Recreational Advisory Panel Meeting

Webinar

November 17, 2025

New England
Fishery Management Council

Groundfish Outlook by Quarter in 2025, updated November 13, 2025, NEFMC Staff

Council Priority*	Jan – Mar	Apr - Jun	July - Sept	Oct - Dec
Amendment 23 Review	Complete development of metrics and indicators		On pause given change in Council priorities	
Framework Adjustment 69	Preliminary & Final Submissions			
Amendment 25	Final Submission	NOAA disapproval; Council priority change to revise and resubmit	Final action on resubmission	Preliminary & Final Submissions
Recreational Measures	Develop recommendations for cod & haddock	Emergency Measures Implemented		
Framework Adjustment 72		Initiate action	Develop specifications & measures, conduct analysis	Final action
Redfish Sector Exemption Review		Develop review	On pause given change in Council priorities	
ABC Control Rules Framework (68)	Staff tracks implementation strategy for revised Risk Policy, contract work conducted to evaluate integration of revised Risk Policy with revised ABC CRs			
Atlantic Cod Management	Continue to develop transition plan, planning for Phase 2			
Stock Assessments		Domestic updates for transboundary mgmt. (cod, haddock, yellowtail flounder) (Jul.)	MT- yellowtail flounder (GB, CC/GOM, SNE/MA), winter flounder (GB, GOM, SNE/MA), redfish, white hake Data updates - windowpane flounder (N. and S.), ocean pout, wolffish (Sept.)	
2026 Priorities			Make additions to list of possible priorities	Final priorities

*Additional: Participate in TMGC, coordinate on EFH designation updates, consult on protected species actions, and provide input for EO 14276

For Today

- Framework 72 / Specifications and Management Measures
  - Receive an update on development of the action
  - Make recommendations to the Committee on preferred alternatives

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Framework Adjustment 72 / Specifications and Management Measures

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For Today

- Receive an update on development of the action
  - Sub-components analysis
- Discuss draft alternatives
- Make recommendations to the Committee on preferred alternatives

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Draft Scope

Fishing year (FY) 2026-2028 Specifications and Management Measures, to:

- Revise status determination criteria for Georges Bank (GB) yellowtail flounder,
- Set FY2026 total allowable catches (TACs) for US/Canada management units of Eastern GB cod and Eastern GB haddock, and the GB yellowtail flounder stock,
- Set FY2026 specifications for GB cod, GB haddock, and GB yellowtail flounder
- Set FY2026-FY2030 specifications for CC/GOM yellowtail flounder, SNE/MA yellowtail flounder, GB winter flounder, GOM winter flounder, SNE/MA winter flounder, white hake, Acadian redfish, ocean pout, and Atlantic wolffish,
- Review sub-component analysis for stocks with revised specifications, Atlantic halibut, and others as time permits and,
- Address recreational measures as part of Atlantic cod management transition for Phase 1 (i.e., Regional Administrator authority to adjust recreational measures for cod and haddock)

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Draft Range of Alternatives

1. Updated Status Determination Criteria for GB Yellowtail Flounder
2. Specifications
   - FY2026 TACs for US/Canada management units of EGB cod and EGB haddock, and GB yellowtail flounder stock
   - FY2026 specifications for GB cod, GB haddock, and GB yellowtail flounder
   - FY2026-FY2030 specifications for CC/GOM yellowtail flounder, SNE/MA yellowtail flounder, GB winter flounder, GOM winter flounder, SNE/MA winter flounder, white hake, Acadian redfish, ocean pout, and Atlantic wolffish,
   - Sub-component analysis for stocks with revised specifications, Atlantic halibut, and other stocks as time permits
3. Recreational Fishery Management Measures
   - Establish regulatory process for Regional Administrator to adjust recreational measures for cod and haddock

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Draft Council Milestones

- **June –** initiate the action
- **September** –update on any draft alternatives under other measures
- **December** – receive specifications alternatives and take final action on entire action (specifications and other measures)
- Implementation by **May 1, 2026,** NMFS

