Groundfish Committee Meeting

Wakefield, MA and Webinar

November 18, 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 Council on preferred alternatives

- Framework 68 / ABC Control Rules: ABC Control Rules / Risk Policy project
  - Receive a progress report on the project to evaluate integration of risk policy with revised groundfish ABC control rules

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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
  - SNE/MA yellowtail flounder scallop fishery sub-ACL
- Discuss draft alternatives
- Make recommendations to the Council on preferred alternatives

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Draft Scope

Fishing year (FY) 2026-2030 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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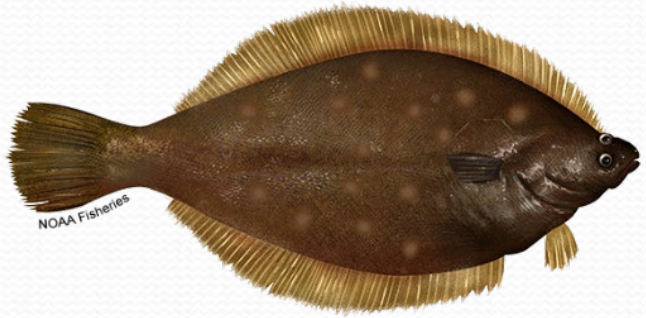
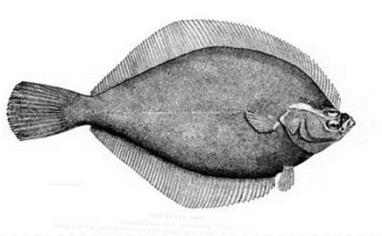
Cape Cod/Gulf of Maine Yellowtail Flounder Fishing Year 2026 through Fishing Year 2030 OFLs and ABCs

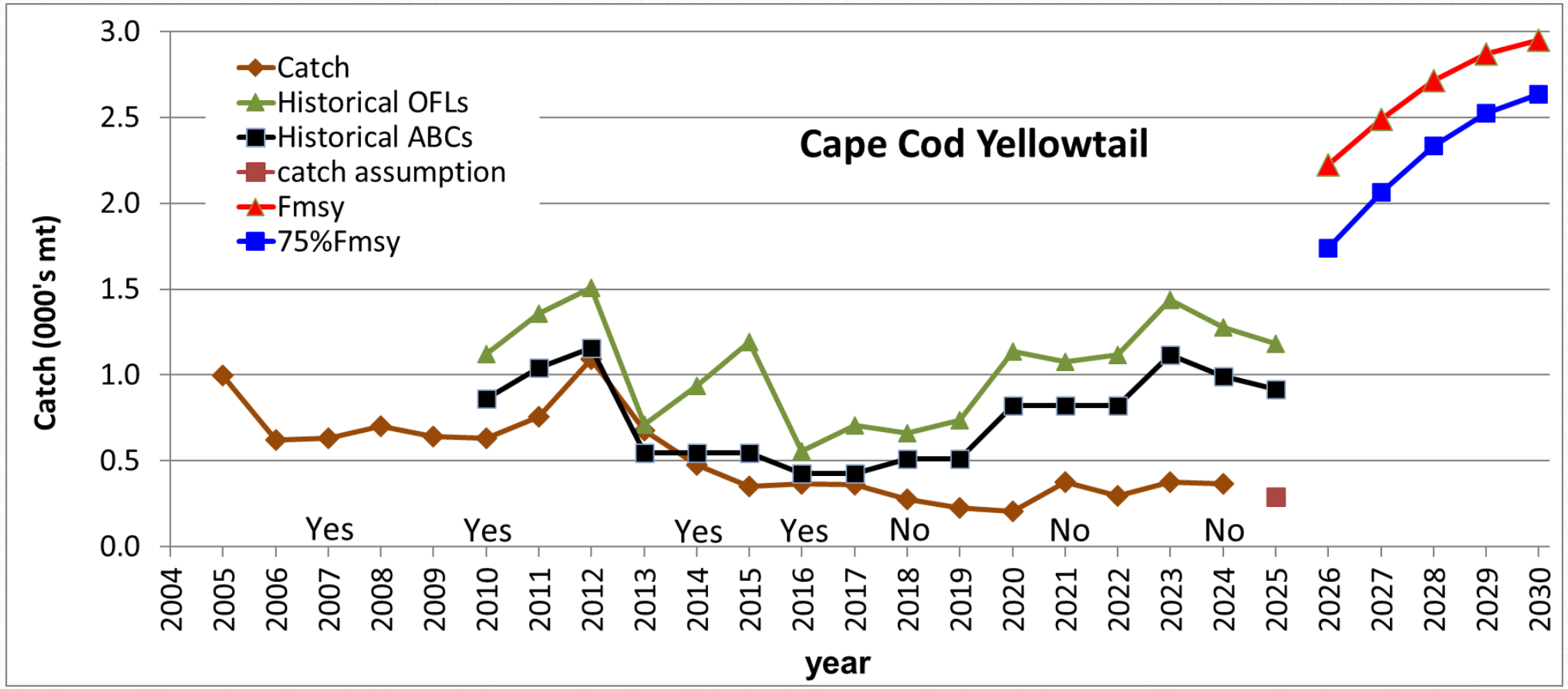


Cape Cod/Gulf of Maine Yellowtail Flounder

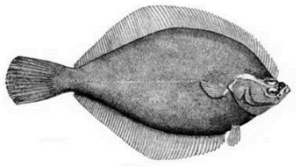


MODEL	WHAM, Level 2
STOCK STATUS	Overfished, Overfishing is not occurring
REBUILDING	Rebuilt as of 2022.
RETROSPECTIVE ADJUSTMENT	No
UNCERTAINTIES	- Treatment of the plus age group, as recent catches indicate an expansion of older ages (6+), suggesting that the current grouping may not capture survival dynamics at the upper tail of the age distribution and could bias selectivity and F estimates. Self-test simulation diagnostics, which shows moderate systematic bias: fishing mortality tends to be overestimated, while recruitment and SSB are underestimated.
CHANGES	- Use of age-specific fleet selectivity with random effects - Decoupling the yearly random effects in recruitment from the yearly random effects in ages 2+ - Revised maturity - Revised MADMF fall survey Age-Length Keys (ALKs)

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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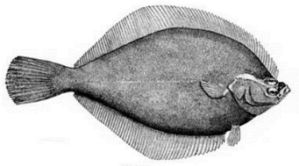
SSC Recommendations – CC/GOM Yellowtail Flounder

Catch projections at 75% F_{MSY} , FY2028 ABC held constant through FY2030

Fishing Year	OFL (mt)	ABC (mt)
2024	1,279	992
2025	1,184	915
2026	2,224	1,736
2027	2,638	2,062
2028	2,984	2,335
2029	3,225	2,335
2030	3,225*	2,335

*Request recalculated OFL if possible

FY2024 & FY2025 values provided for reference



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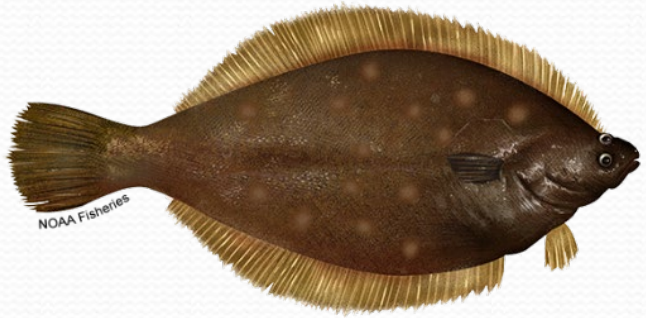
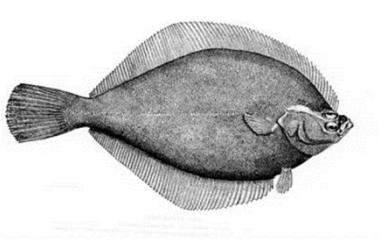
Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic Yellowtail Flounder Fishing Year 2026 and Fishing Year 2030 OFLs and ABCs

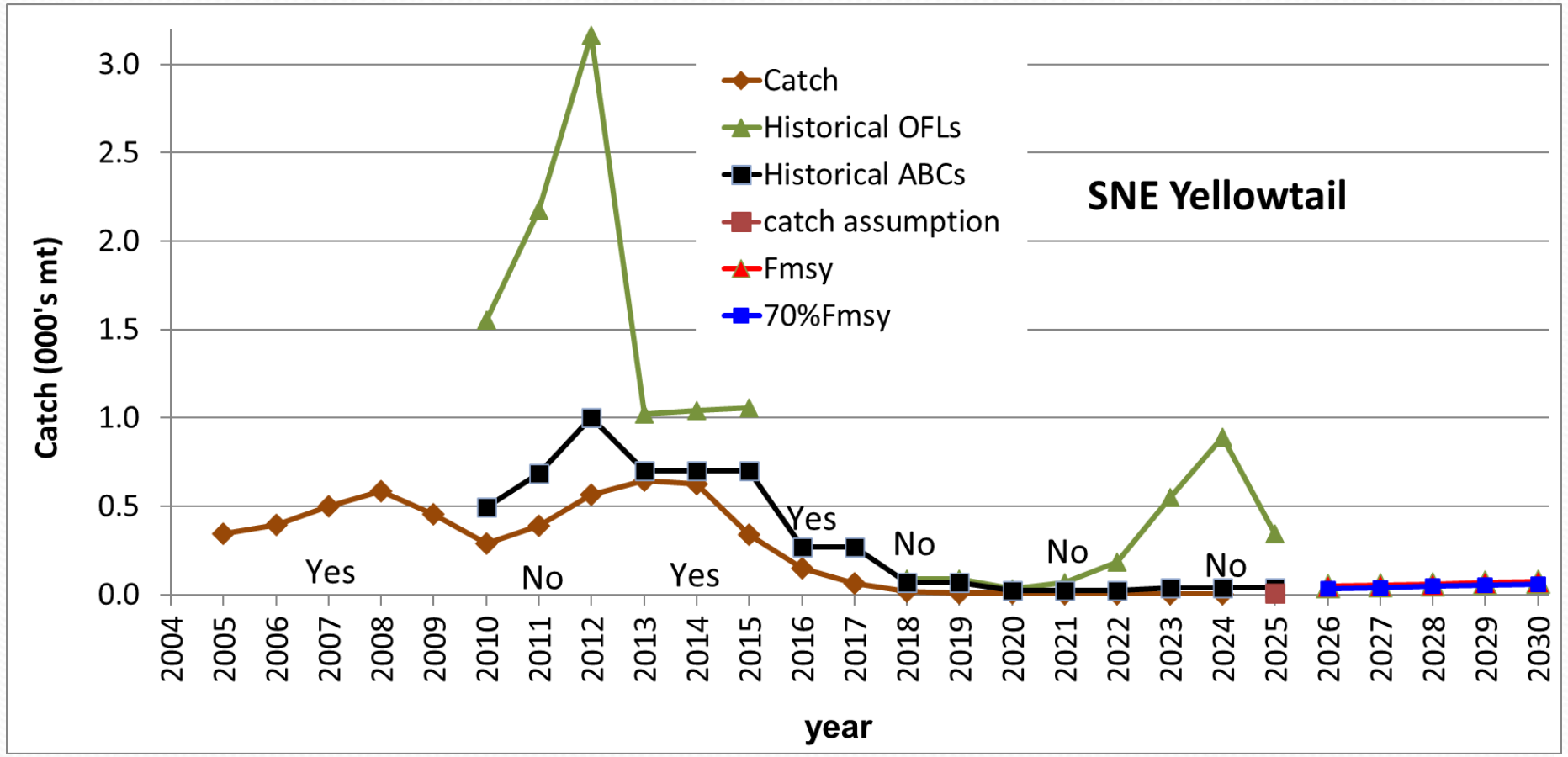


Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic Yellowtail Flounder



MODEL	WHAM, Level 2
STOCK STATUS	Overfished, Overfishing is not occurring
REBUILDING	2029 (70%F_{MSY} Frebuild)
RETROSPECTIVE ADJUSTMENT	No
UNCERTAINTIES	- Lack of biological data (length, age, and maturity) in the terminal years. The terminal five years of the assessment have no age composition data. - The behavior of the Gulf Stream Index (GSI) in the future is difficult to predict. Recruitment is heavily driven by fluctuations in GSI, which makes recruitment difficult to accurately predict as well. Further development of the WHAM model is needed to be able to more appropriately consider zero values, which occur frequently in the recent time period for this stock.
CHANGES	- Lognormal adjustment turned off (best practice guidance is to turn off) - Removal of iid random effects on fleet selectivity, to resolve model convergence issues when additional years of data were added to the model configuration

Catch Performance



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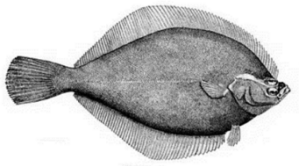

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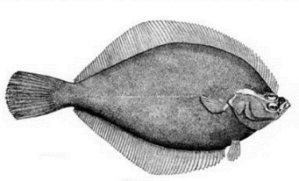
SSC Recommendations – SNE/MA Yellowtail Flounder

70% F_{MSY} , ABC held constant through FY2030

Fishing Year	OFL (mt)	ABC (mt)
2024	890	40
2025	345	40
2026	46	33
2027	56	33
2028	56*	33
2029	56*	33
2030	56*	33

FY2024 & FY2025 values provided for reference

*Request recalculated OFL if possible



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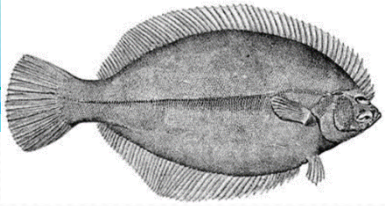
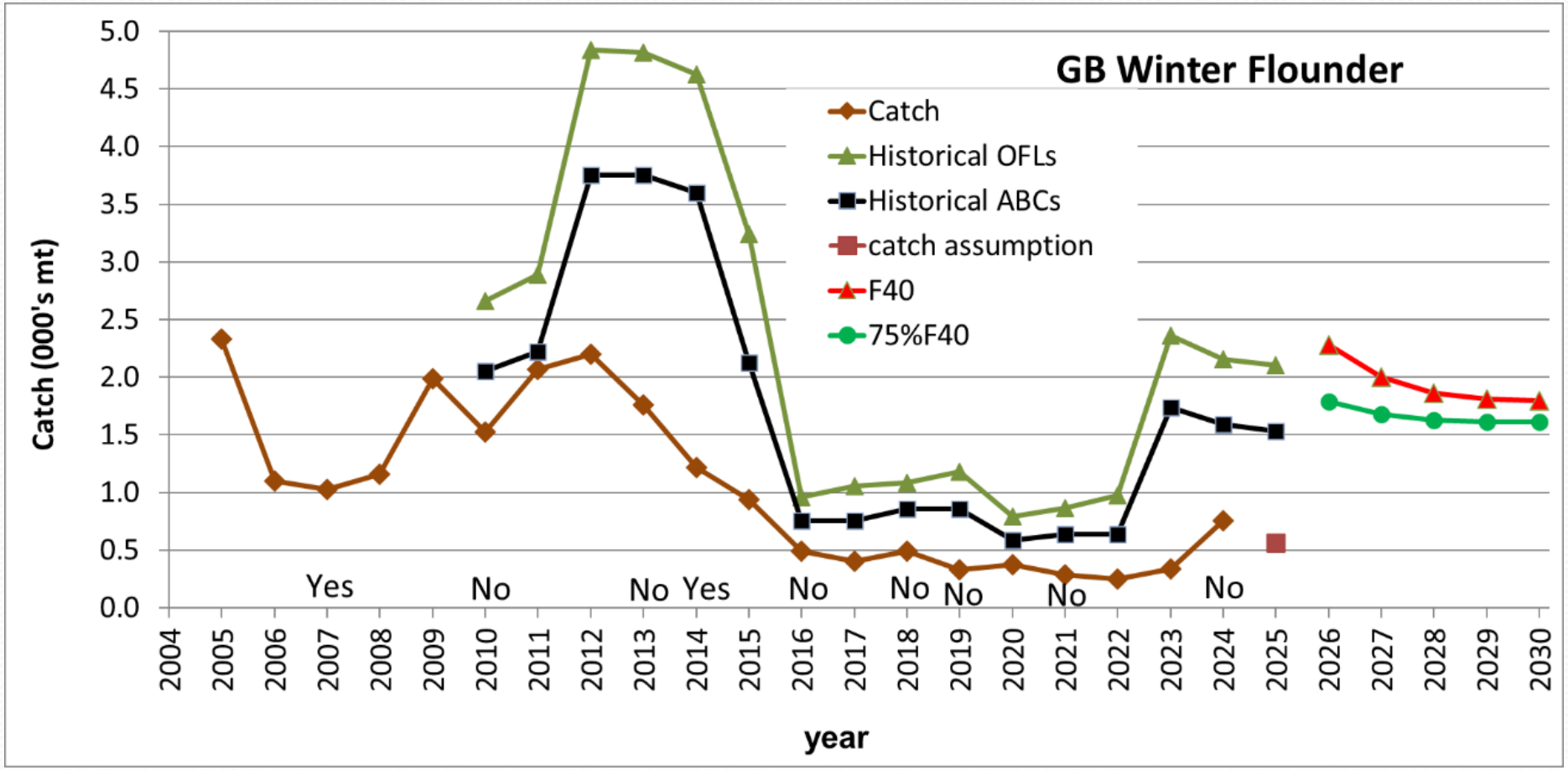
Georges Bank Winter Flounder Fishing Year 2026 and Fishing Year 2030 OFLs and ABCs

Georges Bank Winter Flounder



MODEL	WHAM, Level 3
STOCK STATUS	Not Overfished, Overfishing is not occurring
REBUILDING	2029. 2025 assessment indicates rebuilt.
RETROSPECTIVE ADJUSTMENT	No
UNCERTAINTIES	- Low sampling of commercial landings in recent years. - Discards from the Canadian bottom trawl are not available for inclusion in the assessment, and the precision of the Canadian scallop dredge discard estimates are uncertain. No size composition data for the Canadian landings or discards. -The estimate of natural mortality is not well studied and is assumed to be constant over time.
CHANGES	- Revision to catch data to account for an error that incorrectly scaled landings at age values prior to 2003 - Decoupling of numbers-at-age (NAA) random effects

Catch Performance



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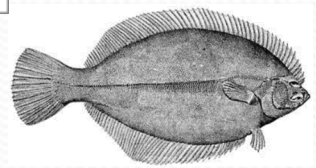

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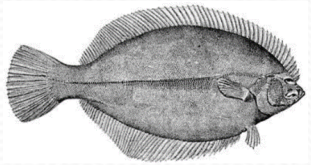
SSC Recommendations – GB Winter Flounder

Catch projections at 75% F_{MSY}

Fishing Year	OFL (mt)	ABC (mt)
2024	2,153	1,587
2025	2,100	1,528
2026	2,279	1,785
2027	2,148	1,681
2028	2,079	1,627
2029	2,061	1,613
2030	2,060	1,612

