



New England Fishery Management Council

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MEETING SUMMARY

Groundfish Plan Development Team

Plymouth, MA

Wednesday May 8, 2019

The Groundfish Plan Development Team (PDT) met to discuss Amendment 23/Groundfish Monitoring and other business, as necessary.

Meeting Attendance on Wednesday May 8: Jamie M. Cournane PhD (Chair), Chad Demarest, Katherine McArdle, Kevin Sullivan, Mark Grant, Matthew Cutler, PhD, Melissa Errend, Robin Frede, and Tim Cardiasmenos, Terry Stockwell (Groundfish Committee Chair); Libby Etrie (Groundfish Committee member); and the audience included Jackie Odell, Geoff Smith, and Michael Clayton.

The meeting began at 9:40 am.

Key Outcomes:

- The PDT reviewed tasking from the Committee and Council and received assignments.
- The PDT developed revisions to the draft alternatives, especially the dockside monitoring alternative.
- The PDT discussed The Nature Conservancy's (TNC) cost evaluation for electronic monitoring prepared by CapLog Group.

Amendment 23/Groundfish Monitoring

The PDT discussed revisions to the draft alternatives in response to the Groundfish Committee's and Council's recommendations at their April meetings. The following summarizes the tasking to date for A23.

Committee/PDT Tasks for A23

- 1) [Council] Develop options for Section 4.2.1.1 Dockside Monitoring (DSM) program that address issues identified with previous DSM programs in 2010 & 2011 and the PDT's DSM Discussion document:
 - If discrepancy between dealer and DSM report of vessel landings which is the “official record” (past decisions by NMFS have stated “DSM could not replace dealer reports as official records of landings”)?
 - Higher cost/lbs. landed for DSM in smaller less used ports and for small vessels with low harvest capacities including:
 - landings in ports that must be trucked from vessel to dealer scales for weighing
 - lower levels of DSM for these ports and vessels (e.g. spot check coverage with 20% of trips)
 - Safety and liability issues associated with DSM fish hold inspections
 - How to pay for DSM option? – include both dealers and Sector options
- 2) [Council] In Section 4.2.2.1.3 Option 3 Coverage Level Based on a Percentage of Catch include 25 percent and 75 percent as potential options in addition to the 50 percent and 100 percent.
- 3) [Council] Add an additional option in Section 4.2.3.1 Option 2 Exemption for Certain Vessels Based on Fishing Locations, to exempt fishing vessels fishing exclusively west of the 71° 30” west longitude line.
- 4) [Groundfish Committee] Develop an explanatory document that explains the pros/cons of decoupling NEFOP and ASM from coverage target rate satisfaction. This analysis should also include considerations in ways flexibility could be achieved if decoupling NEFOP and ASM enabled sectors to develop vessel selection criteria with their provider in their operations/monitoring plan.
- 5) [Groundfish Committee] Add and revise Section 4.2.2.1.3/Option 3 as “Coverage Level Based on a Percentage of Catch” and include for analysis the development of a coverage level for the sector fishery based on at least 50 percent of total catch that looks at strata such as stock, gear, area fished and fishery wide catch. The PDT should take into consideration of how catch of healthy stocks influencing any option and ways it may be considered differently.
- 6) [Groundfish Committee] Review any existing exemptions from ASM to verify if the intent of the exemptions is still being met, i.e., the catch composition had little to no groundfish.

Progress to date

The updated draft alternatives include tasking items #2, #3, and partial #5 and #6 [see *Updated draft alternatives, updated by the Groundfish PDT since the April Council meeting*]. Item #1 and Item #5 (see below) were discussed by the PDT at the meeting and a summary of Item #1 will be presented at a follow-up PDT webinar on May 14 for additional discussion. The PDT agreed that Item #6 would be part of the impacts analysis. Item #4 will require additional PDT work and could potentially delay work on other items.

ITEM #4: The PDT offers this abbreviated summary with respect to Item #4 in the interim, key issues with the intersection of SBRM and ASM sampling programs (and the possibility of adding in new programs like DSM as an example):

- *Operational* – Difficulties emerge when the coverage requirements of one sampling program (e.g., ASM) are 'stacked' on top of another (e.g., SBRM) particularly when the objectives and sampling designs of the two programs are different).
- *Other fisheries* - The implementation of IFM coverage for the Atlantic herring fishery is also facing similar challenges.

ITEM #5: To assist in the discussion, the PDT wanted to know what proportion of the total dealer reported landings for each stock were observed each year. Table 1 summarizes the ratio of dealer reported landings on observed trips relative to unobserved trips for each allocated groundfish stock for fishing year 2010 to partial 2018 (as of May 8, 2019).