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Draft Timeline

2025	
MAY-JUN	Committee/AP/PDT preliminary discussion
MAY 22	Assessment Oversight Panel meets (fall 2025 assessments)
JUN 24-26	**Council initiates framework**
JUL-SEP	Committee/AP/PDT develop draft alternatives
SEP 15-18	Peer review – Management Track Assessments for yellowtail flounder, winter flounder, white hake, and redfish
SEP 24-27	Council reviews progress on developing draft alternatives
OCT 1	TMGC/SC meets to recommend TACs for US/CA management units of EGB cod and EGB haddock, and GB yellowtail flounder stock
OCT 8	SSC recommends OFLs/ABCs for ocean pout* and wolffish*
OCT 21-22	SSC recommends OFLs/ABCs for GB cod, GB haddock, yellowtail flounder (GB, CC/GOM, SNE/MA), winter flounder (GB, GOM, SNE/MA), white hake, redfish
OCT-NOV	Committee/AP/PDT continue developing draft alternatives and complete impact analysis
DEC	**Council receives draft alternatives and takes final action**
2026	
JAN	Preliminary submission of framework document to NMFS
FEB	Final submission of framework document to NMFS
MAR	NMFS publishes proposed rule
MAY 1	Target Implementation

*Assessment schedule change – data update only

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FY2026-FY2030 Specifications for Groundfish Stocks

Background: SSC Terms of Reference

The SSC has traditionally recommended groundfish specifications for 3-year intervals, but recent reductions in federal agency resources have highlighted a potential need for increased flexibility in management and regulatory processes. Thus, rather than recommend specifications for FY2026-2028, the SSC was asked to make recommendations for a 5-year period, considering specifications for FY2029 and FY2030 should future gaps in federal resources prevent the provision of updated data.

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Summary of OFLs and ABCs for FY2026-FY2030

	Fishing Year									
	2026		2027		2028		2029		2030	
Stock	OFL	ABC	OFL	ABC	OFL	ABC	OFL	ABC	OFL	ABC
Eastern Gulf of Maine cod	50	39	39	30						
Western Gulf of Maine cod	603	460	769	586						
Georges Bank cod	473	473								
Southern New England cod	47	36	65	36						
Georges Bank haddock	8,177	8,177								
Gulf of Maine haddock	4,709	3,634	4,700	3,631						
Georges Bank yellowtail flounder	57	57								
Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic yellowtail flounder	46	33	56	33	56*	33	56*	33	56*	33
Cape Cod/Gulf of Maine yellowtail flounder	2,224	1,736	2,638	2,062	2,984	2,335	3,225	2,335	3,225*	2,335
American plaice	8,866	6,979	7,368	5,791						
Witch flounder	unknown	1,526	unknown	1,526						

*Recalculate OFL if possible

Summary of OFLs and ABCs for FY2026-FY2030

	Fishing Year									
	2026		2027		2028		2029		2030	
Stock	OFL	ABC	OFL	ABC	OFL	ABC	OFL	ABC	OFL	ABC
Georges Bank winter flounder	2,279	1,785	2,148	1,681	2,070	1,627	2,061	1,613	2,060	1,612
Gulf of Maine winter flounder	1,064	798	1,064	798	1,064	798	1,064	798	1,064	798
Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic winter flounder	961	507	1,009	532	1,055	556	1,101	556	1,101*	556
Redfish	7,519	5,665	7,203	5,427	6,999	5,273	6,723	5,065	6,513	4,907
White hake	1,943	1,393	1,760	1,261	1,640	1,174	1,618	1,157	1,698	1,215
Pollock	14,583	11,170	13,383	10,252						
Northern windowpane flounder	unknown	136								
Southern windowpane flounder	284	213								
Ocean pout	125	87	125	87	125	87	125	87	125	87
Atlantic halibut	unknown	106	unknown	106						
Atlantic wolffish	124	93	124	93	124	93	124	93	124	93

*Recalculate OFL if possible

Sub-component Analysis – October 31, 2025

- The PDT confirmed its approach of using the three-year recent average of year-end catch for determining state and other sub-components, in the absence of other information.
- The final year-end catch report for FY2024 is not yet available, given delays due to the partial federal government shutdown. The PDT used preliminary FY2024 catch data from GARFO in the calculations along with final year-end catch data from FY2022 and FY2023.
- The PDT compared the current other fisheries and/or state waters sub-component percentages (and associated values) to the updated 3-year average catch (FY2022-FY2024) to develop recommendations.