FY2024 & FY2025 values provided for reference



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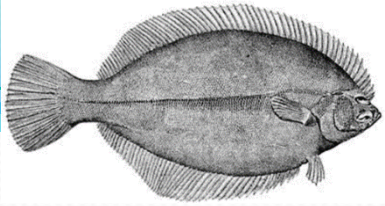
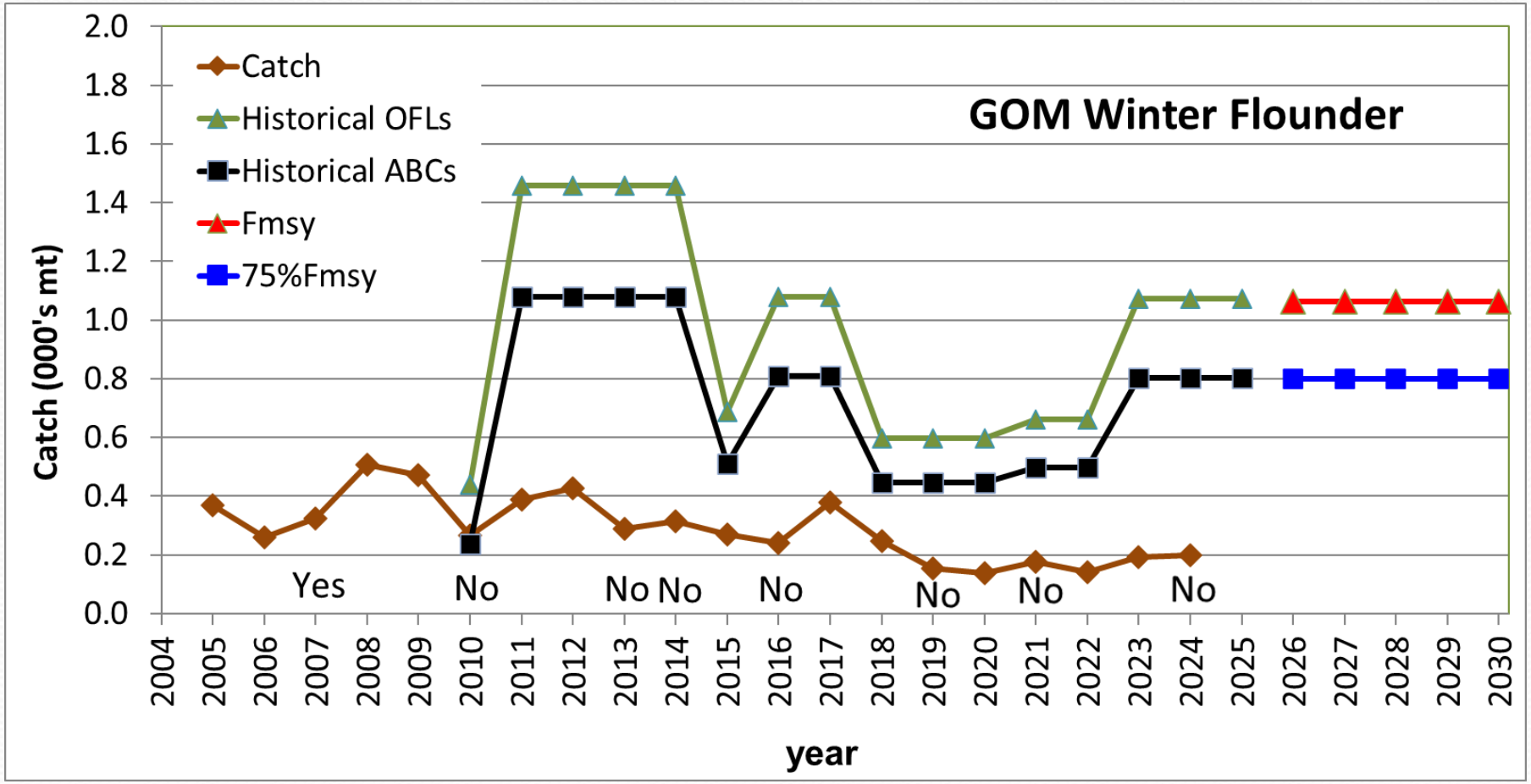
Gulf of Maine Winter Flounder Fishing Year 2026 and Fishing Year 2030 OFLs and ABCs



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



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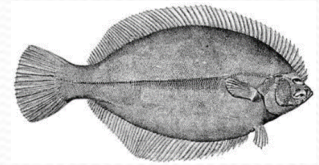

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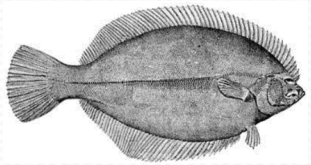
SSC Recommendations – GOM Winter Flounder

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

Fishing Year	OFL (mt)	ABC (mt)
2024	1,072	804
2025	1,072	804
2026	1,064	798
2027	1,064	798
2028	1,064	798
2029	1,064	798
2030	1,064	798

FY2024 & FY2025 values provided for reference



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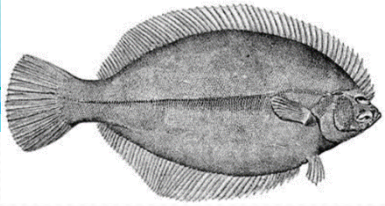
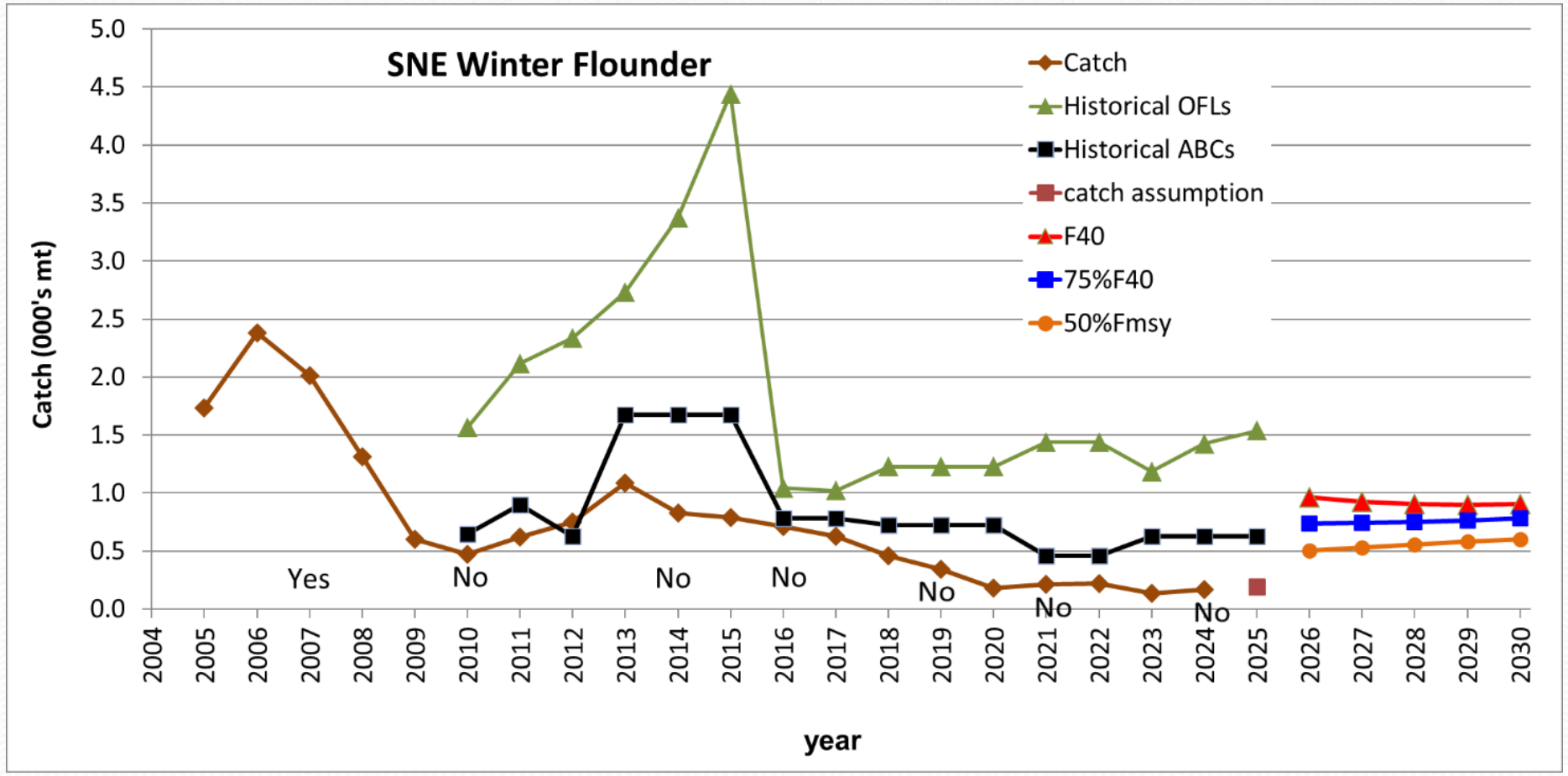
Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic Winter Flounder
Fishing Year 2026 and Fishing Year 2030 OFLs and ABCs

Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic Winter Flounder



MODEL	ASAP, Level 1
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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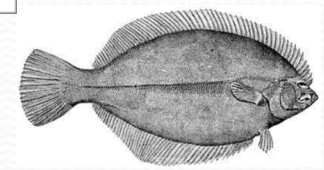

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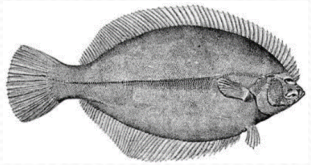
SSC Recommendations – SNE/MA Winter Flounder

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

Fishing Year	OFL (mt)	ABC (mt)
2024	1,425	627
2025	1,536	627
2026	961	507
2027	1,009	532
2028	1,055	556
2029	1,101	556
2030	1,101*	556

FY2024 & FY2025 values provided for reference

*Request recalculated OFL if possible



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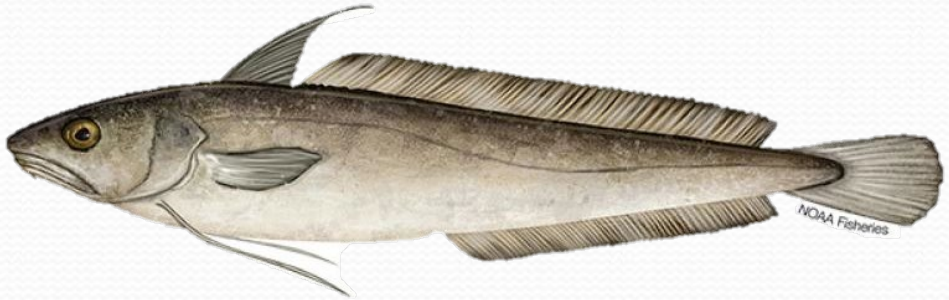
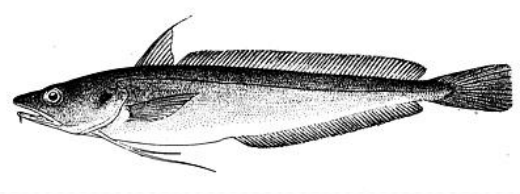
White Hake
Fishing Year 2026 and Fishing Year 2030
OFLs and ABCs

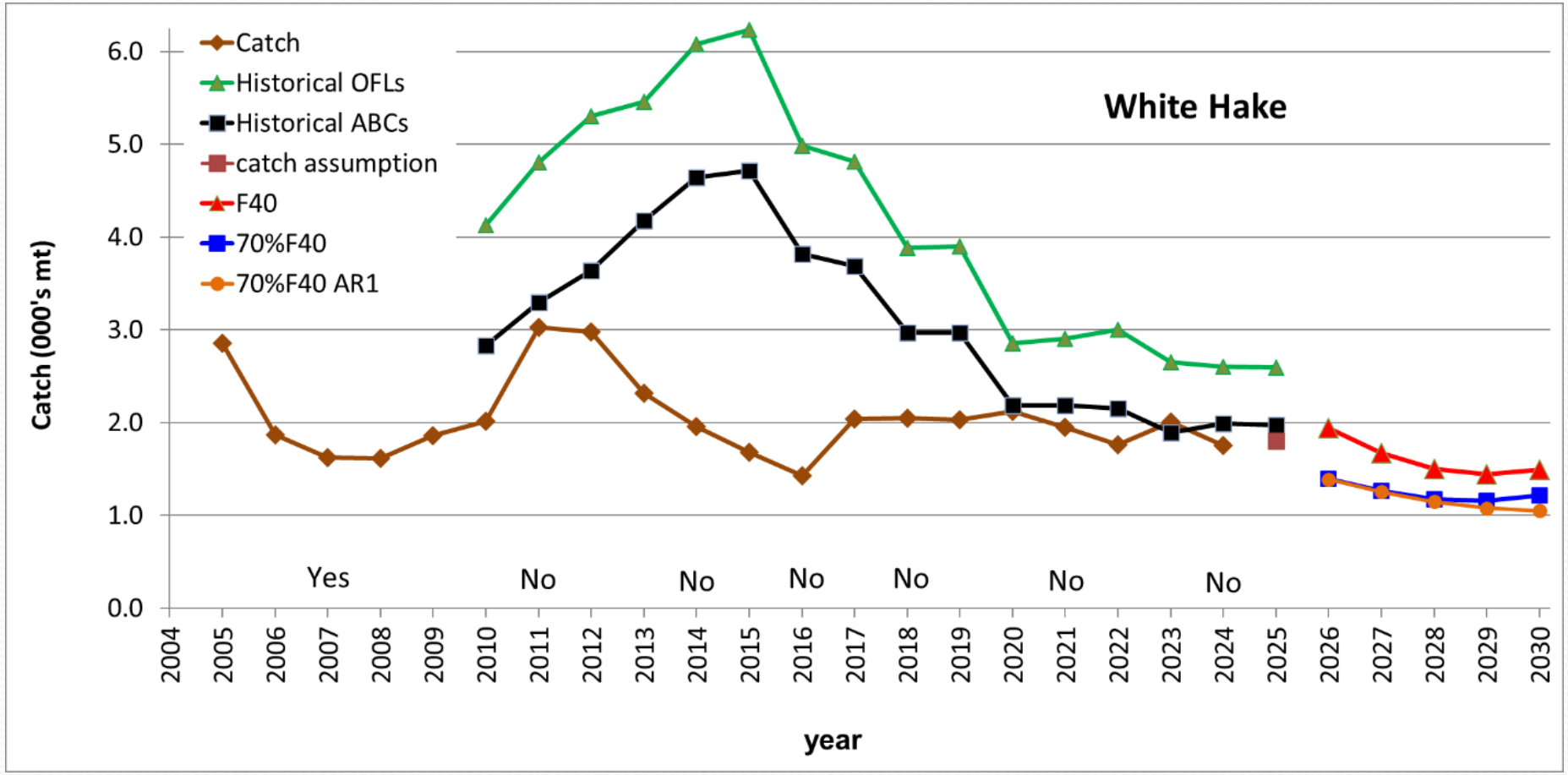




White Hake

MODEL	ASAP, Level 3
STOCK STATUS	Not Overfished, Overfishing is not occurring
REBUILDING	2031 (70%F_{MSY} Frebuild)
RETROSPECTIVE ADJUSTMENT	No
UNCERTAINTIES	- Catch at age information is not well characterized, due to possible mis-identification of species in the commercial and observer data, particularly in early years, low sampling of commercial landings in some years, and sparse discard length data. - Recent addition of an extra-large market category causing possible bias in the age composition - Pooled age-length keys (ALKs) and use of survey ALKs to age commercial catch - Possible seasonal movement out of defined stock area. - Inconsistency between recruitment methods used in the long-term and short-term projections (explored in this assessment but not resolved).
CHANGES	- Added bottom longline survey (BLSS) spring and fall indices - Re-aged catch using a combined NEFSC bottom trawl survey (BTS) and BLLS ALK for 2014–2024

Catch Performance



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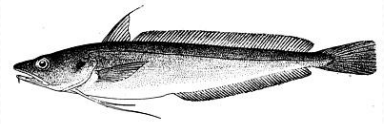

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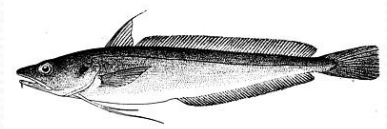
SSC Recommendations – White Hake

Catch Projections at 70% F_{MSY}

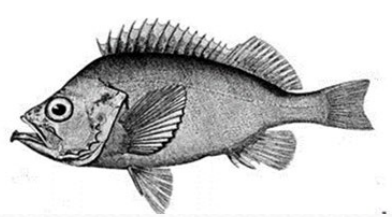
Fishing Year	OFL (mt)	ABC (mt)
2024	2,607	1,991
2025	2,591	1,978
2026	1,943	1,393
2027	1,760	1,261
2028	1,640	1,174
2029	1,618	1,157
2030	1,698	1,215

FY2024 & FY2025 values provided for reference



New England Fishery Management Council

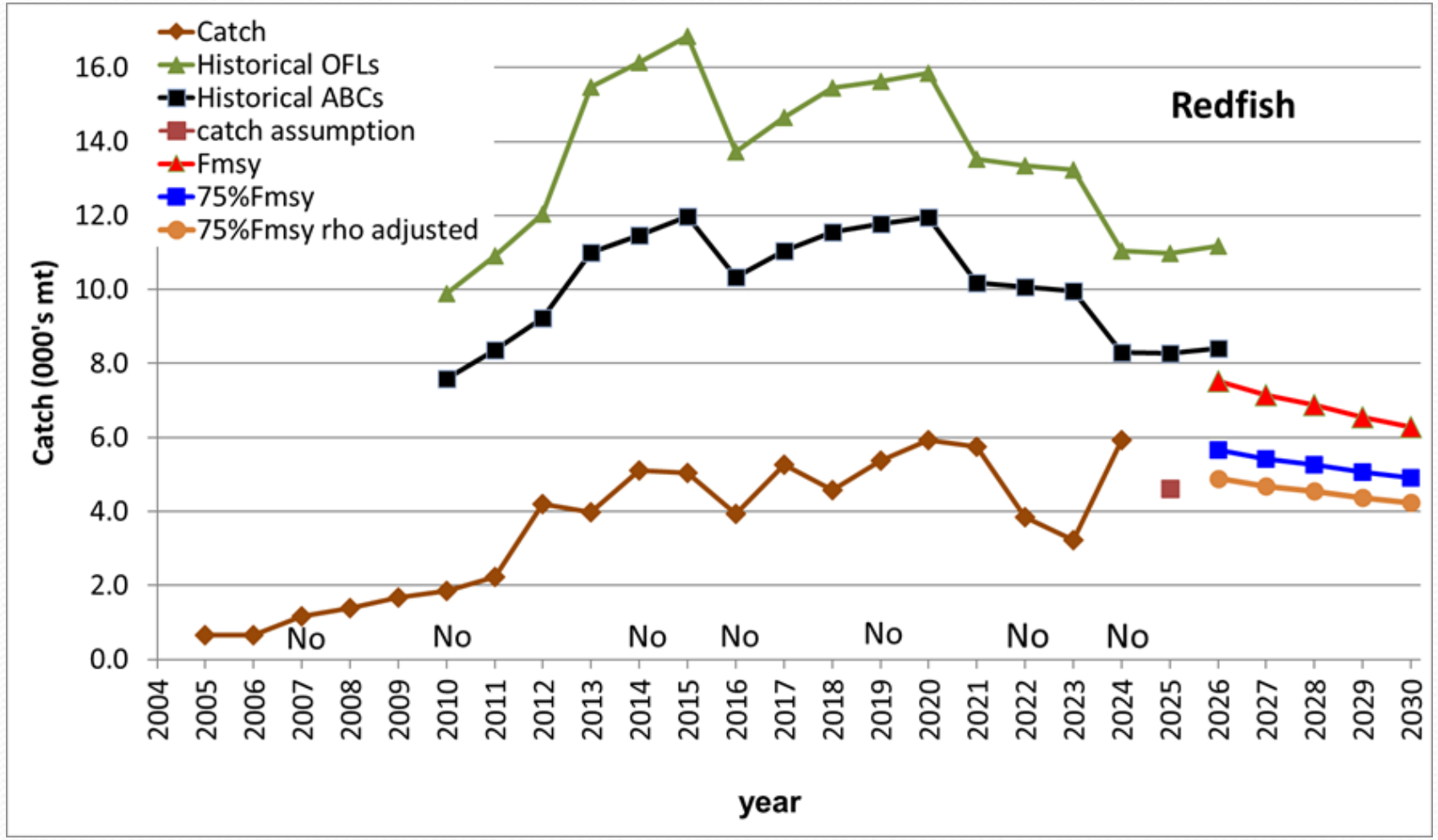
Acadian Redfish
Fishing Year 2026 – Fishing Year 2030
OFLs and ABCs



Acadian Redfish

MODEL	WHAM ('ASAP-like'), Level 3
STOCK STATUS	Not Overfished, Overfishing is not occurring
REBUILDING	Rebuilt
RETROSPECTIVE ADJUSTMENT	Yes for stock status determination. No for short-term projections (no option in WHAM)
UNCERTAINTIES	- Lack of age data from fishery and spring survey in many years is a major source of uncertainty. - Lack of model fit to spring and fall survey indices in recent assessments. WHAM improves the fit to both survey indices, but still fails to fit most recent two years of the fall index.
CHANGES	- Added 4 years of historic commercial age data and 3 years of historic spring survey age data - Change assessment start year from 1913 to 1963 - Change in recruitment model: mean recruitment with AR1 random effects - Use of age-specific fishery and survey selectivity - Change fishery and survey age composition likelihoods: logistic-normal, AR1, missing 0s

