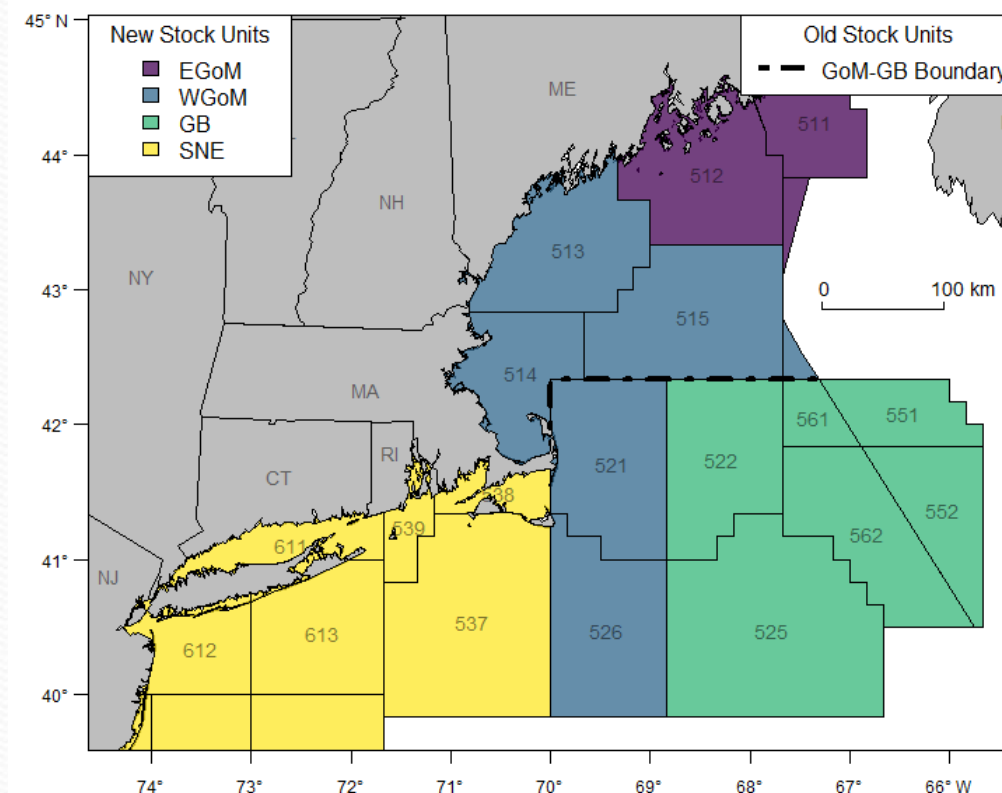
The following default management uncertainty buffers are used for groundfish stocks:

- 3% for stocks with no state waters catch;
- 7% for zero possession stocks;
- 7% for recreational allocations; and
- 5% for all other stocks/components of the fishery.

The Council proposed changes to the management uncertainty buffer for sectors among the alternatives in Amendment 23 – commercial groundfish monitoring. See Amendment 23, located here: <https://www.nefmc.org/library/amendment-23>

Stock Structure Uncertainty

The current GOM cod stock overlaps the new cod biological units of Western Gulf of Maine winter spawners, Western Gulf of Maine spring spawners, and Eastern Gulf of Maine. A Research Track for Atlantic cod is presently underway.



PDT Memo – Discussion – Nov 30, 2022

The management uncertainty buffer for the recreational GOM cod sub-ABC is 7% to determine a sub-ACL. This is the default for recreational allocations set through A16.

The last time the recreational sub-ACL was exceeded was in FY2017, since then the recreational fishery has remained under its sub-ACL for FY2018 through FY2021.

Preliminary catch information for FY2022 indicates GOM cod catches may be declining slightly compared with FY2021.

PDT Memo - Nov 30, 2022

Evaluation of Criteria – Recreational Management Uncertainty Buffer GOM cod

- Enforceability and precision of management measures:
 - Challenge if management measures changing often, each year
 - Split measures by mode (private / for-hire) presents an additional challenge
 - Timing of implementation can be a factor
 - Compliance/non-compliance with measures, could evaluate with MRIP data
- Adequacy of catch monitoring:
 - MRIP data has improved in recent years and is being used in the stock assessment and catch accounting
 - Trip reporting for for-hire (party and charter) vessels is by eVTRs
 - Private mode greater uncertainty than for-hire
 - Evaluation of PSEs, and convert to range around the estimate
- Latent effort:
 - Active for-hire permits have declined
 - No separate limited access/entry program for recreational groundfish, Council decided not to pursue
- Catch of groundfish in non-groundfish fisheries
 - Not applicable for this buffer.