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Sub-component Analysis – October 31, 2025

Georges Bank Cod

Given uncertainty with Amendment 25 and the absence of a FY2024 catch estimate for the revised stock unit at this time, the PDT recommends maintaining the sub-component percentage from last year as included in Framework 69/revised Amendment 25.

Atlantic Halibut

In the absence of in-season 2025 Canadian landings information or any substantial change in Canadian landings, the PDT recommends not updating state and other sub-components for Atlantic halibut at this time.

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Sub-component Analysis – October 31, 2025

Transboundary Stocks

- The PDT notes that with the new TMGC process there is greater potential to annually revise the ABCs for the three transboundary stocks of GB cod, GB haddock, and GB yellowtail flounder (with TMGC recommending total shared TAC set equal to ABC).
- The Committee may wish to consider whether the PDT should annually evaluate the sub-components for these stocks under the new TMGC process, or whether evaluation of sub-components for the transboundary stocks is tied to some other trigger, for example, when there is a U.S. stock assessment.

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Canadian Catch Estimates – Georges Bank Winter Flounder & White Hake

- The PDT used 3-year (2022, 2023, and 2024) calendar year average catch (or landings) from the 2025 Management Track Assessment to determine a Canadian catch estimate

GB Winter Flounder Canadian catch (mt) - 2025 Assessment

Calendar Year	Canadian landings	Canadian scallop dredge discard	Total
2019	19	18	37
2020	21	49	70
2021	7	22	29
2022	3	42	45
2023	3	56	59
2024	27	86	113
3-Yr Avg			**72**

White Hake Canadian landings (mt) - 2025 Assessment

Calendar Year	Canadian landings
2019	24
2020	83
2021	48
2022	39
2023	25
2024	29
3-Yr Avg	**31**

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Canadian Catch Estimates - Atlantic Halibut

- The PDT followed an alternate approach (from FW69) using the most recent final year (2023) of Canadian landings as the 2026 Canadian catch estimate (71 mt).
- If final 2024 and in-season 2025 Canadian landings in 5Z and 5Y is available in time, the PDT may update its Canadian catch estimate for 2026.

Summary of recent Canadian halibut landings (mt) in NAFO areas 5Y and 5Z

Calendar Year	Canadian Landings in 5Z and 5Y
2019	54
2020	157
2021	119
2022	92
2023	71
2024 preliminary	70

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Sub-component analysis

Comparison by stock of the current sub-component values and the PDT's recommendation using the three-year (FY2022-FY2024) average or alternative approach and justification.

	Sub-Component – Percentage of ABC					
	State waters (%)			Other (%)		
Stock	**FY25**	**Recommendation**	**Justification**	**FY25**	**Recommendation**	**Justification**
GB cod	No state waters catch of this stock			NA	8% 12mt	Maintain 8% as recommended in FW69/revised A25.
GB haddock	0% 0mt	0% 0mt	Average catch is so low (0.5mt) that sub-component can remain at 0mt.	0.5% 7.8mt	0.5% 22mt	Maintain 0.5% to cover FY2022-FY2024 average catch of 12.2mt.
GB yellowtail flounder	No state waters catch of this stock			0% 0mt	0% 0mt	Maintain 0%, as there has been no catch of GB yellowtail flounder by other fisheries in recent years.
CC/GOM yellowtail flounder	3% 28mt	1% 17mt	Decrease by 2% to cover FY2022-FY2024 average catch of 14.4mt. Provides buffer for other fisheries catch.	4% 37mt	2% 35mt	Decrease by 2% to cover FY2022-FY2024 average catch of 38.9mt.
SNE/MA yellowtail flounder	0.5% 0.2mt	0.5% 0.2mt	Maintain 0.5% to cover FY2022-FY2024 average catch of 0mt.	5% 2mt	2% 0.7mt	Decrease to 2% to cover FY2022-FY2024 average catch of 0.6mt.