Catch Performance



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

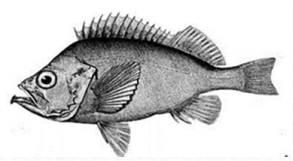
New England Fishery Management Council

SSC Recommendations - Redfish

Catch Projections at 75% F_{MSY}

Fishing Year	OFL (mt)	ABC (mt)
2024	11,041	8,307
2025	10,982	8,273
2026	7,519	5,665
2027	7,203	5,427
2028	6,999	5,273
2029	6,723	5,065
2030	6,513	4,907

FY2024 & FY2025 values provided for reference



New England Fishery Management Council

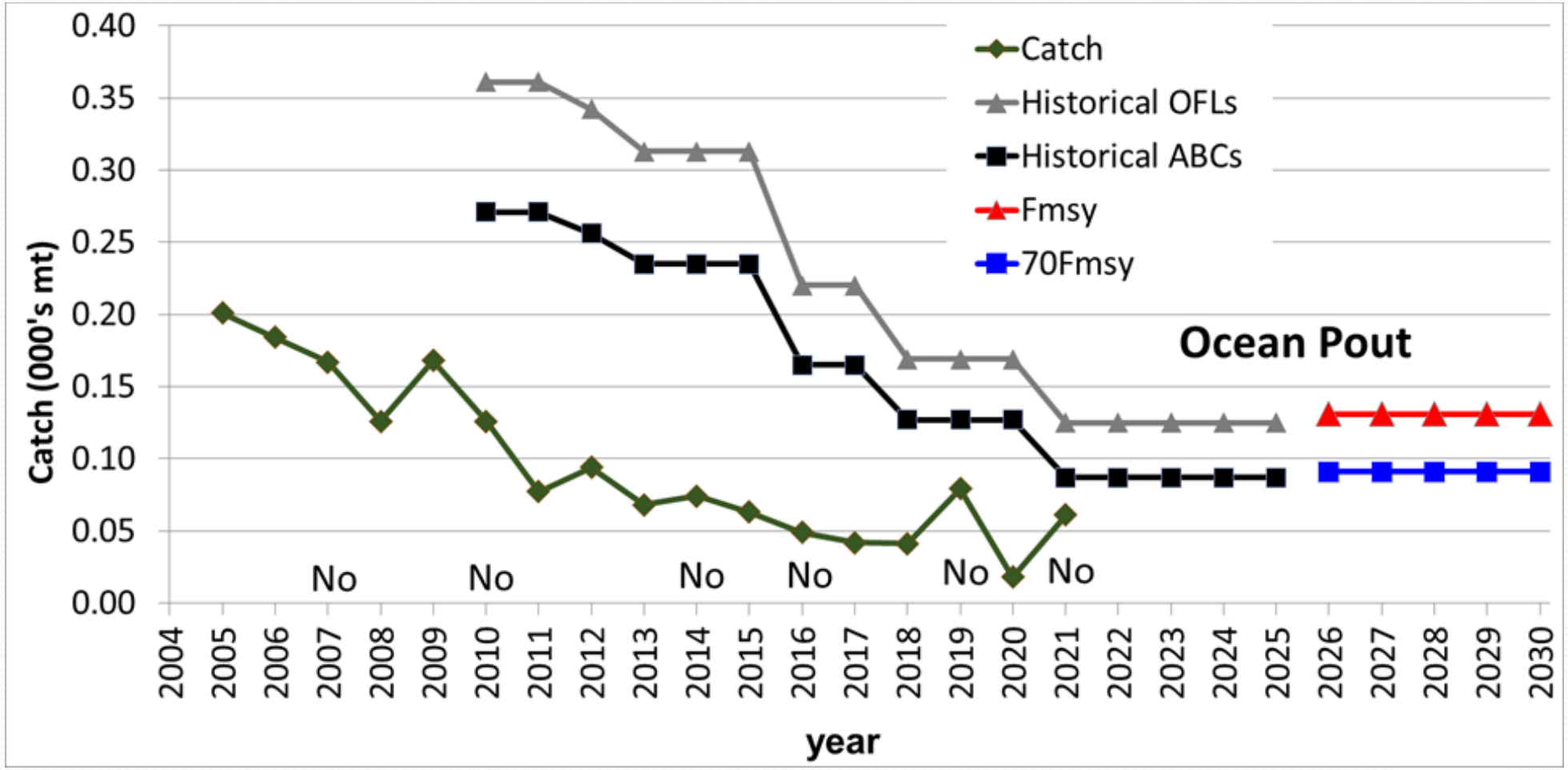
Ocean Pout
Fishing Year 2026 and Fishing Year 2030
OFLs and ABCs

Ocean Pout

MODEL	Index based (exploitation ratio), Data update
STOCK STATUS	Overfished, Overfishing is not occurring (2022 MTA)
REBUILDING	2029 (70%FMSY Frebuild, no projection)
RETROSPECTIVE ADJUSTMENT	N/A
UNCERTAINTIES	No analytical assessment. Missing 2020 and 2023 survey. Data update for 2025.

New England
Fishery Management Council

Catch Performance



New England Fishery Management Council

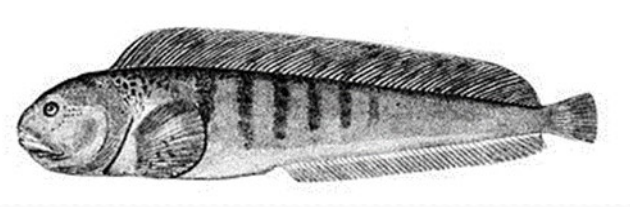
SSC Recommendations - Ocean Pout

Status quo catch advice

Fishing Year	OFL (mt)	ABC (mt)
2026	125	87
2027	125	87
2028	125	87
2029	125	87
2030	125	87

New England
Fishery Management Council

Atlantic Wolffish
Fishing Year 2026 and Fishing Year 2030 OFLs and ABCs

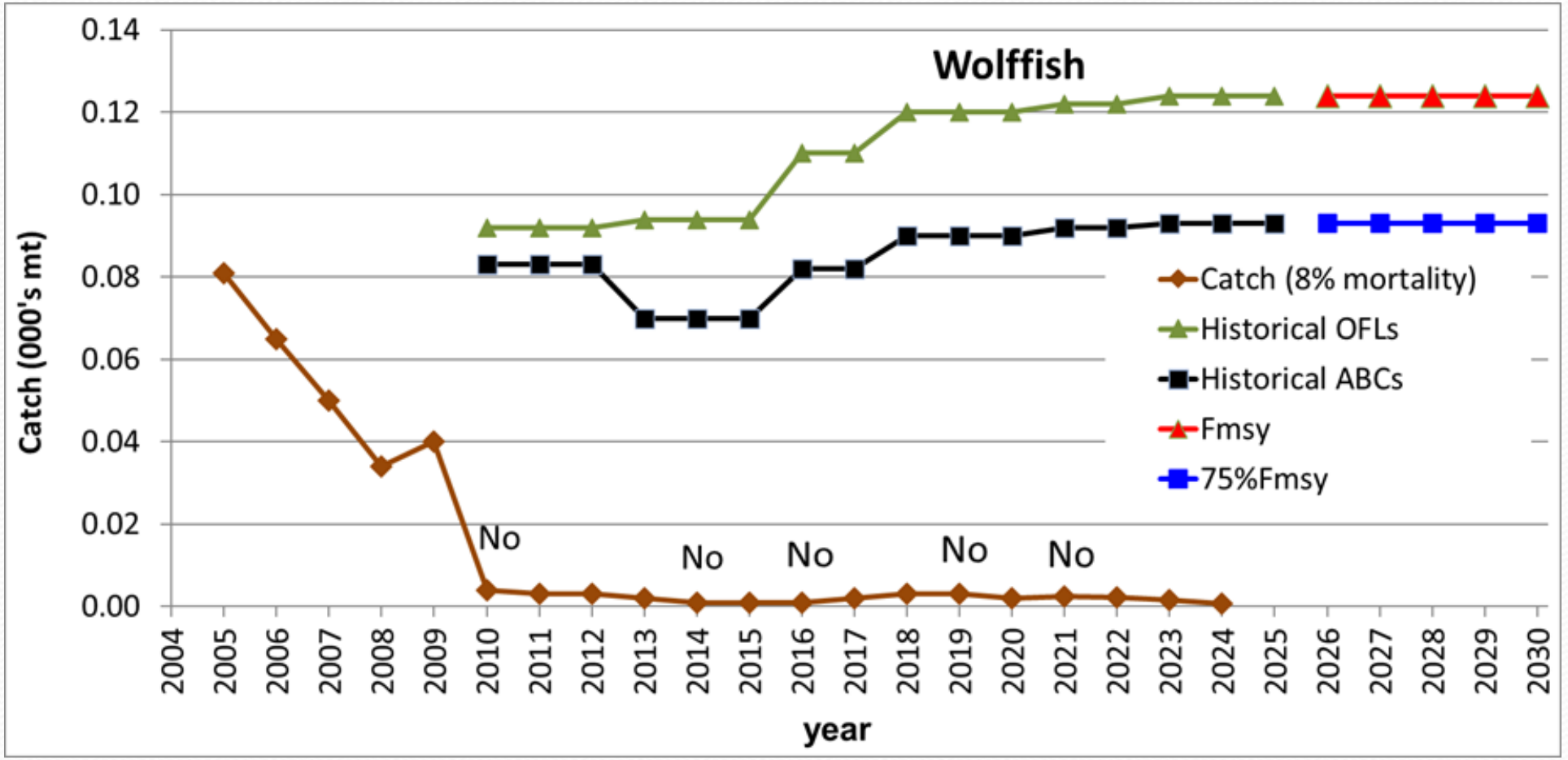


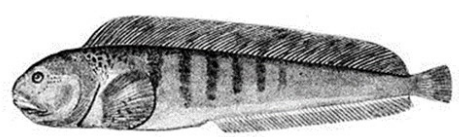
Atlantic Wolffish

MODEL	SCALE, Data update
STOCK STATUS	Overfished, Overfishing is not occurring (2022 MTA)
REBUILDING	Undefined
RETROSPECTIVE ADJUSTMENT	N/A
UNCERTAINTIES	Uncertainty with regards to 8% discard mortality rate. Low detection in the NEFSC surveys. Ocean Pout Bigelow conversion. Missing surveys in 2020 and spring 2023. Data update for 2025.

New England Fishery Management Council

Catch Performance



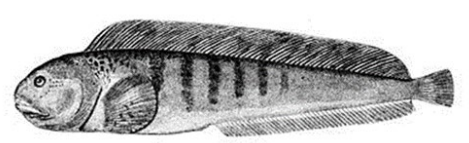


New England Fishery Management Council

SSC Recommendations - Atlantic Wolffish

Status quo catch advice

Fishing Year	OFL (mt)	ABC (mt)
2026	124	93
2027	124	93
2028	124	93
2029	124	93
2030	124	93



New England Fishery Management Council

U.S./Canada Transboundary Management Guidance Committee Recommendations

U.S./Canada Science and Management

- Prior to 2024, the Transboundary Resources Assessment Committee (TRAC) provided joint science advice for the Eastern Georges Bank Management Area for the three transboundary stocks (cod, haddock, and yellowtail flounder)

- In March 2024, a “TRAC Improvement Workshop” was convened to develop a new process for the provision of science advice, which was approved by the U.S./Canada Steering Committee in May 2024.

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U.S./Canada Science and Management

- New strategies to enhance collaboration and streamline advice
- Eliminated the annual TRAC meeting and replaced it with a process that compiles, but does not seek to reconcile, domestic science products for each country
- Integration of Science Advice for Transboundary Stocks (ISATS)
  - Includes a Technical Science Coordination meeting with stock assessment leads
  - Outcomes for U.S. and Canadian domestic assessments are compiled
  - Domestic assessments are considered equally as the basis for informing advice
  - 2025 process included Georges Bank cod and haddock
  - Georges Bank yellowtail flounder was completed after ISATS process through U.S. Management Track Assessment

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U.S./Canada Science and Management

- TMGC is an advisory process to address how catches of transboundary stocks should be allocated to the U.S. and Canada within the Eastern Georges Bank Management Area.
- Includes U.S. industry members from the New England Council, NOAA officials, Canadian industry members, and Canada DFO officials
- In 2025, the role of the Council was replaced by NOAA's Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Fisheries
- TMGC negotiated agreements for the three transboundary stocks
- Recommendations considered, but are not constrained by, groundfish ABC control rules and the Council's Risk Policy
- All TMGC recommendations considered stock status, resource conditions, and risk-averse management approaches

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U.S./Canada Sharing Agreement

- U.S. and Canada rotate to complete the Resource Allocation shares calculation
- 2025 – Canada completed calculations to inform 2026 recommended Total Allowable Catches (TACs)
- The agreement is based on a combination of:
  - Historical utilization by each country – 10% weighting
  - Resource distribution from available trawl surveys – 90% weighting

$$\%share_{year,country} = (\alpha_{year} \times \%utilization_{year,country}) + (\beta_{year} \times \%resource\ distribution_{year,country})$$

where α_{year} = percentage weighting for utilization in year

β_{year} = percentage weighting for resource distribution in year

$\alpha_{year} + \beta_{year} = 100\%$

New England Fishery Management Council

U.S./Canada Sharing Agreement

	Resource Utilization			
		Cod	Haddock	Yellowtail
USA		40%	45%	98%
CANADA		60%	55%	2%

	Resource Distribution					*Weighting*		*Allocation Shares*		
	Survey Year	Cod	Haddock	Yellowtail	Fishing Year	Utilization	Distribution	Cod	Haddock	Yellowtail
USA	**2020**	27%	47%	57%	**2022**	10%	90%	28%	47%	61%
CANADA		73%	53%	43%				72%	53%	39%
USA	**2021**	25%	42%	48%	**2023**	10%	90%	26%	42%	53%
CANADA		75%	58%	52%				74%	58%	47%
USA	**2022**	27%	30%	36%	**2024**	10%	90%	29%	31%	42%
CANADA		73%	70%	64%				71%	69%	58%
USA	**2023**	21%	18%	43%	**2025**	10%	90%	23%	21%	48%
CANADA		79%	82%	57%				77%	79%	52%
USA	**2024**	31%	19%	49%	**2026**	10%	90%	32%	21%	54%
CANADA		69%	81%	51%				68%	79%	46%

Fisheries and Oceans Canada | Pêches et Océans Canada

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U.S. Biomass Apportionment

- For cod and haddock, the Canadian assessment considers Eastern Georges Bank (EGB) as individual stocks, whereas the U.S. assessments include a larger portion of Georges Bank (GB)
- To address spatial differences, NEFSC developed a biomass apportionment method to determine the portion of cod and haddock biomass distributed within the Eastern Georges Bank Management Area
- Results are intended to be informational, not determinative
- Method reviewed by SSC in July 2024
- 2025 updates included:
  - Revised haddock methods to fully align apportionment with survey footprint used in the GB haddock assessment

New England Fishery Management Council

U.S. Biomass Apportionment

2025 Apportionment Results

- Used data from 1992-2024

	EGB apportionment	Terminal year
GB Haddock	75%	2024
GB Cod	100%	2024

New England Fishery Management Council

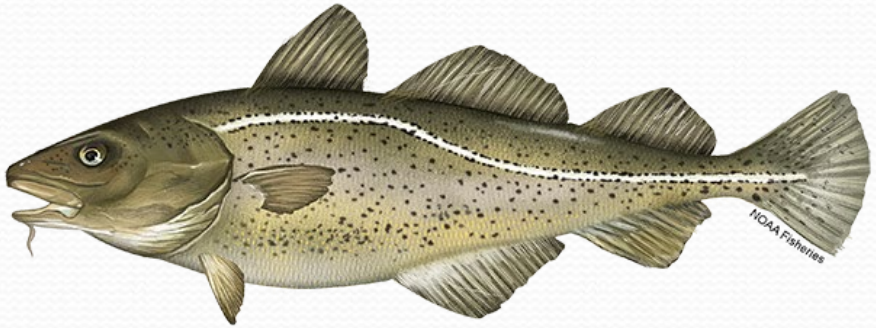
NOAA FISHERIES

Proposed FY2026 US/Canada TACs

	Eastern GB Cod	Eastern GB Haddock	GB Yellowtail Flounder
Total Shared TAC	473	4,750	57
U.S. TAC	151	998	31
Canada TAC	322	3,752	26

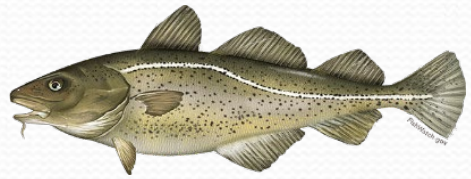
New England Fishery Management Council

Georges Bank Cod
OFL and ABC for FY2026



Georges Bank Cod

- U.S. – Georges Bank
  - WHAM
  - 2023 Research Track
  - 2024 Management Track
  - Data updated through 2023
  - High probability of overfished
  - Overfishing not occurring
- Canada – Eastern Georges Bank
  - WHAM
  - 2025 Framework
  - 2025 Assessment
  - Data updated through 2024
  - High probability of Critical Zone
  - Low fishing mortality



New England Fishery Management Council

Georges Bank Cod

Model	Parameter	2024 Value	2025 Value	2026 Value
DFO EGB Cod Model Values (terminal year of data = 2024)	SSB (mt)	10,900	7,899	6,462
	F	*0.030*	*0.041*	0.052
	Catch (mt)	*378*	*452*	473
NMFS GB Cod 2024 Model Values (terminal year of data = 2023)	SSB (mt)	2,486 (929 – 6,653)	2,089 (499 – 8,739)	1,658 (277 – 9,937)
	F	*0.152*	0.233	0.233
	Catch (mt)	*417*	518	419
	Apportioned catch (mt) in EGB for 2026			419

New England Fishery Management Council

Georges Bank Cod Summary

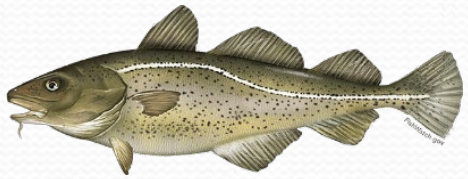
- ISATS:
  - “The most influential differences between the two cod models appear to be the impact of the different spatial footprints on the fundamental dynamics modeled and differences in how the catch value that is reported is estimated and what it represents.”

- TMGC:
  - “Both countries agreed to use the 2025 Canadian assessment for EGB cod…”
    - This assessment incorporates the latest data and applies a fishing mortality (F) strategy defined as a very low risk of preventable decline
    - Consistent with TMGC approach of reducing fishing pressure when stock productivity is poor
    - Lowest ever agreed TAC
    - TAC will help to maintain some operations on EGB, but will continue to limit other fisheries in 2026

New England Fishery Management Council

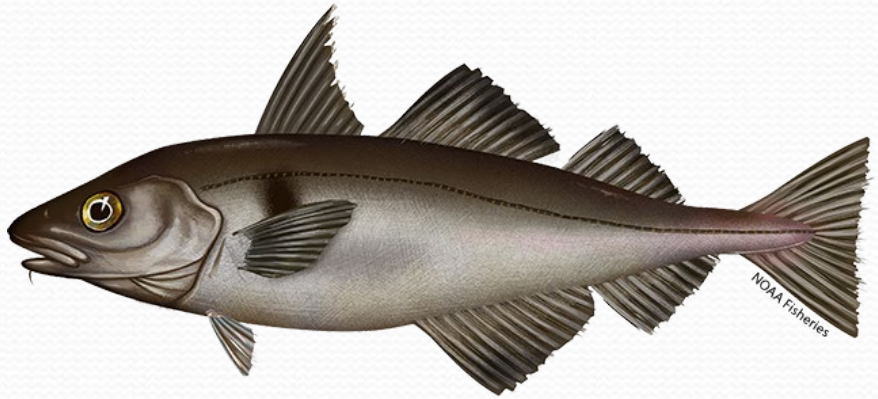
Georges Bank Cod FY2026 OFL & ABC

Fishing Year	Proposed OFL (mt)	Proposed ABC (mt)	U.S. ABC (mt)
2026	473	473	151



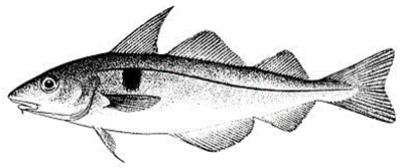
New England Fishery Management Council

Georges Bank Haddock OFL and ABC for FY2026



Georges Bank Haddock

- U.S. – Georges Bank
  - WHAM
  - 2022 Research Track
  - 2024 Management Track
  - Data updated through 2023
  - Not overfished
  - Overfishing not occurring
- Canada – Eastern Georges Bank
  - WHAM
  - 2022 Research Track
  - 2025 Assessment
  - Data updated through 2024
  - High probability of Healthy Zone
  - Fref not exceeded



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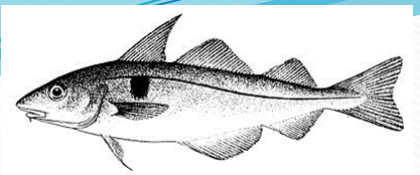
Georges Bank Haddock



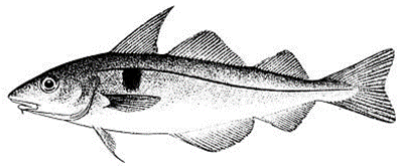
Model	Parameter	2024 Value	2025 Value	2026 Value
DFO EGB Haddock Model Values (terminal year of data = 2024)	SSB (mt)	27,342	23,713	15,180
	F	*0.311*	*0.534*	0.339
	Catch (mt)	*6,219*	*7,410*	2,480–3,850[1]
NMFS GB Haddock 2024 Model Values (terminal year of data = 2023)	SSB (mt)	34,180 (14,038 - 83,225)	34,516 (10,532 - 113,116)	36,029 (8,534 - 152,117)
	F_{5-7}	*0.316 (0.116 - 0.859)*	0.264	0.264
	Catch (mt)	*9,627*	8,034 (2,430 - 26,570)	8,177 (1,956 - 34,188)
	Apportioned catch (mt) in EGB for 2026			6,133

New England Fishery Management Council

Georges Bank Haddock Summary

- ISATS:
  - “The most influential differences between the two haddock models appear to be the impact of adding 2024 data and assumptions regarding M.”

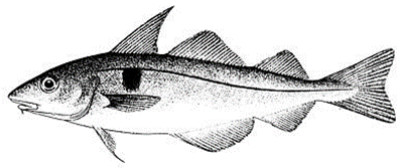
- TMGC:
  - “Based on a review of the domestic assessment products provided by both countries…”
    - This stock is not overfished, overfishing is not occurring, and is considered to the in the healthy zone
    - A 36% decrease was considered a significant one-year reduction which corresponds to the Canadian assessment projections
    - The agreed TAC is below the apportioned U.S. advice but above the range of the Canadian advice based on the EGB assessment



New England Fishery Management Council

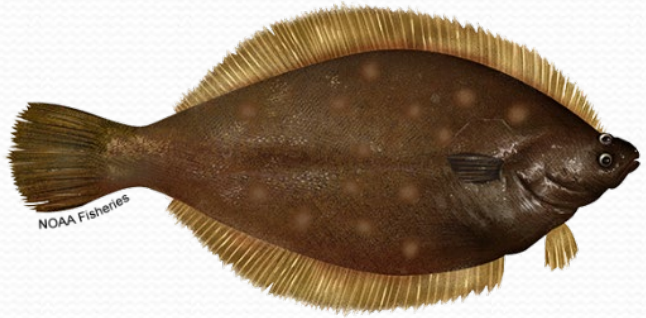
Georges Bank Haddock FY2026 OFL & ABC

Fishing Year	Proposed OFL (mt)	Proposed ABC (mt)	U.S. ABC (mt)
2026	8,177	8,177	4,425



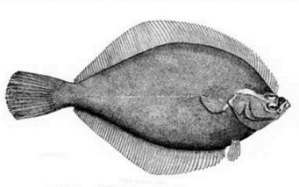
New England Fishery Management Council

Georges Bank Yellowtail Flounder OFL and ABC for FY2026



Georges Bank Yellowtail Flounder

- U.S. – Georges Bank
  - WHAM
  - 2024 Research Track
  - 2025 Management Track
  - Data updated through 2024
  - Overfished
  - Overfishing not occurring



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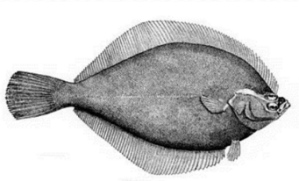
Georges Bank Yellowtail Summary

- TMGC:
  - "Canadian science and resource management authorities agreed that U.S. science would provide catch advice…"
    - Assessment is an improvement from the previous empirical-based "Limiter" approach
    - This stock is overfished, and overfishing is not occurring
    - Stock status based on Canadian reference points remains unknown, but is assumed the stock would be in the critical zone
    - Recent survey values and stock biomass remain low and productivity is poor
    - Recent fishery catches remain well below recent quotas
    - TAC advice is deemed appropriate as it represents a decrease from the recent quota



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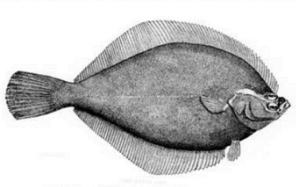
Georges Bank Yellowtail Flounder FY2026 OFL & ABC

Fishing Year	Proposed OFL (mt)	Proposed ABC (mt)	U.S. ABC (mt)
2026	57	57	31



New England Fishery Management Council

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.

New England Fishery Management Council

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

New England Fishery Management Council

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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SNE/MA Yellowtail Flounder Scallop Fishery Sub-ACL

- Presently, the sub-ACL is determined at 90% of the Scallop PDT's projected catch for the fishery, which was set at 2.7 mt for FY2023-FY2025.
- This year, the Scallop PDT is unable to conduct bycatch projections, because they do not have area-specific projections of scallop catch under each alternative, nor updated d/K ratios (ratio of discards to all kept catch) for each stock/projection area.
- The Groundfish PDT discussed possible alternative approaches:
  - Set sub-ACL based on updated fishery catches at 90% of average FY2023-FY2024 catch (2023 catch = 2.1 mt; 2024 catch 0.27 mt [590 lb])
  - Set sub-ACL based on current allocation at 90% of FY2025 sub-ACL

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Scallop PDT Discussion – October 30, 2025

- The Scallop PDT discussed recent fishery catches of SNE/MA yellowtail flounder and effort in the SNE/MA yellowtail flounder stock area
  - The conditions that led to higher SNE/MA yellowtail flounder catches in-season FY2025 are not likely to occur in FY2026 - Nantucket Lightship West will be open but with low scallop biomass so expect lower effort there.
    - Uncertainty with the preliminary in-season catch estimate – majority of catch is from one month and one area
    - Concern that the Mid-Atlantic AM area does not include the area where these FY2025 SNE/MA yellowtail flounder catches occurred. This mismatch warrants further discussion for future years.
  - Likely to be increased open bottom fishing in FY2026 in the SNE/MA yellowtail flounder stock area.

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Groundfish PDT Discussion – October 31, 2025

- The Groundfish PDT recommends setting the SNE/MA yellowtail flounder scallop fishery sub-ACL at 90% of the FY2025 sub-ACL, which would be 2.4 mt.
  - This keeps consistency with the approach and with the intent of keeping bycatch low without constraining the scallop fishery.
  - Supported by the Scallop PDT

- The PDT recommends setting the sub-ACL for all five years in the specifications cycle (FY2026-FY20230) and planning to revisit next year (2026) with new data and updated bycatch projections.

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Key Discussion Questions

- Does the Committee support the Groundfish PDT recommendations for the SNE/MA yellowtail flounder sub-ACL for the scallop fishery?

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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

New England Fishery Management Council

For Today

- Receive an update on development of the action
  - Sub-components analysis
  - SNE/MA yellowtail flounder scallop fishery sub-ACL
- Discuss draft alternatives
- Make recommendations to the Council on preferred alternatives

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Framework Adjustment 68 / ABC Control Rules:
ABC Control Rules / Risk Policy Project

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For Today

- Framework 68 / ABC Control Rules: ABC Control Rules / Risk Policy project
  - Receive a progress report on the project to evaluate integration of risk policy with revised groundfish ABC control rules

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Multi-Year Council Priority

In consultation with the SSC, continue work to revise ABC control rules for Northeast Multispecies stocks.

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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.

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Work to Date

- **May 2023** - Held a meeting of the full Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) with the goal of discussing the challenges they face when applying the ABC control rules and providing feedback on the different approaches
- **June 2023** - Results of the SSC feedback to inform an approach(es) for the Groundfish Committee to recommended to the Council; Council initiated Framework Adjustment to revise ABC control rules (Framework 68)
- **August 17, 2023** - Facilitated meeting to discuss draft goals and objectives for the action
- **September 2023** – Council approved goals and objectives of ABC CRs; development of ABC CRs / FW 68 paused in order to first complete development of revised Risk Policy

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Issues with Current Control Rules Discussed by Group

	SSC	PDT	RAP	GAP	Committee	Council
Difficulty in applying to analytical or backup assessments	■	■				
Not vetted with respect to robustness to climate/ecosystem changes	■	■			■	
Have caused large fluctuations in catch advice and resulting management measures	■	■	■	■		
Questions on when constant catch is appropriate	■	■		■	■	■
Confidence buffer associated with 75%FMSY is appropriate	■					
Revised definition of Frebuild overtime	■	■				
Limited guidance on how to define reference points	■					
Difficulty with quantifying incidental bycatch		■				
Unable to phase-in ABC reductions since not specified in current control rules				■	■	■

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Facilitated Meeting on ABC Control Rules - August 17, 2023

- Discussed possible draft Goals / Objectives
  - Consider if 75%FMSY remains appropriate for ABCs
  - Develop a tiered system of controls rules to set ABCs
  - Improve the performance of the ABC controls rules
  - Develop decision rules for when to use constant ABCs
  - Develop a control rule to set ABCs for stocks that are rebuilt
  - Incorporate environmental or climate change influences in setting of ABCs
  - Develop a control rule for stocks with unknown status to set ABCs
  - Develop control rules that provide stability in ABCs
  - Reduce negative impacts of large changes in catch advice by phasing in ABC

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Common themes from the facilitated meeting

- Overarching goal: focus on yield, safety, status and stability
  - Stability to allows for business planning and market fluctuation
- Consideration for environmental and climate concerns at a higher level
  - Need for dynamic biological reference points, incorporation into stock assessments, flexibility for SSC to accommodate, improvements to take information and make better projections
- Need to develop metrics and indicators for the performance of ABC control rules
  - i.e., economic, management goals, stock status, frequency of use, overfishing status, sustainability and viability measures
- Tiered approach
  - Addresses stocks with unknown status, allows for more transparency in the process, and consider uncertainty and type of assessment

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Groundfish ABC Control Rules Goals

The goal of this action is to modify/replace the existing groundfish ABC control rules to better address the goals and objectives of the Northeast Multispecies (Groundfish) FMP considering increasing uncertainty and variability in stock assessments, changing environmental conditions, and National Standard Guidelines. The new control rule should produce catch advice that prevents overfishing, rebuilds stocks, improves attainment of optimum yield, and seeks to minimize large changes in catch advice as appropriate.

Based on Committee motion – August 17, 2023

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Groundfish ABC Control Rules Objectives

Develop a tiered groundfish ABC control rule which considers, but is not limited to, potential categories, including: 1) stock status, including unknown and rebuilt; 2) stock assessment model type and sources or level of uncertainty; and 3) productivity regime. The control rule should also consider stability in the ABCs, with decision rules for when to use constant ABCs and the ability to use phasing-in ABCs consistent with National Standard 1 guidelines.

Based on Committee motion – August 17, 2023

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Integration of Revised Risk Policy with ABC Control Rules / FW 68

Since development of goals / objectives of groundfish ABC CRs, some of the elements the Committee/Council is interested in have been incorporated into the revised Risk Policy.

> Develop a tiered groundfish ABC control rule which considers, but is not limited to, potential categories, including: 1) stock status, including unknown and rebuilt; 2) stock assessment model type and sources or level of uncertainty; and 3) productivity regime. The control rule should also consider stability* in the ABCs, with decision rules for when to use constant ABCs and the ability to use phasing-in ABCs consistent with National Standard 1 guidelines.

*2025 Risk Policy focus on considering stability to harvesters primarily by avoiding abrupt shifts in fisheries management.

Incorporated into revised Risk Policy

To be considered through revised groundfish ABC CRs / FW 68

In 2025, the focus of both development of groundfish ABC CRs / FW 68 and implementation of revised Risk Policy is simulation testing occurring through contract work under Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) initiatives #1 and 3.

1. Acceptable Biological Catch Control Rules for Northeast Multispecies

Funding: $185K

Primary participants: Staff, Contractor, Groundfish Committee, SSC

Staff Contact: Robin
Staff & Contract Support: Lia, Jonathon

Information Resources: SCS8 outcomes, Risk Policy revisions, Groundfish Committee

Activity	Expected Timeframe
RFP, solicit experienced firm, execute contract (staff)	Jan – Feb 2025
Simulation testing with integrated Risk Policy (contractor – w/IRA 3)	Mar 2025 – Mar 2026
Draft ABC Control Rule with tiered and phase-in approach alternatives (Council)	Jan – Sep 2026
Council approval of ABC control rule	Sep 2026
Implementation of new ABC control rule – start of fishing year (Council)	May 2027

Evaluating the Council's New Risk Policy and Development of Groundfish ABC Control Rules

Project objectives:

a) evaluate the new Risk Policy and current Council ABC control rules,

b) modify an existing Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) model framework to evaluate Risk Policy-integrated harvest control rules (HCRs),

c) identify possible groundfish ABC control rules that explicitly integrate the Council's new Risk Policy, and

d) conduct simulation testing for representative groundfish stocks, comparing performance of status quo control rule approaches to alternative approaches that incorporate the new Risk Policy.

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Simulation Testing Contract Work

- Contract team: University of Maine
  Dr. Lisa Kerr and Dr. Roger Brothers (Co-PIs)
- Contractor works closely with a project oversight team
- Periodically interface with relevant Council groups (Risk Policy Working Group, Groundfish PDT, SSC)
- Brief the Groundfish Committee and Climate and Ecosystem Steering Committee, deliver final report to the Committees
- Work expected to be completed by March 2026

Expected Timeline

Expected timeframe for integrating the revised Risk Policy with the new Groundfish ABC control rules:

<table>
<tr><th></th><th>2025</th><th>2026</th><th>2027</th></tr>
<tr><td>Risk Policy</td><td rowspan="2">Simulation testing of revised Risk Policy integration with Groundfish ABC CRs</td><td colspan="2">Implementation of revised Risk Policy</td></tr>
<tr><td>ABC CRs / FW 68</td><td>Draft ABC Control Rule with tiered and phase-in approach alternatives</td><td>Implementation of revised ABC CR</td></tr>
</table>

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Other Business: Possible 2026 Council Groundfish Priorities

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Draft Proposed 2026 Council Groundfish Priorities

DRAFT PROPOSED: 2026 New England Fishery Management Council Priority List					
Ref #	**Plan/Topic**	**Category**	**Priority/Task**	**Estimated Timing**	**Coordination**
G1	Groundfish	Required	Complete and submit FW72	Complete early 2026	
G2	Groundfish	Required	Action to set ABC/ACL for groundfish stocks for FY2027-FY2031; US/CA stocks for FY2027; additional management measures	2026	IRA3, RP2/3, EO5
G3	Groundfish	Required	Groundfish Management Track Assessments (June - Georges Bank haddock; Sept - Gulf of Maine haddock, American plaice) and data updates (halibut, witch flounder, pollock)	2026	
G4	Groundfish	Required	Updates for transboundary management (TMGC; cod, haddock, yellowtail flounder)	2026	
G5	Groundfish	Paused	Review redfish sector exemption program	2026	
G6	Groundfish	Paused	Amendment 23 monitoring system review including complete development of metrics	2026	
G7	Groundfish	Paused	Continue work to revise ABC control rules for Northeast Multispecies stocks	2026	IRA1, RP2/3
G8	Groundfish	Paused	Transition Plan for cod management units, including allocation issues and new spawning protections	Multiyear, initiated 2024	IRA2/4

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Related IRA Initiatives and EO 14276 Priorities

IRA1	IRA	Required	Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) Control Rules for Northeast Multispecies	Multiyear, completion 2027
IRA2	IRA	Required	Atlantic cod management transition	Multiyear, completion 2027
IRA3	IRA	Required	Operationalizing ecosystem approaches in NE fisheries management	Multiyear, completion 2027

EO5	EO14276	New	Fishery Management Plan Revisions	Multiyear

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Possible Additional Priority: Rollover Provisions

Omnibus Management Flexibility Action:

- Council considered changes to the rollover or default provisions for the Northeast Multispecies and Atlantic Sea Scallop FMPs
  - Northeast Multispecies FMP: remove default specifications and allow rollover of the previous year's specifications until replaced by new specifications
- However, these changes are less likely to qualify for a categorical exclusion from NEPA and so were moved to Considered but Rejected.
- The Council may want to adjust these measures in the next available Northeast Multispecies action into order to analyze any changes alongside new specifications.