Recreational Advisory Panel 12/1/22

The Recreational Advisory Panel recommends to the Groundfish Committee that the management uncertainty buffer used to determine those for the recreational fishery sub-ACLs be equal to those set buffers used for the commercial fishery.

Rationale: In consideration of MRIP data improvements since A16, the default management uncertainty buffer of 7% is no longer appropriate.

Groundfish Advisory Panel 12/1/22

The Groundfish Advisory Panel believes that the recreational uncertainty buffer for Gulf of Maine cod is not sufficient because the fishery is not monitored. The Groundfish Advisory Panel does not have a specific recommendation for increasing the uncertainty buffer but does strongly recommend that the buffer not be reduced.

4.5 ACTION 5 – COMMERCIAL AND RECREATIONAL FISHERY MANAGEMENT MEASURES – GEORGES BANK COD

Do you have any recommendations of alternatives to add in this section?

Background

At its June 2022 meeting, the Council passed the following motion:

*That the Council include Georges Bank cod as a stock to pursue “additional measures to promote rebuilding” in Framework Adjustment 65, including mechanisms that could be adopted to minimize the impact to the commercial fishery if the recreational fishery exceeds its catch target.
June 29, 2022*

The Council expressed concern about the delayed implementation of Framework Adjustment 63 (FW63) which included a major reduction in the GB cod catch limit for the commercial fishery and more conservative measures for the recreational fishery based on a reduced recreational fishery catch target. Measures for the recreational fishery were designed to be in place by May 1, 2022. Implementation did not occur until July 15, 2022.

In-Season Fishery Data for GB cod

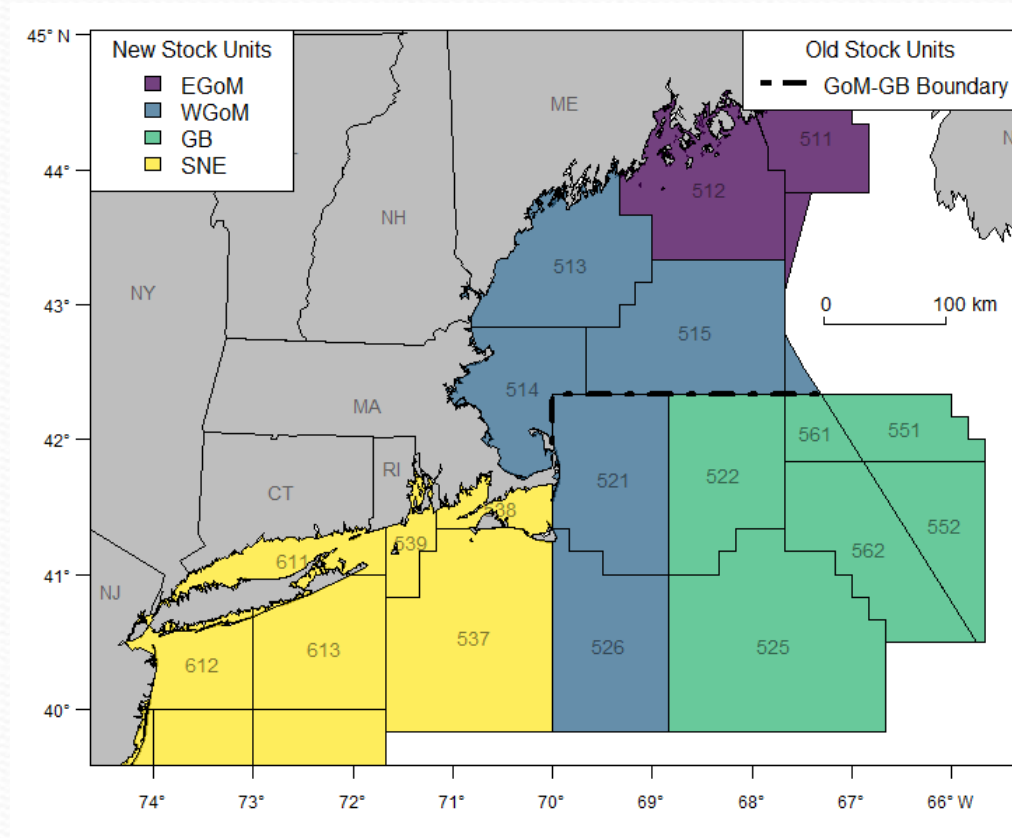
Preliminary updated in-season catch information for the commercial and recreational fisheries shows that the commercial fishery is well-below its sub-ACL (42.1 mt of 243.9 mt through November 8, 2022) and the recreational fishery may have already exceeded the catch target (83 mt of 75 mt target, through August 2022).

