New England Fishery Management Council

RISK POLICY

Appendix IV

DECISION CATALOGUE

Date/Version

Risk Policy Working Group

June 3, 2026

DRAFT Risk Policy Decision Catalog

I. Factors

	Meeting(s)	Decision / Rationale
Assessment and Uncertainty	• January 13, 2026 Stock Assessment Sub-group Meeting • January 23, 2026 RPWG Meeting	Do not use this factor for June 2026 implementation date. Continue to develop this factor for future use. Potential to evaluate based on the last stock assessment but needs to consider changes to stock assessment process and how to handle data updates in Risk Policy.
Fish Condition	• December 17, 2025 Fish Condition and Ecosystem Sub-group Meeting • January 23, 2026 RPWG Meeting	Do not use this factor for June 2026 implementation date. Instead consider a factor for ecosystem characterization (EC). The EC factor should capture risks related to changes in habitat, current habitat conditions, and trophic relationships that are not addressed in other assessment processes (i.e., stock assessments or climate vulnerability assessments).
Biomass (SSB) / Stock Status	March 9, 2026 RPWG Meeting	Maintain factor scoring based on analytical and empirical assessments; consider incorporating information of data updates to modify score based on SSC feedback.
	March 30, 2026 SSC Meeting	Do not use data updates and do not changes in the scoring rubric to revise the factor score for June 2026 implementation date. See *Additional Information: Biomass (SSB) / Stock Status* below.
Climate Vulnerability	March 9, 2026 RPWG Meeting	Maintain factor for June 2026 implementation date. Continue using Hare et al. 2016 to score at species level; allow PDT expert opinion and bodies of literature to score at stock-level. Future iteration of the factor could consider the updated Climate Vulnerability Assessment tentatively scheduled for release in Fall 2026.
Recruitment	January 23, 2026 RPWG Meeting	Maintain factor for June 2026 implementation date; revise to use a quantile approach to score which uses the recruitment or survey index time series and bins into quantile regimes.

	Meeting(s)	Decision / Rationale
Commercial Fishery Characterization	January 23, 2026 RPWG Meeting	Maintain factor for June 2026 implementation date. Simplify to five inputs; consider definitions of primary and secondary ports and two-way directionality in the score; future iterations should consider leasing.
	March 25, 2026 Risk Policy Factor Discussion	Do not use the Quota Change Model as a data source for June 2026 implementation due to concerns about the model's ability to be a good predictor of future harvest. Consider re-wording the quota question to capture dynamics more broadly. For fishing communities, near term implementation could consider requesting a list from each AP for the important ports for each FMP, and commercial activity could be characterized for that specific port across FMPs. Future development could parse this out by FMP and should derive consistent definitions of ports across FMPs. Future development should also consider how economics relates to risk (e.g. GINI coefficients).
	May 5, 2026 Community Data and Port Identification Discussion (Staff)	Information regarding top ports in New England with at least one port from each NE state was discussed as a potential source of information for scoring the factor in the near term. Ideas will be further discussed and presented at the June RPWG meeting.
Recreational Fishery Characterization	January 23, 2026 RPWG Meeting	Maintain factor for June 2026 implementation date. Add a question for RAP; consider two-way directionality in the score.
	March 9, 2026 RPWG Meeting	Maintain question around PSEs and uncertainty but consider data at the level that is utilized in management decisions; develop questions around quota utilization for June 2026 implementation; future iterations of the factor could include questions around participation, engagement, and choke stocks dynamics.
	March 25, 2026 Risk Policy Factor Discussion	Include if greater than 80% of the quota / catch target has been caught in at least

	Meeting(s)	Decision / Rationale
		two of the last three years as a question to characterize this factor for June 2026 implementation. Consider a question for stocks without an ACL for future iterations. Clarify the AP question, that information should be unique from information provided in response to other characterizing questions. Consider re-wording questions 3 and 4 to allow bi-directional movement. Movement on the rubric in response to the fleet diversity question should be unidirectional.
	May 5, 2026 Recreational Data Discussion	Future iterations could consider a different source for fleet diversity than the Opportunities (Shannon index) from the State of the Ecosystem Report. This index is based on trip data from MRIP, and using this to score the level of risk for this factor has the potential to suggest more tolerant approaches if the number of trips by mode increases, by the proportion of the fleet by mode decreases. Current application of this data source could allow the PDTs to break down angler trips by mode and include it in the matrix for context to support the Risk Policy score and Shannon index.

