



New England Fishery Management Council

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Eric Reid, *Chair* | Thomas A. Nies, *Executive Director*

MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 30, 2022
TO: Groundfish Committee
FROM: Groundfish Plan Development Team
SUBJECT: Atlantic Cod – Possible Recreational Allocation Approaches

Committee Tasking

At its June 14, 2022 meeting, the Groundfish Committee made the following motion:

The Committee recommends to the Plan Development Team that the White Paper on potential approaches to allocate “Georges Bank cod” to the recreational fishery consider the following:

- a) Management measures that each sector (rec vs. comm) was subject to during time periods considered, including whether the recreational fishery was subject to a catch target, if that catch target was linked to a change in the ABC, and if the catch target was based on old vs. new MRIP data*
- b) Whether to consider catch data from years prior to the recreational catch target being established (FY2018)*
- c) Identification of years in which an overage of the rec catch target or the commercial sub-ACL occurred and a methodology to ensure overages do not inflate a sub-ACL*
- d) If a management uncertainty buffer is appropriate for the recreational fishery and, if yes, the potential magnitude of the buffer*
- e) The influence of deducting sub-components after the recreational and commercial sub-ACLs*
- f) Using weight vs. numbers of fish in the allocation*
- g) If and how state waters catch factors into the allocation*
- h) Exploration of what recreational catch is compared to and its impacts (i.e. commercial catch, the ACL, something else?)*

The PDT prepared a draft outline of how to address the Committee tasking.

1. Background

- Cod Stock Structure
- Ongoing work of research track working group
- Council’s Change in priorities, transition plan

2. Current Georges Bank Stock

To address (a) through (c), we would summarize information for the current Georges Bank stock. Much of this information is provided in four recent PDT memos to the SSC and Committee.¹

- 1) Summary of commercial and recreational management measures since 2010

a-Management measures that each sector (rec vs. comm) was subject to during time periods considered, including whether the recreational fishery was subject to a catch target, if that catch target was linked to a change in the ABC, and if the catch target was based on old vs. new MRIP data

- 2) Summary of changes in commercial and recreational data collection since 2010

b-Whether to consider catch data from years prior to the recreational catch target being established (FY2018)

- 3) Summary of commercial and recreational catch performance since 2010

c-Identification of years in which an overage of the rec catch target or the commercial sub-ACL occurred and a methodology to ensure overages do not inflate a sub-ACL

3. Southern New England Stock

To address (d) through (h), we would summarize information for the proposed Southern New England stock, based on preliminary data generated by the Atlantic Cod Research Track Working Group. Presently, this information is not available from the Research Track but may be as soon as January 2023. We would also review past Council discussions and decisions on allocating between commercial and recreational fisheries for groundfish stocks that took place during the development of Amendment 16.

¹ PDT to SSC re GB and GOM cod FY2022-FY2024 OFLs and ABCs: https://s3.us-east-1.amazonaws.com/nefmc.org/3C5_211022-GF-PDT-memo-to-SSC-re-FY2022-FY2024-Cod-OFLs_ABCs_with_Appendices_2022-09-08-142910_hpzt.pdf

PDT to SSC re Additional information on GB cod: https://s3.us-east-1.amazonaws.com/nefmc.org/3C4_220818_GF_PDT-memo_to_SSC_re_Additional_Information_on_GB_Cod_with_Appendices_2022-09-08-142849_fmvc.pdf

PDT to Committee re GB cod catch target for recreational fishery: https://s3.us-east-1.amazonaws.com/nefmc.org/3C7_221118-GF-PDT-memo-to-CMTE-re-Recreational-Fishery-Georges-Bank-Cod-Catch-Target-with-attachments.pdf

PDT to Committee re Follow up on draft alternatives for FW65: https://s3.us-east-1.amazonaws.com/nefmc.org/3D2_221130-GF-PDT-memo-to-GF-CMTE-re-FW65-Follow-up-with-Scallop-PDT-memo-and-attachments.pdf

- 4) Summary of commercial and recreational catches attributed to the Southern New England Stock
- 5) Possible approaches to allocate the Southern New England Stock

f-Using weight vs. numbers of fish in the allocation

The PDT notes using numbers for the Southern New England stock will likely be highly uncertain or not possible given the lack of data available.

g-If and how state waters catch factors into the allocation

e-The influence of deducting sub-components after the recreational and commercial sub-ACLs

d-If a management uncertainty buffer is appropriate for the recreational fishery and, if yes, the potential magnitude of the buffer

h-Exploration of what recreational catch is compared to and its impacts (i.e. commercial catch, the ACL, something else?)