

Groundfish Framework Adjustment 55

DRAFT Action Plan

Council: New England Fishery Management Council

Fishery: Northeast Multispecies (Groundfish) Fishery Management Plan (FMP)

Title of Action: Framework Adjustment 55 (FW55)

Scope: To incorporate any status changes for groundfish stocks and set specifications for all groundfish stocks. To adopt an additional sector and modify the sector approval process. To modify the definition of a haddock separator trawl so that the separator panel is easily identifiable. To make changes to the groundfish monitoring program. To make changes to the management measures for U.S./Canada TACs in order to move GB cod quota from the eastern management area to the western management area. To modify the Gulf of Maine Cod Protection Measures so that the recreational possession limit for GOM cod can once again be modified by the Regional Administrator.

Objectives of Action:

To meet regulatory requirements to prevent overfishing, ensure rebuilding, and help achieve optimum yield in the fishery. To provide for flexibility within the sector system to adapt to changing regulatory and legal circumstances. To improve enforcement of a conservation gear. To make the groundfish monitoring program more efficient and cost effective while achieving the stated goals of the program in Amendment 16 (A16) and Framework Adjustment 48 (FW48). To provide for flexibility to access stocks, while staying under quota limits. To allow for flexibility in the setting of recreational management measures.

Likely Range of Alternatives:

- 4.1 *Updates to Status Determination Criteria and Annual Catch Limits*
 - 4.1.1 *Status Determination Criteria*
 - 4.1.2 *Annual Catch Limits*
- 4.2 *Fishery Program Administration*
 - 4.2.1 *Implementation of an Additional Sector*
 - 4.2.2 *Sector Approval Process*
 - 4.2.3 *Modification to the Definition of a Haddock Separator Trawl*
- 4.3 *Commercial Fishery Management Measures*
 - 4.3.1 *Groundfish Sector Monitoring Program¹*
 - 4.3.2 *Management Measures for U.S./Canada TACs*
 - 4.3.3 *Modification to the Gulf of Maine Cod Protection Measures*

¹ The number and complexity of alternatives may impact the timeline for this action.

Applicable Laws/Issues:

NEPA Analysis (EIS/EA/CE/SIR): This action is expected to require an Environmental Assessment.

Endangered Species Act/Marine Mammal Protection Act

Type of ESA Consultation Expected (Informal/Formal): This action is expected to have an informal ESA consultation.

Other Applicable Laws and Regulatory Requirements: Typical issues and analysis are expected at this time.

Groundfish Plan Development Team Membership and Other Individuals:

	Organization	Name	Responsibility
Plan Development Team	NEFMC	Dr. Jamie Cournane	NEFMC Project Manager, Chair of Groundfish PDT, Groundfish FMP Coordinator Collaborate on Biological and Economic Impact Analyses. Oversee document preparation and submission.
	NMFS GARFO Sustainable Fisheries Division	Aja Szumylo	GARFO Project Manager, Primary point of contact in NMFS for FW55. Identify potential policy, regulatory, and administrative issues during development and review. Support with data needs. Prepare document for rule-making.
	NEFMC	Jonathon Peros	Consultation on development of measures and data analysis. Coordinate updating of the Affected Environment. Complete Protected Species Impact Analyses. Coordinate on Essential Fish Habitat Impact Analyses. Document preparation. Prepare document for rule-making.
	NEFMC	Rachel Feeney	Collaborate on Social Impact Analyses.
	NMFS GARFO Sustainable Fisheries Division	Dr. William Whitmore	Identify potential policy, regulatory, and administrative issues during development and review. Support with data needs.
	NMFS GARFO Sustainable Fisheries Division	Mark Grant	Collaborate on the development of the alternatives, and in particular lead development of monitoring alternatives.
	NMFS GARFO Analysis & Program Support Division	Dan Caless	Support data requests. Identify potential monitoring issues during development and review.
	NMFS GARFO NEPA	Tim Cardiasmenos	Review document for completeness in terms of NEPA requirements during development and review
	NMFS GARFO Protected Resources Division	Danielle Palmer	Consultation on Protected Species Impact Analyses. Consultation on development of measures and impacts on protected resources
	NMFS NEFSC Population Dynamics Branch	Paul Nitschke	Consultation on development of measures, data analysis, and biological impact analyses.
	NMFS NEFSC Social Science Branch	Drew Kitts	Consultation on development of measures. Complete data requests for the PDT. Complete Economic Impact Analyses.
	NMFS NEFSC Social Science Branch	Greg Ardini	Consultation on development of measures. Complete data requests for the PDT. Collaborate on Economic Impact Analyses.
	NMFS NEFSC Social Science Branch	Dr. Matthew Cutler	Collaborate on Social Impact Analyses.
	Maine DMR	Sally Sherman	Consultation on development of measures and data analysis.