II. Mechanics

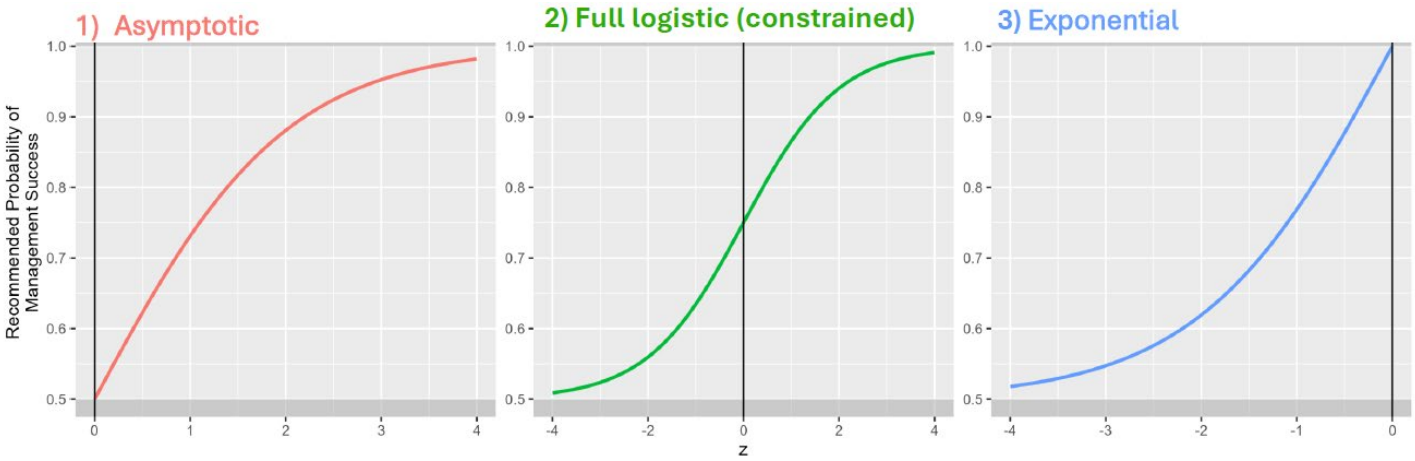
	Meeting(s)	Decision / Rationale
Types of shapes of the logistic curve (Figure 2)	• March 4, 2026 Risk Policy Technical Sub-Group • March 9, 2026 RPWG Meeting	The three curves differ in how quickly the resulting probability of management success changes in areas of high/neutral/low risk tolerance. Do not use asymptotic curve (Figure 2.1) for June 2026 implementation date; replace with full logistic (s-shaped curve, Figure 2.2). Future iterations could consider exponential curve (Figure 2.3) but would need additional development. See *Additional Information: Shape of the Curve* below.
Directionality of scoring rubric	• March 4, 2026 Risk Policy Technical Sub-Group • March 9, 2026 RPWG Meeting	Invert the scoring rubrics so that positive values represent increased risk tolerance; inverted rubric also inverts the full logistic (s-shaped curve) recommended above.
Score ranges and increments	March 4, 2026 Risk Policy Technical Sub-Group	Maintain existing ranges and incremental steps between scores for the respective factors. Future iterations could consider changes as needed.
SSC Use and Application	March 9, 2026 RPWG Meeting	Working group supports the following approaches for SSC application: 1) "Adjustments of 'Probability of Success', unconstrained": movement along the curve in terms of the y-axis and probability of success; 2) "Adjustments of 'Probability of Success' within Risk Zones": movement along the curve but constrained to the implicit risk zones or areas of inflection of the S-shaped curve; and 3) "Advisory ABC": Risk Policy and calculated z-score are a starting point for specification deliberations

Additional Information

Shape of the Curve

Demonstrations of the three curves discussed at the March 9, 2026 RPWG meetings. The full logistic curve was recommended for implementation in June 2026.

