



## New England Fishery Management Council

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# Scallop Fishery Management Plan & Subsequent Actions

## Goals & Objectives

### Objectives of the Scallop Fishery Management Plan

The overall objective of the management program is to maximize over time the joint social and economic benefits from the harvesting and use of the sea scallop resource. In support of this overall objective, the Council adopted the following considerations and sub-objectives:

1. Restoration of the adult stocks in terms of their abundances and age distribution can be expected to reduce the year-to-year fluctuations in stock abundance caused by variation in recruitment.
2. Enhancement of the yield per recruit for each stock.
3. Evaluation of the impact of the Plan provisions on research, Plan development and enforcement costs.
  - Minimization of adverse environmental impacts on stock levels and utilization.

### Amendment 10 (2003):

- Primary Objectives:
  - Improve yield and rebuilding potential by reducing mortality on small scallops
  - Reduce reliance on day-at-sea allocations to control fishing mortality, either by area-based management, by output controls, and/or gear restrictions.
  - Improve the ability of the FMP to meet mortality targets and achieve optimum yield by increasing the proportion of scallop fishing that falls within controlled access programs.
  - Modify the framework adjustment process and change the fishing year to shorten the time between the availability of data (surveys) and annual adjustments via the framework procedure
  - Reduce and/or minimize bycatch mortality and habitat impacts
  - Re-evaluate and balance the mortality associated with equal effort allocations to fishing sectors using different gears

- Develop a program for vessels with general category scallop permits that occasionally target sea scallops to continue this practice with restrictions on participation or the amount of scallops that these vessels may harvest.
- To continue controlled access to groundfish closed areas, consistent with groundfish rebuilding and habitat protection objectives in the context of area rotation management
- Develop a streamlined program to allow researchers to obtain an Experimental Fishery Permit to collect scallop fishery and resource data
- Improve data collection and research on the scallop resource and fishery through a set-aside program to provide funding through industry participation
- Secondary Objectives:
  - Re-evaluate and possibly modify the overfishing definition reference points (targets and thresholds for fishing mortality and stock biomass) to be consistent with new management policies (i.e. area rotation and/or gear modifications)
  - Improve scallop spawning potential, considering sources of variation such as oceanographic factors and man-made effects
  - Improve total productivity for all related species in the fishery
  - Maximize the social and economic benefits to the industry and the nation
  - Minimize adverse impacts on the industry while rebuilding the resource
  - Maximize industry flexibility to adjust to resource variation
  - Minimize regulatory complexity and cost to reduce administrative costs and improve enforcement
  - Reduce and minimize uncertainty about future regulations
  - Minimize adverse impacts on communities, ensuring fair and equitable access to the scallop fishery
  - Improve safety at sea

**Amendment 11 (2004):**

- Primary Objectives:
  - Control capacity and mortality in the general category scallop fishery
  - Allow for better and more timely integration of sea scallop assessment results in the management process
- Secondary Objectives:
  - Establish criteria to qualify a number of vessels for a limited entry general category permit
  - Develop measures to prevent the limited entry general category fishery from exceeding their allocation

- Develop measures to address incidental catch of scallops while fishing for other species
- Determine means to incorporate the most recent sea scallop science and assessment results in management decisions

**Framework 16 (2004):**

- Goals and Objectives:
  - Develop management measures to control scallop fishing effort in re-opened portions of the Georges Bank groundfish closed areas
  - Correct the inconsistencies between the Scallop and Multispecies FMP with regard to habitat closures
  - Minimizing bycatch impacts for groundfish, skates, monkfish, and other finfish
  - Improving the practicability of the habitat closed areas adopted by the Council in Amendment 13 to the Multispecies FMP.
  - Address potential inequalities by modifying the method to allocate controlled access trips and DAS to part-time and occasional scallop vessels

**Framework 17 (2005):**

- Goals and Objectives:
  - Improving law enforcement capabilities in monitoring the possession limit
  - Improving safety by removing the disincentive for vessel to use the broken trip exemption program.
  - Preventing the general category scallop fishing from increasing the scallop mortality beyond sustainable levels because illegal landings.
  - Minimizing the costs of VMS implementation on vessels with General category permits with incidental catches of scallops.
  - Reducing the compliance costs for vessels while in port.