In-Season Fishery Data for GB cod

Preliminary updated in-season catch information for the commercial and recreational fisheries shows that the commercial fishery is well-below its sub-ACL (42.1 mt of 243.9 mt through November 8, 2022) and the recreational fishery may have already exceeded the catch target (83 mt of 75 mt target, through August 2022).

Stock Structure Uncertainty

The current GB cod stock overlaps the new cod biological units of Western Gulf of Maine winter spawners, Georges Bank, and Southern New England. A Research Track for Atlantic cod is presently underway.



Current Approach

Amendment 16 prescribes a process for addressing overages from vessels fishing outside of the allocated fishery.

If the overall ACL for a stock is exceeded, then the amount of the overage due to catch from vessels fishing outside of the allocated fishery shall be distributed among allocated components of the Northeast multispecies fishery based on each component's share of that stock's ACL.

Each component's share of the overage is then added to that component's catch to determine the net overage amount.

If the sum exceeds the component's sub-ACL, the respective AMs for that component of the fishery will be triggered. The AM for sectors and the common pool is a pound-for-pound payback.

For details on how the GB cod overage in FY2016 was addressed, see attached letters from GARFO in 2017 and 2018.

Ideas Discussed – PDT Memo – Nov 30, 2022

Two ideas the PDT discussed on temporary modifications to AMs for GB cod for the commercial fishery (sectors and common pool)

Idea #1-Temporary modification to the AM trigger for GB cod when an overage is due to vessels fishing outside of the allocated fishery

Only for when addressing overages from vessels fishing outside of the allocated fishery and as a temporary measure for fishing years 2022, 2023, and 2024, modify the AM trigger to be if the Georges Bank cod US ABC is exceeded.

All other provisions would remain.

Idea #2- Temporary modification to include a performance-based AM for GB cod when an overage is due to vessels fishing outside of the allocated fishery

Only for when addressing overages from vessels fishing outside of the allocated fishery and as a temporary measure for fishing years 2022, 2023, and 2024, a performance-based AM would be added, as:

- Year 1 – An overage occurs due to vessels fishing outside the allocated fishery – this is known in year 2 – for a reduction in year 3.
- Year 2 – The total ACL is not exceeded by any amount.
- Year 3 – In-season reduced lb-for-lb payback based on the underage of the total ACL in year 2.

All other provisions would remain.

Discussion PDT Memo – Nov 30, 2022

- The PDT discussed the two ideas on how to modify the commercial AMs, but the PDT did not recommend either approach.
- First, the PDT found it difficult to connect Idea #1 to the objective of promoting stock rebuilding over the current approach as the AM would not be triggered until the ABC was exceeded rather than the ACL.
- Second, Idea #2 is challenging due to timing and if a mid-year adjustment to re-allocate back would be feasible.
- Generally, the PDT felt creating a sub-ACL for the recreational fishery in future years would be more appropriate to address the concerns.
- Furthermore, if the cod stock units change through the research track, how AMs would be applied may become more complicated.

Framework Adjustment 65

Goal:

Discuss development of draft specifications and measures

Outcome:

Motions to recommend development of alternatives or select preferred alternatives.