Sub-component analysis

Comparison by stock of the current sub-component values and the PDT's recommendation using the three-year (FY2022-FY2024) average or alternative approach and justification.

	Sub-Component – Percentage of ABC					
	State waters (%)			Other (%)		
Stock	**FY25**	**Recommendation**	**Justification**	**FY25**	**Recommendation**	**Justification**
GB winter flounder	No state waters catch of this stock			1% 15mt	2.5% 43mt	Increase by 1.5% to cover the FY2022-FY2024 average catch of 41.3mt.
GOM winter flounder	19% 153mt	12% 96mt	Decrease by 7% to cover the FY2022-FY2024 average catch of 94.9mt. Provides buffer for other fishery catch.	1.5% 12mt	1% 8mt	Decrease by 0.5% to cover the FY2022-FY2024 average catch of 8.3mt.
SNE/MA winter flounder	3% 19mt	5% 25mt	Increase by 2% to cover the FY2022-FY2024 average catch of 25.5mt.	23% 144mt	16% 81mt	Decrease by 7% to cover the FY2022-FY2024 average catch of 79.3mt. Provides buffer for state catch.
White hake	0% 0mt	0% 0mt	Average catch is so low (0.9mt) that sub-component can remain at 0mt.	0.5% 10mt	0.5% 6.8mt	Maintain at 0.5% to cover the FY2022-FY2024 average catch of 6.1mt. Provides buffer for state catch.

Sub-component analysis

Comparison by stock of the current sub-component values and the PDT's recommendation using the three-year (FY2022-FY2024) average or alternative approach and justification.

	Sub-Component – Percentage of ABC					
	State waters (%)			Other (%)		
Stock	**FY25**	**Recommendation**	**Justification**	**FY25**	**Recommendation**	**Justification**
Redfish	0% 0mt	0.5% 28mt	Increase by 0.5% to cover the FY2022-FY2024 average catch of 4mt. Provides buffer for other fishery catch.	0% 0mt	0% 0mt	Average catch is so low (3.7mt) that sub-component can remain at 0mt.
Ocean pout	1% 0.4mt	1% 0.9mt	Maintain at 1% to cover the FY2022-FY2024 average catch of 1.4mt.	39% 34mt	35% 31mt	Decrease by 4% to cover the FY2022-FY2024 average catch of 28.6mt. Provides buffer for state catch.
Atlantic halibut	26% 9.1mt	26% 9.1mt	Maintain 26% as recommended in FW69.	4.5% 1.6mt	4.5% 1.6mt	Maintain 4.5% as recommended in FW69.
Atlantic wolffish	0% 0mt	0% 0mt	Maintain 0%, as there has been no catch of Atlantic wolffish by state fisheries in recent years.	0% 0mt	0% 0mt	Maintain 0%, as there has been no catch of Atlantic wolffish by other fisheries in recent years.

Key Discussion Questions and Decision Points

- Does the Committee accept the PDT's recommendations for sub-components?

- Should the PDT evaluate sub-components for the transboundary stocks annually under the new TMGC process, or by some other trigger (for example, when there is a U.S. stock assessment)?

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Action 1 –Status Determination Criteria

Which alternatives do you recommend?

Alternative 1 – No action

- Status determination criteria (SDCs) would not be adopted for GB yellowtail flounder

Alternative 2 – Updated Status Determination Criteria for GB Yellowtail Flounder

- Adopts updated SDCs for GB yellowtail flounder from the 2025 Management Track Stock Assessment

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Action 2 - Revised Specifications

Which alternatives do you recommend?