⇨ Include in annual groundfish framework action (G2) as 'other management measures'

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Extra Slides

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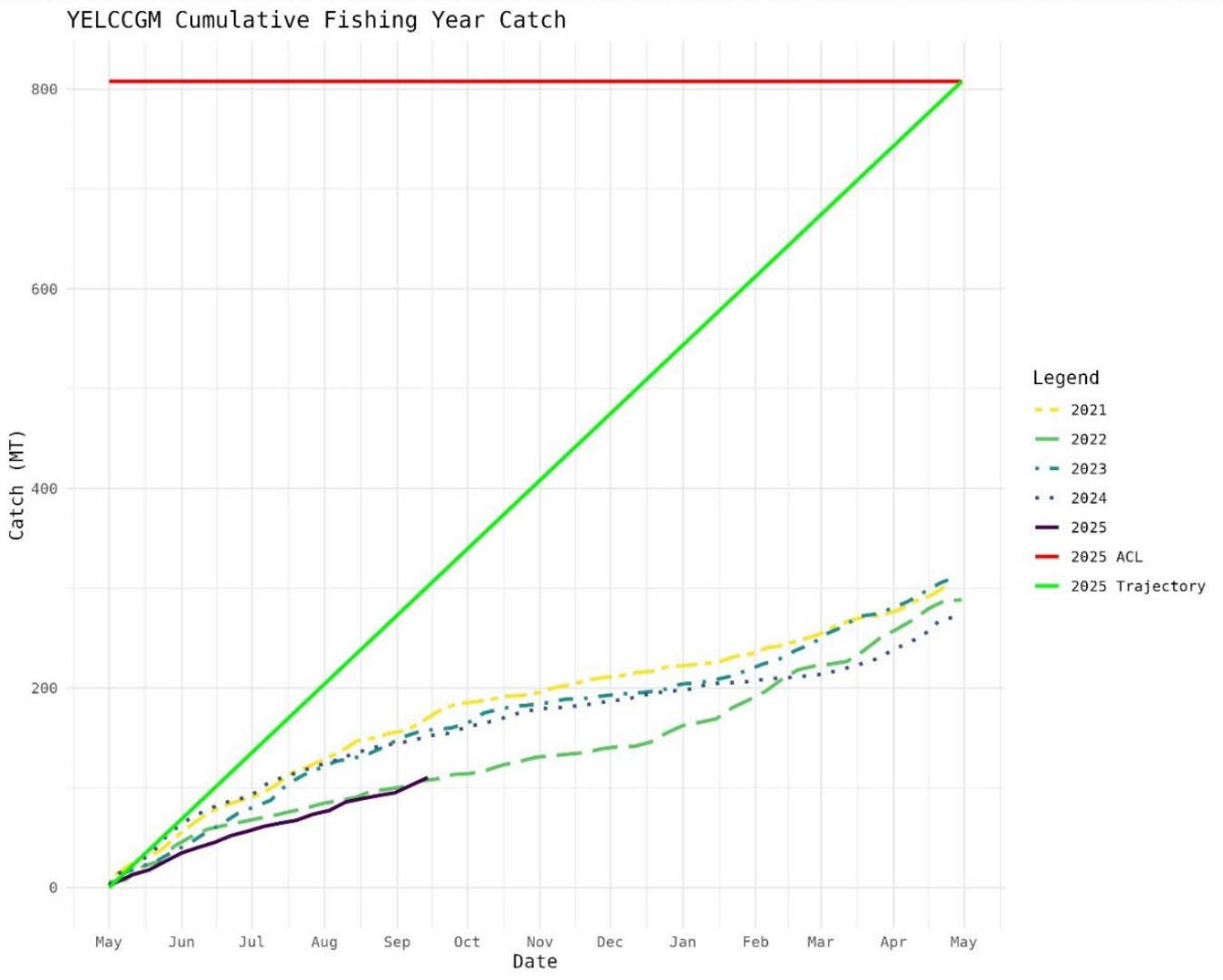
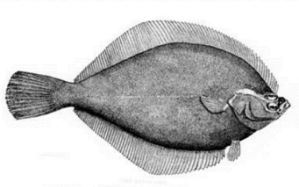
Commercial Groundfish Fishery In-Season Catch





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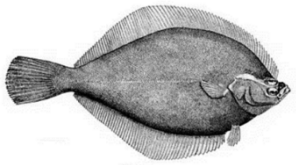
Quota Change Model Results - Sectors

	FY	Sector sub-ACL	Catch (mt)		*Utilization (%)*		Gross Rev ($mil, 2024)	
			Realized	Predicted	*Realized*	*Predicted*	Realized	Predicted
CC/GOM Yellowtail Flounder	2012	1021	954	391	*0.94*	*0.33*	3.5	0.7
	2013	466	377	423	*0.81*	*0.74*	1.5	1.6
	2014	463	249	338	*0.54*	*0.72*	0.8	1.3
	2015	437	372	204	*0.85*	*0.46*	1.4	0.8
	2016	327	249	177	*0.76*	*0.54*	1.1	0.6
	2017	326	196	237	*0.60*	*0.73*	0.8	1.0
	2018	381	165	380	*0.43*	*1.00*	0.5	1.6
	2019	377	141	282	*0.37*	*0.74*	0.4	1.0
	2020	656	182	178	*0.28*	*0.27*	0.4	0.5
	2021	651	284	124	*0.44*	*0.19*	0.6	0.3
	2022	661	287	344	*0.43*	*0.53*	0.4	0.6
	2023	931	299	165	*0.32*	*0.18*	0.4	0.3
	2024	876	259	339	*0.30*	*0.41*	0.3	0.5

Inter-sector ACE lease prices have been $0 in recent years



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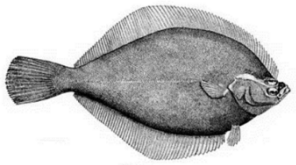
Other Fishery and State Fishery Sub-components Catch

Other significant sources of CC/GOM yellowtail flounder catch include:

- scallop fishery (27.8 mt in FY2023) and
- state commercial fishery (8.5 mt in FY2023).

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



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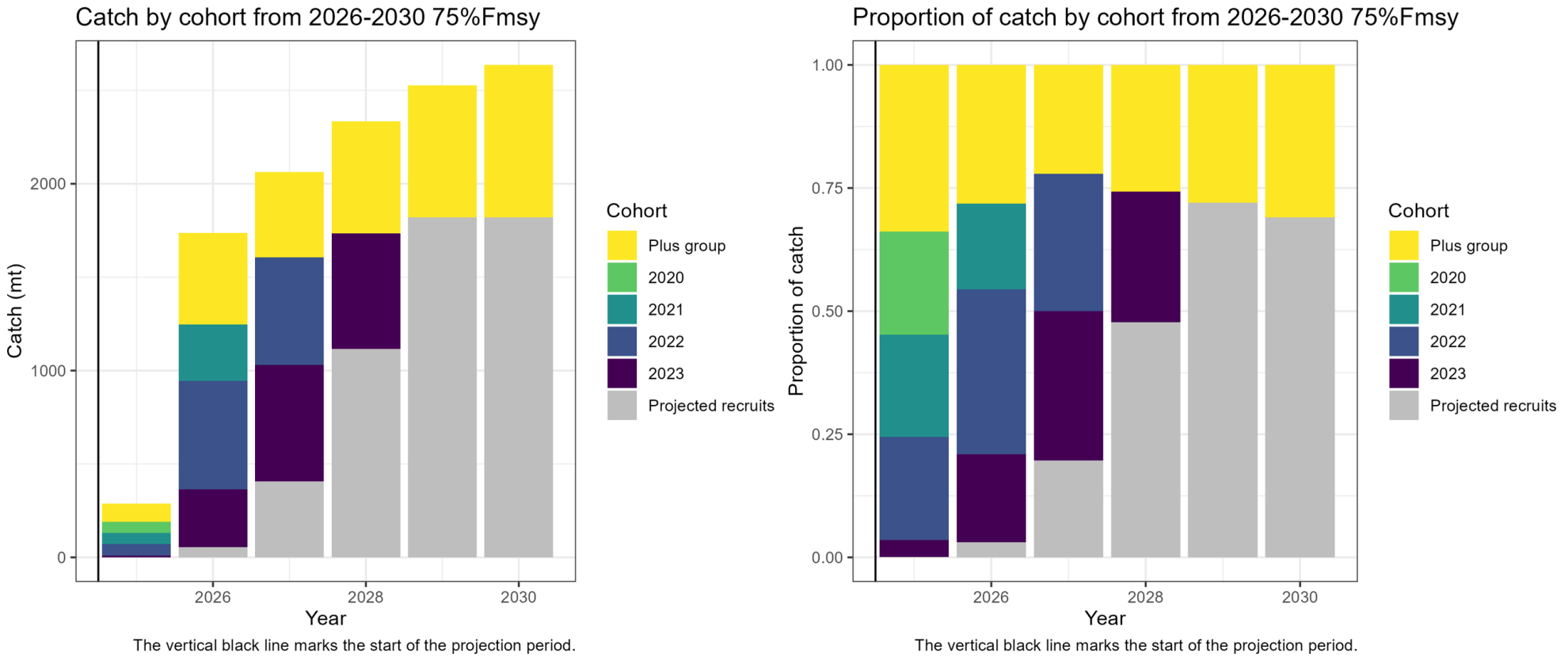
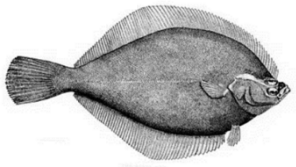
Projected Cohorts



Source: NEFSC

By 2028 50% of projected catch is from projected recruits



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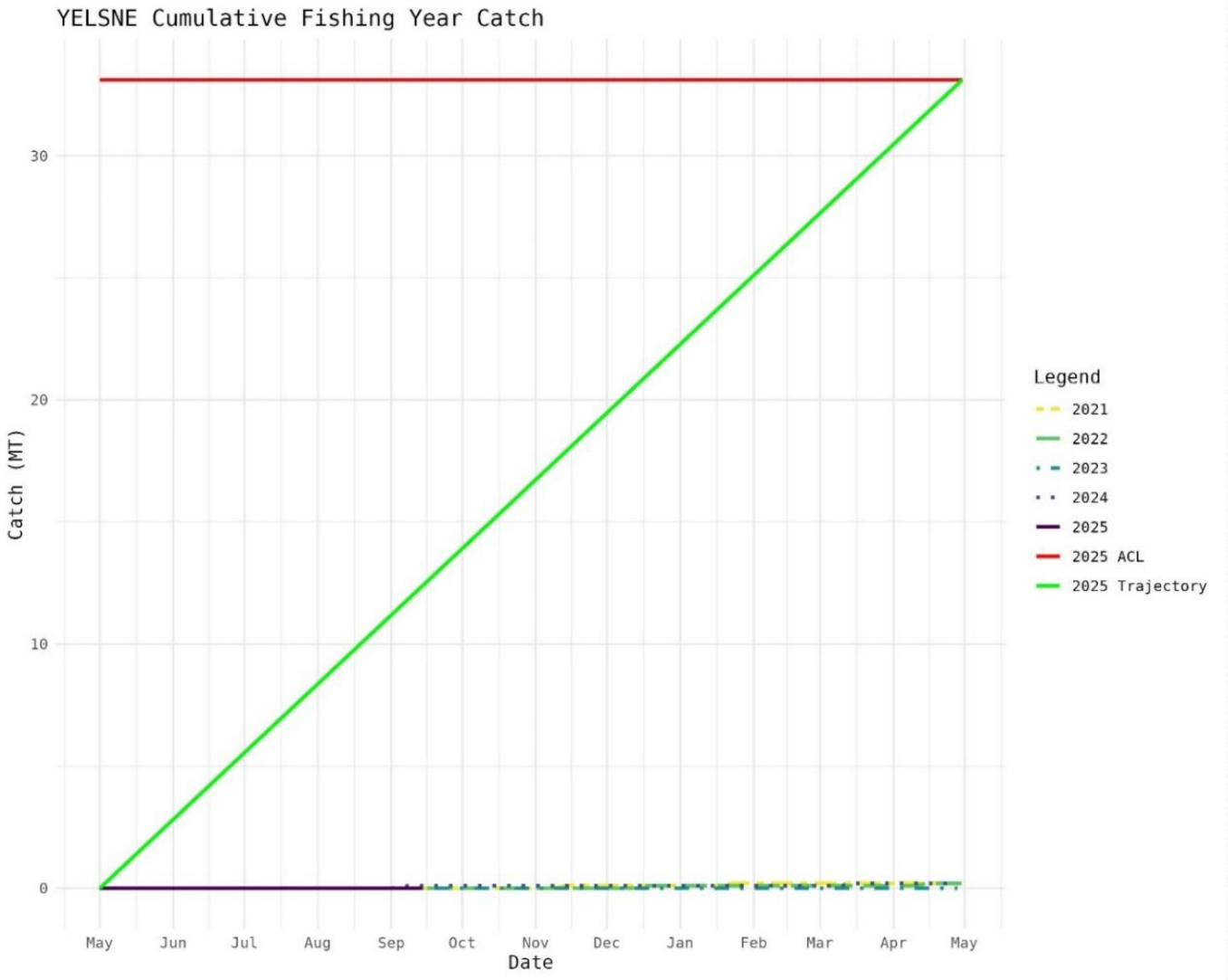
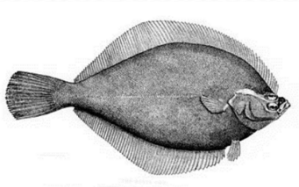
Commercial Groundfish Fishery In-Season Catch





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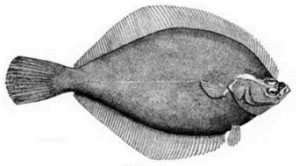
Quota Change Model Results - Sectors

	FY	Sector sub-ACL	Catch (mt)		*Utilization (%)*		Gross Rev ($mil, 2024)	
			Realized	Predicted	*Realized*	*Predicted*	Realized	Predicted
SNE/MA Yellowtail Flounder	2012	607	426	148	*0.70*	*0.20*	1.9	0.1
	2013	488	282	455	*0.58*	*0.88*	1.5	1.9
	2014	462	313	450	*0.68*	*1.00*	1.4	2.0
	2015	460	174	457	*0.38*	*1.00*	0.9	1.8
	2016	169	45	138	*0.26*	*0.95*	0.4	0.5
	2017	176	11	120	*0.06*	*0.77*	0.1	0.4
	2018	35	7	34	*0.20*	*1.00*	<0.1	0.1
	2019	36	3	16	*0.07*	*0.61*	<0.1	0.1
	2020	13	1	12	*0.07*	*1.00*	<0.1	<0.1
	2021	12	<1	3	*0.02*	*0.25*	<0.1	<0.1
	2022	12	<1	1	*0.01*	*0.09*	<0.1	<0.1
	2023	25	<1	1	*0.00*	*0.02*	<0.1	<0.1
	2024	27	<1	<1	*0.01*	*0.00*	<0.1	<0.1

Inter-sector ACE lease prices have been $0



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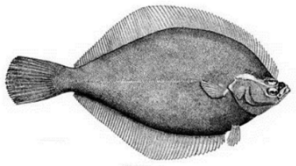
Scallop Fishery Sub-ACL

- Presently, the sub-ACL is determined at 90% of the Scallop PDT's projected catch for the fishery, which was set at 2.7 mt for FY2023-FY2025.
- In FY2023, the scallop fishery caught 79% of its sub-ACL (2.1 mt out of 2.7 mt).
- The preliminary in-season GARFO catch report indicates 191.5% of the sub-ACL has been caught in FY2025, and so the scallop fishery may exceed its sub-ACL in 2025.
- AMs can be triggered under certain conditions, and these AMs would require gear modifications in a subsequent year following an overage.



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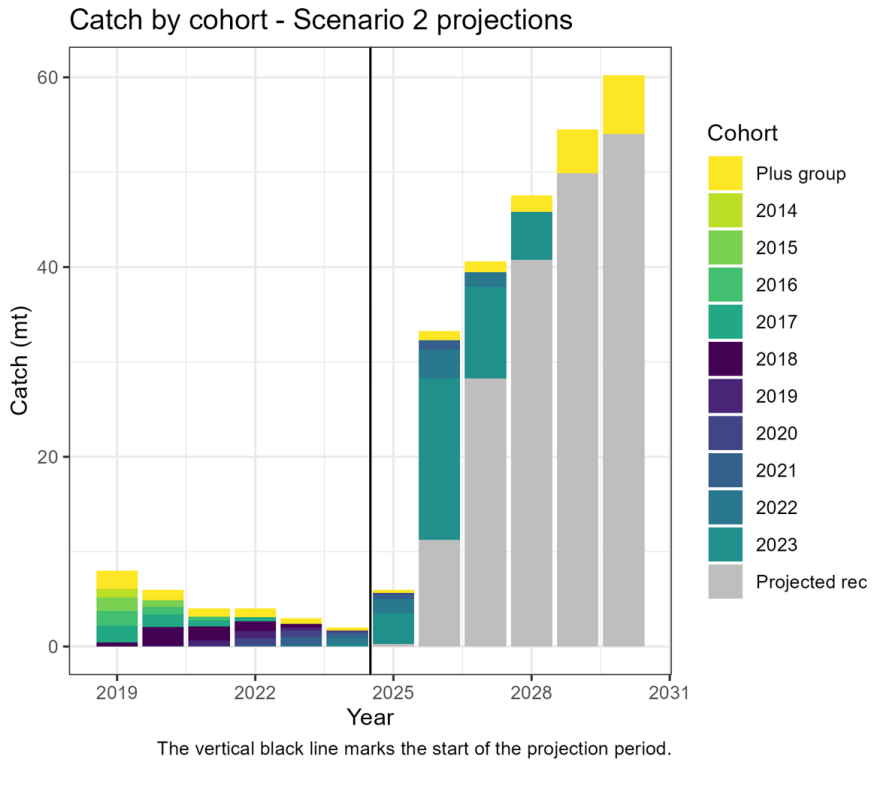
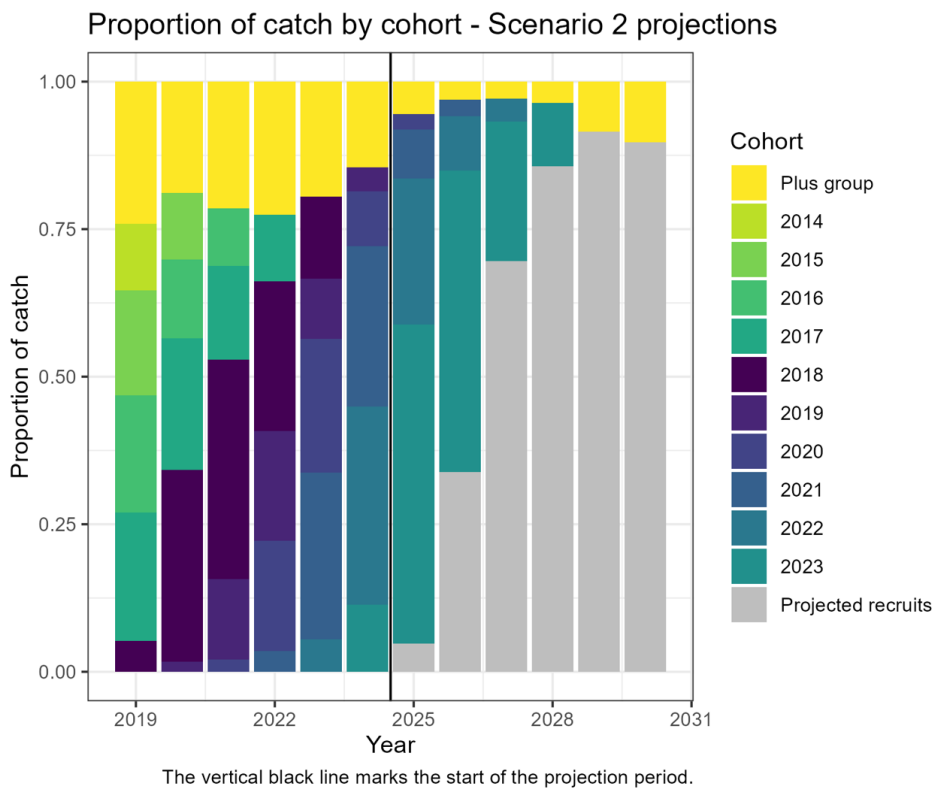
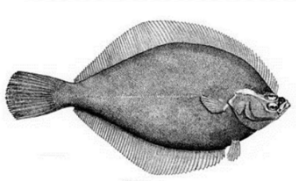
Projected Cohorts





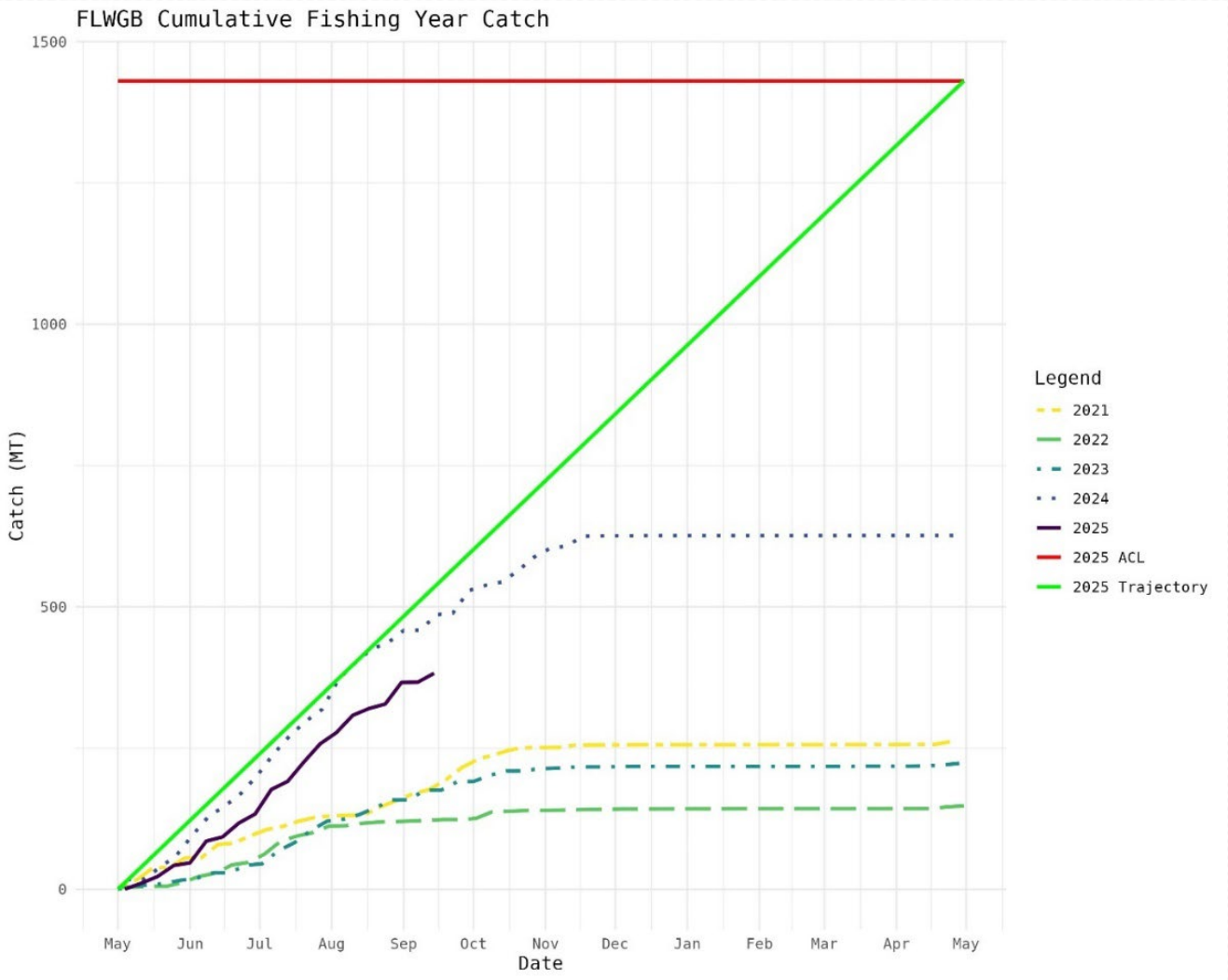
Source: NEFSC

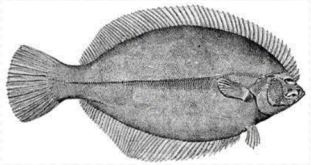
By 2027-2028 greater than 50% of projected catch is from projected recruits