Table 1 - Ratio of dealer reported landings on observed trips relative to unobserved trips for each allocated groundfish stock 2010 to 2018. Realized (ASM + NEFOP) at-sea monitoring rate also shown, for comparison. * denotes target rate since realized coverage level for 2018 is not yet available.

| Fishing Year | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 |
|--------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| <i>Realized coverage level</i> | 0.32 | 0.27 | 0.22 | 0.20 | 0.26 | 0.20 | 0.15 | 0.14 | *0.15 |
| GB Cod East | 0.28 | 0.42 | 0.16 | 0.18 | 0.34 | 0.11 | 0.11 | 0.14 | 0.19 |
| GB Cod West | 0.26 | 0.24 | 0.21 | 0.18 | 0.24 | 0.18 | 0.14 | 0.18 | 0.12 |
| GB Haddock East | 0.26 | 0.27 | 0.07 | 0.07 | 0.14 | 0.20 | 0.13 | 0.11 | 0.27 |
| GB Haddock West | 0.32 | 0.36 | 0.25 | 0.24 | 0.30 | 0.19 | 0.14 | 0.14 | 0.12 |
| GB Winter Flounder | 0.34 | 0.34 | 0.17 | 0.17 | 0.22 | 0.17 | 0.12 | 0.08 | 0.15 |
| GB Yellowtail Flounder | 0.32 | 0.36 | 0.29 | 0.12 | 0.22 | 0.20 | 0.10 | 0.02 | 0.04 |
| GOM Cod | 0.33 | 0.30 | 0.22 | 0.23 | 0.31 | 0.25 | 0.17 | 0.25 | 0.13 |
| GOM Haddock | 0.29 | 0.23 | 0.24 | 0.27 | 0.30 | 0.20 | 0.13 | 0.22 | 0.14 |
| GOM Winter Flounder | 0.24 | 0.28 | 0.19 | 0.17 | 0.24 | 0.22 | 0.10 | 0.14 | 0.11 |
| CC/GOM Yellowtail Flounder | 0.23 | 0.20 | 0.15 | 0.21 | 0.27 | 0.19 | 0.13 | 0.16 | 0.10 |
| SNE/MA Yellowtail Flounder | 0.21 | 0.26 | 0.20 | 0.20 | 0.19 | 0.11 | 0.13 | 0.18 | 0.10 |
| SNE Winter Flounder | 0.07 | 0.15 | 0.22 | 0.29 | 0.26 | 0.23 | 0.13 | 0.19 | 0.09 |
| White Hake | 0.37 | 0.37 | 0.24 | 0.22 | 0.29 | 0.20 | 0.16 | 0.19 | 0.16 |
| Witch Flounder | 0.30 | 0.34 | 0.24 | 0.24 | 0.28 | 0.19 | 0.14 | 0.20 | 0.11 |
| Plaice | 0.33 | 0.39 | 0.27 | 0.24 | 0.28 | 0.20 | 0.13 | 0.17 | 0.11 |
| Pollock | 0.34 | 0.34 | 0.21 | 0.23 | 0.28 | 0.20 | 0.14 | 0.20 | 0.15 |
| Redfish | 0.33 | 0.34 | 0.22 | 0.21 | 0.30 | 0.21 | 0.15 | 0.18 | 0.13 |

TNC's cost evaluation for electronic monitoring prepared by CapLog Group

Geoff Smith (TNC) and Michael Clayton (CapLog Group) answered the PDT's questions about the cost evaluation report. The electronic monitoring report uses cost information collected from vessels participating in an EFP on various costs such as those associated with installation, video review, storage and maintenance. The model uses this information to project cost for a hypothetical 100 vessels in the fishery over a three-year period, with different scenarios (based on gear, vessel length, and type of trip) for differences in review rate. Each scenario assumes improvements in technical support costs over time. The majority of which were about the model assumptions. The PDT appreciated the work and the opportunity to ask questions about the report. The PDT also looks forward to testing out the model once it is available for release. To summarize, the PDT raised the following:

- The cost estimate includes some of the major vessel size and gear types, but at present does not include the smallest and largest vessels in the fleet, so the estimate is not representative of the composition of the current fleet. Some gear/vessel size combinations are also absent.
- Although key variables are described, the report does not provide summary statistics for these variables in the model, such as the median, variance, range, etc. This information could be useful for understanding and interpreting the cost estimate.

Cost evaluation of monitoring approaches

Mr. Chad Demarest and other NMFS staff are working on a Center Reference Document to evaluate the cost of different monitoring approaches in the groundfish fishery. The PDT plans to review the document when it is available later this year and expects it will be useful in the impacts analysis for A23. The PDT plans to have a meeting about cost estimates in the coming months. For reference purposes, a previous NMFS analysis evaluated monitoring options of a hypothetical sector and can be found on the GARFO website¹.

Other Business

No other business.

Table 2 lists follow-up tasks. The Groundfish PDT meeting adjourned at approximately 4:30 p.m.

¹ See:

https://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/fish/em_cost_assessment_for_gar_multispecies_2015_06_10.pdf

Table 2- Follow-up tasks from May 8, 2019 Groundfish PDT meeting.

| Task | Name(s) | Due Date |
|--|---|---|
| Draft meeting summary | Jamie | 5/13/2019 |
| Draft updated draft A23 alternatives | Robin, Melissa, Mark | 5/13/2019 |
| Review draft meeting summary | PDT | 5/14/2019 |
| PDT Tasking – assignments were made by each item number | | varies |
| 1 Dockside Monitoring Questions | Mark, Robin, Greg, Katherine, Matt, Melissa | |
| 2 Coverage Level Based on a Percentage of Catch | Robin, Melissa | |
| 3 Exemption for Vessels Fishing West of 71 30 | Robin, Melissa, Dan L. | |
| 4 Decoupling ASM and NEFOP | Dan L, Paul, [maybe add Michael Palmer] | |
| 5 Coverage Set as a Percentage of Catch | Chad, Melissa | |
| 6 Review of Existing ASM Exclusions | Robin, Chad | |
| Work with NOAA General Counsel to refine, if needed, the language in Section 4.1.1.3.2 Option 2: Additional Funding for Increased Monitoring in the draft A23 alternatives | Mark Grant | By the next Committee meeting, if possible. |