**Framework 18 (2006):**

- Goals and Objectives:
  - Area rotation adjustments to achieve optimum yield and reduce mortality on areas having abundant small scallops
  - Changes to reduce administrative burdens and risks to safety at sea
  - Reduce the potential for interactions between the scallop fishery and sea turtles.

**Amendment 13 (2007):**

- Goals and Objectives:

- Implement an observer service provider mechanism for the Atlantic sea scallop fishery that would reactivate the industry funded observer program through a scallop total allowable catch (TAC) and days-at-sea (DAS) set aside program to help defray the cost of carrying observers.

**Framework 21 (2010):**

- Goals and Objectives:
  - Comply with reasonable and prudent measure required in recent biological opinion relating to sea turtles

**Amendment 15 (2011):**

- Primary Objectives:
  - Bring the Scallop FMP in compliance with new requirements of the re-authorized MSA
  - Address excess capacity in the limited access (LA) scallop fishery
  - Consider measures to adjust several aspects of the overall program to make the scallop management plan more effective.
- Secondary Objectives:
  - Consider addressing capacity in the limited access scallop fishery and improve overall economic performance while considering impacts on various fisheries and fishing communities.
  - Consider adjusting the current overfishing definition (OFD) to be more compatible with area rotation.
  - Consider adjustments to the limited access general category management program
  - Consider addressing the essential fish habitat (EFH) closed areas under the Scallop FMP if Phase II of the EFH Amendment is delayed.
  - Consider adjustments to the current research set-aside (RSA) program to address timing concerns and efficient use of resource for the purposes of research.
  - Consider adjusting the scallop fishing year because it is currently out of sync with the framework adjustment process and the timing of when scallop survey data are available for management decisions.

**Framework 23 (2012):**

- Goals and Objectives:
  - Minimize impacts on sea turtles through the requirement of a turtle deflector dredge

- Improve the effectiveness of the accountability measure adopted under Amendment 15 for the YT flounder sub-ACL
- Consider specific changes to the general category NGOM management program to address potential inconsistencies
- Consider modifications to the vessel monitoring system to improve fleet operations.

**Framework 24 (2013):**

- Goals and Objectives:
  - Refine the management of the YT flounder sub-ACL allocated to the scallop fishery by developing measures to further reduce yellowtail flounder bycatch and optimize scallop yield, and improve accountability of bycatch across the fishery
  - improve the flexibility and efficient use of LAGC IFQ by allowing leasing during the year
  - Expand the current observer set-aside program to include LAGC vessels in open areas in order to more accurately determine bycatch from this sector of the fishery.

**Framework 26 (2015):**

- Goals and Objectives:
  - Adjust several aspects of the overall program to make the scallop management plan more effective for participants in the fishery
    - Allow vessels with federal scallop permits to potentially fish in state waters after the federal NGOM hard TAC is reached to minimize potentially negative impacts on vessels that participate in both fisheries
    - Make the turtle chain mat and turtle deflector dredge requirements consistent in terms of season and area to reduce regulatory complexity and maintain conservation benefits for sea turtles
    - Provide some incentive (through reduced DAS charged) for a limited access vessel to bring scallop landings back to ports located farther from primary open area fishing locations to minimize negative impacts on vessels and fishing communities in the southern range of the fishery.
    - Clarify regulations related to flaring bar restriction for turtle deflector dredges to improve safe handling of fishing gear.

### **Amendment 19 (2016):**

- Primary Objectives:
  - Reduce potential economic and biological consequences from late implementation of specifications
  - Reduce overall administrative burden associated with late implementation

### **Framework 28 (2017)**

- Goals and Objectives:
  - To remove the incentive to not use a DAS while possessing and processing in excess of 50 bu of shell stock, which undermines the DAS program used to control fishing mortality.

### **Framework 29 (2018):**

- Goals and Objectives:
  - Facilitate access to scallops formerly in a habitat management area
  - Ensure equality in allocations

### **Framework 30 (2019)**

- Goals and Objectives:
  - Streamline the specifications setting process and facilitate predictable outcomes for stakeholders

### **Amendment 21 (2022):**

- Goals and Objectives:
  - Support a growing directed scallop fishery in federal waters in the NGOM.
  - Establishing mechanisms to set allowable catches and accurately monitor catch and bycatch from the NGOM
  - Improve overall economic performance of the LAGC IFQ component.
  - Allow for continued participation in the General Category fishery at varying levels

### **Framework 38 (2024):**

- Goals and Objectives:
  - Improve enforceability of the scallop rotational management program