

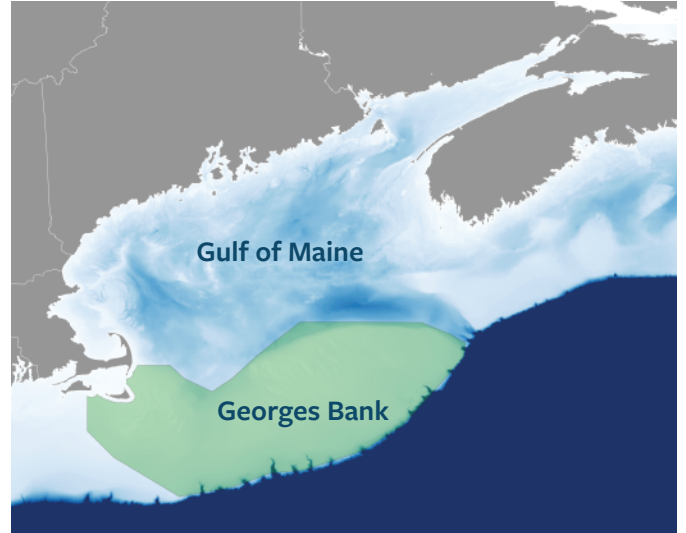


The Georges Bank Ecological Production Unit (EPU)

Why Georges Bank?

Ecological Production Units are areas on the continental shelf that have unique characteristics of: **bathymetry, bottom sediments, temperature, salinity, and primary production from phytoplankton.** The boundaries of the Georges Bank EPU are defined by these unique characteristics and extend to the continental shelf on its east and south edges, to Natucket Shoals on the west, and to the southern edge Gulf of Maine on the North.

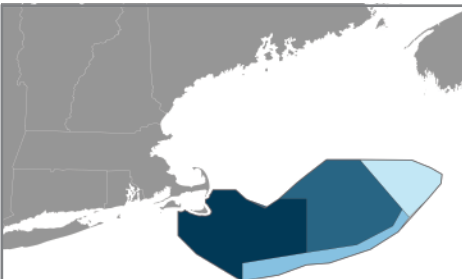
Georges Bank was chosen for the example Fishery Ecosystem Plan (eFEP) because a **large amount of data** has been collected and researched conducted about the physical environment and fish and other animals that live there. In addition, computer models of the ecosystem have been researched and developed. Because managers and scientists are familiar with the ecosystem, it will be easier for them to predict how it will respond to a FEP.



The Georges Bank EPU is displayed as the transparent green area on the map.

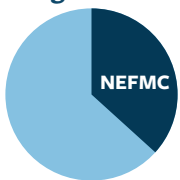
Management Considerations

Fisheries management on Georges Bank is complex due to vulnerable habitats, variety of fishing gear types used, and the fact the fish species caught there are managed by a multitude of agencies.




Spatial
While the goal is to manage stock complexes at the EPU level, there may be a need to subdivide the EPU into smaller management sub-units based on vulnerable habitats and/or fishing methods

Species caught



Jurisdictional
Only **1/3** of species commonly caught on Georges Bank are managed by NEFMC. However, this accounts for **2/3** of the total finfish landings from Georges Bank.

Species Landed



Management Options

- 1 - Only set catch ceilings for species managed exclusively or jointly by NEFMC.
- 2 - **Develop a cooperative and collaborative approach with other management agencies and set ceilings for the portion caught on Georges Bank.***
- 3 - Petition for sole management of all stocks on Georges Bank.

*most likely option



An important goal of this process is to maintain existing access to fish stocks on Georges Bank. If you have a current permit and have fished the EPU, you will be able to retain your ability to fish in the EPU.



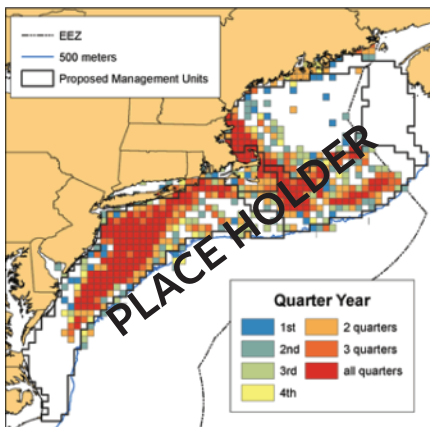
What Is Being Caught on Georges Bank?*

The table below shows the species of fish that are commonly caught on Georges Bank on the type of gear used to catch them. Also indicated is if a fish species is the target or bycatch of a gear type.

