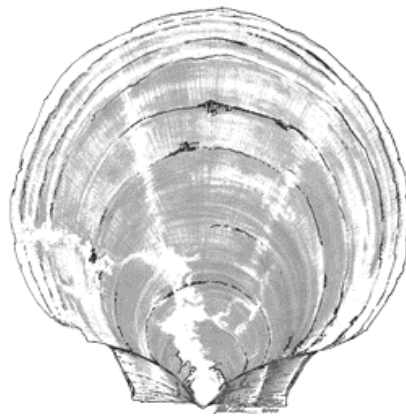


DECISION DOCUMENT
For
Framework 33 to the
Atlantic Sea Scallop Fishery Management Plan



This document was developed to help the Council select final preferred alternatives for Framework 33.

January 15, 2020

Version 1.1 – AP & Committee Copy

Anticipated Council Action:

Prior to selecting final preferred alternatives, the Council will receive a presentation on measures under consideration in Framework 33 and their analyzed impacts on target species, non-target species, protected resources, the physical environment (EFH), and human communities (economic and social impacts).

1. Select the *preferred alternative* for overfishing limit and acceptable biological catch (Section 4.1).
2. Select *preferred alternatives* for Northern Gulf of Maine total allowable catch in FY 2021 and FY 2022 (Section 4.2). Separate decisions for FY2021 and FY2022.
3. Select the *preferred alternative* for fishery specifications, including access area and DAS allocations (Section 4.3).
4. Select the *preferred alternative* for LAGC IFQ access area trip allocations (Section 4.4).
5. Select the *preferred alternative* for where RSA compensation fishing can occur (Section 4.5.1).
6. Select the *preferred alternative* for reducing impacts on Georges Bank yellowtail flounder and northern windowpane flounder (Section 4.5.2).
7. Motion to submit Framework 33 to NOAA Fisheries (Council meeting).

4.1 – Action 1 – Overfishing Limit and Acceptable Biological Catch

Section 4.1 – Action 1 – Overfishing Limit and Acceptable Biological Catch <i>Choose one alternative.</i>		Preferred by		
		PDT	AP	CTE
Alternative 1 (Sec. 4.1.1)	No Action (default OFL and ABC for FY 2021 from Framework 32)			
Alternative 2 (Sec. 4.1.2)	Updated OFL and ABC for FY 2021 and FY 2022.	X		
Decisions/Questions/Information to Consider				
Action 1 considers updating OFL and ABC estimates using the most recent survey information and updated reference points from the 2020 scallop assessment update. The SSC recommended updated OFL and ABC values for 2021 and 2022 (default) at its meeting on Nov. 23, 2020. The Atlantic sea scallop resource is considered healthy; the stock is not overfished, and overfishing is not occurring.				
Other important Considerations/Draft EA References				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biological impacts: Section 6.2.1 • Non-target species impacts: Section 6.3.1 • Protected resource impacts: Section 6.4.1 • Impacts on Physical Environment and Essential Fish Habitat: Section 6.5.1 • Economic impacts: Section 6.6.1.1 • Social impacts: Section 6.6.2.1 				