Atlantic Cod Management



New England
Fishery Management Council

Atlantic Cod Management

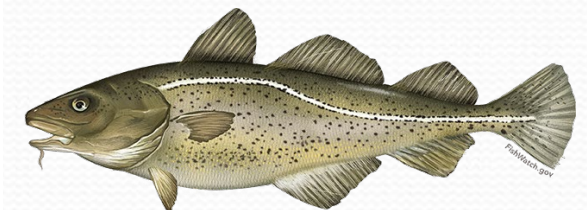
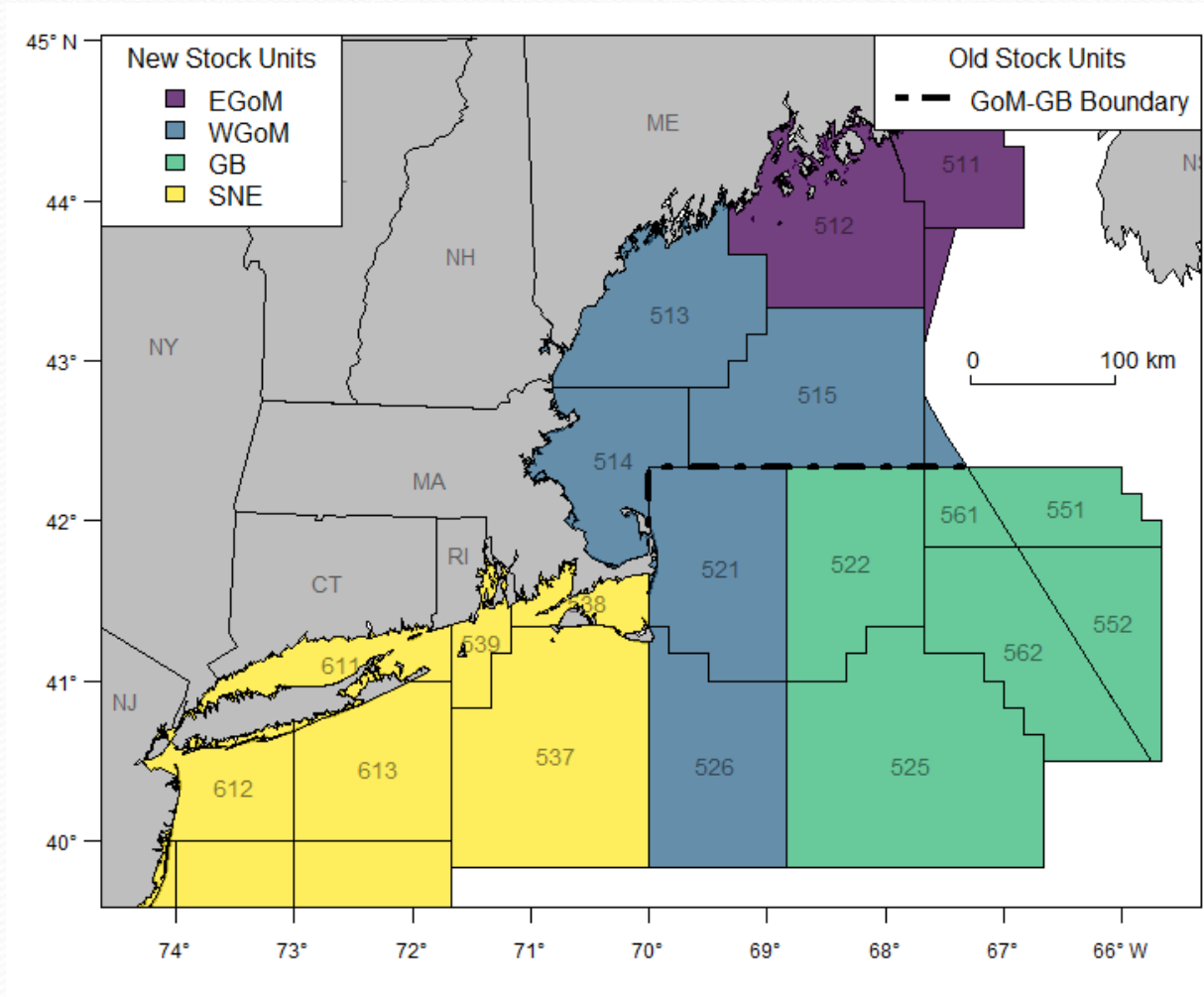
Goal:

Receive an update on development of a discussion paper on allocating GB cod to the recreational fishery.

Outcome:

Discussion and feedback.

Atlantic Cod Management



Groundfish Committee - Meeting 6/14/22

The Committee recommends to the Plan Development Team that the White Paper on potential approaches to allocate “Georges Bank cod” to the recreational fishery consider the following:

- a) Management measures that each sector (rec vs. comm) was subject to during time periods considered, including whether the recreational fishery was subject to a catch target, if that catch target was linked to a change in the ABC, and if the catch target was based on old vs. new MRIP data
- b) Whether to consider catch data from years prior to the recreational catch target being established (FY2018)
- c) Identification of years in which an overage of the rec catch target or the commercial sub-ACL occurred and a methodology to ensure overages do not inflate a sub-ACL
- d) If a management uncertainty buffer is appropriate for the recreational fishery and, if yes, the potential magnitude of the buffer
- e) The influence of deducting sub-components after the recreational and commercial sub-ACLs
- f) Using weight vs. numbers of fish in the allocation
- g) If and how state waters catch factors into the allocation
- h) Exploration of what recreational catch is compared to and its impacts (i.e. commercial catch, the ACL, something else?)

