

JOINT MEETING OF THE GROUNDFISH COMMITTEE, GROUNDFISH ADVISORY PANEL, AND RECREATIONAL ADVISORY PANEL

Wakefield, MA and by Webinar

June 10, 2026



**New England Fishery
Management Council**

Groundfish Outlook by Quarter in 2026, updated June 9, 2026, NEFMC Staff

Council Priority*	Jan – Mar	Apr - Jun	July - Sept	Oct - Dec
Amendment 25	Final Submission		GARFO implementation	
Recreational Measures	Develop recommendations for cod & haddock	GARFO implementation		
Framework Adjustment 72	Preliminary & Final Submissions		GARFO implementation	
Amendment 23 Review	Conduct review analyses	Complete review		Consider recommendations for follow-up actions
Redfish Sector Exemption Review	Conduct review analyses	Complete review		Consider recommendations for follow-up actions
ABC Control Rules Framework (68)	Contract work conducted to evaluate integration of revised Risk Policy with revised ABC CRs			Develop revised ABC CRs from simulation testing, conduct analysis
Framework Adjustment 74		Develop scope Initiate action	Develop specifications & measures, conduct analysis	Final action
Atlantic Cod Management			Continue to develop transition plan; planning for IRA #2 groundfish management transition visioning sessions (spring 2027)	
White Hake Rebuilding			Conduct rebuilding plan analyses & review biological reference points	
Stock Assessments		MT- GB haddock (Jun.)	Domestic updates for transboundary mgmt. (cod, haddock, yellowtail flounder) (Jul.)	MT- GOM haddock, plaice Data updates- pollock, witch flounder, halibut (Sept.)

*Additional: Participate in TMGC, coordinate on EFH designation updates, and make recommendations for 2027 Council priorities

FOR TODAY

Recreational measures process planning

- Receive updates from NEFSC RecDST staff on recreation demand model (RDM) and decision support tool (DST)
- Discuss planning for FY2027 measures development

Industry Updates

- Share perspectives on fishery performance and market conditions during FY2025 and considerations for FY2026

Framework 74 / Specifications and Management Measures (*to be initiated*)

- Discuss draft scope and alternatives

Framework 68 / ABC Control Rules

- Receive a brief update, including status of Council's revised risk policy and work to evaluate integration of risk policy with groundfish ABC control rules

Other 2026 Council Groundfish Priorities: Amendment 23 Monitoring Review

- Receive a report of additional draft analyses from the PDT
- Answer questions on new analyses

RECREATIONAL MEASURES PROCESS PLANNING



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FOR TODAY

Recreational measures process planning

- Receive updates from NEFSC RecDST staff on recreation demand model (RDM) and decision support tool (DST)
- Discuss planning for FY2027 measures development
- Discussion/possible feedback.



INDUSTRY UPDATES



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INDUSTRY UPDATES

- Opportunity to share perspectives and observations on fishery performance from the past year (FY2025) and considerations for the current fishing year (FY2026)



FISHERY PERFORMANCE OBSERVATIONS

- Catches so far this fishing year compared to last?
- Changes in seasonality/availability of different stocks?
- Market considerations?
- Region or port level considerations?
- Recreational fishery catch and effort – by region/season/mode?



FRAMEWORK ADJUSTMENT 74 / SPECIFICATIONS AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES (*TO BE INITIATED*)



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FOR TODAY

Framework 74 / Specifications and Management Measures (*to be initiated*)

- Discuss draft scope and alternatives
- Discussion/Motion to initiate action.



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DRAFT SCOPE

Fishing year (FY) 2027-2031 Specifications and Management Measures, to:

- Revise status determination criteria, as appropriate,
- Set FY2027 total allowable catches (TACs) for US/Canada management units of Eastern Georges Bank (GB) cod and Eastern GB haddock, and FY2027-FY2028 TACs for the GB yellowtail flounder stock,
- Set FY2027 specifications for GB cod and GB haddock,
- Set FY2027-FY2028 specifications for GB yellowtail flounder,
- Set FY2027-FY2031 specifications for Gulf of Maine (GOM) haddock, American plaice, witch flounder, pollock, northern windowpane flounder, southern windowpane flounder, and Atlantic halibut,
- Review sub-component analysis for stocks with revised specifications, others as time permits,
- Review GB haddock sub-ACL in the mid-water trawl/herring fishery,
- Re-evaluate approach used for Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic (SNE/MA) yellowtail flounder scallop fishery sub-ACL and,
- Modify the criteria for the provision of the southern windowpane flounder accountability measures to reduce the size of the AM area for the groundfish fishery and large-mesh non-groundfish trawl fisheries

DRAFT RANGE OF ALTERNATIVES

1. Revised Status Determination Criteria (*if necessary*)
2. Specifications
 - FY2027 TACs for US/Canada management units of Eastern GB cod and Eastern GB haddock, and FY2027-FY2028 TACs for the GB yellowtail flounder stock,
 - FY2027 specifications for GB cod and GB haddock,
 - FY2027-FY2028 specifications for GB yellowtail flounder,
 - FY2027-FY2031 specifications for GOM haddock, American plaice, witch flounder, pollock, northern windowpane flounder, southern windowpane flounder, and Atlantic halibut,
 - Sub-component analysis for stocks with revised specifications, others as time permits,
 - Review of GB haddock sub-ACL in the mid-water trawl/herring fishery,
 - SNE/MA yellowtail flounder scallop fishery sub-ACL [re-evaluate approach used in FW72 with updated data]
3. Commercial Fishery Management Measures
 - Modifications to the criteria for the provision to reduce the size of the AM area so that if the Large AM Area has been triggered and the stock is rebuilt, only the Small AM Area is implemented – for the Groundfish Fishery and Large-Mesh Non-Groundfish Trawl Fisheries

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, 2027**, NMFS



DRAFT TIMELINE

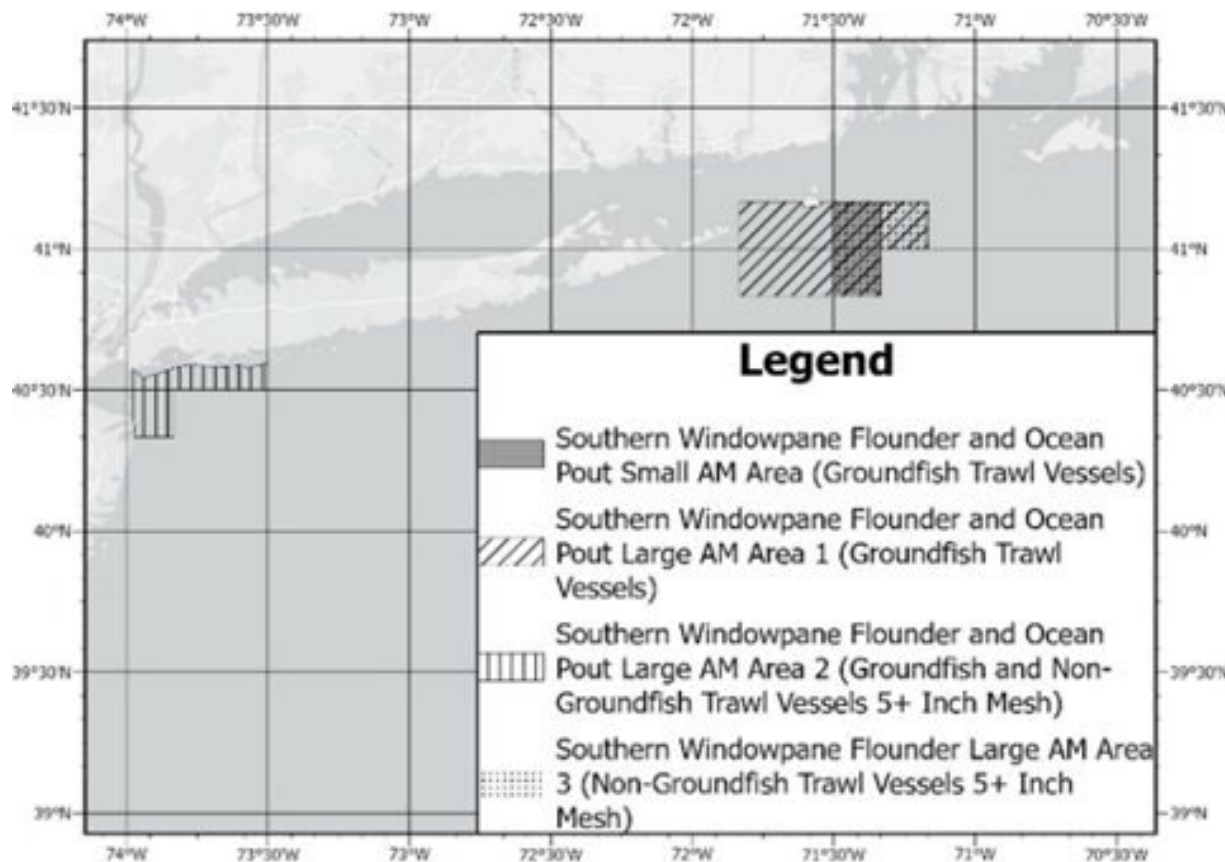
2026	
MAY-JUN	Committee/AP/PDT preliminary discussion
JUN 23-25	Council initiates framework
JUN 29	Peer Review – Management Track Assessment for GB haddock
JUL-SEP	Committee/AP/PDT develop draft alternatives
SEP 15-17	Council reviews progress on developing draft alternatives
SEP 22-23	Peer review – Management Track Assessments for GOM haddock and American plaice
OCT 14-16	TMGC/SC meets to recommend TACs for US/CA management units of EGB cod and EGB haddock, and GB yellowtail flounder stock
OCT 7 and 27-28	SSC recommends OFLs/ABCs for GOM haddock, American plaice, witch flounder*, pollock*, windowpane flounder (northern and southern)*, and Atlantic halibut*
OCT-NOV	Committee/AP/PDT continue developing draft alternatives and complete impact analysis
DEC	Council receives draft alternatives and takes final action
2027	
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

*Data update



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SOUTHERN WINDOWPANE FLOUNDER ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES



- Applies to **groundfish trawl vessels** (sectors and common pool) fishing on a sector or DAS trip and **non-groundfish trawl vessels fishing with codends 5" mesh or greater**
- Provision to reduce size of the AM area implemented from Large to Small
 - Two criteria: 1) stock rebuilt and 2) biomass criterion
 - **FY2024 overage – biomass criterion not met**
- Gear-restricted areas – vessels may only use a haddock separator trawl, a Ruhle trawl, or a rope separator trawl
- Provision to reduce duration of AM – on or after September 1, if Year 2 ACL is not exceeded



SOUTHERN WINDOWPANE FLOUNDER ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES

Council Motion – April 16, 2026:

That the Council include in the groundfish action to be initiated in June (FW74), an alternative to modify the southern windowpane flounder accountability measure trigger so that the **criteria for determining a reduction in the size of the AM implemented is the stock being rebuilt (i.e., when the stock is rebuilt, only the small AM area is applied)**, for both the groundfish fishery and large-mesh non-groundfish fisheries.

Rationale:

- Allow for more efficient way to reduce the size of the necessary AM to account for overages, provide economic relief to the fishing industry.
- Serve as a bridge between current and future planned priority work: IRA # 3.3 - Ecosystem Component Species (southern windowpane flounder is a candidate), and EO 14276 - Revisions to Reactive Accountability Measures.



PDT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FW74 SCOPE

Administrative Measures - Regulatory Clean-up / Streamlining

- The PDT recommends for inclusion in FW74 two administrative items to address regulatory clean-up and/or streamlining of two programs in the Northeast Multispecies (Groundfish) Fishery Management Plan (FMP) - identified and included within EO 14276 recommendations.
- *Longer term* => broader regulatory clean-up action desirable as the Council considers the utility of these programs
- **Short term** => administrative changes provide a temporary way to reduce the annual workload, address recent challenges faced with implementation of these programs, and better align with how these programs have been operating.



PDT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FW74 SCOPE

1) *Regular B DAS Program:*

Issue: This program has been **closed annually for almost a decade** due to very low quota allocated into the Incidental Catch TAC, but **requires an annual determination by the Regional Administrator (RA)** and notification in the *Federal Register* to implement.

Suggested measure: **Change the administration of the program such that it's by default closed** unless the RA determines that sufficient quota is allocated to the Incidental Catch TACs to allow the program to operate in a given fishing year. This ensures that the program remains closed when necessary but alleviates the current need for GARFO to include closure of the program in annual rulemaking.



PDT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FW74 SCOPE

2) Closed Area II Yellowtail Flounder/Haddock SAP:

Issue: This program **requires annual determination by the RA** of whether this Special Access Program (SAP) is open in the upcoming fishing year to “Target Yellowtail Flounder” or to “Target Haddock”. The RA must make this determination in a rulemaking in the *Federal Register* ahead of each fishing year. **Open to “Target Yellowtail Flounder” is the default, but for at least a decade the determination has been made to open to “Target Haddock.”**

Suggested measure: **Modify the administration of the SAP so that “Target Haddock” is the default status** not requiring RA declarations, which would eliminate rulemaking requirements in the busy buildup to May 1. Also **consider updating the naming conventions applied to this SAP**, as these names are 1) very difficult to write out concisely in text and 2) result in misinterpretation about the requirements present in each mode.



PDT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FW74 SCOPE

Georges Bank Haddock Mid-Water Trawl/Herring Fishery Sub-ACL

- The PDT recommends for inclusion in FW74 the consideration to set the sub-ACL to remain at a fixed percentage amount (e.g., the current 2%) and discontinue the requirement to review the sub-ACL.
- MWT/herring fishery catches of GB haddock have been very low in recent years, and Atlantic herring fishery effort has declined under low herring ACLs.
- Setting the sub-ACL to a fixed allocation percentage and discontinuing the review requirement would be consistent with how groundfish catches are evaluated in other fisheries (e.g., scallops, small-mesh), whereby the PDT would continue to monitor catches and make recommendations to the Council as appropriate.



KEY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Consider PDT recommendations on draft scope for the action.
 - Consider including two administrative measures to streamline administration of:
 1. Regular B DAS Program
 2. Closed Area II Yellowtail Flounder/Haddock SAP
 - GB haddock MWT/herring fishery sub-ACL:
 - Consider discontinuing review requirement and setting allocation at fixed percentage
- Recommend initiating the action and identify the items for inclusion.



FRAMEWORK ADJUSTMENT 68 / ACCEPTABLE BIOLOGICAL CATCH (ABC) CONTROL RULES



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FOR TODAY

Framework 68 / ABC Control Rules

- Receive a brief update, including status of Council's revised risk policy and work to evaluate integration of risk policy with groundfish ABC control rules
- Discussion.



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Council's Revised Risk Policy

- Status and next steps



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Risk Policy Statement

The goal of the Council's Risk Policy is to implement a process by which the Council, and its subordinate bodies, accounts for the fact that all fishery management is based on uncertain information, fisheries and the surveys used to monitor marine resources are taking place in a changing environment, and that the decisions of the Council have social and economic impacts on fishing communities.



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Risk Policy Objectives

- Overarching; not species or decision specific.
 - Flexible, transparent, can be broadly implemented.
- Use of factors which are weighted and scored.
- Can produce qualitative and quantitative outcomes.
- Will connect to ABC control rules, with an aim to improve implementation through clear linkages.
 - Will need follow-on actions (ABC control rules).
- Can accommodate various factors that are important to consider in the context of risk (biology, climate change, social impacts).



WEIGHTING, SCORING, LEVEL OF RISK

FACTORS

(Key elements to characterize risk)

WEIGHTING

(level of importance of a factor to the Council)

Policy Choice



SCORING

(based on recent information)

Objective



LEVEL OF RISK

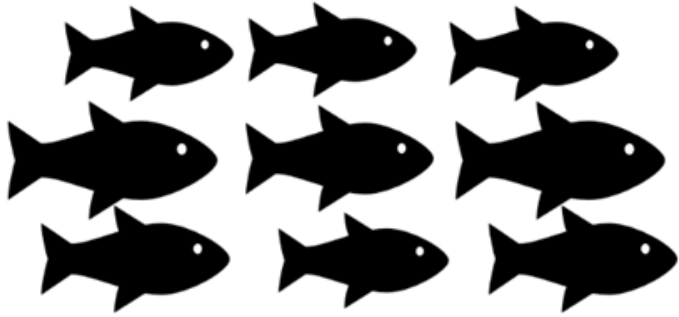
(added up across factors)

- The results for each factor are aggregated into a “Z-score” for level of risk that is plotted along the Risk Policy curve.



RISK POLICY FACTORS (5)

SSB / Stock Status



Recruitment



Climate Vulnerability



Commercial Fishery Characterization



Recreational Fishery Characterization



Risk Policy Tool / ABC Control Rules

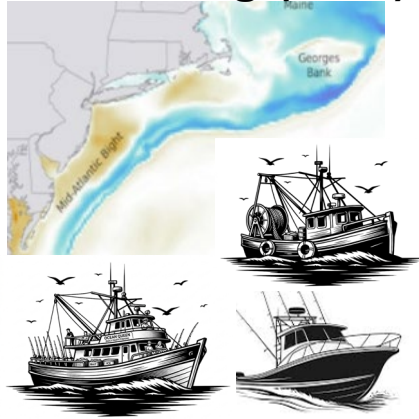
Risk Policy Concept (Tool)

Factors (5)

1. Global Weighting 2. Scoring (data)



Weights apply to all stocks



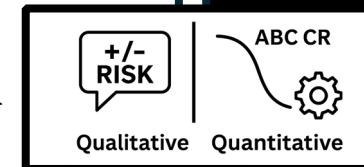
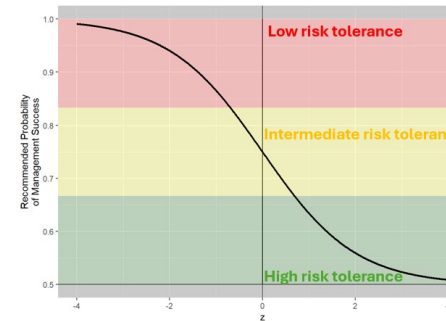
3. Z-Score

Combination of weights and scores.

$$Z = \sum (w_i s_i)$$

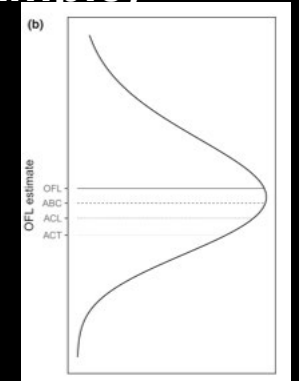
w = weights
 s = scores

4. Risk Tolerance



ABC Control Rule

5. Set ABC using Risk Policy + HCR (Example)



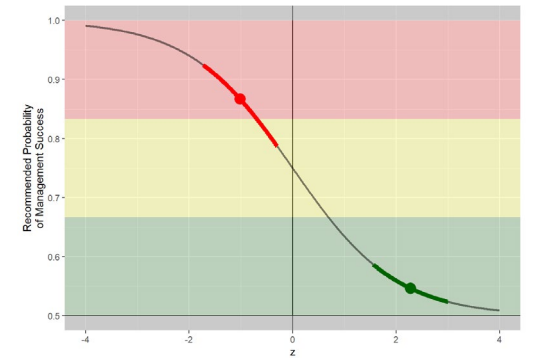
Planned Use of Risk Policy in 2026

Two key areas:

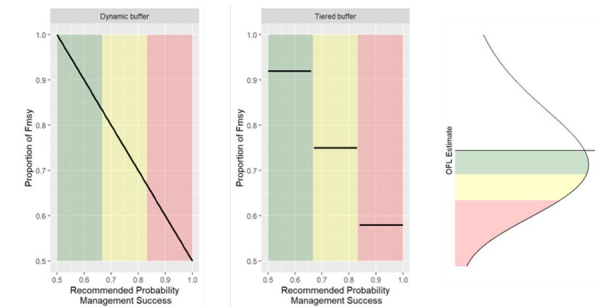
1. **NOW**: Qualitative use of the Risk Tolerance output (Z-score on curve – see Guidance Document).
2. **LATER**: Integration with ABC Control Rules. (FW68)

Council will direct how its bodies use Risk Policy (PDT, SSC).
Recent consideration around how the SSC, PDTs use the Risk Policy.

1. Use of Risk Tolerance



2. Integration with ABC CRs



Risk Policy Outlook



- **January and April 2026:** Council affirmation of proposed revisions (# factors, shape of curve)
- **June 2026:** Council approve revised Risk Policy Concept, complete weightings, guide use
 - Revised Concept document and appendices (scoring, weighing, mechanics, catalogue).
 - Global weightings (1 weight for each factor that applies to all stocks).
- **Summer/Fall 2026:**
 - Council weights and PDT scores generate Z-score, level of risk tolerance.
 - Apply guidance to inform qualitative and continue to develop quantitative use of the Risk Policy.
 - Other ongoing processes, notably Groundfish Framework 68.



Risk Policy Scoring Matrix

FACTOR	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4
SSB / Stock Status	Below Threshold		<75% but Above Threshold		Neutral		Rebuilt		Well Above Target
Recruitment	Persistent Low Recruitment		Recent Low Recruitment		Average, No Trend		Recent Large Year Classes		Multiple Large Year Classes
Climate Vulnerability	High Negative Direction	High	Moderate, Negative Direction	Moderate	Low				
Commercial Fishery Characterization					Minimal stress	Low stress	Moderate stress	Elevated stress	High stress
Recreational Fishery Characterization					Minimal stress	Low stress	Moderate stress	Elevated stress	High stress



2026 Use – What comes after the Council approves the Concept?

MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 11, 2025
TO: Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC)
FROM: Cate O'Keefe, Executive Director
SUBJECT: **Terms of Reference – Overfishing limits (OFL) and acceptable biological catch (ABC) for northern and southern monkfish for fishing years (FY) 2026 to 2030**

TERMS OF REFERENCE

- A. Consider the results of the Northeast Fisheries Science Center's (NEFSC) 2025 Data Update for northern and southern monkfish and information provided by the Council's Monkfish Plan Development Team (PDT).
- B. Recommend OFLs and ABCs for monkfish in both the northern and southern management areas for FY 2026 – 2030 (defaults for FY 2029 and 2030) that will prevent overfishing, meet the objectives of the fishery management plan, and consider the Council's Risk Policy Statement and Concept.

