

National Marine Fisheries Service  
Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office  
Sustainable Fisheries Division  
[www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov](http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov)

# Status Report of Greater Atlantic Region Actions

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Prepared for the June 23-25, 2026  
Meeting of the  
New England Fishery Management Council

June 16, 2026

## **New England Council Actions**

### **Omnibus Management Flexibility Amendment to New England Fishery Management**

## **Council Fishery Management Plans**

On May 14, 2026, NMFS published a notice of availability (NOA) in the *Federal Register* (91 FR 27234) announcing that the Council had transmitted the Amendment to the Secretary of Commerce for review. The comment period on the NOA closes on July 13, 2026. If approved, the Amendment would allow for increased management flexibility and consistency across all the Council's FMPs. For additional information, please contact Travis Ford at (978) 281-9233 or [Travis.Ford@noaa.gov](mailto:Travis.Ford@noaa.gov).

## **Small-Mesh Multispecies**

None at this time.

## **Groundfish**

### **2026 Sector Rule**

On April 27, 2026, NMFS published the final Northeast multispecies sector rule in the *Federal Register* (91 FR 22467) that allocated initial annual catch entitlements to groundfish sectors for fishing year 2026, which began on May 1. The final rule is based on catch limits set by Framework Adjustment 69 and default specifications. For additional information, please contact Pete Christopher at 978-281-9288 or email at [peter.christopher@noaa.gov](mailto:peter.christopher@noaa.gov).

### **Northeast Multispecies Inseason Action: Closed Area II Yellowtail Flounder/Haddock SAP and Closure of the Regular B DAS Program**

On May 7, 2026 NMFS published a temporary rule in the *Federal Register* (91 FR 24737), that allocated zero trips into the Closed Area II Yellowtail Flounder/Haddock Special Access Program (SAP) for common pool vessels to target yellowtail flounder for fishing year 2026. As a result, this SAP is only open to target haddock, from August 1, 2026, through January 31, 2027. Northeast multispecies vessels fishing in the SAP must fish with a haddock separator trawl, a Ruhle trawl, or hook gear. Additionally, this inseason action closed the Regular B Days-At-Sea (DAS) program, and use of Regular B DAS is prohibited for the 2026 fishing year, through April 30, 2027. This applies to all vessels issued a limited access Northeast multispecies permit. The Regular B DAS Program has been closed in this manner annually since fishing year 2019. For additional information, please contact Spencer Talmage at (978) 281-9232 or email at [Spencer.Talmage@noaa.gov](mailto:Spencer.Talmage@noaa.gov).

## **Scallops**

### **Closure of the Northern Gulf of Maine Scallop Management Area to the Limited Access General Category Fishery**

On April 14, 2026, NMFS published a notice in the *Federal Register* (91 FR 19079) that closed the Northern Gulf of Maine (NGOM) scallop management area for Limited Access General Category vessels as of 0001 hr on April 13, 2026. We projected that 100 percent of the 2026 NGOM set-aside (437,867 lb) would be harvested by April 13. For additional information, please contact Ashley Trudeau at (978) 281-9252 or [Ashley.Trudeau@noaa.gov](mailto:Ashley.Trudeau@noaa.gov).

## **Herring**

None at this time.

## **Monkfish**

### **Framework Adjustment 17 to the Monkfish Fishery Management Plan**

On April 23, 2026, NMFS published a proposed rule in the *Federal Register* (91 FR 21779) for Framework Adjustment 17 to the Monkfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP). The framework proposed the Council-recommended specifications for fishing years 2026 through 2028 and a streamlined way to implement accountability measures when annual monkfish catch limits are exceeded. The Framework 17 proposed rule also included a measure for implementing default rollover specifications for the monkfish fishery. Implementation of default specifications was originally included in Framework Adjustment 13 to the Monkfish FMP but was inadvertently omitted in the rulemaking for that action. The comment period for this proposed rule closed on May 26, 2026, and we are working to publish a final rule as soon as possible. For additional information, please contact Spencer Talmage at (978) 281-9232 or [spencer.talmage@noaa.gov](mailto:spencer.talmage@noaa.gov).

## **Atlantic Deep-Sea Red Crab**

None at this time.

## **Northeast Skate Complex**

None at this time.