New England Fishery Management Council

Commercial Groundfish Fishery In-Season Catch



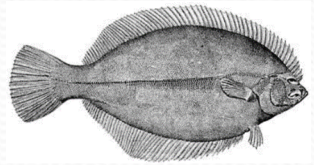


New England Fishery Management Council

Quota Change Model Results - Sectors

	FY	Sector sub-ACL	Catch (mt)		*Utilization (%)*		Gross Rev ($mil, 2024)	
			Realized	Predicted	*Realized*	*Predicted*	Realized	Predicted
GB Winter Flounder	2012	3,367	1,931	941	*0.57*	*0.16*	11.3	5.2
	2013	3,506	1,722	1,780	*0.49*	*0.46*	8.2	10.2
	2014	3,356	1,149	2,031	*0.34*	*0.60*	6.5	11.7
	2015	1,873	869	1,870	*0.46*	*1.00*	4.9	9.0
	2016	585	423	456	*0.72*	*0.78*	4.1	3.2
	2017	615	378	409	*0.61*	*0.66*	3.4	3.5
	2018	725	420	598	*0.58*	*0.83*	3.7	5.6
	2019	742	306	480	*0.41*	*0.63*	2.4	4.2
	2020	502	290	498	*0.58*	*0.99*	1.5	4.3
	2021	517	262	292	*0.51*	*0.54*	1.8	2.2
	2022	551	148	236	*0.27*	*0.46*	0.9	1.6
	2023	1,585	222	232	*0.14*	*0.15*	1.0	1.2
	2024	1,488	627	257	*0.42*	*0.18*	2.7	1.2

Inter-sector ACE lease prices have been $0 in recent years

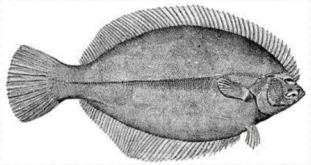


New England Fishery Management Council

Other Fisheries Sub-components Catch

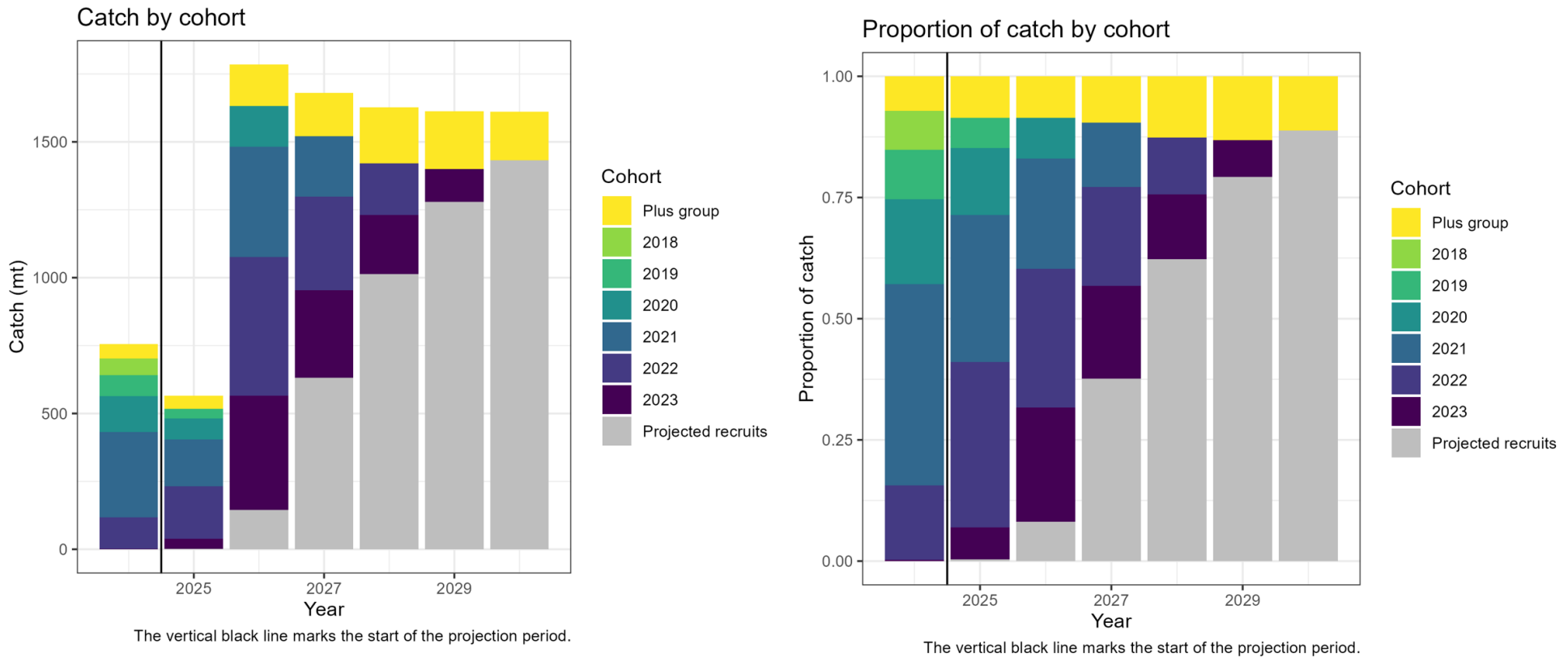
Other significant sources of GB winter flounder catch include the scallop fishery (55.9 mt in FY2023).

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



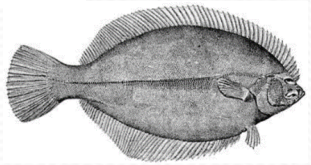
New England Fishery Management Council

Projected Cohorts



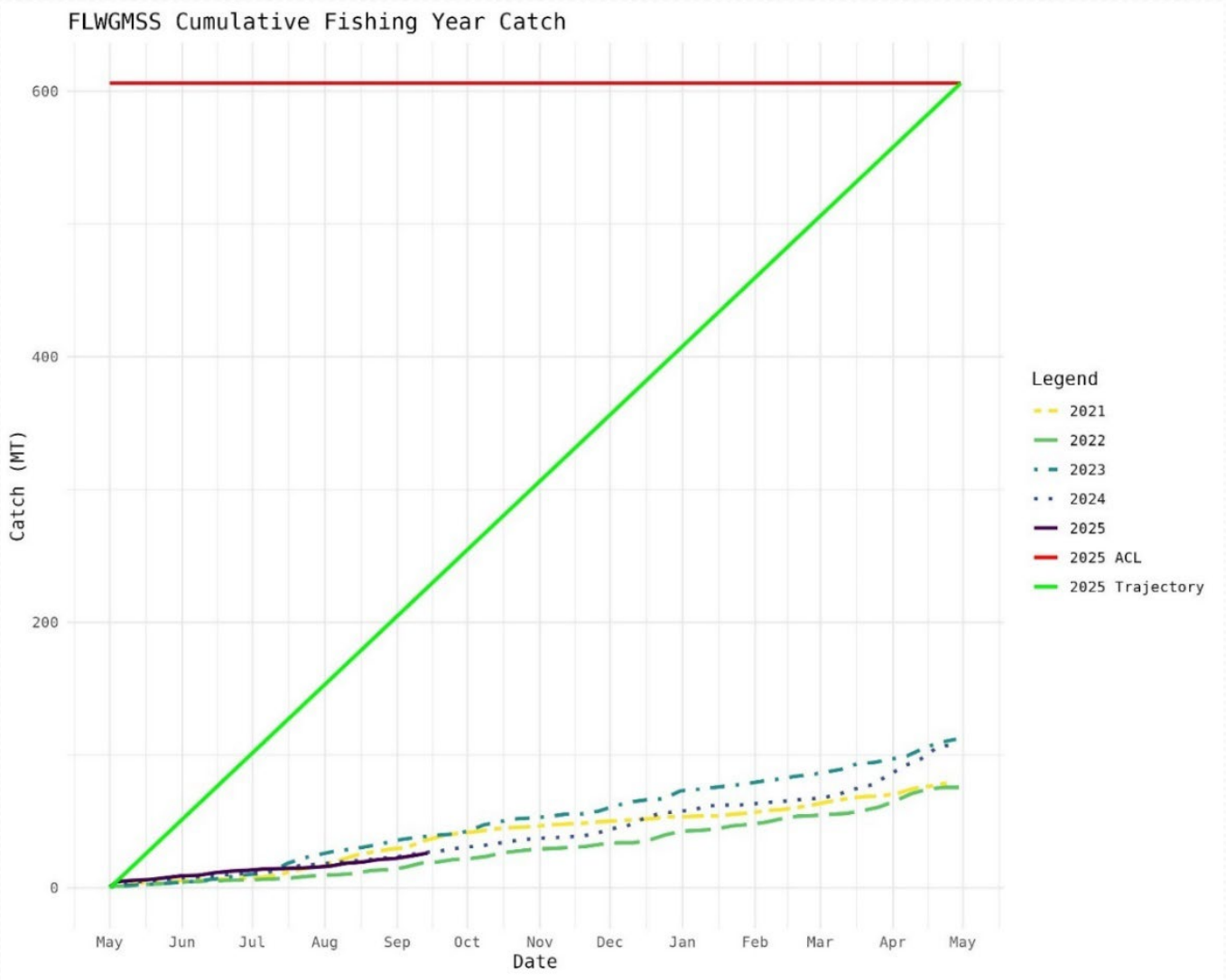
Source: NEFSC

By 2028 greater than 50% of projected catch is from projected recruits

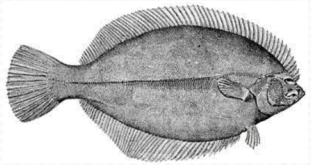


New England Fishery Management Council

Commercial Groundfish Fishery In-Season Catch



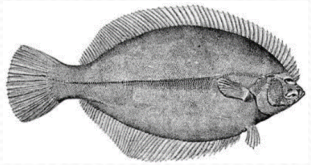
New England Fishery Management Council



Quota Change Model Results - Sectors

	FY	Sector sub-ACL	Catch (mt)		*Utilization (%)*		Gross Rev ($mil, 2024)	
			Realized	Predicted	*Realized*	*Predicted*	Realized	Predicted
GOM Winter Flounder	2012	690	258	33	*0.37*	*0.05*	1.5	0.1
	2013	688	168	119	*0.24*	*0.16*	0.8	0.7
	2014	683	124	117	*0.18*	*0.17*	0.7	0.7
	2015	371	118	96	*0.32*	*0.26*	0.6	0.5
	2016	607	109	85	*0.18*	*0.14*	0.8	0.4
	2017	607	111	148	*0.18*	*0.24*	0.9	1.0
	2018	339	91	164	*0.27*	*0.48*	0.6	1.2
	2019	337	57	161	*0.17*	*0.48*	0.4	1.1
	2020	272	55	95	*0.20*	*0.35*	0.4	0.6
	2021	267	69	48	*0.26*	*0.18*	0.3	0.3
	2022	259	75	87	*0.29*	*0.33*	0.3	0.4
	2023	519	105	41	*0.20*	*0.07*	0.4	0.2
	2024	553	100	93	*0.18*	*0.18*	0.5	0.3

Inter-sector ACE lease prices have been $0 in recent years

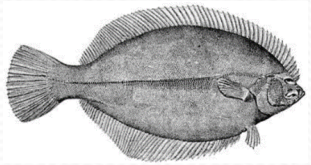


New England Fishery Management Council

Other Fishery and State Fishery Sub-components Catch

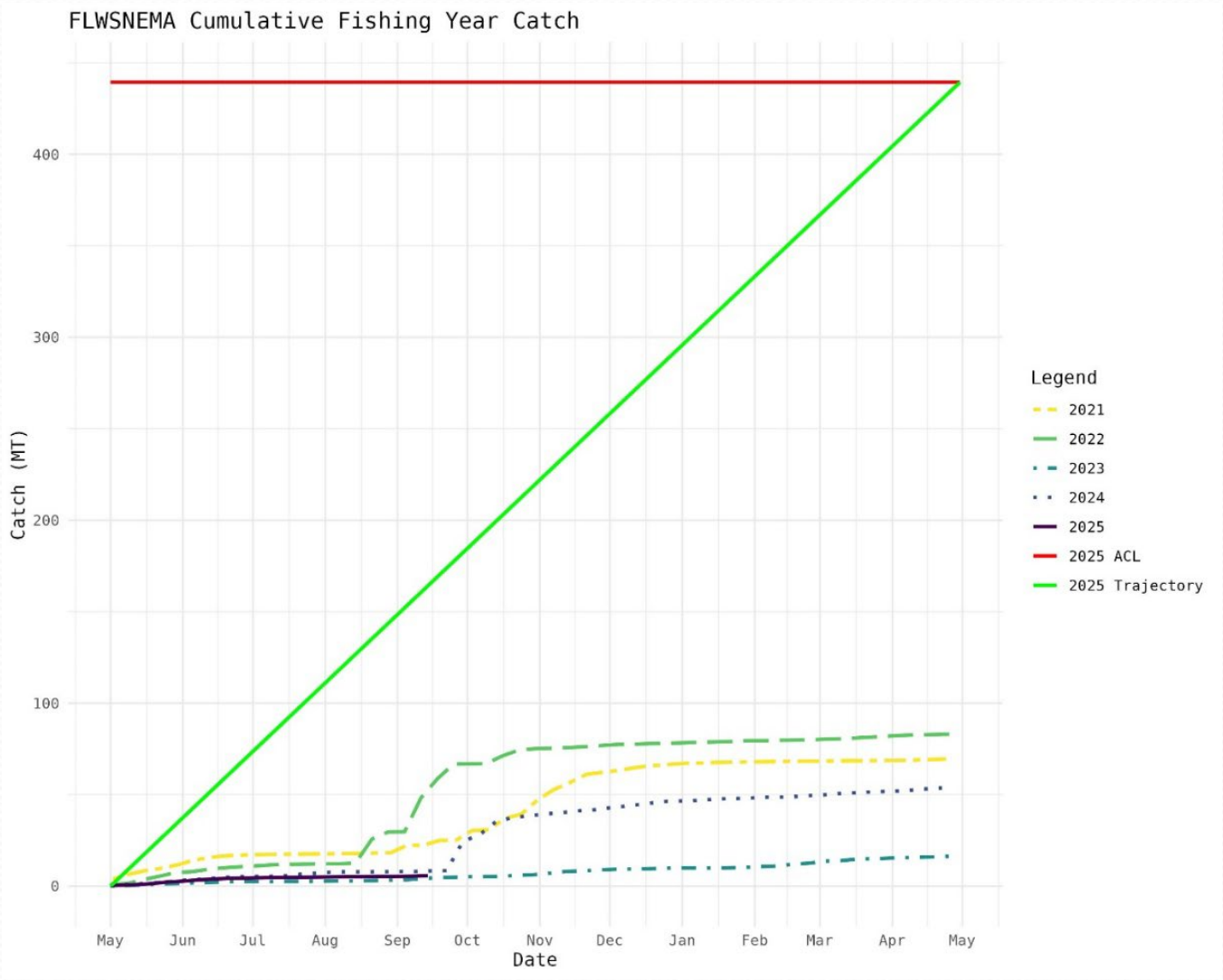
There are notable recreational catches of GOM winter flounder in state waters (67.6 mt in FY2023), as well as commercial state fishery catches (43.6 mt in FY2023).

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

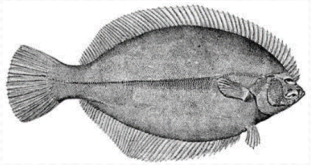


New England Fishery Management Council

Commercial Groundfish Fishery In-Season Catch



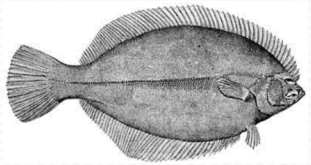
New England Fishery Management Council



Quota Change Model Results - Sectors

	FY	Sector sub-ACL	Catch (mt)		*Utilization (%)*		Gross Rev ($mil, 2024)	
			Realized	Predicted	*Realized*	*Predicted*	Realized	Predicted
SNE/MA Winter Flounder	2012	N/A	105	69	*N/A*	*N/A*	5.4	1.2
	2013	1,074	670	125	*0.62*	*0.37*	4.2	0.0
	2014	1,063	490	95	*0.46*	*0.10*	3.6	0.0
	2015	1,147	583	833	*0.51*	*0.73*	3.5	3.5
	2016	523	397	355	*0.76*	*0.69*	2.6	2.0
	2017	515	372	386	*0.72*	*0.74*	2.6	3.3
	2018	456	229	428	*0.50*	*0.94*	3.4	3.3
	2019	444	135	455	*0.30*	*1.00*	3.4	3.5
	2020	475	97	314	*0.21*	*0.68*	3.6	3.5
	2021	247	83	163	*0.34*	*0.64*	3.4	3.1
	2022	250	78	131	0.31	*0.53*	0.3	0.7
	2023	387	14	168	0.04	*0.44*	0.1	0.8
	2024	408	50	13	0.12	*0.03*	0.2	<0.1

Inter-sector ACE lease prices have been $0 in recent years



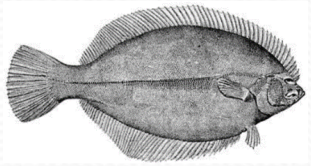
New England Fishery Management Council

Other Fishery and State Fishery Sub-components Catch

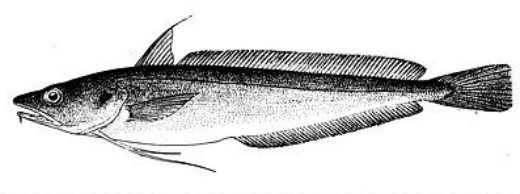
Other significant sources of SNE/MA winter flounder catch include:

- 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 associated accountability measures (AMs).