INFORMATION

- a. NEFSC Monkfish Data Update Report, July 29, 2025
 - i. [Monkfish North Data Update](#)
 - ii. [Monkfish South Data Update](#)
- b. Monkfish Plan Development Team
 - i. Presentation by Council staff
 - ii. Monkfish PDT memo to SSC re FY 2026 – 2028 (and default for FY 2029-2030) OFLs and ABCs for monkfish, August 12, 2025
 - iii. Risk Policy Matrix for monkfish
- c. [Monkfish SAFE Report](#), including the most recent description of the social and economic status of the fishery (Framework Adjustment 13, Affected Environment Human Communities), monitoring and assessment reports, etc.
- d. FY 2024 monkfish catch accounting, GARFO
- e. Previous SSC recommendations regarding monkfish
 - i. Meeting materials, [January 20, 2023](#)
 - ii. SSC memo, [January 23, 2023](#)
- f. Correspondence (if any)

**Risk Policy Document
Now includes: Z-Scores,
Level of Risk Tolerance**

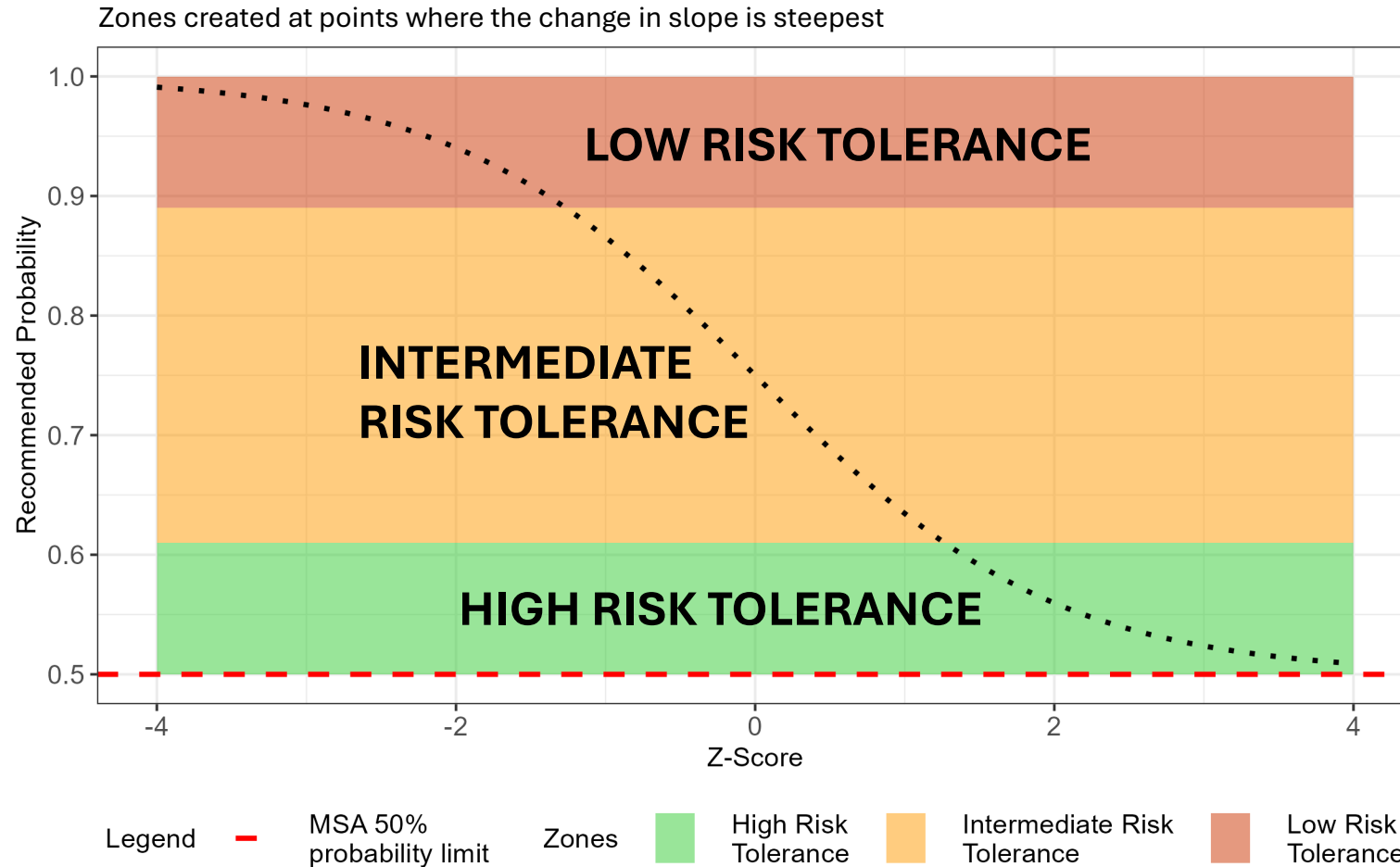
Background Documents

1. The Council's [Risk Policy Statement and Concept](#), implemented January, 2025
2. NOAA/NEFSC [2025 State of the Ecosystem Reports for the Northeast U.S. Shelf](#)

- Weighting (Council), Scoring (PDT).
- Qualitative use of Risk Policy.
 - No Change to ABC CRs!
 - More data, no change to process.
- Dedicated Toolkit to support Risk tolerance calculations and matrix.



2026 Qualitative Use



Objective: Apply a structured way to interpret Risk Policy outputs for management discussions.

Application:

Plot stock-specific Z-score (X-axis) on the curve.

Design of the tiers:

- Follow shape of the curve
- Flat areas reflect “Stability”
- Zones transition at the greatest change of slope in the curve.



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Risk Policy Use in 2026 - Standard Output

2026 Risk Policy Report for GOM Haddock

May 29, 2026

Factor	Value	Supporting Information
Assessment and Uncertainty	Assessment Type	The stock has an analytical assessment.
	Assessment Model	WHAM
	Terminal Assessment Year	2023
	Retrospective Pattern	There was minor retrospective pattern.
	Retrospective Values	0.22 for SSB and -0.17 for F
	Data Used	NMFS Trawl Survey (spring and fall) and NMFS Bottom longline survey (spring and fall)
	Missing Data	Spring 2023 NMFS Trawl Survey due to lack of samples in GOM haddock strata
	Uncertainty Sources	The level of survival of the above-average 2020- and 2021-year classes, which will determine population biomass in the short-term.
Biomass	Overfished	The stock is not overfished.
	Overfishing	Overfishing is not occurring for this stock.
	Rebuilding Plan	The stock is not in a rebuilding plan.
	Rebuilding Target	NA
	SSB	17,836
	Relative SSB	194
Recruitment	Recruitment is estimated	Yes
	Recruitment Model	NA
	Initial year of time series	NA
	Other Recruit Info	Recruitment modeled as deviations from the mean.

Scores and Weights

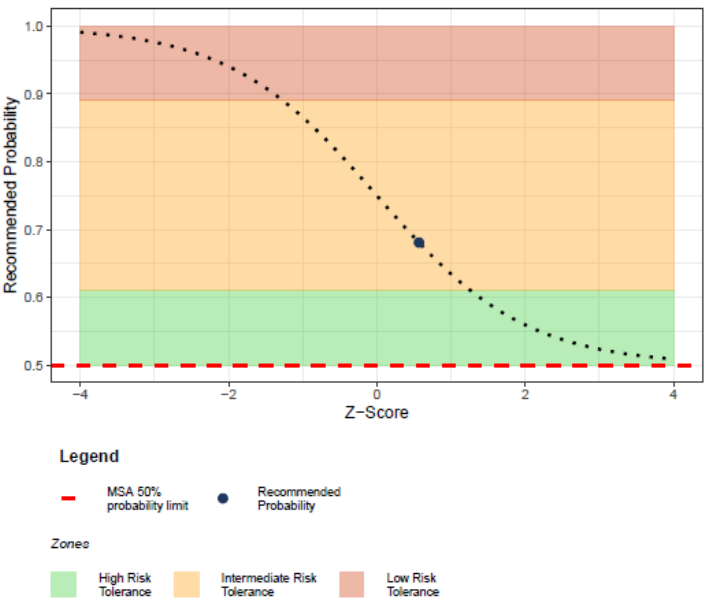
Report Year	Stock	Factor	Score	Average Weight
2026	GOM Haddock	Biomass	4	3.29
2026	GOM Haddock	Recruitment	4	3.00
2026	GOM Haddock	Climate	-1	2.95
2026	GOM Haddock	Commercial	2	3.24
2026	GOM Haddock	Recreational	2	1.90

The calculated z-score is **0.5675**

The recommended probability is **68.1%**

Recommended Probability

The level of risk that should be considered based on the z-score and recommended probability for GOM Haddock is *Intermediate Risk Tolerance*.

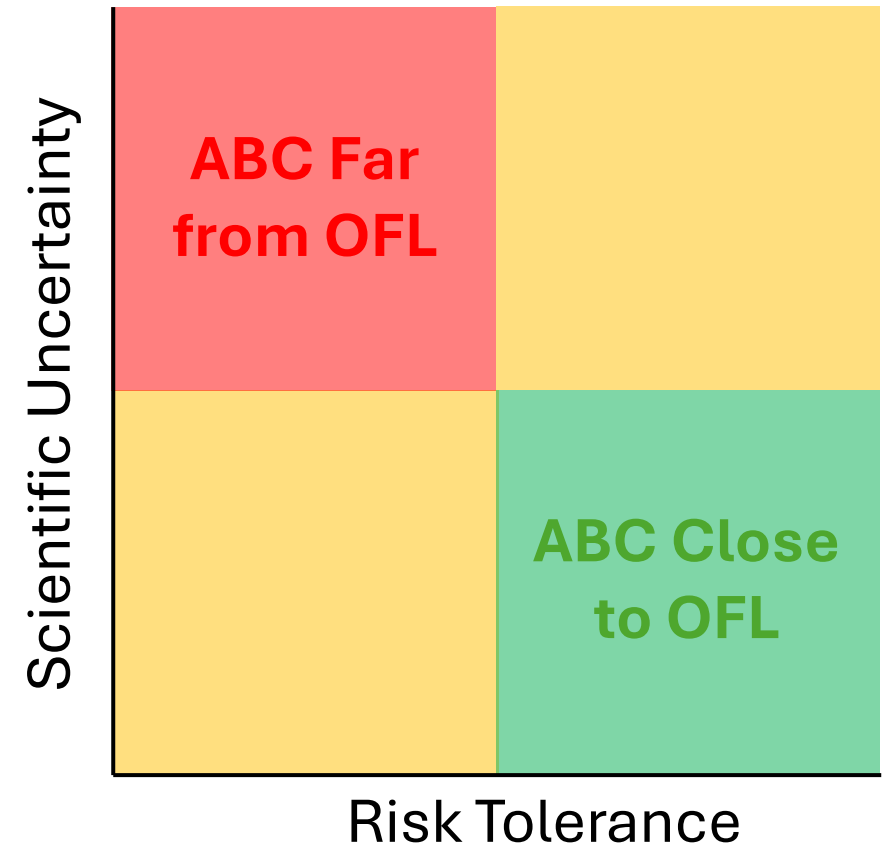


Potential Risk Policy Integrated ABC Control Rules



Defining the Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC)

- The ABC is set below the OFL to account for scientific uncertainty
- The magnitude of buffer can depend on the degree of scientific uncertainty
- In a Risk Policy integrated approach, it would also depend on the specified Risk Tolerance