Alternative 1 – No Action

- Default specifications for many stocks

Alternative 2 – Revised Specifications

- FY2026 TACs for US/Canada management units of EGB cod and EGB haddock, and GB yellowtail flounder stock
- FY2026 specifications for GB cod, GB haddock, and GB yellowtail flounder
- FY2026-FY2030 specifications for CC/GOM yellowtail flounder, SNE/MA yellowtail flounder, GB winter flounder, GOM winter flounder, SNE/MA winter flounder, white hake, Acadian redfish, ocean pout, and Atlantic wolffish,
- Sub-component analysis for stocks with revised specifications, Atlantic halibut, and other stocks as time permits

Action 3 – Recreational Fishery Management

Which alternatives do you recommend?

Alternative 1 – No Action

- Maintains the process for RA to adjust recreational measures for stocks with recreational sub-ACLs only

Alternative 2 – Establish Regulatory Process for Regional Administrator to Adjust Recreational Measures for Cod and Haddock

- Establishes a regulatory process for the RA to adjust recreational measures for all stocks of cod and haddock

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For Today

- Receive an update on development of the action
  - Sub-components analysis
- Discuss draft alternatives
- Make recommendations to the Committee on preferred alternatives

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Extra Slides

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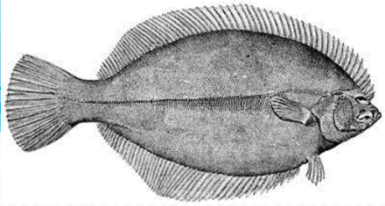
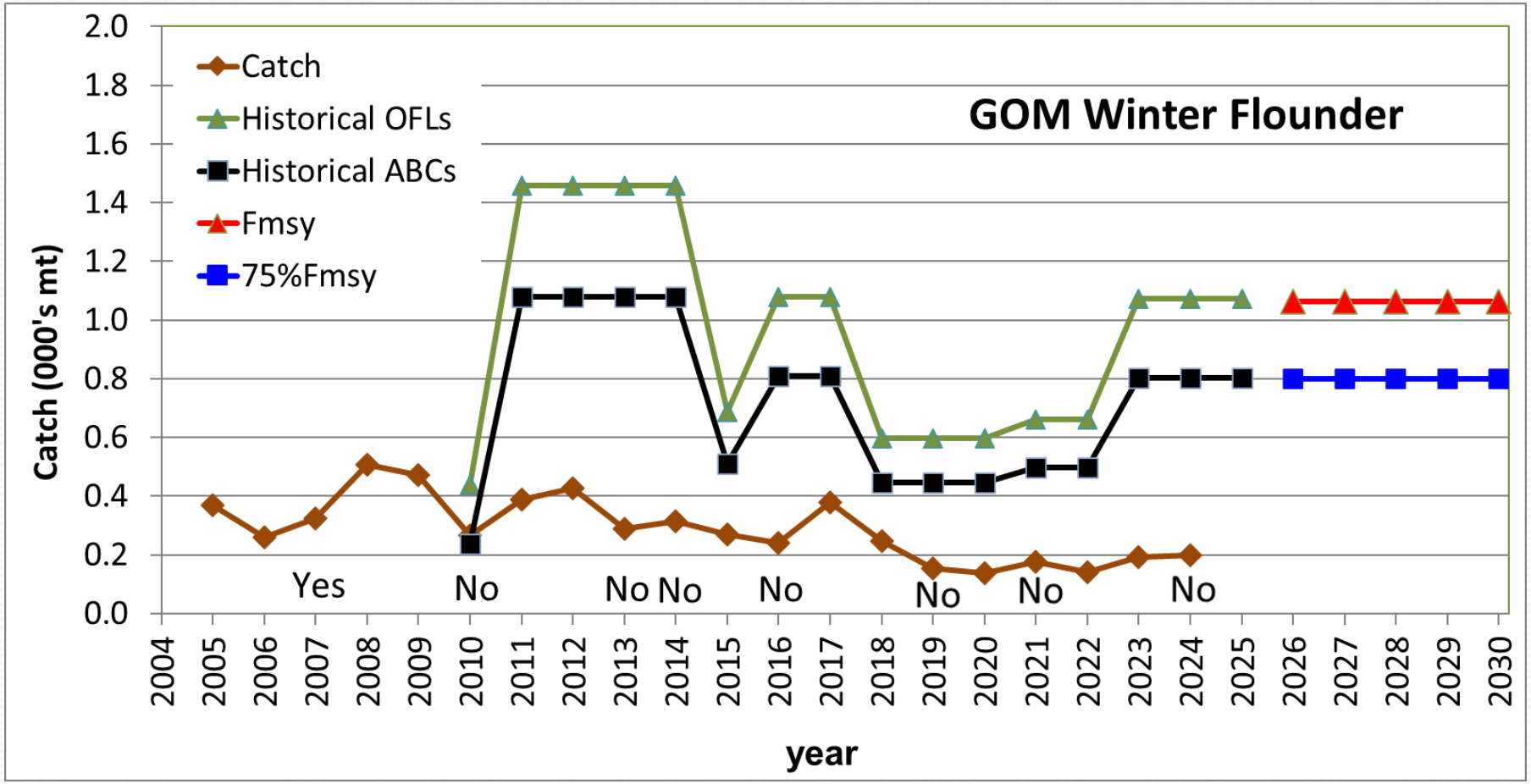