Figure 1. Three possible shapes for the Risk Policy curve including 1) an asymptotic curve, 2) a full logistic curve constrained between 0.5 and 1, and 3) an exponential curve.



III. Data Needs and Wants

	Factor	Decision / Rationale
Age-1 indices and length-age keys (LAK)	Recruitment	Indices and LAK could assist in scoring the factor when recruitment estimates are not readily available from assessments or data updates.
Catch (number per tow) at age by year and season (Figure 3)	Biomass (SSB) / Stock Status	This information could provide another source of information when uncertainty around stock assessment estimates is high.
Survey catch (number per tow) by year and age (Figure 4)	Biomass (SSB) / Stock Status	This information could provide another source of information when uncertainty around stock assessment estimates is high.
Age 3+ survey catch by year and season (Figure 5)	Biomass (SSB) / Stock Status	This information could provide another source of information when uncertainty around stock assessment estimates is high.
Advisory Panel weighted community indicators	Commercial Fishery Characterization	The existing community indicators are weighted if the data is more variable which is not a real-world scenario. Allowing the advisory panel to provide feedback, interests, and priorities for improving the fishery could up or down weight certain indicators and the overall level of risk they're willing to accept to achieve those interests.
Angler satisfaction indicator	Recreational Fishery Characterization	NEFSC SSB may be able to assist in defining an indicator based on angler satisfaction of fishing for their target species which could help track the recreational fishery performance and its changes over time.

Additional Information

Biomass (SSB) / Stock Status

Figure 2. Catch at age (numbers/tow) for the Northern (top row) and Southern (bottom row) stocks of silver hake caught by the NEFSC bottom trawl survey during the Spring (left column) and Fall (right column) surveys. Plots produced by Andy Applegate.