Two distinct approaches for determining the scientific uncertainty buffer

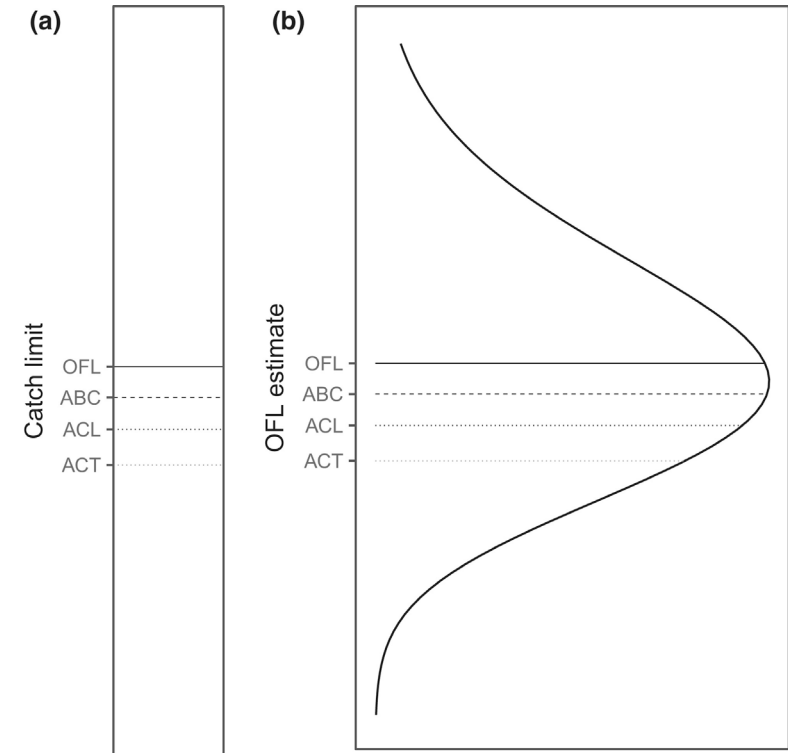
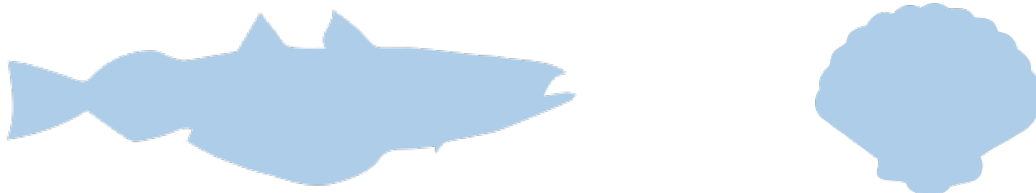
a) A simple percentage buffer

- For example: the ABC is 75% of the OFL

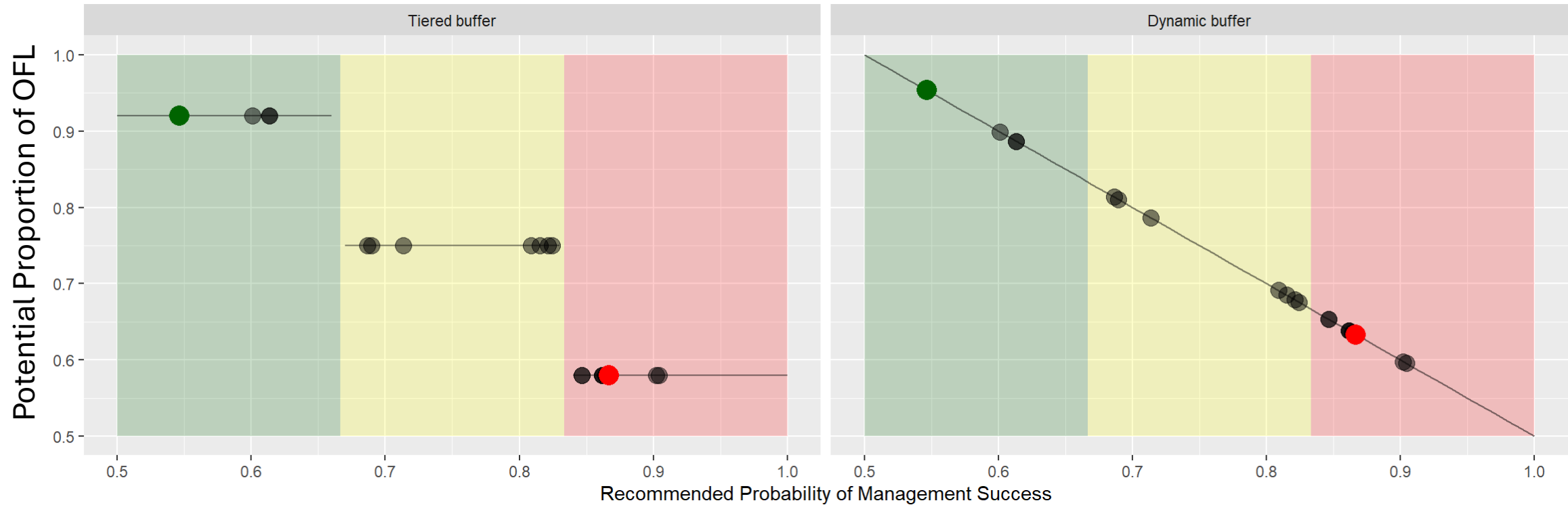


b) A distribution/probability-based approach

- ABC is determined by an acceptable probability of overfishing (e.g., $P^* = 0.25$)



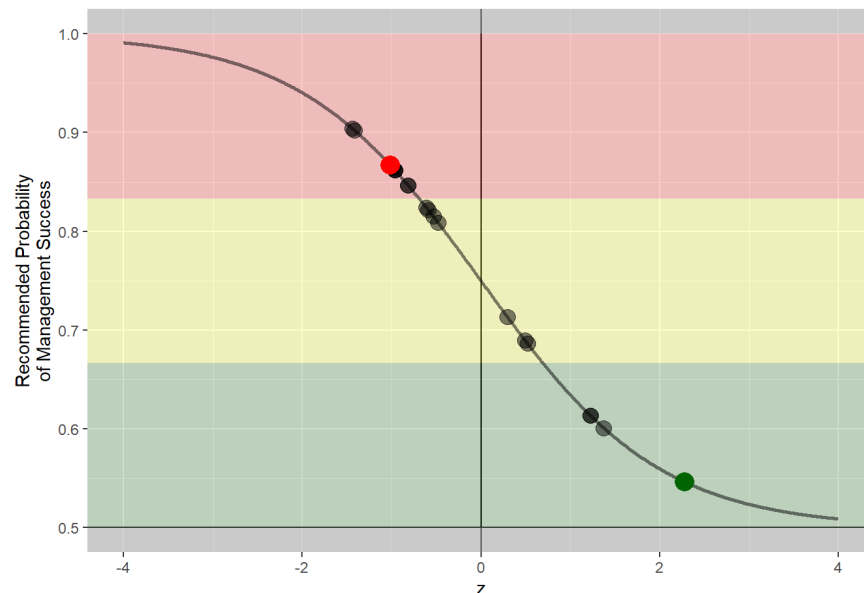
Potential Percentage of OFL Approach



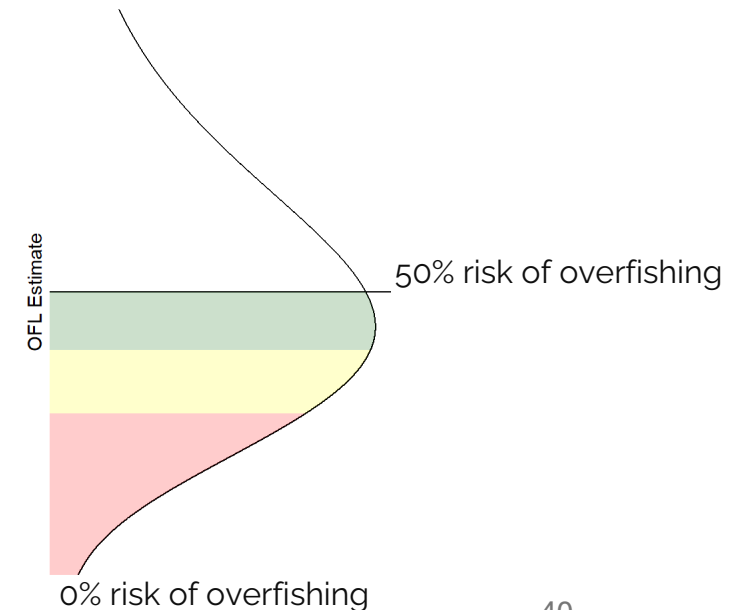
- The rule could apply a continuously changing buffer (right), or fixed proportions in discrete risk tiers (left)
- For both, ABC = 75% of OFL at intermediate risk tolerance and the proportion changes according to the results of the Risk Policy
- Both require additional policy decisions (e.g., range of buffers, boundaries of risk tiers). We made assumptions for demonstration.

Potential Probability-Based Approach

- For catch limits, management success is avoiding overfishing
- Risk Policy could inform the acceptable probability of overfishing (P^*)
- The exact buffer between the ABC and OFL would also depend the assumed distribution around the OFL



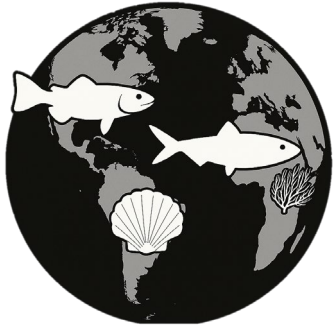
P^* informed by
Risk Policy



Risk Policy Concept and ABC Control Rules

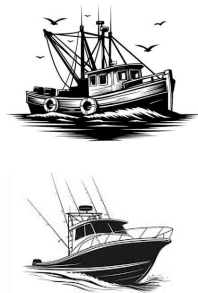
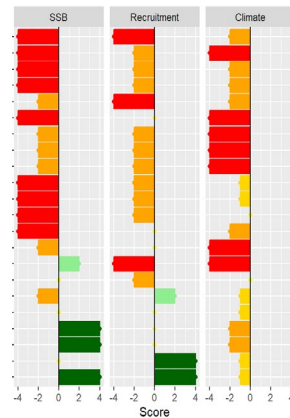
Risk Policy with Five Factors

1. Factor Weighting

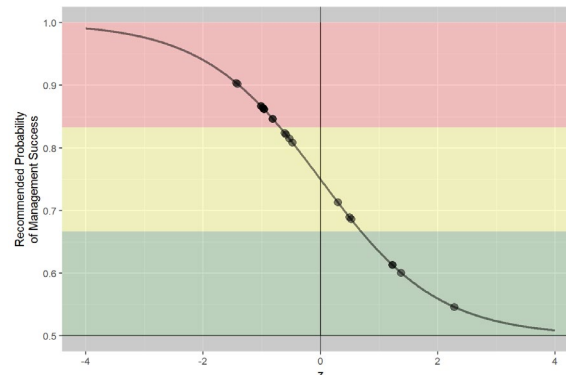


Weights apply to all stocks

2. Factor Scoring (Data)



3. Factors Combined into a single Z-Score

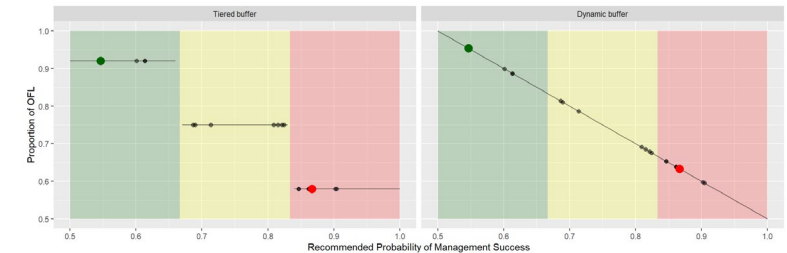


4. Risk Tolerance

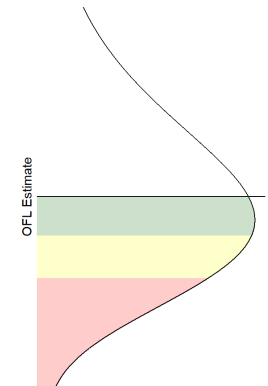
Potential Risk Policy Integrated ABC Control Rules

