New England Fishery Management Council
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MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 2, 2026

TO: Scallop Advisory Panel

FROM: Scallop Plan Development Team

SUBJECT: **Commercial Fishery Characterization – AP Input on Risk Policy**

In June 2026, the Council approved revisions to its Risk Policy, establishing qualitative categories of low, medium, and high-risk tolerance to support management decisions beginning in 2026. The Risk Policy's bi-directional approach is designed to emphasize caution when stock conditions are poor, recruitment is low, and environmental conditions are unfavorable, and conversely allow fishery managers to increase catch limits for healthy stocks deemed eligible to tolerate more risk.

The Risk Policy combines the Council's input about the importance of risk factors with technical scores related to managed resources. The Council's policy preference was determined at the June meeting, when Council members assigned universal weights to five factors on a scale of 0-4, ranging from "least" to "critically" important. The five factors include: (1) Biomass/Stock Status, (2) Recruitment, (3) Climate Vulnerability, (4) Recreational Fishery Characterization, and (5) Commercial Fishery Characterization. The Commercial Fishery Characterization and Recreational Fishery Characterization are comprised of five questions that are designed to assess stress and vulnerability in the fishery.

The Scallop Plan Development Team (PDT) has scored each of the five factors for the scallop stock using guidance included in the Risk Policy. The results of this scoring exercise will be provided to the Scientific and Statistical Committee in October as they develop recommendations for specifications for scallop.

Commercial Fishery Characterization

The goal of the Commercial Fishery Characterization factor aims to assess stress and vulnerability for the commercial fishery. This factor consists of five questions that focus on: 1) utilization, 2) fishing communities, 3) revenue, 4) fisheries interactions, and 5) Advisory Panel input. The PDT is responsible for scoring the first 4 components using specific methods (Risk Policy Statement and Concept Appendix I), and the last component score is based on Advisors reviewing the scores from the first four components and determining whether the scores are accurate based on current fishery conditions. Each question will receive a score, and the final "score" for Commercial Fishery Characterization is the sum of the scores to the five questions. The Commercial Fishery Characterization factor can only lead to more risk tolerance, as the final score is constrained to a range of 0-4 (minimal stress to high stress).

AP Task

After reviewing the commercial fishery characterization scores for scallops below, please consider the following question.

> ***Focusing on the current fishing year and your outlook for the fishery, do the answers to the commercial fishery characterization scoring continue to be correct?***

If they "still hold" and are correct, AP input will be recorded 0 for this factor. If there are recent changes to the socioeconomic status of the fishery, AP input will be scored as -1 (if the socioeconomic health of the fishery has improved) or +1 (if the socioeconomic health of the fishery has declined and is not captured in the answers to the Commercial Fishery Characterization factor questions).

Stock	**PDT score of factors** (utilization, fishing communities, revenue, fishery interactions)	**AP Score** (do answers to PDT scoring of factors still hold true?)	**Overall Commercial Fishery Characterization Score** (= PDT score of factors + AP score)	**Meaning of Overall Commercial Fishery Characterization Score***
Scallop	**3**	To be filled in during AP mtg (score of 0, -1, or +1)	**To Be Determined**	**To Be Determined**

Commercial Fishery Characterization Scores based on PDT input:

Questions	**Scores**
Utilization	+1
Community	+1
Revenue	+1
Fishery interactions	0
AP input	TBD (0, -1, +1)
TOTAL	**X**

***Overall Commercial Fishery Characterization Scoring Rubric:**

- **High Stress (4).** Responses to questions result in a score of 4 or more.
- **Elevated Stress (3).** Responses to questions result in a score of 3.
- **Moderate Stress (2).** Responses to questions result in a score of 2.
- **Low Stress (1).** Responses to questions result in a score of 1.
- **Minimal Stress (0).** Responses to questions result in a score of 0 or less.

PDT Scoring

Factor 1. Utilization – has greater than 80% of the allowable limit been harvested in at least 2 of the last 3 years?

- If yes = PDT scores factor as 1, or,
- If no = PDT scores factor 0

Background

Fishing year	Annual Projected Landings (APL) Landings (lb)	APL (lb)	% of APL
2021	42,713,444	40,044,765	106.7%
2022	30,461,860	34,039,373	89.5%
2023	25,436,987	25,007,005	101.7%
2024	20,411,321	27,392,436	74.5%
*2025	19,196,073	19,752,293	97.2%
Data source: Framework 40, *GARFO Quota Monitoring			

Stock	PDT Score	Rationale for PDT Score
Scallop	**1**	>80% utilization for past 5 FYs.

Factor 2. Fishing Communities – This question uses the Port Commercial Fishing Activity (PCFA) indicator, which considers recent levels of revenue, landings, active permits, and dealers relative to long-term averages within key ports in all New England states (see Risk Policy Appendix I). Of New England ports identified in the Risk Policy PCFA analysis, are the port-level scores for a majority of ports above, neutral, or below the time-series average?

- If below = PDT scores factor as 1,
- If neutral = PDT scores factor 0, or
- If above = PDT scores factor -1

Background: Additional information on this analysis is available in the scoring guidance document and in rationale in table below.

Stock	PDT Score	Rationale for PDT Score
Scallop	**1**	A New-England specific PCFA was completed by the NEFSC Social Sciences Branch for the Risk Policy, and scores were identified for each of the ports. Based on the results of this analysis, a majority of ports received scores that were below the time-series averages, and this question has been assigned a score of 1.

Factor 3. Revenue – has the revenue in the fishery (Scallop FMP level) been in a lower, higher, or average state over the last five fishing years?

- If below average = PDT scores factor as 1,
- If average = PDT scores factor 0, or
- If above average = PDT scores factor -1

Background

Fishing Year	Scallop FMP Revenue (in 2025 $)
2010	$681,927,370
2011	$844,744,250
2012	$789,683,959
2013	$645,983,436
2014	$567,318,375
2015	$611,296,996
2016	$670,135,872
2017	$693,693,288
2018	$722,813,181
2019	$718,090,847
2020	$595,261,915
2021	$785,777,977
2022	$476,083,942
2023	$352,628,578
2024	$342,351,310
2025	$410,283,731
Data source: CAMS, accessed July 2026.	

Stock	PDT Score	Rationale for PDT Score
Scallop	**1**	Scallop fishery revenue from FY 2021 to FY 2025 was used to score this question. Four of the past five fishing years had revenue below the 25th percentile.

Factor 4. Fisheries Interactions – is the quota for this species limiting the execution of other fisheries? Is there a sub-ACL, accountability measure, or inter-FMP interaction associated with this stock that limits the execution of another fishery?

- If yes = PDT scores factor as 1 or
- If no = PDT scores factor 0

Background: Additional information on this analysis is available in the scoring guidance document and in rationale in table below.

Stock	PDT Score	Rationale for PDT Score
Scallop	**0**	Scallops are not a choke stock for any species, and scallop fishery sub-ACLs for northern windowpane flounder, Georges Bank yellowtail flounder, southern windowpane flounder, and Southern New England / Mid-Atlantic yellowtail flounder are not limiting the execution of those fisheries.