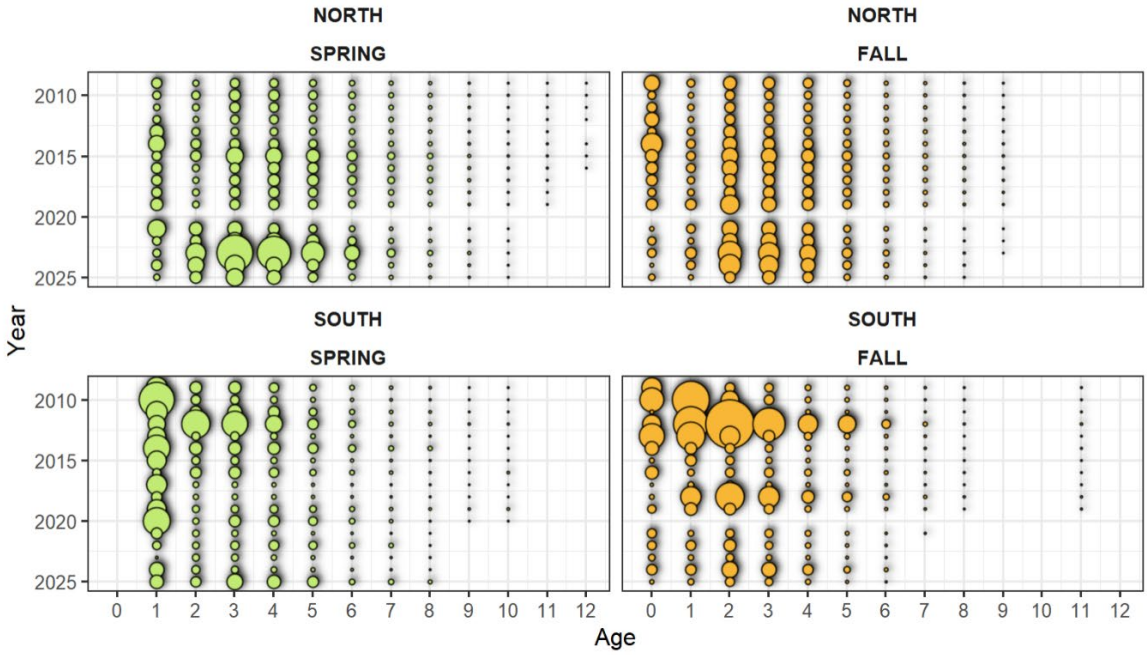


Figure 3. Survey catch (numbers/tow) for ages 0 (red line) and 1(blue line) for the Northern (top row) and Southern (bottom row) stocks of silver hake caught by the NEFSC bottom trawl survey during the Spring (left column) and Fall (right column) surveys. Plots produced by Andy Applegate.

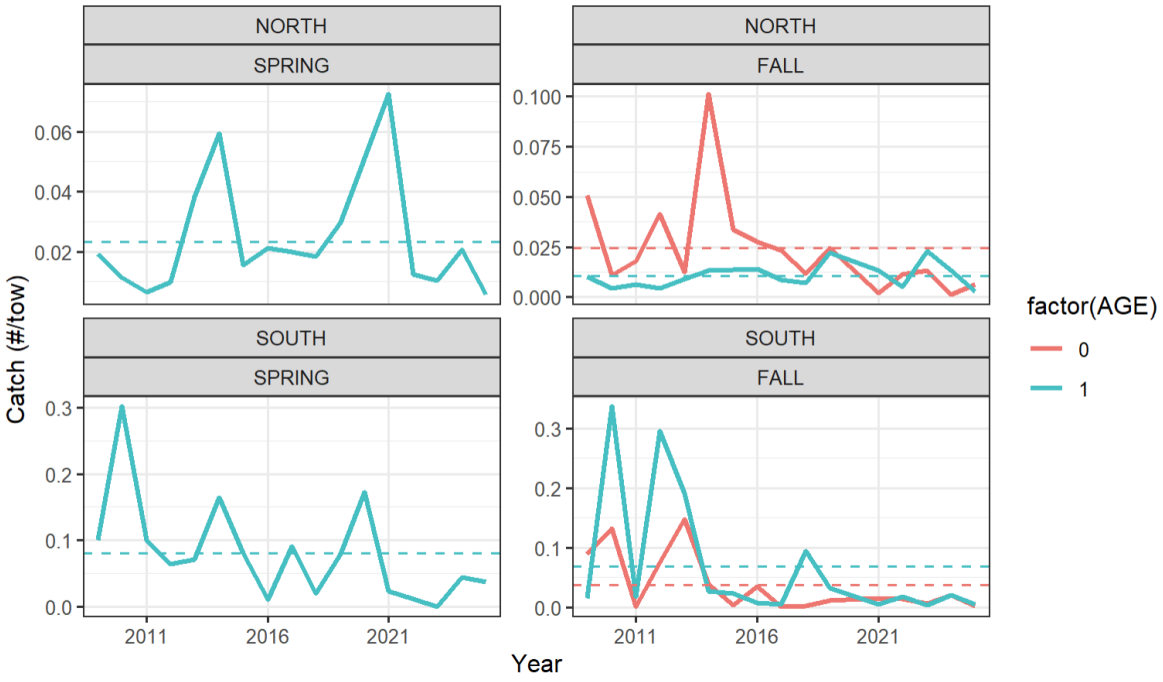
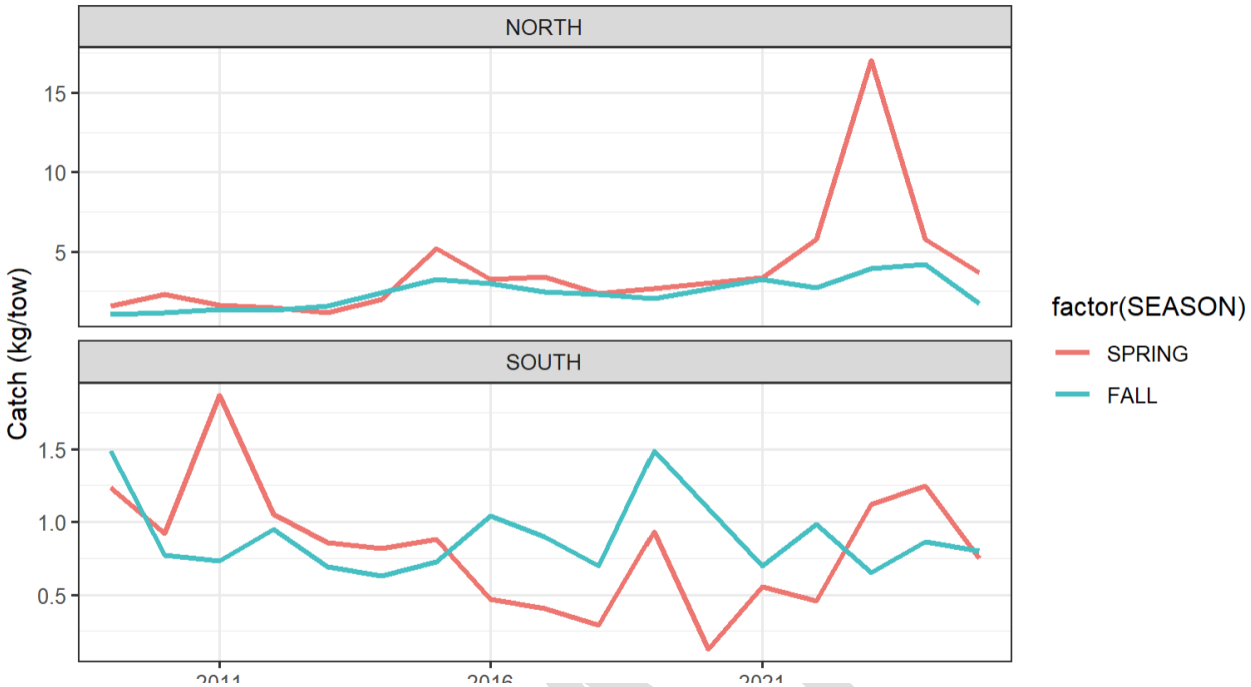


Figure 4. Survey biomass (kg/tow) for ages 3+ for the Northern (top row) and Southern (bottom row) stocks of silver hake caught by the NEFSC bottom trawl survey during the Spring (red line) and Fall (blue line) surveys. Plots produced by Andy Applegate.

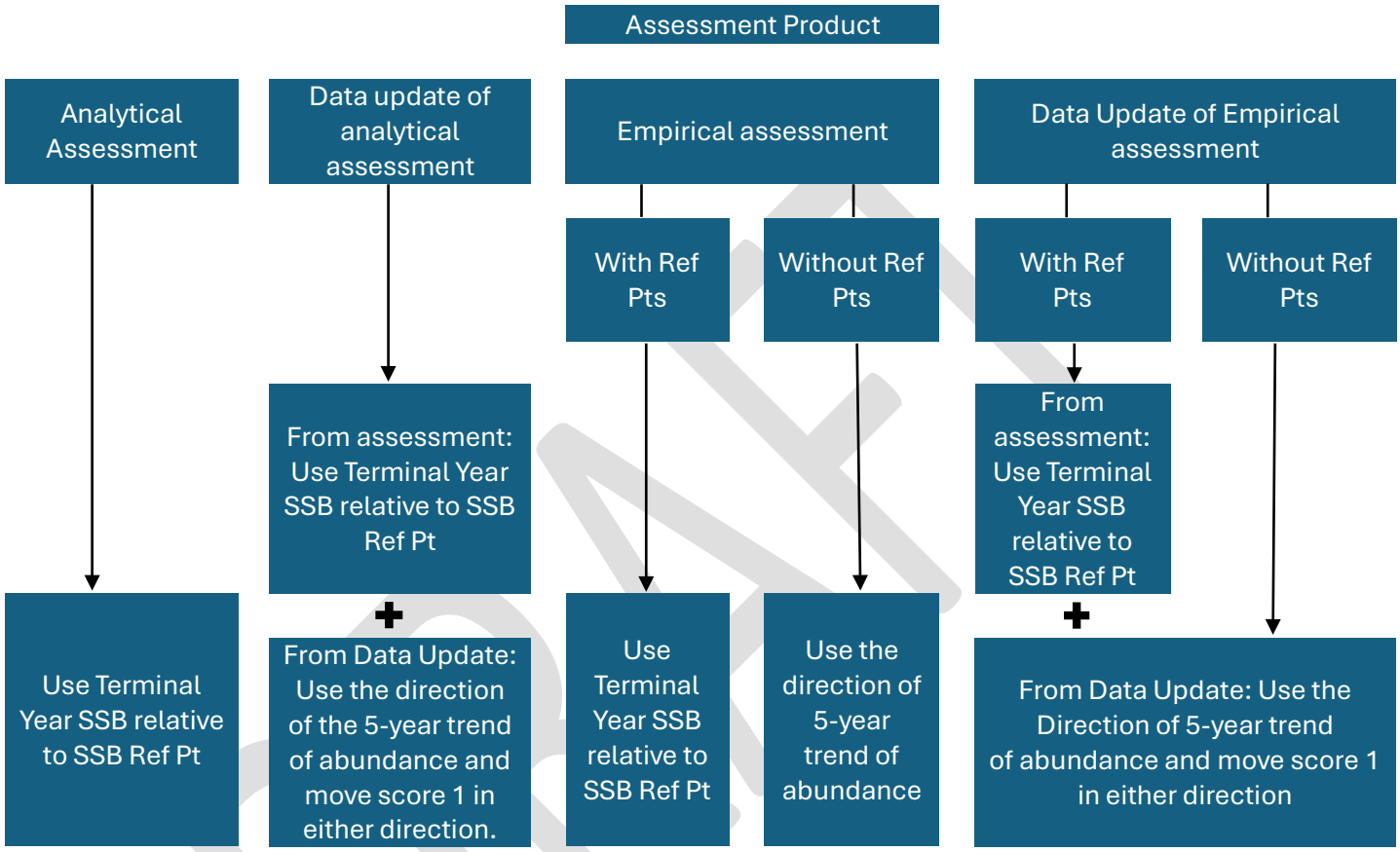


Additional Information

Biomass (SSB) / Stock Status

Demonstrations of how to revise the SSB/Stock status factor using data updates in lieu of updated stock assessments. These were considered by the RPWG on March 9, 2026, and removed from scoring documentation following the March 30, 2026 SSC Meeting.

Figure 5. A flow chart for which data products to use and how when scoring SSB / Stock Status.



Scoring rubric – Data Updates

- **Shift left one score. (-1)** There is a negative trend over the most recent 5 years of abundance indices.
- **Shift right one score. (+1)** There is a positive trend over the most recent 5 years of abundance indices.
- For data updates of empirical assessments, the score range is confined to -4-0, following the scoring rubric available for empirical assessments.

Directionality	**Meaning**	**Data Update Adjustment for Analytical and Empirical Assessments**
Increasing	Slope < 0 and meaningful in magnitude	-1
Decreasing	Slope > 0 and meaningful in magnitude	+1
Neutral / No Trend	Slope ≈ 0 or inconsistent direction	No change

Numerical Score	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4
Categorical Score	**Below threshold**		**<75% but above Threshold**		**Neutral**		**Rebuilt**		**Well Above Target**
Data updates of analytical or empirical assessments with ref pts	Move right one score if there is a positive trend; Move left one score if there is a negative trend; Cannot go above or below the range of -4 to 4								
Data updates of analytical or empirical assessments without ref pts	Move right one score if there is a positive trend; Move left one score if there is a negative trend; Cannot go above or below the range of -4 to 0								