5. Determine Scientific Uncertainty Buffer

a) Risk Policy Informed Proportion of OFL



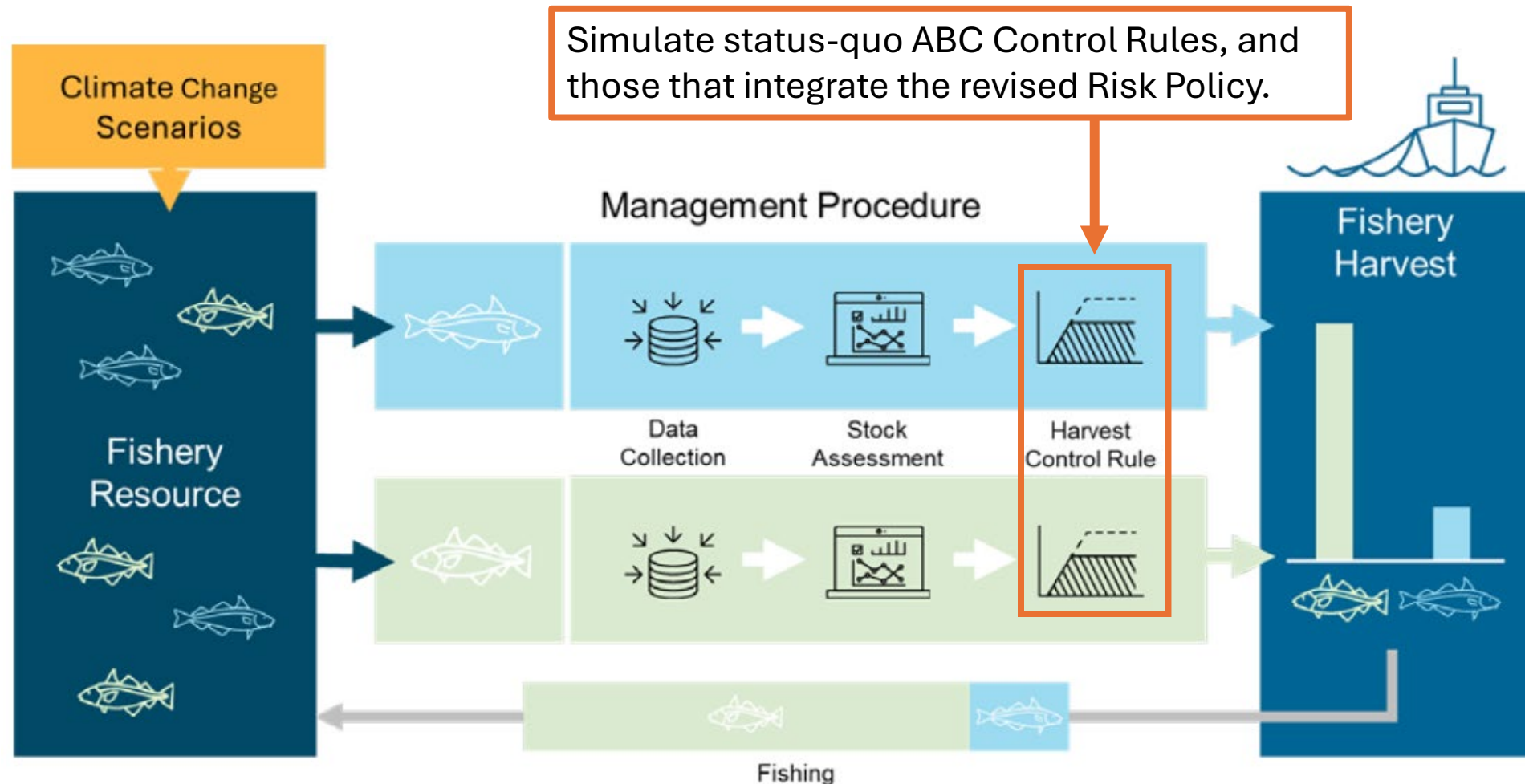
Risk Policy Informed P^*



b) Probability-based approach

Goals of Simulation Testing

Use management strategy evaluation to test the performance of Risk Policy integrated **ABC Control Rules**



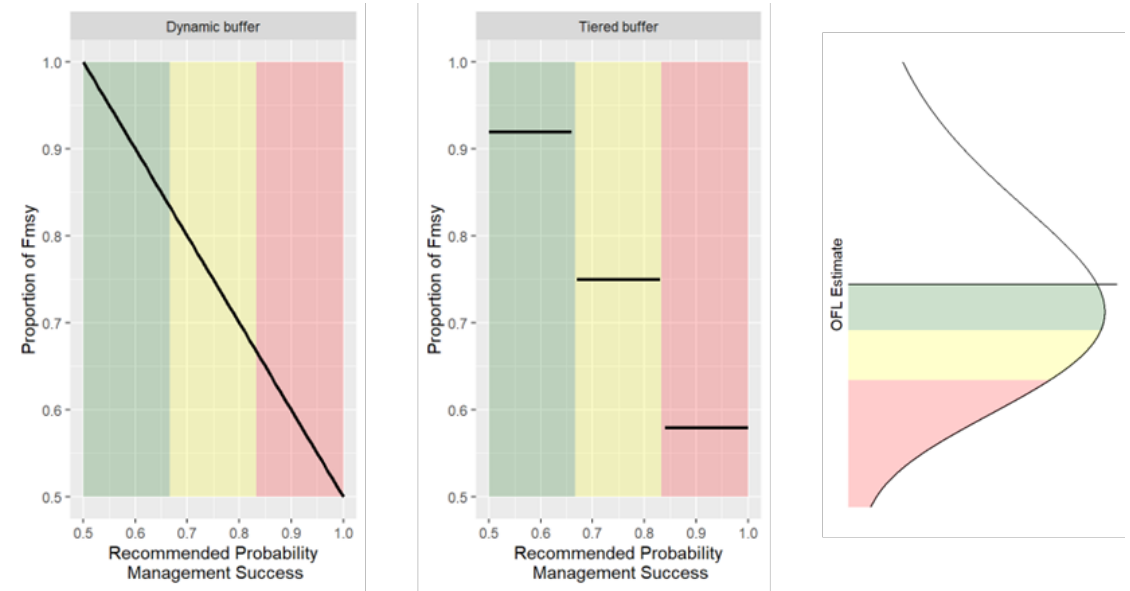
Simulating Alternative Groundfish Control Rules

Status Quo

- ABC specified as % of OFL
- Percentage changes with status

3 Risk Policy Integrated Alternatives

- Dynamic buffer
- Tiered approach
- Probability-based option (P^*)



Potential Performance Metrics

- Responsiveness of Control Rule results to changing conditions
- Stock Sustainability
 - Stock status
 - Time to rebuild
- Harvest opportunities
 - Catch advice
 - Realized catch

We will use these, and others, to compare the performance of status-quo and Risk Policy integrated ABC control rules.

Framework Adjustment 68

ACCEPTABLE BIOLOGICAL CATCH (ABC) CONTROL RULES
(aka Harvest Control Rules [HCR])



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HISTORY

- The Council added development of revised groundfish ABC control rules (CRs) to its priorities in 2023. Framework 68 was initiated in June 2023.
- August 2023, a facilitated meeting discussed draft goals and objectives.
 - Participants from the Groundfish Committee, the SSC, the Groundfish PDT, the GAP, the RAP, the Risk Policy Working Group, and the public.
- The Council paused development of ABC CRs / FW 68 to first revise its Risk Policy. The Council approved the revised [Risk Policy Statement and Risk Policy Concept](#) in September 2024, and implementation began on January 1, 2025.
- Continued development of Risk Policy Concept in 2025 and 2026.
- Ongoing simulation testing of potential ABC CRs for Groundfish through contract work under Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) initiatives #1 and #3.



GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- The goal of FW68 is to modify/replace the existing groundfish ABC CRs to better address the goals and objectives of the FMP considering increasing uncertainty/variability in stock assessments, changing environmental conditions, and National Standard Guidelines. The new CR 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.
- 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.



APPROACH

- Since development of the draft goals and objectives, some topics the Committee and Council are 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.

Incorporated into revised Risk Policy

To be considered through revised groundfish ABC CRs / FW 68

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



FW68 NEXT STEPS

- June Council meeting:
 - Approve revised Risk Policy Concept.
 - Conduct weightings exercise - Global weighting applies to ALL stocks.
 - Discuss use.
- Contractor: continue work on multiple ABC CR approaches including simulations.
- PDT
 - Draft alternatives for FW68 targeting final decision in ~~September 2026~~ April 2027.*
 - Include [new \(2016\) NS 1 Guidance](#):
 - [Phased-in ABCs](#) to foster industry stability (not to exceed 3 years),
 - [Carryover](#) to foster safety and market stability, and
 - Constant ABCs. (^See PDT/SSC subgroup 11/22 and SSC 5/5/23.)



AMENDMENT 23 MONITORING REVIEW



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FOR TODAY

Other 2026 Council Groundfish Priorities: Amendment 23 Monitoring Review

- Receive a report of additional draft analyses from the PDT.
- Answer questions on new analyses.
- Discussion.



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M13 INDUSTRY COSTS: PROCESS

- Seaday costs specified in sector/provider contracts from FYs 2023-2025 were applied to ASM observed trips.
- Costs were compared to those from FYs 2016-2018, previously analyzed in Ardini et al. (2020)¹.
- Costs were normalized to 2025 USD.
 - This controls for inflation when comparing costs between years.
- Where available, seaday costs were compared to the total ASM (human observer) amounts reimbursed to sectors.

¹ Ardini, G., C. Demarest, and K. McArdle. 2020. Costs of at-sea monitoring under government and private contracts in the groundfish fishery of the northeastern United States Fish. Bull. 118(3):284-296.



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	2016	2017	2018	2023	2024	2025
At-Sea Cost (Nominal)	\$680,409	\$450,188	\$524,356	\$4,579,150	\$4,559,789	\$4,031,528
At-Sea Cost (2025 USD)	\$887,961	\$577,540	\$656,424	\$4,789,287	\$4,649,203	\$4,009,381
ASM Observed Days Absent	1,113	667	791	5,417	5,313	4,574
At-Sea Cost per ASM Observed Day Absent (Nominal)	\$611	\$675	\$663	\$845	\$858	\$881
At-Sea Cost per ASM Observed Day Absent (2025 USD)	\$798	\$866	\$830	\$884	\$875	\$877
Total Cost of Human Observers (Nominal)				\$6,427,856	\$6,003,993	
Realized Coverage Rate	15%	17%	16%	82%	87%	81%