	Organization	Name	Responsibility
Other Individuals	NEFMC	Michelle Bachman	Complete Essential Fish Habitat Impact Analyses
	NEFMC	Deirdre Boelke	Support analysis of impacts of groundfish sub-ACLs on the scallop fishery
	NEFMC	Herring FMP Lead	Support analysis of impacts of groundfish sub-ACLs on the herring fishery
	NMFS GCNE	Mitch MacDonald	Consultation on potential legal issues and questions.
	NMFS GARFO Habitat Conservation Division	David Stevenson	Consultation on development of measures and impacts on habitat.

NMFS Implementation Team Membership:

Organization	Name	Responsibility
NMFS GARFO Sustainable Fisheries Division	Aja Szumylo	Implementation Team Chair
NMFS GARFO Sustainable Fisheries Division	NMFS GARFO Sustainable Fisheries Division	Assist with issues and measures affecting sector operations
NMFS GARFO Analysis and Program Support Division (Statistics)	Dan Caless	Implementation of specifications, new sub-ACLs, and other related catch monitoring issues
NMFS GARFO Protected Resources Division	Danielle Palmer	Consultation on measures and impacts on protected resources
NMFS Northeast General Counsel—Enforcement	Joe Heckwolf	Consultation on development of measures with enforcement considerations including any new area/gear restrictions
NMFS Office of Law Enforcement	Don Frei Eric Provencher Ross Lane	Consultation on development of measures with enforcement considerations including any new area/gear restrictions
NMFS Office of Law Enforcement—VMS	Bill Semrau	Consultation on development of measures with VMS considerations including any new area restrictions

Implementation Team Issues:

None identified at this time.

Enforcement:

TBD

Information Resource Management (IRM):

TBD

Statistics:

TBD

Observer Coverage:

TBD

Administrative issues/costs:

TBD

Regulatory clarification/simplification:

TBD

Data Requirements:

TBD

VMS:

TBD

Protected Resources:

TBD

Plan for How to Measure the Effectiveness of the Action:

TBD

Other:

TBD

Worksheet 1: Groundfish PDT Resources and Work Schedule

PDT Work Task/ Issue to Address	Specific Needs	Primary Groundfish PDT Participation	Start	End	Duration
Data Request	Estimate CY catches for groundfish stocks with stock projections	Caless, Nitschke, Cournane	July, 2015	August, 2015	2 weeks
Introduction, purpose and need	Draft introduction, purpose, and need	Cournane, Szumylo, Cardiasmenos	June, 2015	October, 2015	2 days
Alternatives	Develop and review draft alternatives	Groundfish PDT	May, 2015	October, 2015	2 weeks
Alternatives	Finalize draft alternatives	Cournane, Peros	September, 2015	October, 2015	3 days
Affected Environment	Update the Affected Environment	Peros, Cournane, Szumylo	May, 2015	December, 2015	1 week
Impacts Analysis	Discuss potential impacts analysis and direction of impact by VEC	Groundfish PDT	October, 2015	October, 2015	2 weeks
Impacts Analysis	Distribute impact analysis template	Cournane	October, 2015	October, 2015	2 weeks
Impacts Analysis	Complete Biological Impacts section	Cournane, Nitschke, Sherman, Boelke, Peros, Szumylo, Cardiasmenos	September, 2015	November, 2015	2 weeks
Impacts Analysis	Complete Protected Resources section	Peros, Palmer, Cournane, Cardiasmenos	September, 2015	November, 2015	2 weeks
Impacts Analysis	Complete Habitat Impacts section	Bachman, Peros, Cournane, Cardiasmenos	September, 2015	November, 2015	2 weeks
Impacts Analysis	Complete Socio-economics Impacts section	Kitts, Cournane, Cutler, Ardini, Peros, Whitmore, Szumylo	September, 2015	November, 2015	2 weeks
Council Decision Document	Create Council decision document for final action	Cournane	November, 2015	November, 2015	1 day
Applicable Laws	Complete applicable laws section	Cournane, Kitts, Ardini	December, 2015	December, 2015	4 days
Cumulative Impacts	Complete cumulative impacts analysis	Cournane	December, 2015	December, 2015	2 days
Pre-Submission	Review of full document	Groundfish PDT	December, 2015	December, 2015	1 week
Pre-Submission	Review of full document by Council Staff Supervisor	Kellogg	December, 2015	December, 2015	3 days
Preliminary Submission	NEFMC staff submits FW 55 to GARFO staff for review	Cournane	December, 2015	December, 2015	1 day
Corrections	GARFO staff complies any corrections and sends to NEFMC staff	Szumylo, Whitmore	December, 2016	January, 2016	3 weeks
Formal Submission	NEFMC makes any corrections from GARFO staff and formally submits FW 55 to GARFO	Cournane	January, 2016	January, 2016	1 week