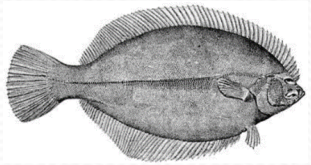
Gulf of Maine Winter Flounder

MODEL	Empirical 30+ Area-Swept, Level 1
STOCK STATUS	Overfished status is unknown, Overfishing is not occurring
REBUILDING	Not in a rebuilding plan and never was declared overfished.
RETROSPECTIVE ADJUSTMENT	NA
UNCERTAINTIES	- Missing 2020 and 2023 survey - Survey Q uncertainty especially with State surveys - Biomass based reference points cannot be determined and overfished status is unknown with this assessment method - Lack of biomass response to low exploitation. Though there have been more recent increases in the fall and the spring area-swept biomass estimates.
CHANGES	- Revised the catchability estimate, changed from 0.81 to 0.79 in the fall and 0.70 to 0.71 in the spring, using updated surveys averages from the sweep experiment (Miller et al., 2023) - Returned to previous assessment method using average of two most recent fall survey indices

Catch Performance



Overfishing status in the terminal year of the assessment indicated on the x-axis ("Yes" = overfishing, "No" = not overfishing).



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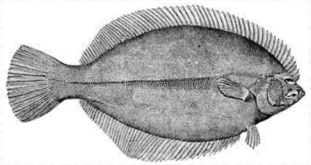
SSC Recommendations – GOM Winter Flounder

Average of 2023 and 2024 Fall Surveys X 75%Fmsy
Constant Approach

Fishing Year	OFL (mt)	ABC (mt)
2026	1,064	798
2027	1,064	798
2028	1,064	798
2029	1,064	798
2030	1,064	798



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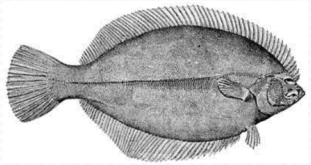
Other Fishery and State Fishery Sub-components Catch

There are notable recreational catches of GOM winter flounder in state waters (67.6 mt in FY2023), as well as commercial state fishery catches (43.6 mt in FY2023).

These other fishery and state fishery sub-components are expected catches and do not have accountability measures (AMs) associated.