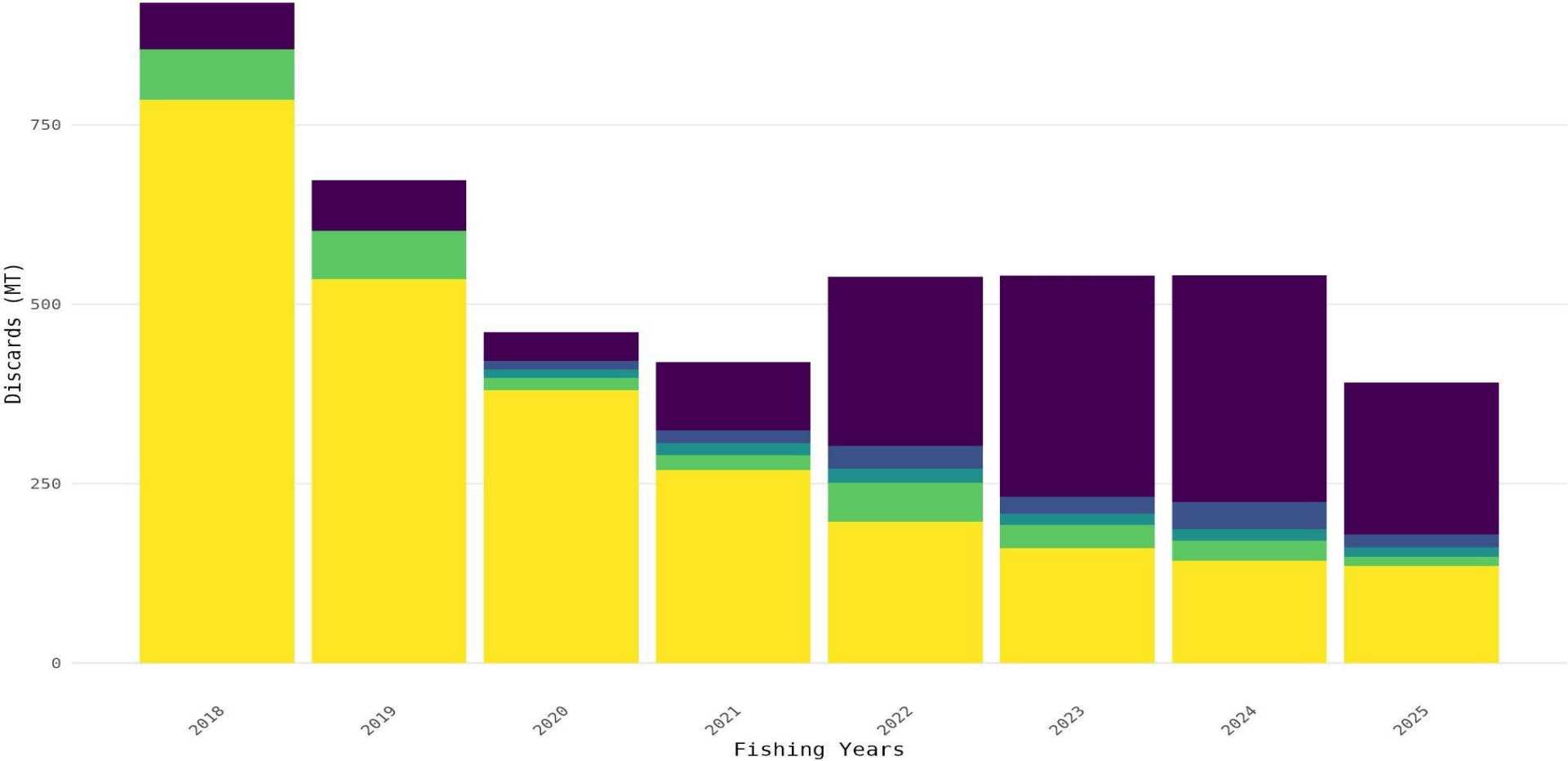
- Given limited annual variability within the two time periods (2016-2018 and 2023-2025), results can also be grouped.
- Costs per ASM day absent increased by 6% in the A23 period.
- Total at-sea cost increases during A23 period are primarily a result of higher observer coverage rates.

	2016-2018 (annual average)	2023-2025 (annual average)
At-Sea Cost (2025 USD)	\$707,308	\$4,482,624
ASM Observed Days Absent	857	5,101
Cost per ASM Observed Day Absent (2025 USD)	\$826	\$879
Realized Coverage Rate	16%	83%



M6: DISCARD ESTIMATES FOR ALL SECTOR GROUNDFISH TRIPS

Discards On Commercial Groundfish Sector Trips
Groundfish Species



Discard Source ASM DELTA EM_reviewed NEFOP Rate

*2025 estimates are preliminary and subject to change.



M6: DISCARD ESTIMATES STRATIFIED BY STOCK

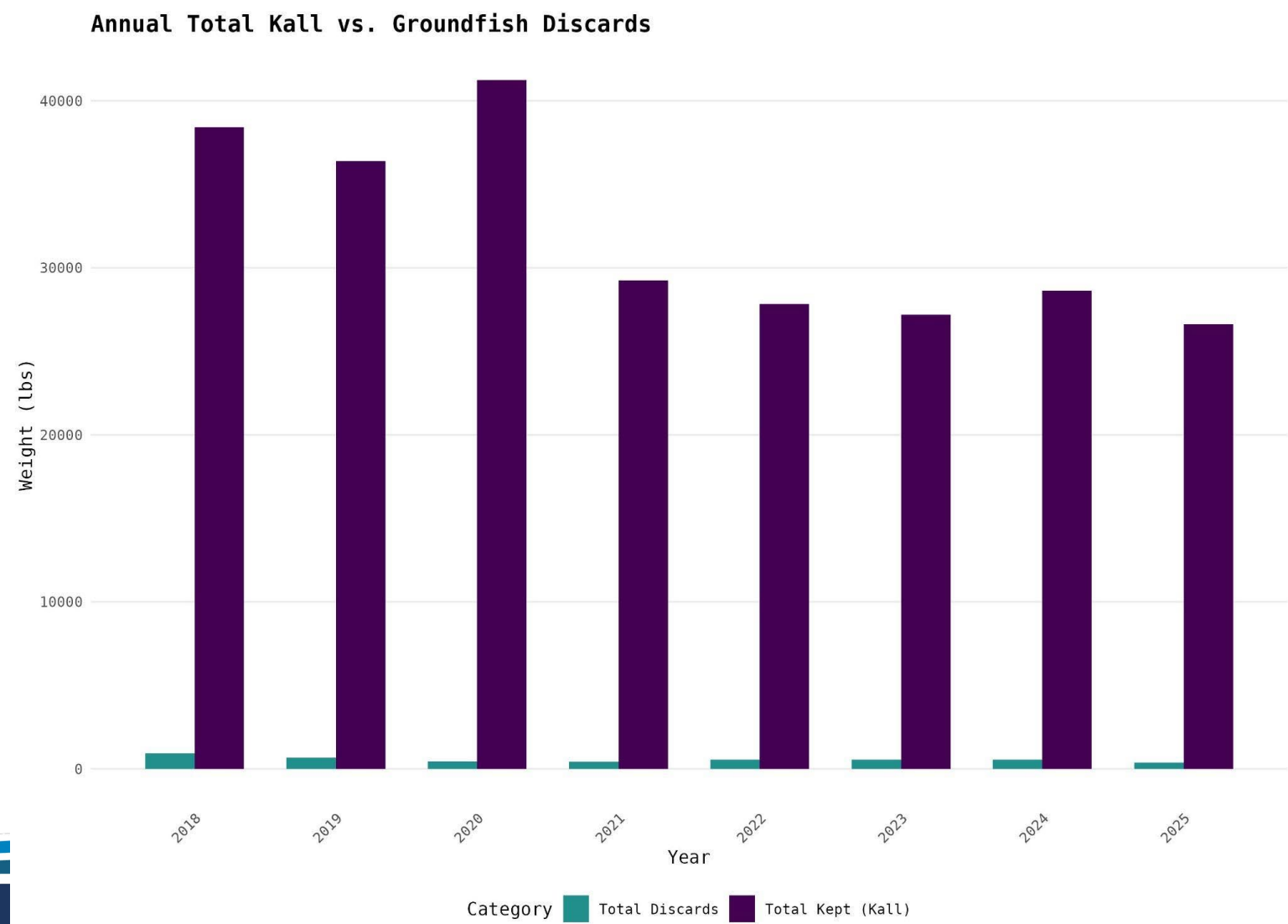
Discards On Commercial Groundfish Sector Trips

Groundfish Species



*2025 estimates are preliminary and subject to change.

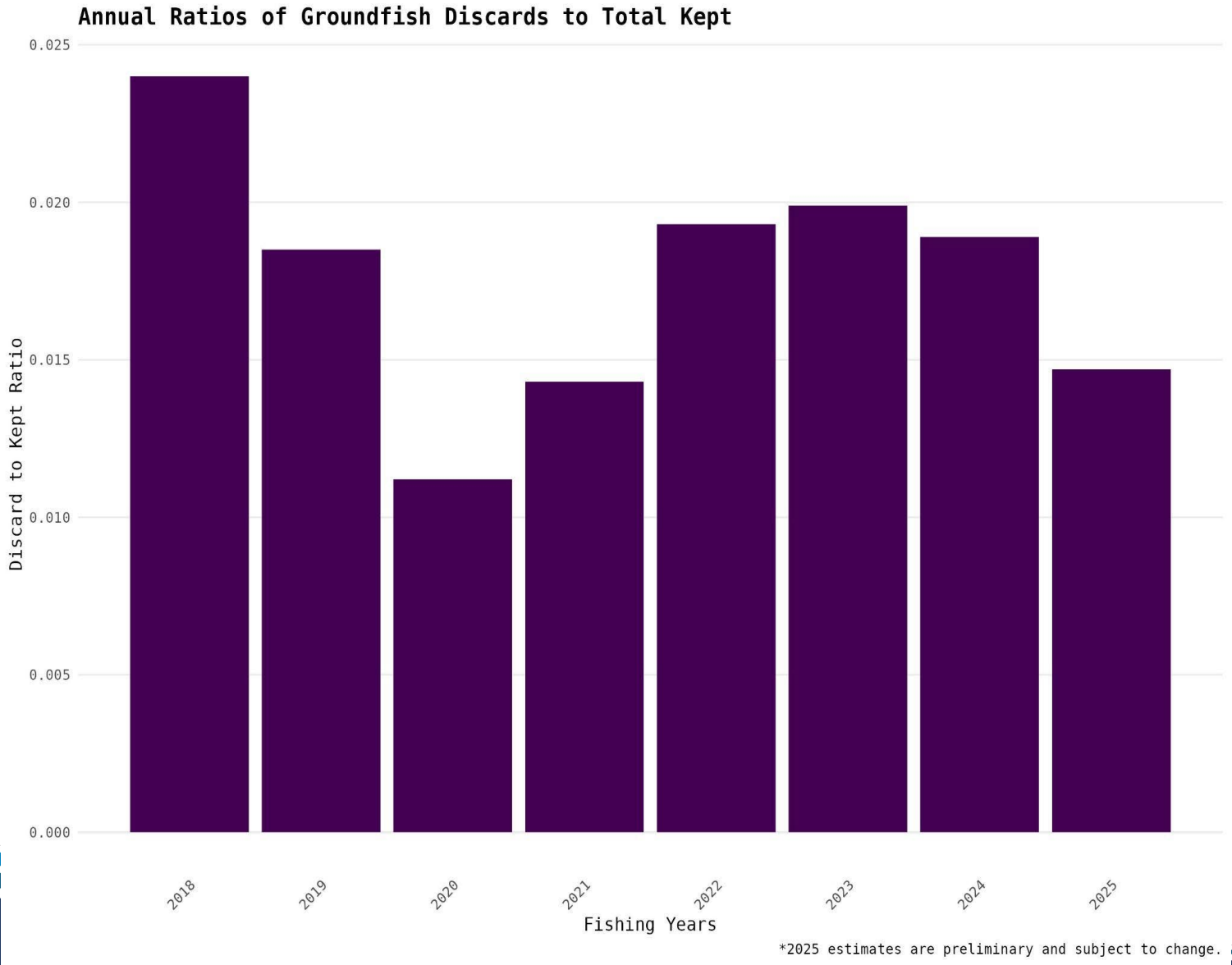
M6: GROUNDFISH DISCARDS AND ANNUAL TOTAL KEPT CATCH



*2025 estimates are preliminary and subject to change.