New England Fishery Management Council



White Hake

Recruitment and projection methodology

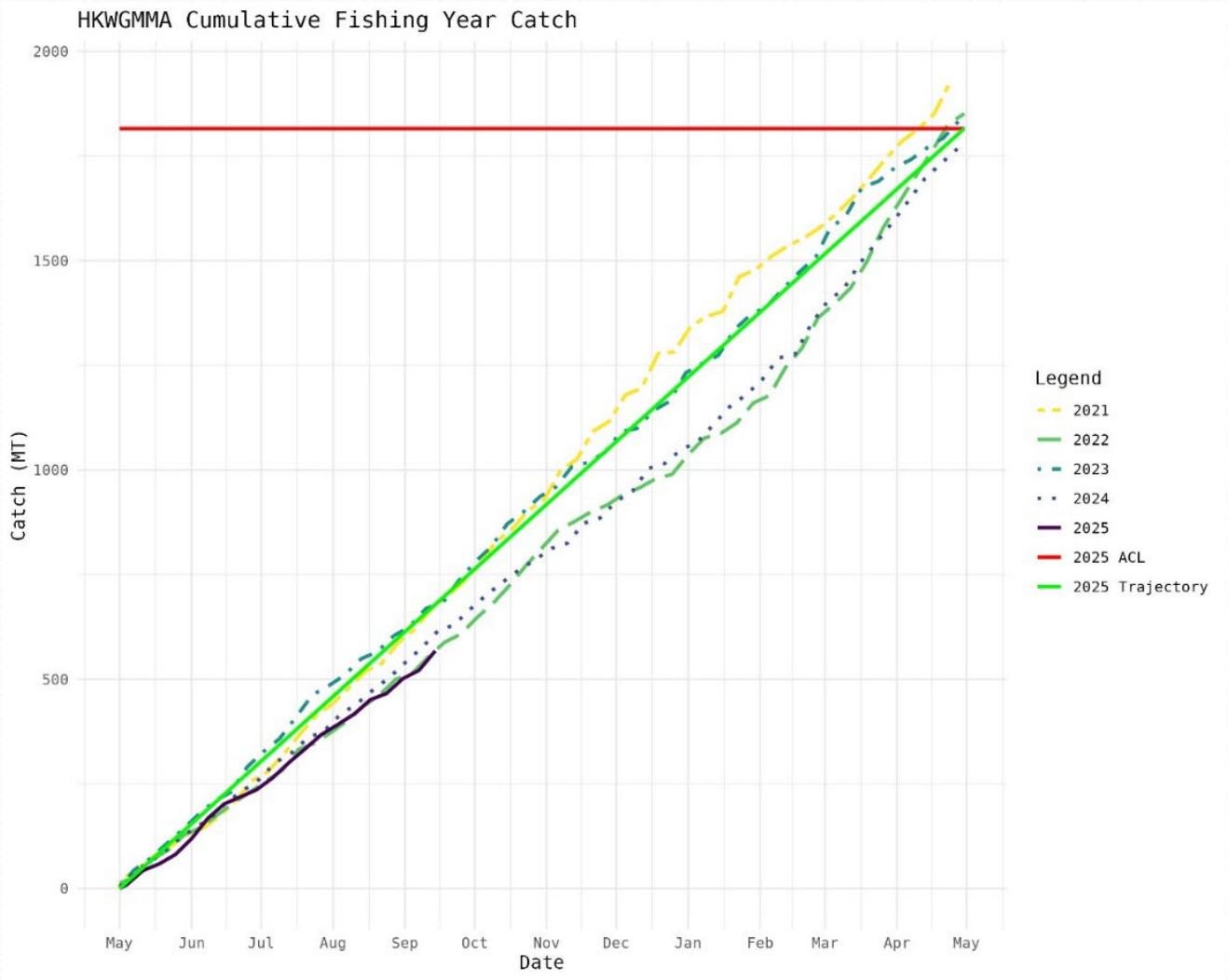
Current Approach:

- SSBMSY estimated using the SAW56 approved method of long-term projections at an F40%proxy for FMSY using a CDF of recruitment from the model times series minus the last two years (1963-2022)
- However, short-term projections used for catch advice were developed using the SAW56 method of recruitment from 1995-2022 because there was a declining trend in recruitment

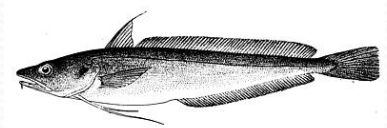
Alternative Approach:

- Cadrin 2023 uses projected recruitment based on a lognormal distribution with autocorrelated error in recruitment
- Using the autocorrelation in recruitment in the projections eliminates the need for the development of a separate long-term projection for BRP estimates and short-term projections for catch advice

Commercial Groundfish Fishery In-Season Catch



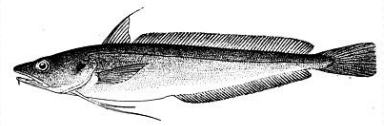
New England Fishery Management Council



Quota Change Model Results - Sectors

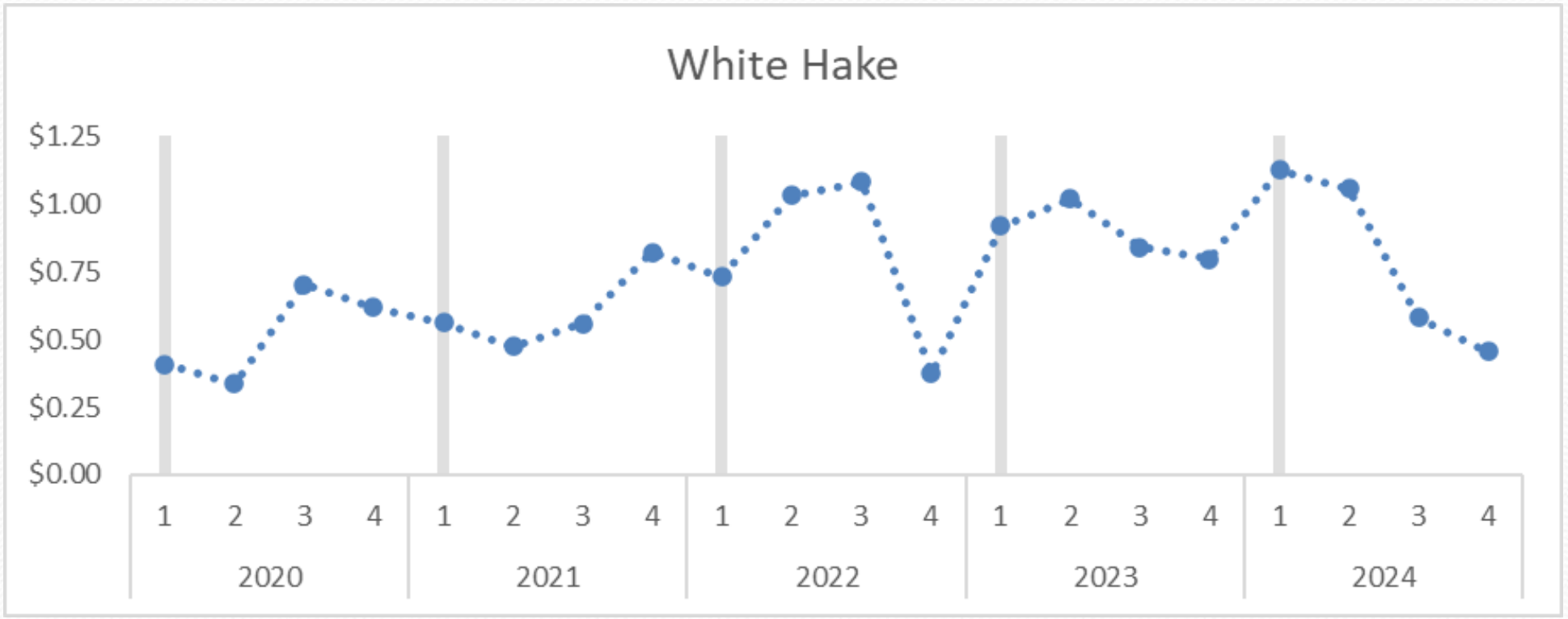
	FY	Sector sub-ACL	Catch (mt)		*Utilization (%)*		Gross Rev ($mil, 2024)	
			Realized	Predicted	*Realized*	*Predicted*	Realized	Predicted
White Hake	2012	3,257	2,414	1,980	*0.74*	*0.43*	9.3	5.8
	2013	4,142	2,025	2,570	*0.49*	*0.70*	7.7	8.2
	2014	4,308	1,721	1,932	*0.40*	*0.45*	7.3	7.4
	2015	4,313	1,581	1,689	*0.37*	*0.39*	6.3	6.4
	2016	3,434	1,432	1,780	*0.42*	*0.52*	5.6	7.1
	2017	3,333	2,014	2,071	*0.60*	*0.62*	5.6	8.3
	2018	2,713	2,083	1,907	*0.77*	*0.70*	5.4	7.1
	2019	2,715	2,044	2,691	*0.75*	*0.99*	5.1	7.1
	2020	2,004	1,790	1,839	*0.89*	*0.92*	5.2	4.8
	2021	1,994	1,930	1,995	*0.97*	*1.00*	6.6	4.6
	2022	1,970	1,824	1,906	*0.93*	*0.97*	5.7	5.8
	2023	1,808	1,747	1,719	*0.97*	*0.95*	4.9	5.6
	2024	1,905	1,741	1,904	*0.91*	*1.00*	4.8	5.2

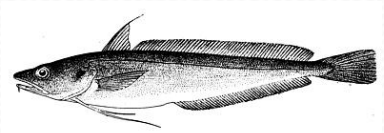
White hake has been a highly constraining stock for the last five years



New England Fishery Management Council

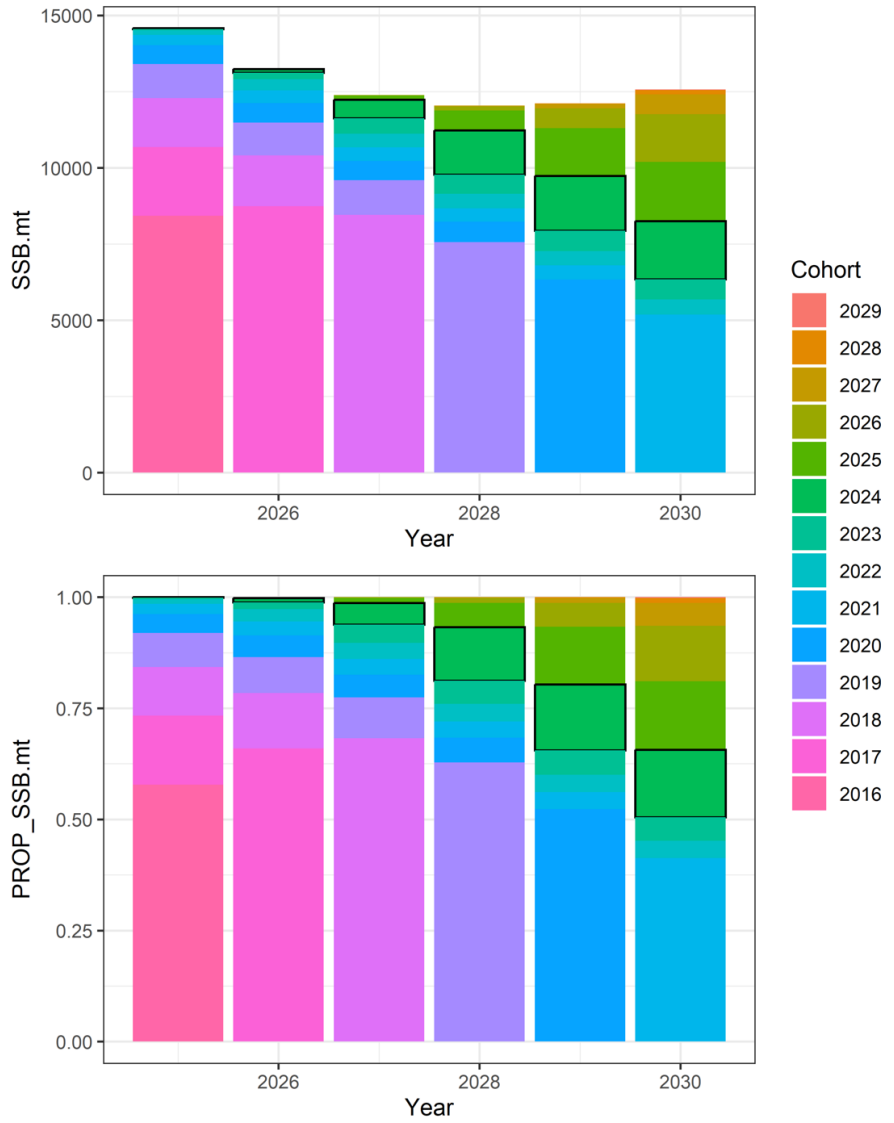
Inter-Sector ACE Lease Prices - Sectors





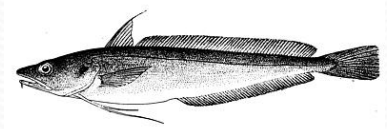
New England Fishery Management Council

Projected Cohorts

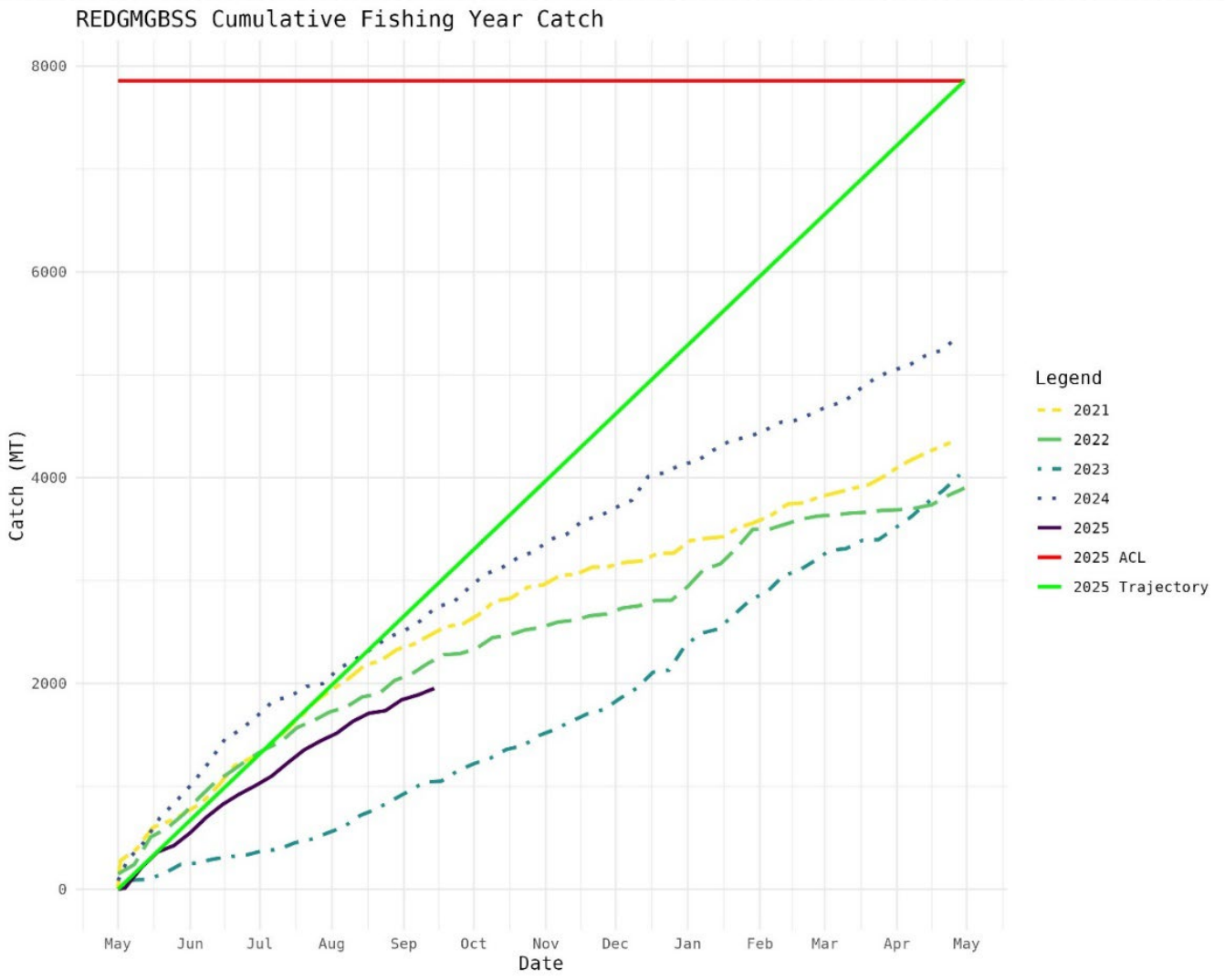


- Note: with ASAP and AGEPRO unable to produce this for catch (uses SSB instead)
- By 2028 25% of projected SSB is from projected recruits (50% by 2030)

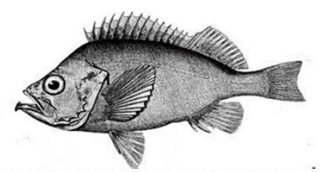
Source: NEFSC



Commercial Groundfish Fishery In-Season Catch



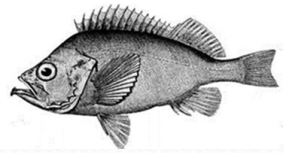
New England Fishery Management Council



Quota Change Model Results - Sectors

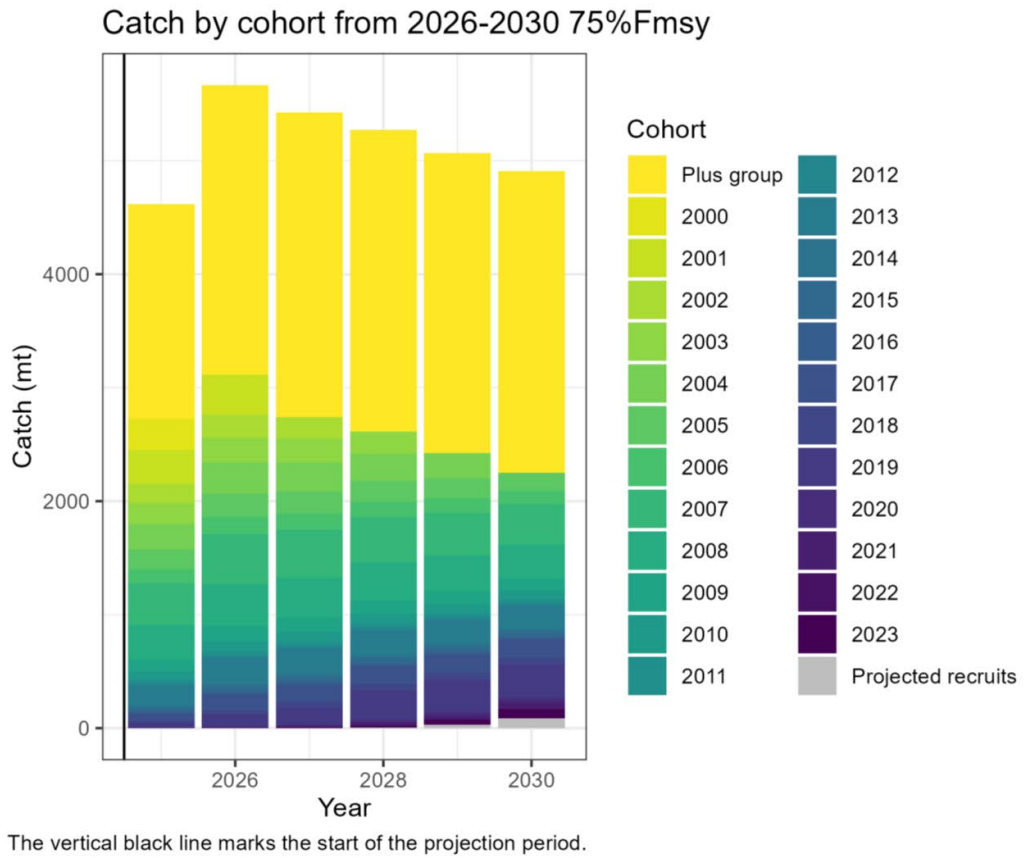
	FY	Sector sub-ACL	Catch (mt)		*Utilization (%)*		Gross Rev ($mil, 2024)	
			Realized	Predicted	*Realized*	*Predicted*	Realized	Predicted
Redfish	2012	8,291	4,423	2,064	*0.53*	*0.17*	7.4	3.1
	2013	10,092	3,996	3,361	*0.40*	*0.31*	5.7	5.4
	2014	10,521	4,682	3,363	*0.45*	*0.32*	7.0	4.8
	2015	10,970	5,284	4,145	*0.48*	*0.38*	8.5	5.9
	2016	9,474	4,078	6,860	*0.43*	*0.72*	6.8	10.5
	2017	10,127	4,647	4,199	*0.46*	*0.41*	6.9	6.6
	2018	10,705	5,361	4,650	*0.50*	*0.43*	7.2	7.4
	2019	10,915	4,957	4,993	*0.45*	*0.46*	7.0	7.1
	2020	11,085	6,712	4,894	*0.61*	*0.44*	9.5	6.4
	2021	9,537	4,353	4,634	*0.46*	*0.49*	6.5	6.3
	2022	9,459	3,856	5,267	*0.41*	*0.56*	6.3	6.8
	2023	9,369	3,921	4,027	*0.42*	*0.43*	5.8	6.3
	2024	8,226	5,347	2,912	*0.65*	*0.37*	6.7	4.4