## **Mid-Atlantic Council Actions**

### **Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass**

#### **2026-2027 Recreational Management Measures for Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass.**

On April 30, 2026, NMFS published an interim final rule in the *Federal Register* (91 FR 23178) announcing the 2026 and 2027 recreational management measures for summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass, as recommended by the Council, including conservation equivalency for summer flounder and black sea bass, waiving Federal coastwide measures in Federal waters. Scup measures remained status quo. For additional information, please contact Savannah Lewis

at (978) 281-9348 or [Savannah.Lewis@noaa.gov](mailto:Savannah.Lewis@noaa.gov).

**Recreational Measures Setting Process Framework for Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass (Framework 19) and Bluefish (Framework 7).**

On April 28, 2026, NMFS implemented the Recreational Measures Setting Process Framework for summer flounder, scup, black sea bass, and bluefish. These frameworks make limited revisions to the process for setting recreational management measures and modify the recreational accountability measures. For additional information, please contact Savannah Lewis at (978) 281-9348 or [Savannah.Lewis@noaa.gov](mailto:Savannah.Lewis@noaa.gov).

**Spiny Dogfish**

None at this time.

**Surfclam and Ocean Quahog**

None at this time.

**Atlantic Bluefish**

None at this time.

**Tilefish**

**2026 Specifications**

On June 15, 2026, NMFS published a final rule in the *Federal Register* (91 FR 35897) that implemented 2026 blueline tilefish specifications, and reaffirmed previously projected 2026 golden tilefish specifications. The specifications for golden tilefish are status quo. The specifications for blueline tilefish include increases to both the commercial and recreational total allowable landings, and are based upon results of the blueline tilefish assessment completed in 2025. All other management measures remain unchanged. For additional information, please contact Matthew Rigdon at (978) 281-9336 or [Matthew.Rigdon@noaa.gov](mailto:Matthew.Rigdon@noaa.gov).

**Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish**

**2026 Chub Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish Fishery Specifications**

On March 16, 2026, NMFS published a proposed rule in the *Federal Register* (91 FR 12545) for the 2026 specifications for the Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP). This action would set new 2026 and projected 2027-2028 specifications for the chub mackerel and *Illex* squid fisheries, and reaffirm previously-projected specifications for the longfin squid and butterfish fisheries. The public comment period for this proposed rule was open through

April 15, 2026. For additional information, please contact Maria Fenton at (978) 281-9196 or [Maria.Fenton@noaa.gov](mailto:Maria.Fenton@noaa.gov).

### **Framework Adjustment 17 to the Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish FMP**

On April 27, 2026, NMFS published an interim final rule in the *Federal Register* (91 FR 22457) implementing Framework Adjustment 17 to the Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish FMP. This action: Revised the Atlantic mackerel rebuilding plan; set final 2026 and projected 2027 mackerel fishery specifications; increased commercial mackerel possession limits; modified the in-season possession limit adjustment process; established increased mode-specific (*i.e.*, private, for-hire) recreational mackerel possession limits; and made administrative changes and revisions to existing regulations. The public comment period for Framework 17 was open through May 12, 2026. For additional information, please contact Maria Fenton at (978) 281-9196 or [Maria.Fenton@noaa.gov](mailto:Maria.Fenton@noaa.gov).

### **Quota Transfers**

On May 4, 2026, NMFS published a *Federal Register* notice of summer flounder quota transfer from Virginia to New Jersey (91 FR 23918). The transfer was made to repay landings made by an out-of-state permitted vessel under a safe harbor agreement. For additional information, please contact Matthew Rigdon at (978) 281-9336 or [Matthew.Rigdon@noaa.gov](mailto:Matthew.Rigdon@noaa.gov).

### **Other Actions**

#### **Cost Recovery**

##### **Cost Recovery Program Updates Rule**

On May 1, 2026, NMFS published a proposed rule in the *Federal Register* (91 FR 23385) to update and simplify the regulations for cost recovery in the Limited Access General Category Scallop Individual Fishing Quota, Golden Tilefish Individual Fishing Quota, and Surfclam and Ocean Quahog Individual Transferable Quota fisheries. The proposed changes would waive annual fees less than \$25, specify that bills would be issued within six months of the end of the cost recovery period, and would set the deadline to pay bills to 30 days. The public comment period was open through June 1, 2026. A final rule is under development. For additional information contact Douglas Potts, [douglas.potts@noaa.gov](mailto:douglas.potts@noaa.gov).

#### **Paperwork Reduction Act**

On June 11, 2026, the Department of Commerce published a notice of information collection and request for comment related to the renewal of the OMB control number associated with the annual trap transfer program in the American lobster fishery. Public comment is being accepted through August 10, 2026.