M6: ANNUAL GROUNDFISH DISCARDS TO TOTAL KEPT CATCH

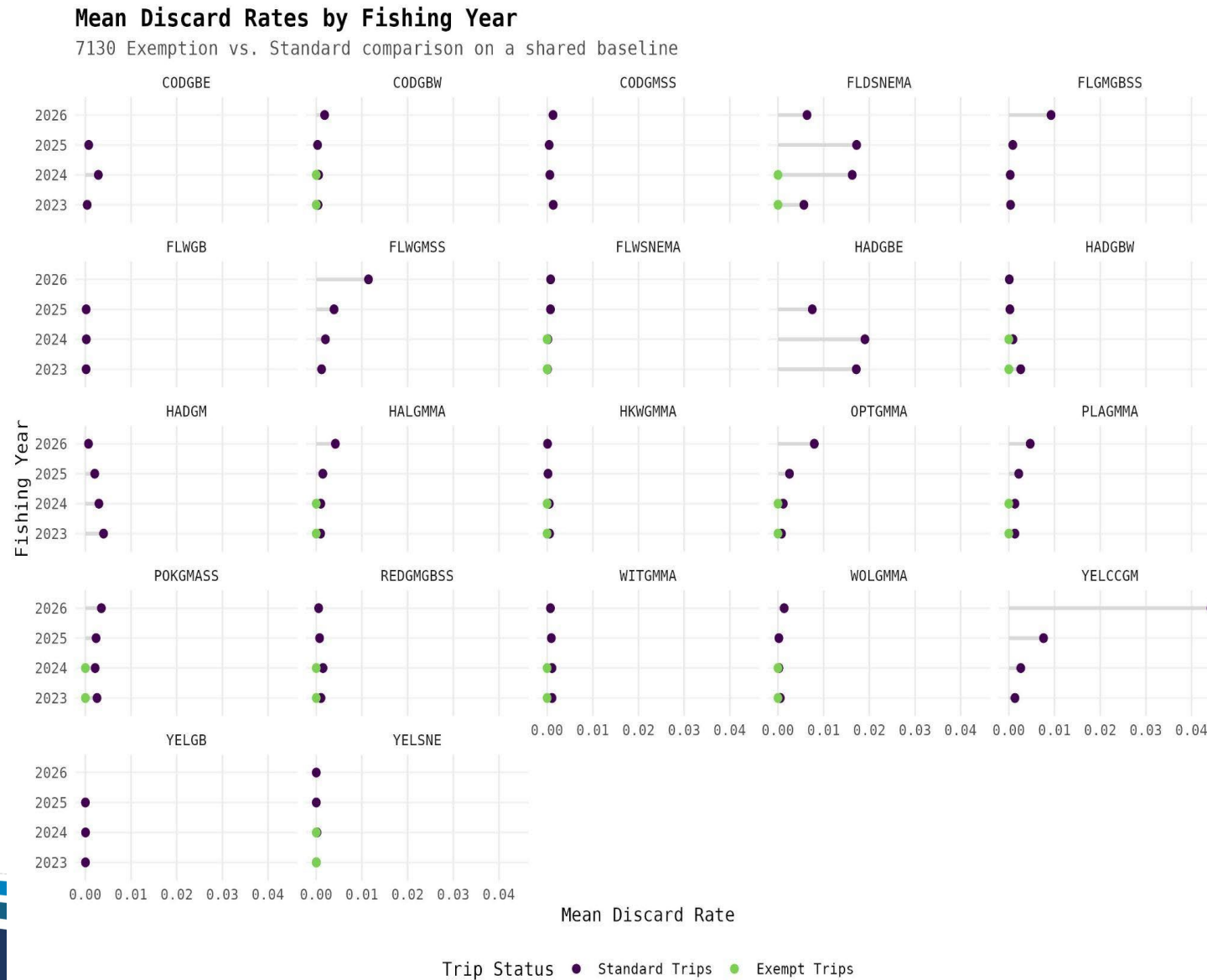


M10: ASM EXCLUSIONS: 71 30

7130 Exempt Status	Fishing Year	Number permits	Number trips	Groundfish Discards (MT)
Non-Exempt	2023	124	4,638	539.4
Non-Exempt	2024	135	4,793	539.6
Non-Exempt	2025	123	4,288	390.2
Exempt	2023	6	45	0.7
Exempt	2024	4	32	0.6
Exempt	2025	8	17	0.7



M10: ASM EXCLUSIONS: 71 30 MEAN DISCARD RATES BY YEAR

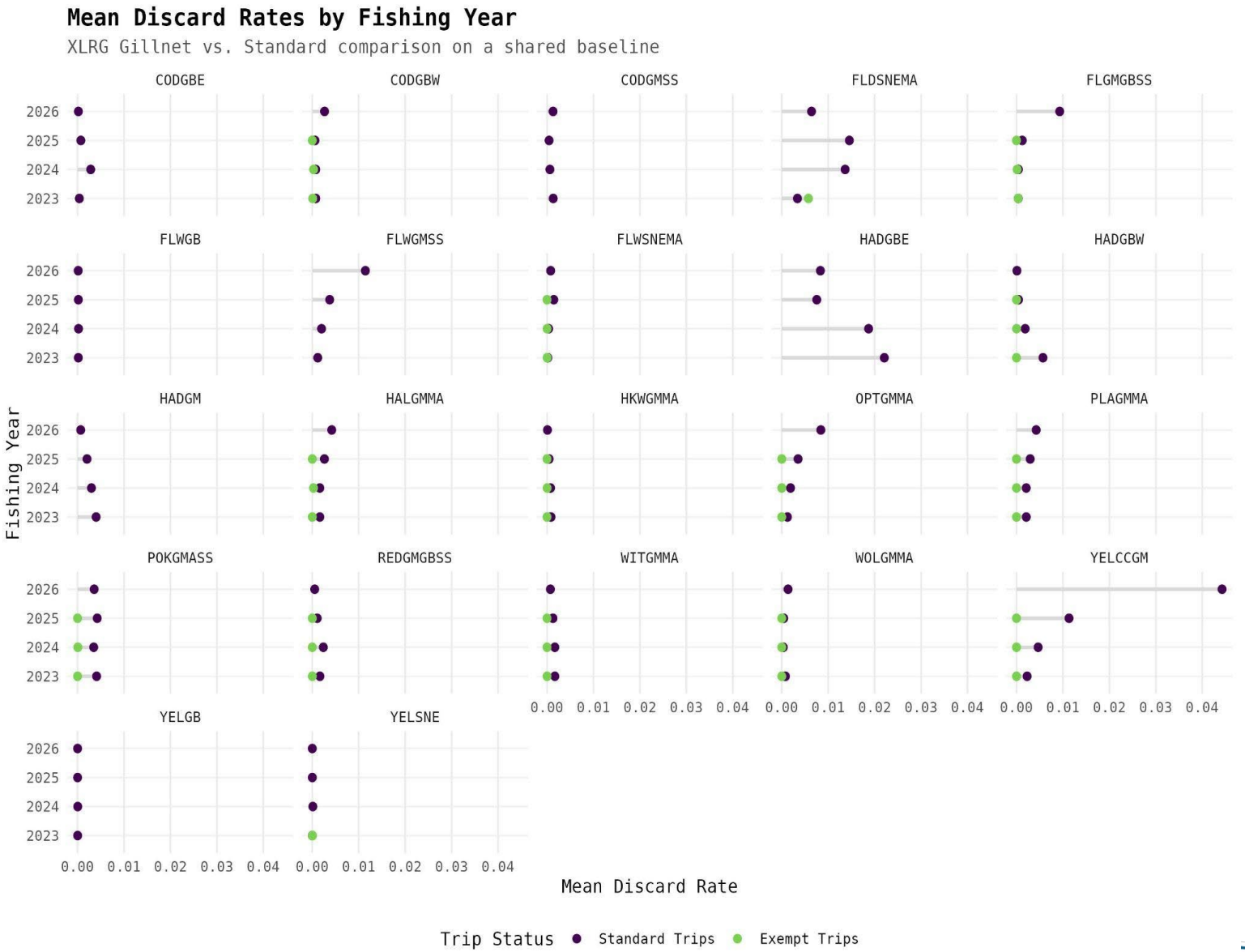


M10: ASM EXCLUSIONS: XL GILLNET

Xlrg Gillnet Exemption Status	Fishing Year	Number Permits	Number Trips	Groundfish Discards (MT)
Non-Exempt	2023	124	3,840	536.7
Non-Exempt	2024	137	3,983	537.8
Non-Exempt	2025	126	3,366	385.6
Exempt	2023	17	843	3.3
Exempt	2024	16	842	2.4
Exempt	2025	15	939	5.4



M10: ASM EXCLUSIONS: XL GILLNET MEAN DISCARD RATES BY YEAR



M28: Distribution of Vessels in Programs by Fishing Year

Fishing Year	ASM Vessels	EM Vessels
2020	94	16
2021	109	18
2022	103	21
2023	92	22
2024	84	33
2025	73	29



M28: Distribution of Vessels by Length and Fishing Year

Fishing Year	Vessel Length	ASM Vessels	EM Vessels
2020	<= 50.0	37	14
2020	50.1 - 75.0	28	2
2020	> 75.0	29	NA
2021	<= 50.0	48	13
2021	50.1 - 75.0	32	5
2021	> 75.0	29	NA
2022	<= 50.0	42	14
2022	50.1 - 75.0	31	7
2022	> 75.0	30	NA



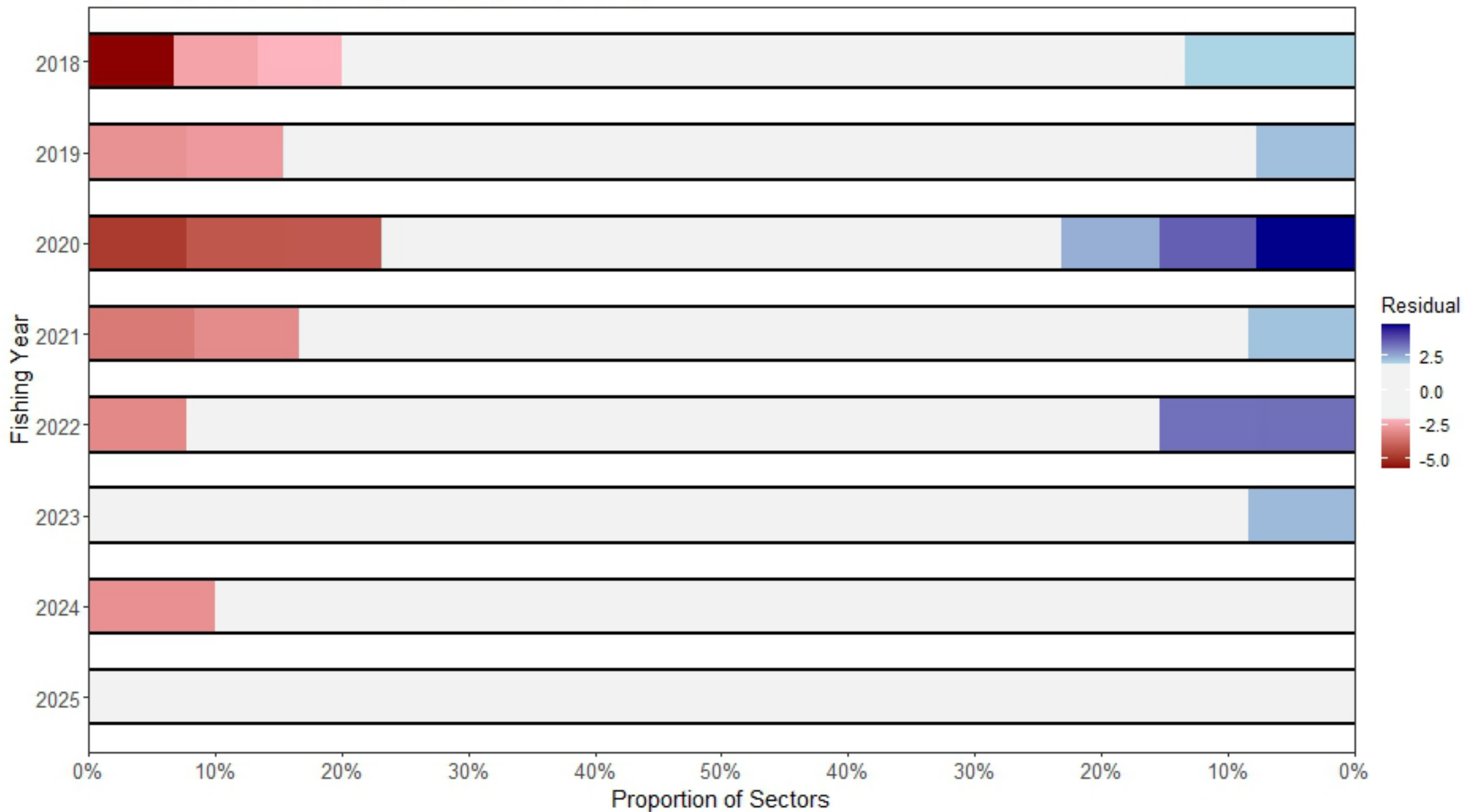
M28: Distribution of Vessels by Length and Fishing Year