Recreational Advisory Panel - Meeting 8/31/22

From the Groundfish Committee's motion on 6/14/22:

The Committee recommends to the Plan Development Team that the White Paper on potential approaches to allocate "Georges Bank cod" to the recreational fishery consider the following:

a) Management measures that each sector (rec vs. comm) was subject to during time periods considered, including whether the recreational fishery was subject to a catch target, if that catch target was linked to a change in the ABC, and if the catch target was based on old vs. new MRIP data.....

g) If and how state waters catch factors into the allocation

That the Recreational Advisory Panel recommends if an allocation is made it should use new MRIP for the recreational fishery and that state waters catch should factor into the allocation.

Groundfish PDT – Nov 30 2022

1. Background

- Cod Stock Structure
- Ongoing work of research track working group
- Council's Change in priorities, transition plan

2. Current Georges Bank Stock

To address (a) through (c), we would summarize information for the current Georges Bank stock. Much of this information is provided in four recent PDT memos to the SSC and Committee

3. Southern New England Stock

To address (d) through (h), we would summarize information for the proposed Southern New England stock, based on preliminary data generated by the Atlantic Cod Research Track Working Group. Presently, this information is not available from the Research Track but may be as soon as January 2023. We would also review past Council discussions and decisions on allocating between commercial and recreational fisheries for groundfish stocks that took place during the development of Amendment 16.

Atlantic Cod Management

Goal:

Receive an update on development of a discussion paper on allocating GB cod to the recreational fishery.

Outcome:

Discussion and feedback.

Possible 2023 Council Priorities



New England
Fishery Management Council

Current Draft Possible Priorities List

- Set ABCs/ACLs as necessary for groundfish stocks for FY2024-FY2026 and US/CA stocks for FY2024-FY2025
- Develop measures to reduce gillnet interactions with protected species (sturgeon, large whales).
- Develop a transition plan for Atlantic cod management from the current two management units to up to five management units.
- In consultation with the SSC, continue work to revise ABC control rules for Northeast Multispecies stocks - modify the existing controls (Approach 2) or replace the existing control rules/conduct MSE (Approach 3)
- Review commercial sector PSC allocation as per Council allocation review schedule.
- Review groundfish sector sub-ACLs as per Council allocation review schedule.
- Implement recommendations from the white paper on potential approaches to allocate "Georges Bank" cod to the recreational fishery, delivered in 2022 to inform the 2023 priorities discussion.
- Consider adjustments to sector program suggested by sector catch share review
- "Develop a recreational angler permit with reporting requirements for cod "
- Revise the small vessel category trip limits – tied to changes in catch limits / changes in stock size
- Review sub-ACL allocations for GB YTF (scallops), GB YTF (small mesh), SNE/MA WINP (scallops), SNE/MA WINP (large mesh)
- Complete development of metrics to be used in the review process that will evaluate the monitoring system, as per Amendment 23, and have SSC review
- Review Sector Redfish Universal Exemption after redfish assessment
- Examine modifications to the universal sector exemptions for redfish
- Continue as a multi-year priority work on ABC control rules Approach #2 (modify existing control rules) and Approach #3 (replace existing control rules).
- Evaluate fisheries exceeding 5% total catch of SNE/MA Winter Flounder
- Evaluate uncertainty in Georges Bank cod catch estimates and recommend how to use in recreational management
- Develop a mechanism to quantify how many anglers are catching/targeting groundfish
- Evaluate the current and potential new Northeast Multispecies management measures to protect Atlantic cod spawning, within the Council's transition plan to move from 3 units to up to 5 units
- Develop alternatives on how to address impacts of large swings in Canadian halibut catch in US halibut management
- STAFF: Research track assessment (working group participation) - Atlantic cod, yellowtail flounder
- STAFF: Groundfish management track assessments
- STAFF: TRAC/TMGC

Groundfish Advisory Panel - Meeting 11/8/22

By consensus, the Groundfish Advisory Panel recommends to the Groundfish Committee these priorities for 2023 (which are unranked):

- Examine modifications to the universal sector exemptions for redfish
- Evaluate uncertainty in Georges Bank cod catch estimates and recommend how to use in recreational management
- Re-examine mortality closures to allow for the ability for sector vessels to access these areas.

Recreational Advisory Panel - Meeting 11/14/22

The Recreational Advisory Panel reaffirms to the Groundfish Committee these possible priorities for 2023 (ranked order):

1. Evaluate uncertainty in Georges Bank cod catch estimates and recommend how to use in recreational management
2. Develop a mechanism to quantify how many anglers are catching/targeting groundfish
3. Develop a recreational angler permit with reporting requirements for cod

The Recreational Advisory Panel recommends to the Groundfish Committee to support item # 61 on the 10/6/22 list of Possible Tasks under Herring, which reads "Revisit Amendment 8 inshore midwater trawl closure."