

# Northeast Multispecies Groundfish Framework Adjustment 63

**Groundfish Committee**

**August 6, 2021**



New England  
Fishery Management Council

# Council Milestones

- **June** – *initiated the action*
- **September** – receive and approve TMGC's TAC recommendations for U.S./Canada stocks, 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, 2022**, NMFS



# Scope

## **2022-2024 Specifications/Management Measures, to include:**

- Set 2022 total allowable catches for US/Canada management units of Eastern Georges Bank (GB) cod and Eastern GB haddock, and 2022-2023 specifications for the GB yellowtail flounder stock,
- Set 2022-2024 specifications for GB cod and Gulf of Maine (GOM) cod, and possibly adjust 2022 specifications for GB haddock and GOM haddock,
- Adjust 2022 specifications for white hake based on the rebuilding plan,
- Adopt additional measures to promote stock rebuilding, and
- Develop alternatives to the current default system.

# Objectives

To meet regulatory requirements to prevent overfishing, ensure rebuilding, and help achieve optimum yield in the commercial and recreational groundfish fishery.



# Range of Alternatives

## 1. Updates to annual catch limits

- Specifications for six groundfish stocks (GB cod, GOM cod, GB haddock, GOM haddock, GB yellowtail flounder, and white hake)
- Total allowable catches for transboundary stocks
- Sub-annual catch limits for Atlantic Sea scallop, small-mesh multispecies, and herring fisheries
- Review and possibly adjust sub-components (other fisheries and state)
- Changes to default specification process

## 2. Commercial and Recreational Management

- Additional measures to promote stock rebuilding

# GF PDT Memo August 3

The PDT requests guidance from the Committee on developing additional measures to promote stock rebuilding. Specifically,

1. Which stock(s) to focus on?
  - a. Individual stocks
  - b. Groupings of stocks (e.g., species, area-based, stock assessment type, other approach)
2. What types of management measures?
  - a. Fisheries – identify the fishery components to focus on
  - b. Time/Area – establish additional closures to protect spawning or habitat
  - c. Gear – develop restrictions or modification requirements
  - d. Landings – change minimum legal-sizes or develop slot limits
  - e. Catches – increase management uncertainty buffers on sub-ACLs
  - f. Other types?



# GF PDT Memo August 3

The PDT requests guidance from the Committee on developing alternatives to the current default specifications process. Specifically,

1. What should the PDT explore?

- a. How long would the default specifications be in place? Should the duration be longer than 3 months? Is 4 months sufficient? Or should the duration be longer for example 6 months, 9 months, or 12 months?
- b. Is the current percentage, 35%, of the previous year's ACLs sufficient? Some fish are targeted seasonally for example. If not, what range should the PDT develop for example - 50%, 75%, or 100%?
- c. Should all stocks have the same percentage applied or different percentages by groupings of stocks (e.g., stock area, stock status)?
- d. Should the no holdback provision be maintained?
- e. Other ideas?

# GF PDT Memo August 3

2. The PDT also suggests and would like feedback on:
  - a. Establishing two-year TACs for cod and haddock in the US/CA area
  - b. Maintaining the provision on adjusting default specifications based on incoming recommendations
  - c. Preserving the current timeline for final action (typically December) for specifications, rather than extending well into the following year



# For Today

- Discuss and make recommendations on draft measures for the PDT to develop.