Fishing Year	Vessel Length	ASM Vessels	EM Vessels
2023	<= 50.0	34	15
2023	50.1 - 75.0	27	7
2023	> 75.0	31	NA
2024	<= 50.0	32	19
2024	50.1 - 75.0	24	10
2024	> 75.0	28	4
2025	<= 50.0	25	18
2025	50.1 - 75.0	23	9
2025	> 75.0	25	2

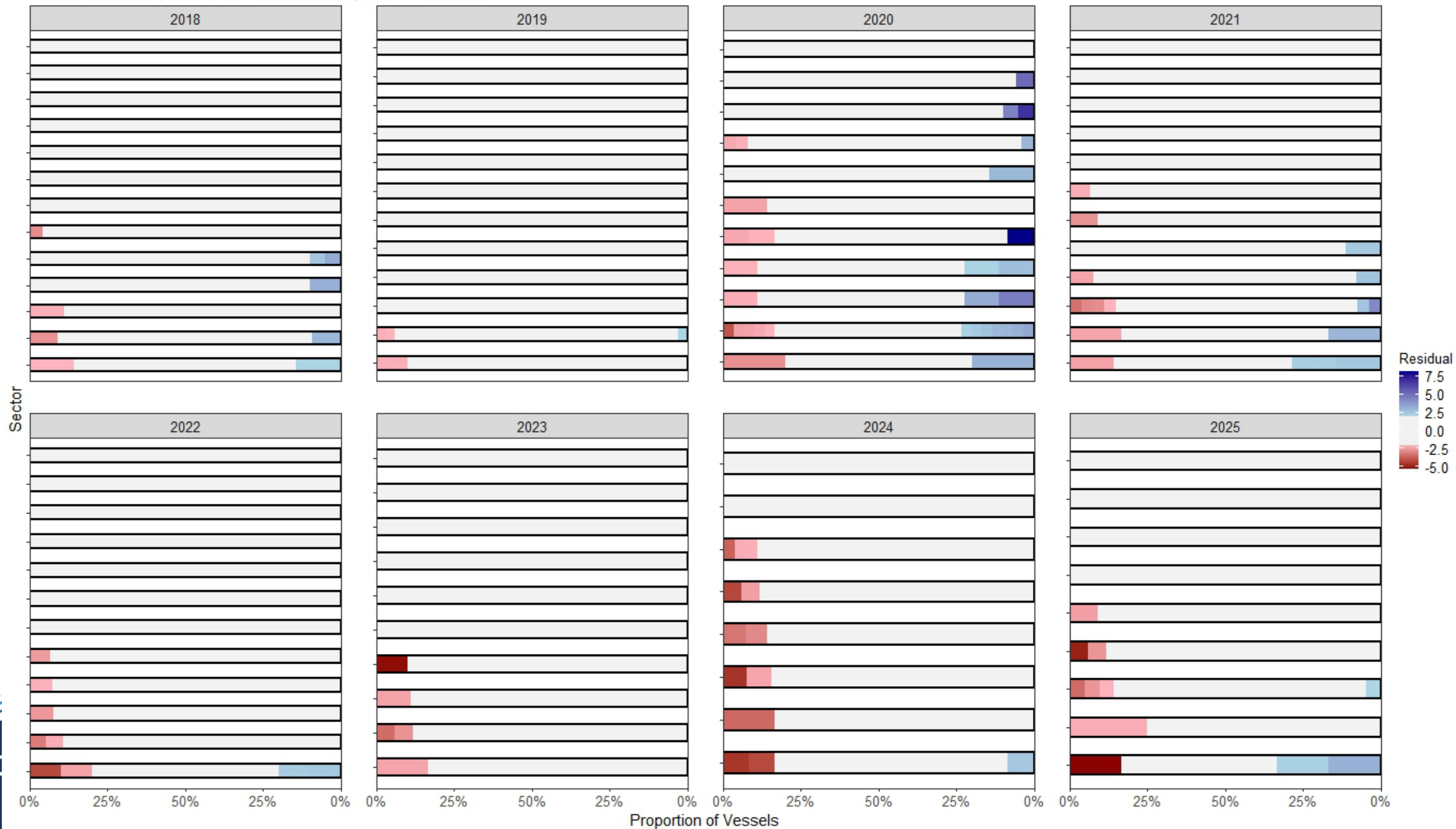


Between Sector Equitability Measure

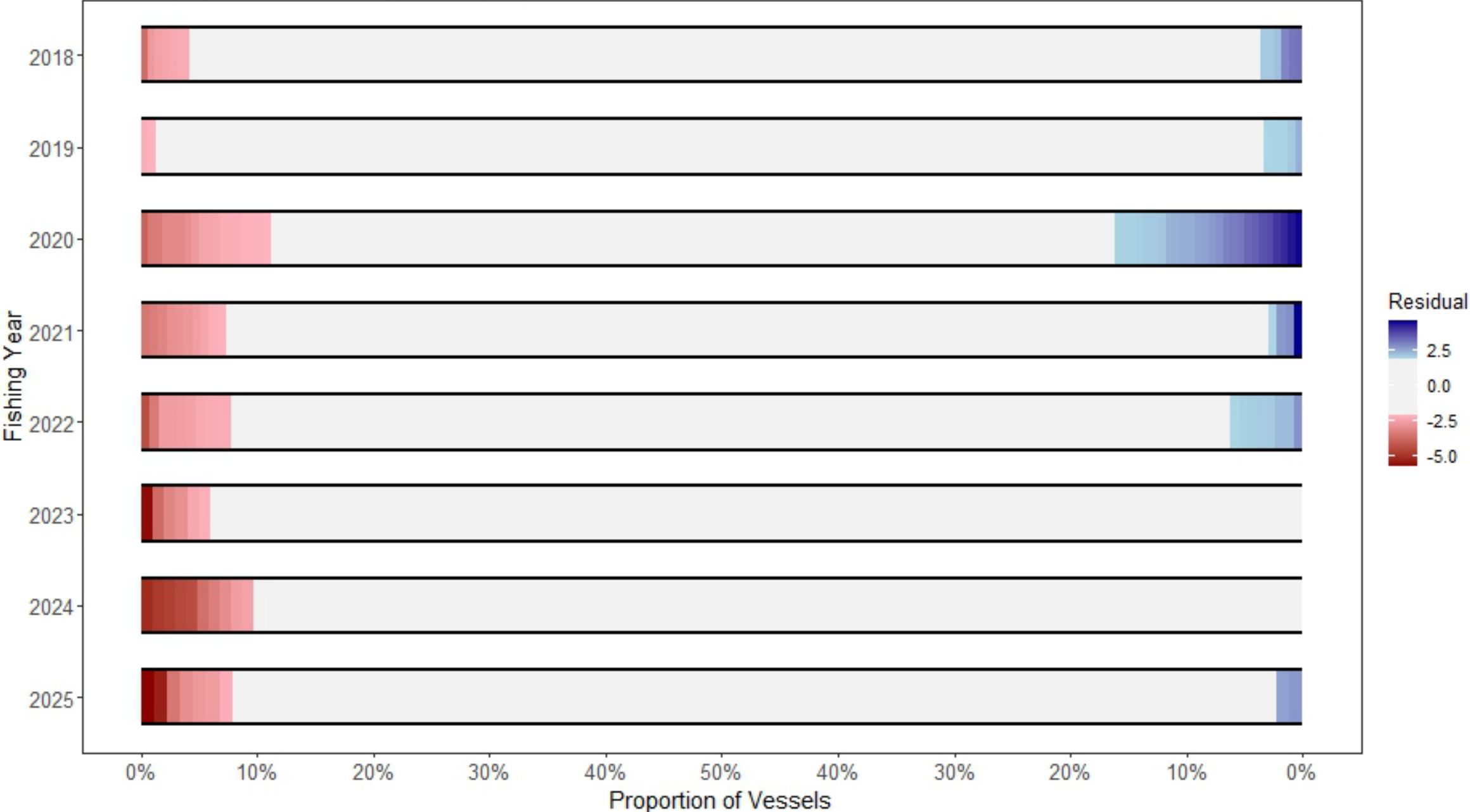
Pearson residual comparison of sector expected numerator trips



Pearson residual comparison of within sector vessel expected numerator trips



Between Vessel Equitability Measure (Fleet Wide)
Pearson residual comparison of vessel expected numerator trips



EXTRA SLIDES



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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 F_{MSY} .
- B. If fishing at 75% of F_{MSY} 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 ($F_{Rebuild}$).
- C. For stocks that cannot rebuild to B_{MSY} 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.



2023 WORK

- 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 recommend 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



Biomass (SSB) / Stock Status



- **Risk associated** with current productivity of the stock
- **Relationship to Risk:** As status (SSB/SSB_{MSY}) increases, risk tolerance increases
- **Directionality:** Two way, can increase and decrease risk tolerance

← Lower Risk Tolerance					Higher Risk Tolerance →				
FACTOR	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4
SSB / Stock Status	Below threshold		<75% but above Threshold		Neutral		Rebuilt		Well Above Target

Recruitment



- **Risk associated** with future productivity of the stock
- **Relationship to Risk:** As recruitment increases, risk tolerance increases
- **Directionality:** Two way, can increase and decrease risk tolerance

← Lower Risk Tolerance					Higher Risk Tolerance →				
FACTOR	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4
Recruitment	Persistent Low Recruitment		Recent Low Recruitment		Average, No Trend		Recent Large Year Classes		Multiple Large Year Classes

Climate Vulnerability



- **Risk associated** with climate change
- **Relationship to Risk:** As climate vulnerability increases, risk tolerance decreases
- **Use in 2026**, species guidance, plus PDT input for stock level scoring
 - Vulnerability score and directional effect of climate change (Hare et al., 2016)
- **Directionality:** One way, only decreases risk tolerance

← Lower Risk Tolerance					Higher Risk Tolerance →				
FACTOR	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4
Climate Vulnerability	High Negative Direction	High	Moderate, Negative Direction	Moderate	Low				

Commercial Fishery Characterization



- **Risk associated** with socioeconomic health of the commercial fishery
- **Relationship to Risk:** As socioeconomic stress increases, risk tolerance increases
- **Use in 2026**, scoring questions, consider AP input
- **Directionality:** One way, can only increase risk tolerance

← Lower Risk Tolerance					Higher Risk Tolerance →				
FACTOR	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4
Commercial Fishery Characterization					Minimal stress	Low stress	Moderate stress	Elevated stress	High stress

Recreational Fishery Characterization



- **Risk associated** with socioeconomic health of the recreational fishery
- **Relationship to Risk:** As socioeconomic stress increases, risk tolerance increases
- **Use in 2026**, scoring questions, consider AP input
- **Directionality:** One way, can only increase risk tolerance

← Lower Risk Tolerance					Higher Risk Tolerance →				
FACTOR	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4
Commercial Fishery Characterization					Minimal stress	Low stress	Moderate stress	Elevated stress	High stress