

**CIE review for NEFMC EBFM work – early FY 18
Ecosystem Based Fishery Management Strategy Review**

What the review is:

This review is essentially a research-track review, the goal of which is to illustrate how the proposed EBFM strategy and conceptual framework could be applied to provide the information needed for fisheries management by the New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC). Specifically, the review addresses the resolution by the NEFMC to evaluate proposed Georges Bank operating models, supporting data, and worked examples of control rules developed to support the NEFMC's Fishery Ecosystem Plan initiative. The approach includes establishing an overall catch cap or ceiling and methods of setting catch limits by functional groups of species, as well as minimum biomass thresholds for individual species. The review will be conducted by a panel composed of appropriate national and international experts.

What the review is not:

The review is not intended to provide a review of specific tactical management advice for setting specifications. The review will evaluate simulation studies conducted to assess the performance of management procedures based on specification of system-level catch ceilings and associated measures to ensure conservation of the individual species comprising the functional groups.

What the expected outcome is:

It is anticipated that the review will provide guidance to the NEFMC on the appropriateness of the proposed management procedure and associated control rules for management of multispecies assemblages on Georges Bank that specifically addresses technological and biological interactions among species and the constraints imposed by energy flow in the system.

What the next steps are:

If the review panel concurs that the proposed management procedure offers a viable approach to multispecies management of Georges Bank fishery resources, the next steps will involve continuation of the development of a prototype Fishery Ecosystem Plan by the EBFM Plan Development Team. The EBFM PDT has established a phased schedule of development and implementation of the FEP. Substantial progress has been made on Phase I (establishment of objectives, FEP structure, and supporting documentation for elements of the plan). Proposed activities for Phase II include a formal management strategy evaluation.