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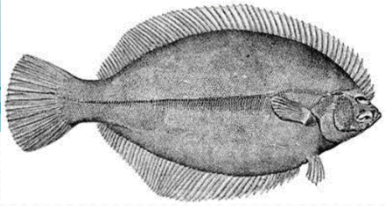
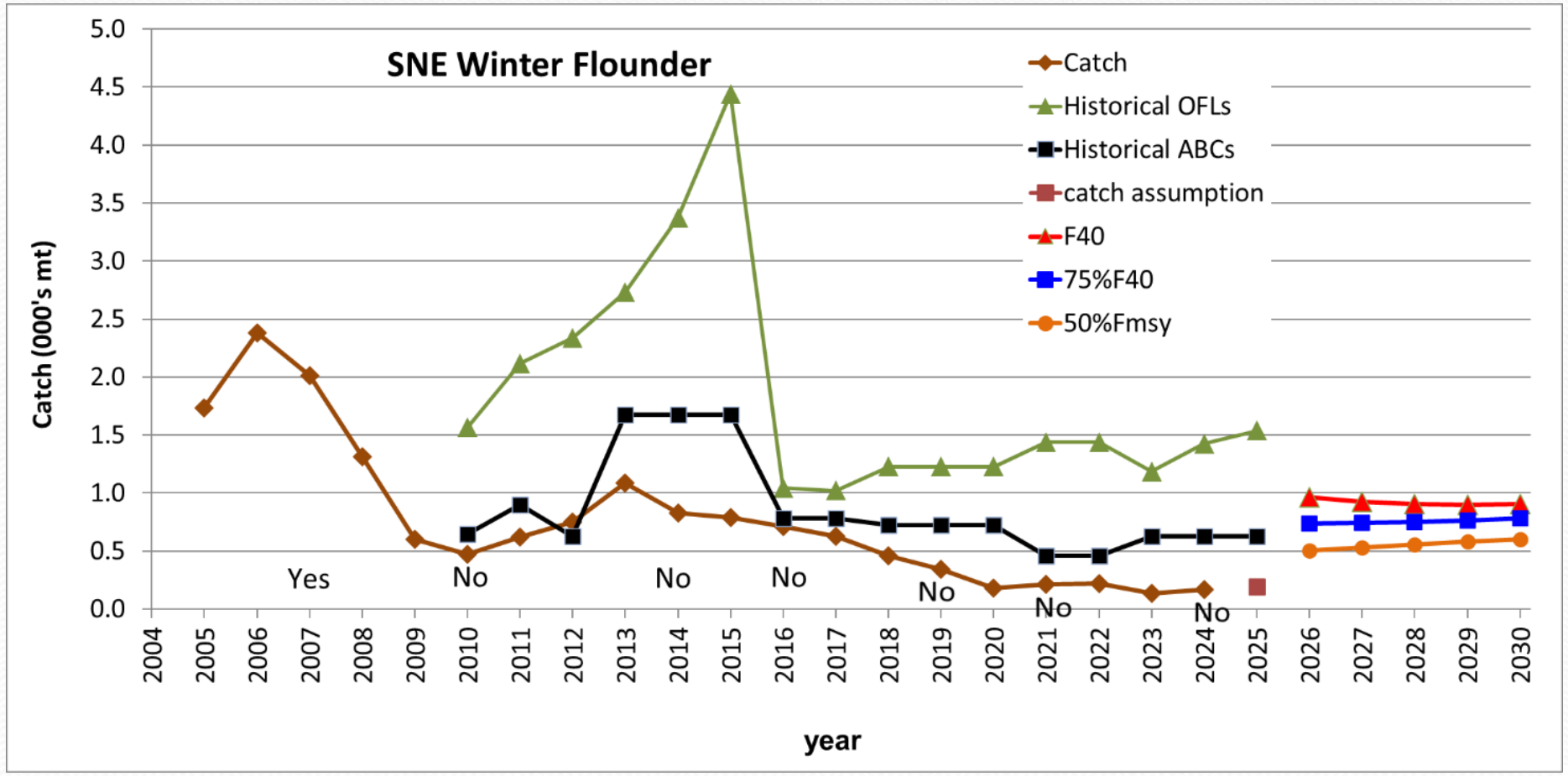
Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic Winter Flounder