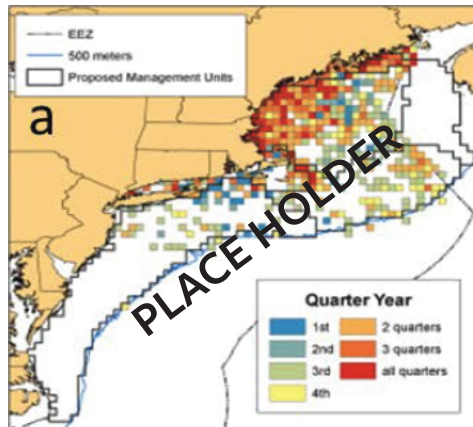
		Large mesh trawl	Small mesh trawl	Sink gillnet	Drift longline/recreational	Bottom longline	Pots	Clam dredge
		● Target ○ Bycatch						
Apex predator	Bluefin Tuna				●			
	Atlantic Cod	●		●	●			○
Fish eaters	Silver Hake		●					
	Monkfish	●		●				○
	Pollock	●		●	●			
	Spiny Dogfish	●		●		●		
	Winter Skate	●		●				○
	Summer Flounder	●			●			
	Winter Flounder	●		●	●			○
Bottom feeders	Witch Flounder	●						○
	Yellowtail Flounder	●	○					○
	American Plaice	●						
	Haddock	●	○		●	●		
Plankton eaters	Long-finned Squid		●					
	Atlantic Herring		●					
	Atlantic Mackerel		●					
Stand alone stocks	Sea Scallop							●
	American Lobster	○					●	
	Jonah Crab						●	
	Red Crab						●	

* For a complete list of the 82 species caught on Georges Bank, please see table 15 of the *Draft Example Fishery Ecosystem Plan for Georges Bank*.

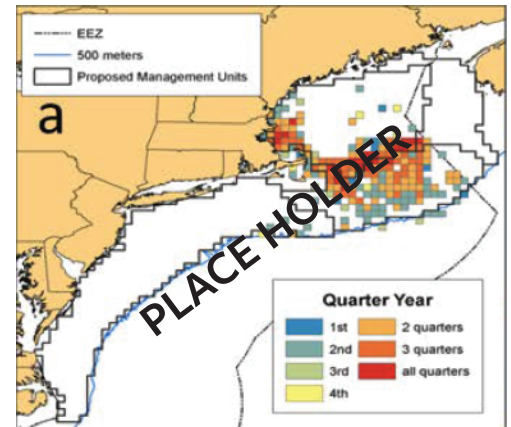
Where Is Fishing Happening By Gear Type?



Dredge



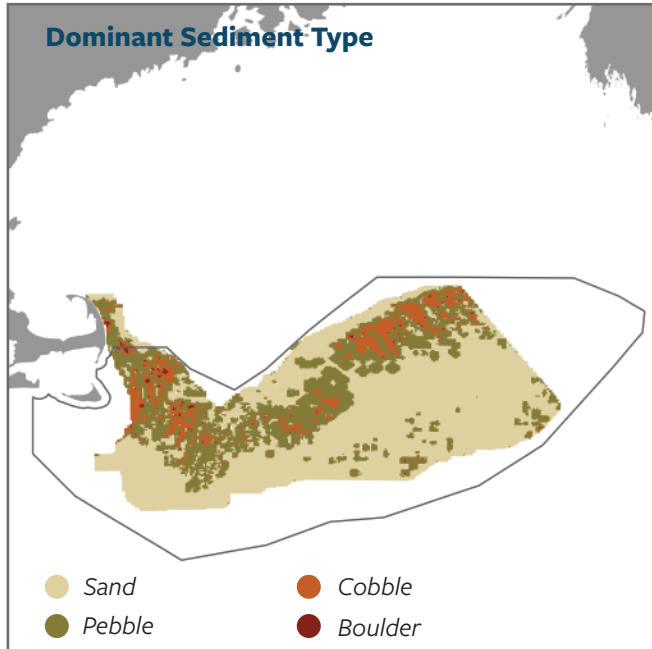
Pot



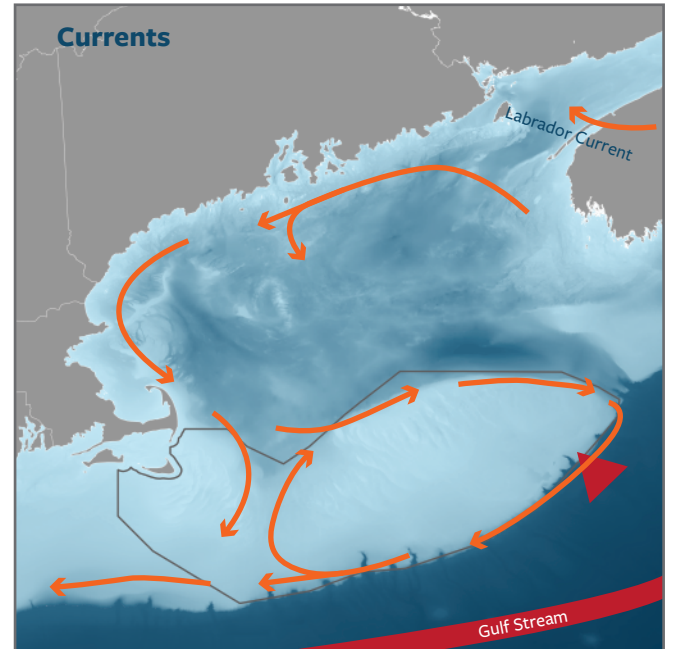
Trawl



The Georges Bank Ecosystem



The bottom of Georges Bank is made up of areas of gravel, sand, and boulders. The gravel areas are important habitat for young cod and haddock. Both gravel and boulders provide important habitat structure for bottom dwelling fish.



Georges Bank is strongly influenced by 2 major ocean currents - the Labrador Current from the north and the Gulf Stream from the south

There is a clockwise circulation pattern on Georges Bank which helps contain water on the Bank. Water, and the nutrients and plankton in it, tends to stay on the Bank for 2 to 5 months depending on season.