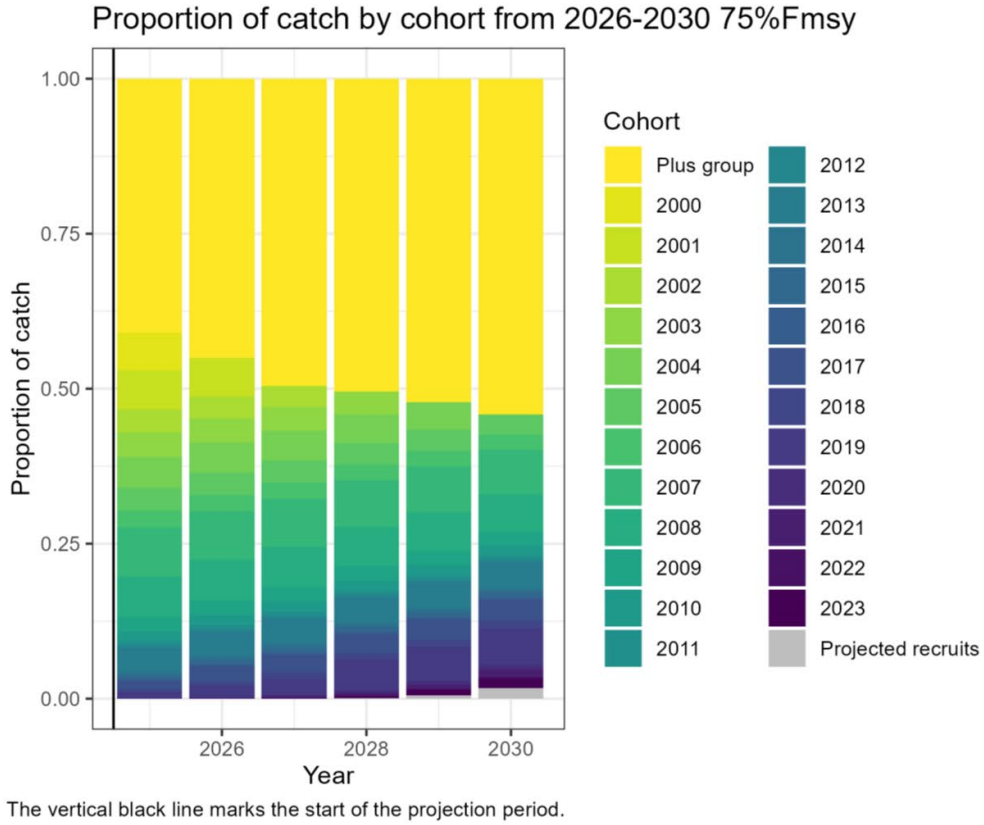
Inter-sector ACE lease prices have been $0



New England Fishery Management Council

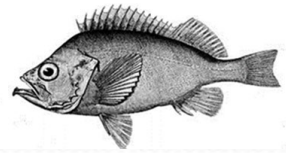
Projected Cohorts





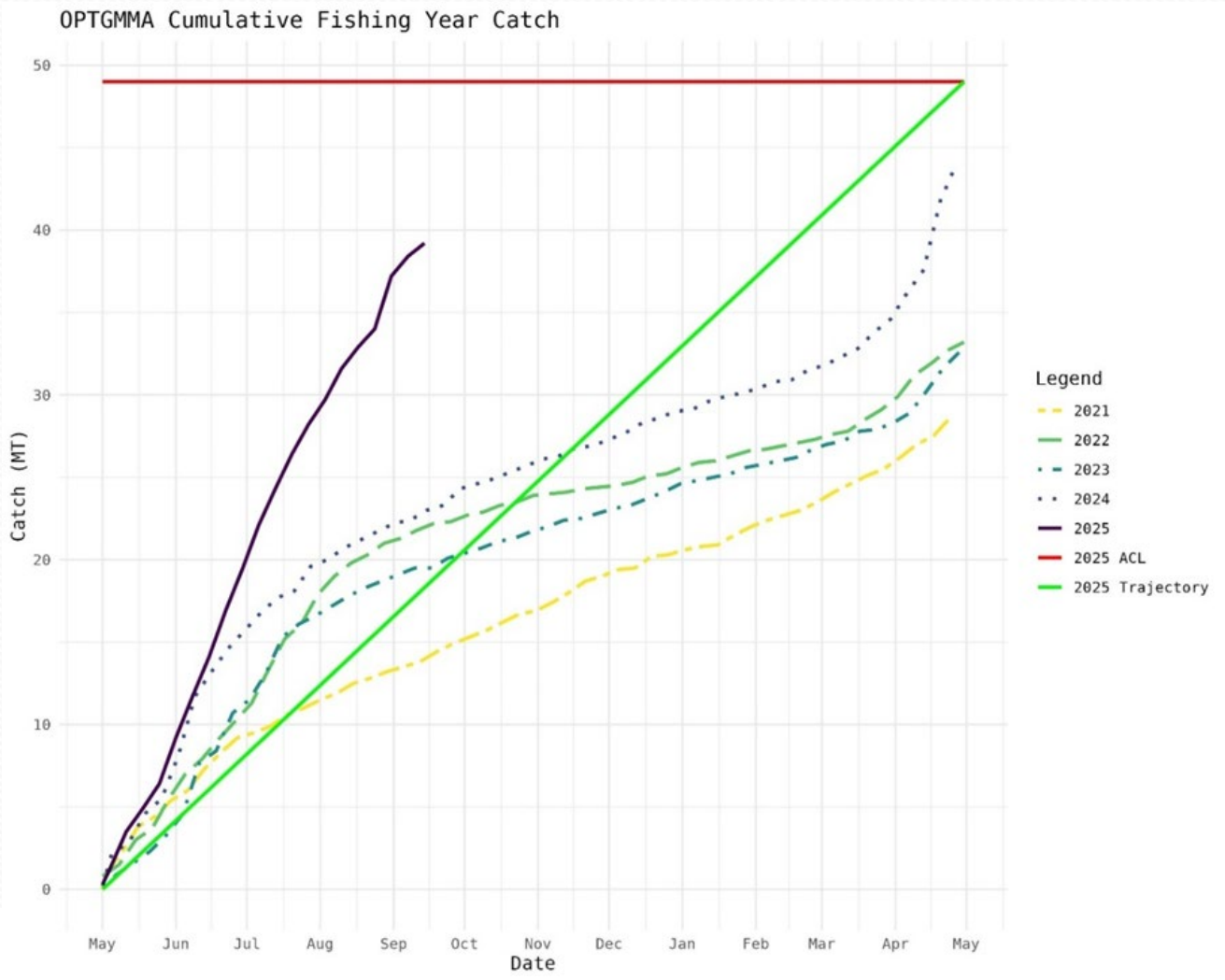
Source: NEFSC

Reliance on projected recruits in catch projections less of an issue for redfish – given life history as long-lived species



New England Fishery Management Council

Commercial Groundfish Fishery In-Season Catch



Ocean pout is a zero possession, non-allocated stock

New England Fishery Management Council

Other Fisheries Sub-component Catch

- Increases of ocean pout catches in squid, squid/whiting, and fluke fisheries are consistent with trends in the groundfish fishery - driven by increases in observed bycatch in small and large-mesh otter trawl gears in the Georges Bank/Southern New England (GB_SNE) estimation region

Ocean pout discard rates for large mesh otter trawl gear on non-groundfish trips

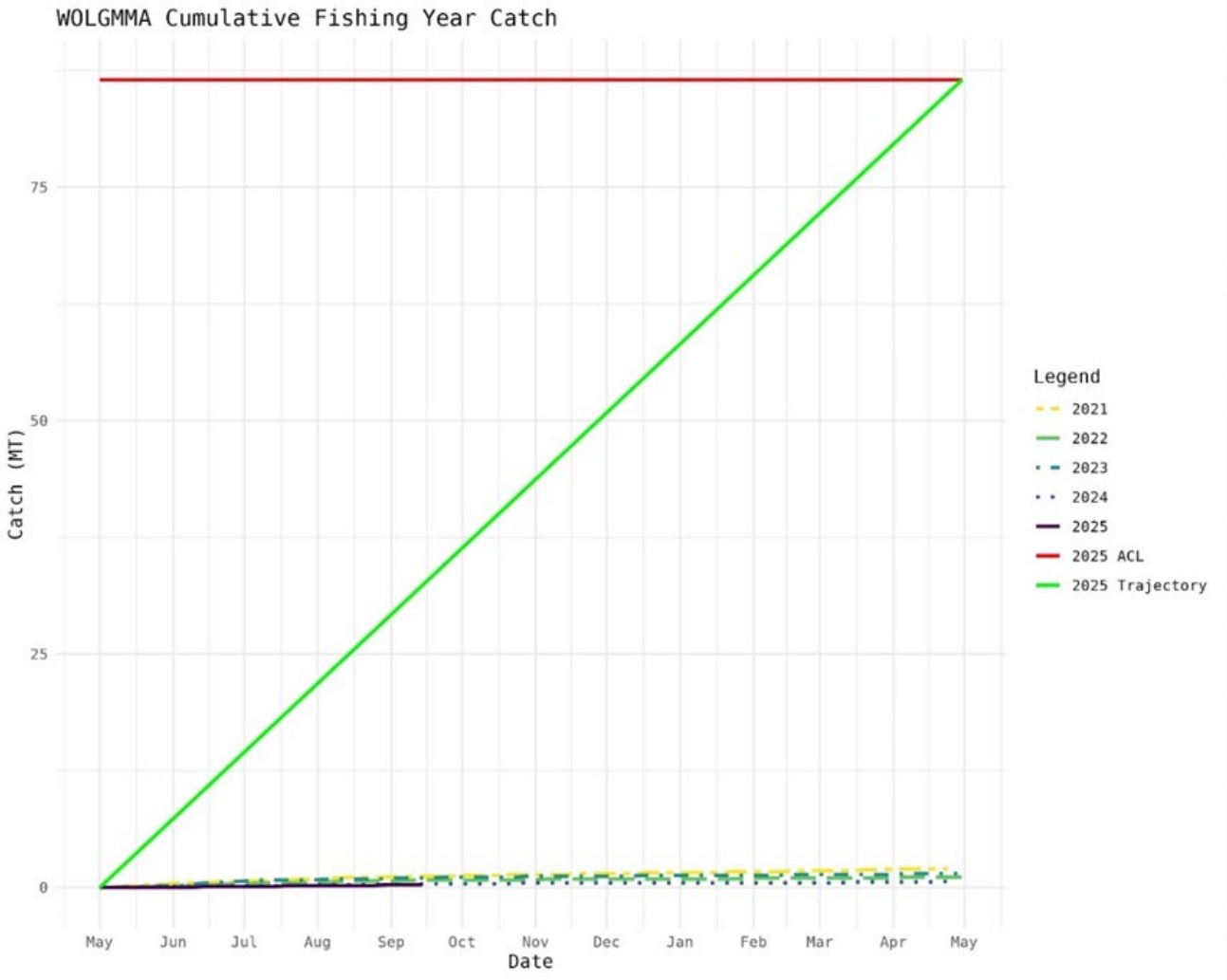
FISHING YEAR	GEAR GROUP	MESH CATEGORY	REGION	DISCARD RATE
2020	50	LM	GB_SNE	0.000122
2021	50	LM	GB_SNE	0.000147
2022	50	LM	GB_SNE	0.000799
2023	50	LM	GB_SNE	0.000292
2024	50	LM	GB_SNE	0.003134

Ocean pout discard rates for small mesh otter trawl gear on non-groundfish trips

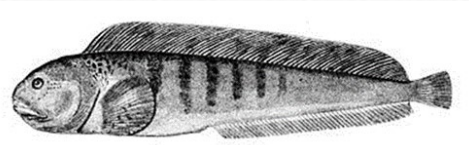
FISHING YEAR	GEAR GROUP	MESH CATEGORY	REGION	DISCARD RATE
2020	50	SM	GB_SNE	0.000027
2021	50	SM	GB_SNE	0.000811
2022	50	SM	GB_SNE	0.000431
2023	50	SM	GB_SNE	0.000085
2024	50	SM	GB_SNE	0.001199

New England Fishery Management Council

Commercial Groundfish Fishery In-Season Catch

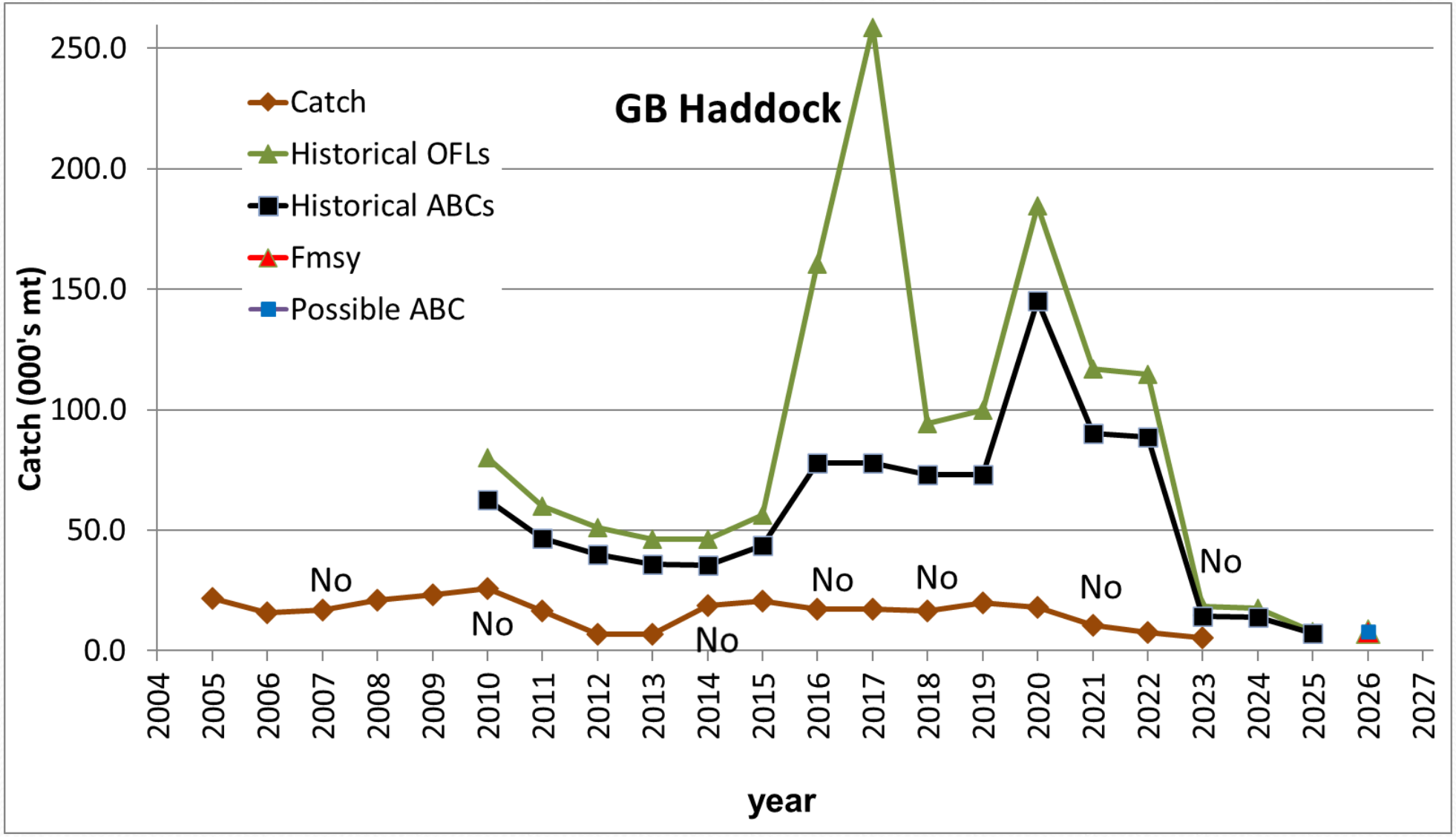


Wolffish is a zero possession, non-allocated stock

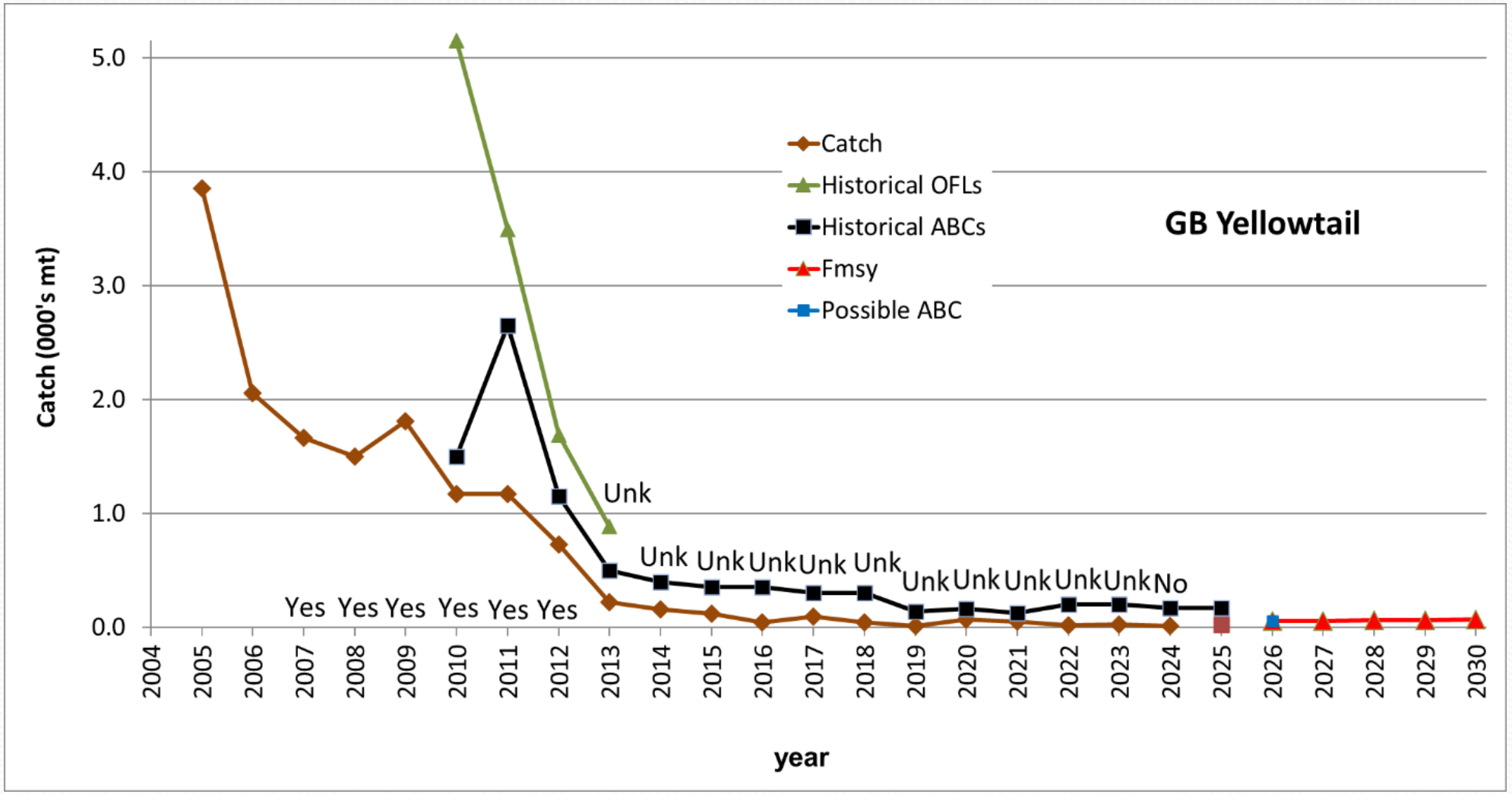


New England Fishery Management Council

Georges Bank Haddock



Georges Bank Yellowtail



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.