MODEL	ASAP, Level 2
STOCK STATUS	Not Overfished, Overfishing is not occurring
REBUILDING	Rebuilt as of 2022.
RETROSPECTIVE ADJUSTMENT	No
UNCERTAINTIES	- Population projections are sensitive to the recruitment model chosen, as well as the temporal period selected from which recruitment estimates are drawn. - Recruitment and natural mortality are both likely to be dependent on environmental conditions, which cannot be explored within the ASAP framework. Investigations of environmental covariates within a state-space model framework are ongoing. - Few length data to characterize recreational discards (though a small component of the total catch). - The estimate of natural mortality is not well studied and is assumed to be constant over time. Uncertainty in the true max age
CHANGES	- Data updated through 2024

Catch Performance



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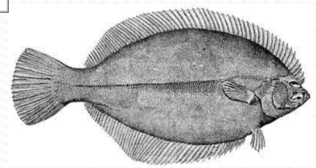

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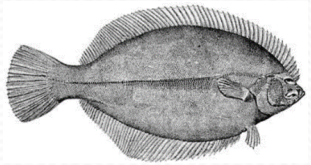
SSC Recommendations – SNE/MA Winter Flounder

Catch projections at 50% F_{MSY} , FY2028 ABC held constant through FY2030

Fishing Year	OFL (mt)	ABC (mt)
2026	961	507
2027	1,009	532
2028	1,055	556
2029	1,101	556
2030	1,101*	556

*Request recalculated OFL if possible



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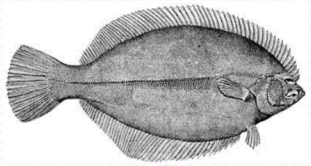
Other Fishery and State Fishery Sub-components Catch

Other significant sources of SNE/MA winter flounder catch include:

- scallop fishery (17.4 mt in FY2023),
- squid fishery (19.4 mt in FY2023), and
- state recreational fishery (20.8 mt in FY2023)

These other fishery and state sub-components are expected catches and do not have accountability measures (AMs) associated.



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Stock	Council Actions								
	Emergency Action	*Amendment 25 v2*		*Framework 69*			*Framework 72*		
	FY2025	**FY2026**	**FY2027**	**FY2025**	**FY2026**	**FY2027**	**FY2026**	**FY2027**	**FY2028**
Eastern Gulf of Maine cod	✓[1]	✓	✓						
Western Gulf of Maine cod		✓	✓						
Georges Bank cod		✓					✓[3]		
Southern New England cod		✓	✓						
Georges Bank haddock	✓			✓[2]			✓		
Gulf of Maine haddock	✓			✓[2]	✓	✓			
Georges Bank yellowtail flounder	✓			✓[2]	✓		✓		
Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic yellowtail flounder							✓	✓	✓
Cape Cod/Gulf of Maine yellowtail flounder							✓	✓	✓
American plaice	✓			✓[2]	✓	✓			
Witch flounder	✓			✓[2]	✓	✓			
Georges Bank winter flounder							✓	✓	✓
Gulf of Maine winter flounder							✓	✓	✓
Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic winter flounder							✓	✓	✓
Redfish									
White hake							✓	✓	✓
Pollock	✓			✓[2]	✓	✓			
Northern windowpane flounder							✓[4]	✓[4]	✓[4]
Southern windowpane flounder							✓[4]	✓[4]	✓[4]
Ocean pout							✓[5]	✓[5]	✓[5]
Atlantic halibut	✓			✓[2]	✓	✓			
Atlantic wolffish							✓[5]	✓[5]	✓[5]

[1] Proposed ABCs in Framework 69 were combined to distribute specifications for GOM and GB cod stocks.
[2] Specifications will replace those included in the emergency action.
[3] Specifications will replace those included in Amendment 25.
[4] Potential to be omitted from FW72.
[5] 2025 Management track assessments have been deferred to data updates only.