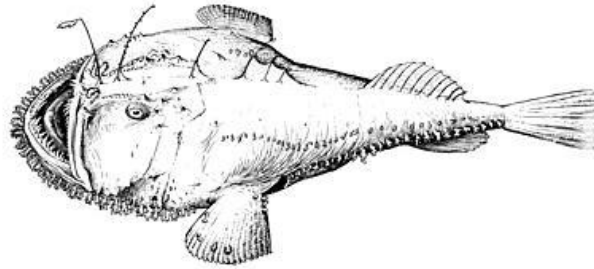


DECISION DOCUMENT

Monkfish Framework 17



This document was developed to help the Council select a final proposed action for Monkfish FW17, specifications and effort controls for FY 2026-2030.

September 2025 Council Meeting

Anticipated Council Action:

Prior to selecting the final proposed action, the Council will receive a presentation on measures under consideration and their analyzed impacts on target species, non-target species, protected resources, the physical environment (EFH), and human communities (economic and social impacts) in Monkfish Framework 17. The proposed action was developed by the Monkfish Plan Development Team (PDT) based on the Scientific and Statistical Committee's 2025 recommendations based on the NEFSC data update provided in lieu of a monkfish assessment. Council staff will also answer questions, as needed, about the draft Supplemental Information Report (SIR).

The following are anticipated Council actions:

1. Motion to recommend a *proposed action for* FY 2026-2030 specifications. This includes overfishing limits, acceptable biological catches, and total allowable landings for the northern and southern monkfish management areas.
2. Motion to recommend a *proposed action for* FY 2026-2030 effort controls (monkfish possession limits and monkfish days-at-sea) for the northern and southern monkfish management areas.
3. Motion to submit Monkfish Framework 17 to NOAA Fisheries, as amended today.

Proposed Action (Part 1) – FY 2026-2030 Specifications

The Committee opted to not recommend a preliminary preferred proposed action for specifications.

Section 3.0 (SIR document) – FY 2026-2030 Specifications <i>Choose one.</i>		Preferred by	
		AP	Committee
Original Action	- Unknown overfishing limits for both the northern and southern management areas. <u>Northern Management Area</u>: maintain FY2023-2025 ABC/ACL for FY 2026-2030 (6,224 mt) <u>Southern Management Area</u>: maintain FY2023-2025 ABC/ACL for FY 2026-2030 (5,861 mt)		
Proposed Action (Sec. 3.0)	- Unknown overfishing limits for both the northern and southern management areas. <u>Northern Management Area</u>: maintain FY 2023-2025 ABC/ACL (6,224 mt) for FY 2026-2030. <u>Southern Management Area</u>: maintain FY 2023-2025 ABC/ACL (5,861 mt) for FY 2026-2028 and reduce ABC/ACL for FY 2029-2030 (3,766 mt).		
Decisions/Questions/Information to Consider - See SSC report (8/19/25) meeting: https://d23h0vhs26o6d.cloudfront.net/250831-SSC-report-re-monkfish.pdf - The Proposed Action uses updated monkfish survey data (through 2025), landings, and discard information. This is the first year where NEFSC provided a data update in lieu of an assessment and there is no method developed by the PDT nor within the Monkfish FMP for ABC setting to adjust specifications based on a data update only. - The SSC recommended the Proposed Action specifications for FY 2026-2030. The PDT recommended keeping monkfish effort controls unchanged from what's in place now for FY 2023-2025. - The Monkfish AP (9/16) recommended status quo ABC for the north (6,224 mt) for FY 2026-2028 and the SSC recommendation of status quo for the south (5,861 mt) for FY 2026-2030 until a stock assessment is provided. - The Monkfish Committee (9/17) had two specifications motions that failed (6 yes/6 no/1 abstention) primarily due to length of specifications setting.			
Other important Considerations/Draft SIR References - No major changes in updated monkfish survey data, landings, and discard information relative to FY 2023-2025 (Section 5.0 of Monkfish FW17) - Unknown stock status, though risk of overfishing is assumed to be low. - Impacts are within the range of what was considered in the last Environmental Assessment (FY 2023-2025, Framework 13). See Section 6.0 of the draft Supplemental Information Report. - Target species (Monkfish): uncertain or slight positive - Non-target species (skates, spiny dogfish): moderate positive - Protected species: slight negative to moderate positive - Physical Environment and Essential Fish Habitat: slight negative - Human Communities: slight positive to positive			

Proposed Action (part 2) – FY 2026-2030 Effort controls: Monkfish days-at-sea and possession limits

Section 3.0 (SIR document) – FY 2026-2030 Effort Controls <i>Choose one.</i>		Preferred by	
		AP	Committee
Original Action	Maintain FY 2023-2025 effort controls (Monkfish days-at-sea (DAS) and monkfish possession limits) for FY 2026-2030 for both the northern and southern management areas.		
Proposed Action (Sec. 3.0)	Maintain FY 2023-2025 effort controls (Monkfish days-at-sea (DAS) and monkfish possession limits) for FY 2026-2030 for both the northern and southern management areas.	X	X
Decisions/Questions/Information to Consider The Monkfish AP (9/16) and the Monkfish Committee (9/17) recommended status quo DAS and possession limits for both the northern and southern management areas, with the Committee recommending revising effort controls in 2027 based on fishery performance.			
Other important Considerations/Draft SIR References Impacts are within the range of what was considered in the last Environmental Assessment (FY 2023-2025, Framework 13). See Section 6.0 of the draft Supplemental Information Report and above table.			