On June 11, 2026, the Department of Commerce published a notice of information collection and

request for comment related to the renewal of the OMB control number associated with the individual fishing quota (IFQ) program in the golden tilefish fishery. Public comment is being accepted through August 10, 2026.

## **Jonah Crab**

None at this time.

## **Industry Funded Monitoring Omnibus Amendment**

None at this time.

## **Lobster**

None at this time.

## **Habitat Actions**

None at this time.

## **Protected Resources Actions**

None at this time.

## **Research Permits and Acknowledgments - Applications Under**

**Review** (For a comprehensive list of research permits and acknowledgements, refer to the [Greater Atlantic Exempted Fishing Permit Program Inventory](#)).

On April 6, 2026, NMFS received a Scallop Research-Set-Aside Letter of Authorization (RSA LOA) from the Maine Department of Marine Resources (ME DMR), to conduct compensation fishing activities in support of its dredge-based scallop assessment in the NGOM. For additional information, please contact Ashley Trudeau at (978) 281-9252 or [Ashley.Trudeau@noaa.gov](mailto:Ashley.Trudeau@noaa.gov).

On April 9, 2026, NMFS received an Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) application from the Coonamessett Farm Foundation (CFF), to conduct a project to advance the use of electronic monitoring in the scallop fishery in Massachusetts, New Jersey, and North Carolina. For additional information, please contact Ashley Trudeau at (978) 281-9252 or [Ashley.Trudeau@noaa.gov](mailto:Ashley.Trudeau@noaa.gov).

On April 20 and 22, 2026, NMFS received Scallop RSA LOA applications from CFF, to conduct compensation fishing in support of its offshore wind impacts and optical assessment surveys. For additional information, please contact Ashley Trudeau at (978) 281-9252 or

[Ashley.Trudeau@noaa.gov](mailto:Ashley.Trudeau@noaa.gov).

On April 23, 2026, NMFS received an EFP application from CFF, to continue compensation fishing in support of its Great South Channel Habitat Management Area sonar and drop camera survey. For additional information, please contact Christine Ford at (978) 281-9185 or at [christine.ford@noaa.gov](mailto:christine.ford@noaa.gov).

On May 6, 2026, NMFS received an EFP application from Brady Lybarger, to fish for tilefish during scallop trips. For additional information, please contact Ashley Trudeau at (978) 281-9252 or [Ashley.Trudeau@noaa.gov](mailto:Ashley.Trudeau@noaa.gov).

On May 14, 2026, NMFS received a Scallop RSA LOA application from the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, to conduct compensation fishing in support of its trawl survey. For additional information, please contact Ashley Trudeau at (978) 281-9252 or [Ashley.Trudeau@noaa.gov](mailto:Ashley.Trudeau@noaa.gov).

On May 14, 2026, NMFS received an EFP application from the Commercial Fisheries Research Foundation (CFRF), to conduct a project to expand opportunities in the tilefish fishery through fishermen-collected data. For additional information, please contact Ashley Trudeau at (978) 281-9252 or [Ashley.Trudeau@noaa.gov](mailto:Ashley.Trudeau@noaa.gov).

On May 20, 2026, NMFS received a Scallop RSA LOA application from CFRF, to conduct compensation fishing in support of its research fleet survey. For additional information, please contact Ashley Trudeau at (978) 281-9252 or [Ashley.Trudeau@noaa.gov](mailto:Ashley.Trudeau@noaa.gov).

On June 12, 2026, NMFS received an EFP application from ME DMR, to test dynamic management in the Maine lobster fishery for North Atlantic Right Whale aggregations near Jeffrey's Ledge. For additional information, please contact Christine Ford at (978) 281-9185 or at [christine.ford@noaa.gov](mailto:christine.ford@noaa.gov).

## **Research Permits and Acknowledgments – Application Review Completed**

On April 16, 2026, NMFS issued an EFP to the Northeast Seafood Coalition, in coordination with the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries (MA DMF), to continue its Cod Transition Plan surveys in seasonally closed areas. For additional information, please contact Christine Ford at (978) 281-9185 or at [christine.ford@noaa.gov](mailto:christine.ford@noaa.gov).

On April 16, 2026, NMFS issued a Letter of Acknowledgement (LOA) to the University of Massachusetts (SMASST), to conduct its Gulf of Maine cod video trawl survey. For additional information, please contact Christine Ford at (978) 281-9185 or at [christine.ford@noaa.gov](mailto:christine.ford@noaa.gov).

