



New England Fishery Management Council

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

MEETING SUMMARY

Monkfish Plan Development Team

webinar

January 9, 2023

The Monkfish Plan Development Team (PDT) met on January 2, 2023, to continue work on Framework Adjustment 13 to the Monkfish Fishery Management Plan and update recommendations for 2023-2024 Monkfish Research-Set-Aside program priorities.

MEETING ATTENDANCE

Dr. Rachel Feeney (PDT Chair), Jenny Couture (NEFMC); Sharon Benjamin, Spencer Talmage, and Kris Winiarski (NMFS/GARFO); Dr. Jon Deroba and John Walden (NMFS/NEFSC); Jason Didden (MAFMC); Eric Schneider (RIDEM) and Dr. Tara Dolan (MADMF). Monkfish Committee Chair Libby Etrie, Committee members Eric Hansen and Scott Olszewski, and about eight members of the public attended.

FRAMEWORK ADJUSTMENT 13 (FW13)

The PDT reviewed outcomes of the December meetings of the New England and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Councils, particularly the remand back to the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) of its recommendations for the monkfish acceptable biological catches (ABC) for fishing years 2023-2025. The PDT developed its memo summarizing the ABCs that the Councils are requesting that the SSC consider, discussed the range of alternatives in FW13, developed effort control options consistent with NEFMC tasking and discussed updating the impacts analysis and preparing the document for final action by the Councils at their next meetings.

It was noted that if the SSC maintains its October 2022 recommendations, then the Council request could not be considered a viable alternative, as the ABCs would be higher than the SSC recommendation. PDT members suggested that it would help if the SSC could clarify the level of catches that could lead to overfishing. The PDT prepared Days-At-Sea (DAS) reduction options that would be less restrictive than what had been in the range of alternatives, given the Council recommendation for higher ABCs than the SSC had recommended. Given DAS can be selected for the north and south separately in this action, the PDT created a cap on DAS of 46 total across both areas (the No Action DAS allocation), to prevent effort increasing beyond currently allowable levels. The PDT agreed to add a table on landings and revenue dependence by species for trips using a monkfish DAS, noting that the current economic impact analysis includes all landings on trips using a monkfish DAS.

A member of the industry commented that the monkfish and skate fisheries are prosecuted together. Without monkfish DAS, vessels are unlikely to go skate fishing.

2023-2024 MONKFISH RESEARCH-SET-ASIDE PROGRAM (RSA)

The PDT Chair reported that NOAA Fisheries recently indicated its interest in issuing a Request for Proposals for the Monkfish RSA program in 2023. The NEFMC had approved Monkfish RSA research priorities in June 2022. The PDT reviewed these and discussed potential updates to recommend. A member of the public from academia noted that recently funded projects may help address some of the priorities approved last June. Recommendations were finalized via correspondence after the PDT meeting. The PDT recommendations are in a memo to the Monkfish Committee to be considered at its joint meeting with the Advisory Panel on [January 23](#).

With no other business, the meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm