

**NEW ENGLAND FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**  
**Groundfish Committee**

**I. STATUS**

- A. Meetings: The Groundfish Committee met on Aug. 3 and Sept. 12, 2016 to review the work of the Groundfish Plan Development Team (PDT) and recommendations from the two advisory panels. The Committee discussed and made recommendations to the Council on the development of Framework Adjustment 56, the groundfish monitoring action, and an initial list of 2017 priorities. The Recreational Advisory Panel met on Aug. 2, 2016 and the Groundfish Advisory Panel met on Aug. 30, 2016 to provide recommendations to the Groundfish Committee. The Groundfish PDT met on July 21, Aug. 16, and Aug. 31.
- B. Transboundary Resource Assessment Committee (TRAC) /Transboundary Management Guidance Committee (TMGC): The TRAC met July 12-14, 2016 in Woods Hole, MA to conduct assessments for Eastern Georges Bank (EGB) cod, EGB haddock, and Georges Bank (GB) yellowtail flounder. The TMGC met on Sept. 7-8, 2016 and the Steering Committee met on Sept. 8-9, 2016 in Boston, MA to discuss quotas for US/Canada stocks and other management issues. The Council will receive an overview from the US TRAC chair of the assessments and from the US TMGC chair regarding the discussion and recommendations on quotas for fishing year 2017.
- C. Framework Adjustment 56 (specifications/management measures): This action was initiated at the June Council meeting. This action would set specifications for U.S./CA stocks on Georges Bank (cod, haddock, and yellowtail flounder) for fishing years 2017 and witch flounder for fishing years 2017-2019, establish a sub-annual catch limit for northern windowpane flounder in the scallop fishery, increase the Georges Bank sub-annual catch limit in the mid-water trawl Atlantic herring fishery, and possibly other measures including modifying the process used to set recreational management measures and modifications to Atlantic halibut management. The Scallop PDT has sent two memos to the Groundfish PDT regarding FW 56 measures, see Tab 4. The Council will discuss the draft alternatives under consideration.
- D. Amendment 18 (accumulation limits/fleet diversity): Council staff completed the preliminary submission of the draft EIS to GARFO in October 30, 2015. GARFO sent comments on the preliminary submission on June 17, 2016. The formal submission was sent to GARFO on August 12, 2016.

**II. COUNCIL ACTION**

- A. Consider and possibly approve the TMGC's recommendations for fishing year 2017 quotas for Eastern Georges Bank (EGB) cod, EGB haddock, and Georges Bank yellowtail flounder.
- B. Approve the range of alternatives for Framework Adjustment 56.
- C. Receive a report on the draft white paper on monitoring strategies for the commercial groundfish fishery.

### III. INFORMATION

1. TRAC/TMGC
  - a. Presentation: TRAC 2016 summary (*NEFSC*)
  - b. Presentation: TMGC 2016 summary (*to be provided*)
  - c. DRAFT TMGC Guidance document (*if available*)
2. Presentation: Groundfish Committee Report (Council staff, to be provided)
3. Framework Adjustment 56
  - a. Draft action plan for FW 56 version 1, July 22, 2016
  - b. Draft FW 56 alternatives for consideration, September 9, 2016
  - c. PDT memo to the Groundfish Committee re development of alternatives for FW 56, September 7, 2016
  - d. PDT memo to the Groundfish Committee re directed Atlantic halibut fishery in the State of Maine, September 7, 2016
  - e. Assessments
    1. Eastern Georges Bank Cod, Status Report, TRAC, 2016/01
    2. Eastern Georges Bank Haddock Update, Status Report, TRAC, 2016/02
    3. Georges Bank Yellowtail Flounder, Status Report, TRAC, 2016/03
    4. Groundfish PDT memo to the SSC re GB yellowtail flounder ABCs for FY 2017- FY 2018, corrected version, August 5, 2016 (includes a memo from the Scallop PDT to the Groundfish PDT)
  - f. Draft letter to the Secretary of Commerce/State of Maine on the halibut issue, Council staff with Groundfish Committee revisions, September 13, 2016
4. Groundfish monitoring action
  - a. White paper on monitoring strategies, draft outline from the PDT, July 21, 2016
  - b. Draft PDT report on dockside monitoring programs, July 6, 2016
  - c. PDT memo to the Groundfish Committee re progress report on the white paper, September 7, 2016
5. Past meeting summaries
  - a. Recreational Advisory Panel, meeting summary, August 2, 2016
  - b. Groundfish Advisory Panel, meeting summary, August 30, 2016
  - c. Groundfish Committee meeting motions, September 12, 2016
  - d. Groundfish Committee, meeting summary, August 3, 2016
6. Correspondence