On April 16, 2026, NMFS issued an LOA to Stony Brook University, to conduct its annual New York Bight Offshore Monitoring survey. For additional information, please contact Christine Ford at (978) 281-9185 or at [christine.ford@noaa.gov](mailto:christine.ford@noaa.gov).

On April 16, 2026, NMFS issued an LOA to ME DMR, to conduct its scallop dredge survey in the Northern Gulf of Maine. For additional information, please contact Ashley Trudeau at (978) 281-9252 or [Ashley.Trudeau@noaa.gov](mailto:Ashley.Trudeau@noaa.gov).

On April 17, 2026, NMFS issued an LOA to S Mast, to conduct its Vineyard Wind ventless trap survey. For additional information, please contact Christine Ford at (978) 281-9185 or at [christine.ford@noaa.gov](mailto:christine.ford@noaa.gov).

On April 21, 2026, NMFS issued an LOA to the New England Aquarium, to conduct its RecBio sampling program. For additional information, please contact Christine Ford at (978) 281-9185 or at [christine.ford@noaa.gov](mailto:christine.ford@noaa.gov).

On April 23, 2026, NMFS issued a monkfish Research Set-Aside (RSA) EFP to the Cape Cod Commercial Fishermen's Alliance, to extend the timeframe for it to complete unused days at sea from its original award. For additional information, please contact Christine Ford at (978) 281-9185 or at [christine.ford@noaa.gov](mailto:christine.ford@noaa.gov).

On April 23, 2026, NMFS issued a monkfish RSA EFP to the Cornell Cooperative Extension, to extend the timeframe for it to complete unused days at sea from its original award. For additional information, please contact Christine Ford at (978) 281-9185 or at [christine.ford@noaa.gov](mailto:christine.ford@noaa.gov).

On April 24, 2026, NMFS issued an EFP to CFF, to extend and expand its surfclam compensation fishing in support of the Great South Channel Habitat Management Area project, to support its surfclam surveys in the area. For additional information, please contact Ryan Silva at (978) 281-9326 or at [ryan.silva@noaa.gov](mailto:ryan.silva@noaa.gov).

On April 27, 2026, NMFS issued an EFP to MA DMF, to conduct its annual ventless lobster trap survey. For additional information, please contact Christine Ford at (978) 281-9185 or at [christine.ford@noaa.gov](mailto:christine.ford@noaa.gov).

On April 28, 2026, NMFS issued an EFP to the Gulf of Maine Research Institute, to continue its jigging in the Gulf of Maine groundfish closure area project. For additional information, please contact Christine Ford at (978) 281-9185 or at [christine.ford@noaa.gov](mailto:christine.ford@noaa.gov).

On May 5 and 12, 2026, NMFS issued two LOAs to S Mast, to conduct its Georges Bank drop camera and Gulf of Maine optical surveys of the sea scallop resource. For additional information, please contact Ashley Trudeau at (978) 281-9252 or [Ashley.Trudeau@noaa.gov](mailto:Ashley.Trudeau@noaa.gov).

On May 6, 2026, NMFS issued an LOA to S Mast to conduct its Vineyard Wind trawl survey. For additional information, please contact Christine Ford at (978) 281-9185 or at [christine.ford@noaa.gov](mailto:christine.ford@noaa.gov).

On May 18, 2026, NMFS issued an EFP to CFRF, to continue its skate wing fishery trip limits



project. For additional information, please contact Ashley Trudeau at (978) 281-9252 or [Ashley.Trudeau@noaa.gov](mailto:Ashley.Trudeau@noaa.gov).

On June 9, 2026, NMFS issued an EFP to CFRF, to continue its annual lobster and Jonah crab research fleet project. For additional information, please contact Christine Ford at (978) 281-9185 or at [christine.ford@noaa.gov](mailto:christine.ford@noaa.gov).

On June 12, 2026, NMFS issued an LOA to the Mystic Aquarium, to conduct its 2026 Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine National Monument expedition. For additional information, please contact Christine Ford at (978) 281-9185 or at [christine.ford@noaa.gov](mailto:christine.ford@noaa.gov).

On June 15, 2026, NMFS issued an LOA to the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary, to capture forage fish in support of its predator foraging ecology research. For additional information, please contact Christine Ford at (978) 281-9185 or at [christine.ford@noaa.gov](mailto:christine.ford@noaa.gov).