Worksheet 2: Timeline for Development of FW 55

2015	
MAY 28	Groundfish PDT meeting
JUN 4	Groundfish Committee meeting
JUN 16-18	NEFMC – Initiates framework
JUL 7-9	TRAC assessments for US/CA stocks including GB yellowtail flounder, EGB cod, and EGB haddock
JUL 21	Groundfish PDT meeting
AUG 18	Groundfish PDT meeting
AUG 20	US TMGC meeting
SEP 1	SSC meeting to recommend ABC for GB yellowtail flounder
SEP 2	Groundfish Advisory Panel (GAP) meeting
SEP 3	Groundfish Committee meeting
SEP 9-10	TMGC meeting to recommend TACs for US/CA stocks
SEP 14-18	Peer review of NEFSC Groundfish Operational Assessments of all stocks (except GB yellowtail flounder)
SEP 23	Groundfish PDT meeting
SEPT 29-OCT 1	NEFMC – Receives an update on the development of the action, including discussing US/CA stocks
OCT 13-14	SSC meeting to complete ABC recommendations
OCT 29	Groundfish PDT meeting
NOV 5	Groundfish PDT Meeting
NOV 12	GAP meeting
NOV 16	Groundfish PDT Meeting
NOV 17	Recreational Advisory Panel Meeting
NOV 18	Groundfish Committee meeting
DEC 1-3	NEFMC- Takes final action on framework
SUBMISSION	
DEC 23, 2015	Preliminary submission of FW 55
JAN 27, 2016	Formal submission of FW 55
MAY 1, 2016	Implementation of FW 55

Worksheet 3: Detailed Implementation Timeline

PROJECT PHASE	STARTING	ENDING
1. Council Meeting to select final measures	12.1.2015	12.3.2015
2. Council staff complete draft document	12.3.2015	12.23.2015
3. Preliminary submission to NMFS GARFO	12.23.2015	12.23.2015
4. NMFS GARFO review of preliminary document (1 month)	1.22.2016	1.22.2016
5. Formal Submission to NMFS GARFO	1.27.2016	1.27.2016
6. NMFS Program Planning and Integration review (5 days)	1.27.2016	2.3.2016
7. PPI comments incorporated by Council staff, if applicable	2.3.2016	2.3.2016
8. Resubmission (final), if necessary	2.3.2016	2.3.2016
9. Proposed rule submitted to NMFS Headquarters	1.22.2016	1.22.2016
10. Proposed rule publishes in Federal Register	2.16.2016	2.16.2016
11. Proposed rule Public Comment Period (30 days)	3.16.2016	3.16.2016
12. Final rule submitted to NMFS Headquarters	3.30.2016	3.30.2016
13. Final rule publishes in Federal Register	4.15.2016	4.15.2016
14. Approved measures effective	4.29.2016	4.29.2016

Action Plan Versions:

Version	Date	Author	Change Description
1	5/20/2015	J. Cournane	Initial version
2	5/29/2015	S. Heil	Minor updates to initial version
3	8/28/2015	J. Cournane and A. Szumylo	Updated using the Council template. Updated scope and alternatives. Updated PDT membership, work schedule, and timelines.
4	11/10/2015	J. Cournane and A. Szumylo	Updated scope, objectives, and range of alternatives Updated PDT membership Updated Timeline for Development
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