4.2 – Action 2 – Northern Gulf of Maine TAC Setting

Section 4.2 – Action 2 – Northern Gulf of Maine TAC Setting <i>If Alternative 2 is selected, choose one option in Section 4.2.2.1, and one option for 4.2.2.2</i>		Preferred by		
		PDT	AP	CTE
Alternative 1 (Sec. 4.2.1)	No Action <i>FW32 Default TAC of 265,000 pounds in FY2021. LAGC share 167,500. No TAC for FY2022.</i>			
Alternative 2 (Sec. 4.2.2)	Set NGOM TAC, with first 70,000 lbs to LAGC, then 50/50 split between LA and LAGC	X		
Alternative 2 Section 4.2.2.1 – Select NGOM TAC for FY 2021				
<i>Option 1</i> (4.2.2.1.1)	<i>Set NGOM TAC at F=0.18</i> TAC=160,000 pounds, LAGC share 115,000 pounds			
<i>Option 2</i> (4.2.2.1.2)	<i>Set NGOM TAC at F=0.20</i> TAC=175,000 pounds, LAGC share 122,500 pounds			
<i>Option 3</i> (4.2.2.1.3)	<i>Set NGOM TAC at F=0.25</i> TAC=210,000 pounds, LAGC share 140,000 pounds			
Alternative 2 Section 4.2.2.2 – Select NGOM TAC for FY 2022 (default measures)				
<i>Sub-Option 1</i> (4.2.2.2.1)	<i>Set the NGOM TAC for 2022 using F rate selected for FY2021 (4.2.2.1), close Stellwagen Bank.</i> F=0.18, TAC=70,000 pounds, LAGC share 70,000 pounds F=0.20, TAC=74,000 pounds, LAGC share 72,000 pounds F=0.25, TAC=85,000 pounds, LAGC share 77,500 pounds			
<i>Sub-Option 2</i> (4.2.2.2.2)	<i>Set the NGOM TAC for 2022 at zero.</i> F=0, TAC=0 pounds, LAGC share 0 pounds.			
Decisions/Questions/Information to Consider				
If the Council selects Alternative 2, it will need to select a TAC for FY2021 and for FY2022 (separate decisions). The FY 2022 TAC is temporary and would be replaced by new measures that will be developed in the next framework. All options would result in the continued closure of Stellwagen Bank in the NGOM until new measures in future actions are implemented.				
Other important Considerations/Draft EA References				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biological impacts: Section 6.2.2 • Non-target species impacts: Section 6.3.2 • Protected resource impacts: Section 6.4.2 • Impacts on Physical Environment and Essential Fish Habitat: Section 6.5.2 • Economic impacts: Section 6.6.1.2 • Social impacts: Section 6.6.2.2 				

4.3 – Action 3 – Fishery Specifications

Section 4.3 – Action 3 – Fishery Specifications <i>Choose one alternative. If Alternative 2,3,4, or 5 is selected, choose one DAS option.</i>		Preferred by		
		PDT	AP	CTE
Alternative 1 (Sec. 4.3.1)	<i>No Action</i> Default measures from Framework 32			
Alternative 2 (Sec. 4.3.2)	3.5 Access Area Trips, with 1.5 trips to Nantucket Lightship South			
<i>Option 1</i> (4.3.2.1)	Open Areas Fished at F=0.3 (24 DAS)			
<i>Option 2</i> (4.3.2.2)	Open Areas Fished at F=0.33 (26 DAS)			
Alternative 3 (Sec. 4.3.3)	Four Access Area Trips, with 1 trip to Closed Area II			
<i>Option 1</i> (4.3.2.1)	Open Areas Fished at F=0.3 (24 DAS)			
<i>Option 2</i> (4.3.2.1)	Open Areas Fished at F=0.33 (26 DAS)			
Alternative 4 (Sec. 4.3.4)	Four Access Area Trips, with 1 trip to Nantucket Lightship South			
<i>Option 1</i> (4.3.4.1)	Open Areas Fished at F=0.3 (24 DAS)			
<i>Option 2</i> (4.3.4.1)	Open Areas Fished at F=0.33 (26 DAS)			
Alternative 5 (Sec. 4.3.5)	Four Access Area Trips, with 1 trip to the Mid-Atlantic Access Area			
<i>Option 1</i> (4.3.5.1)	Open Areas Fished at F=0.3 (24 DAS)			
<i>Option 1</i> (4.3.5.2)	Open Areas Fished at F=0.33 (26 DAS)			
Decisions/Questions/Information to Consider				
The Scallop PDT recommends setting DAS at 24 (Option 1 in Alternatives 2-5). In the context of the four alternatives developed in this action, the PDT recommends 1.5 trips in the NLS-South.				
Other important Considerations/Draft EA References				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biological impacts: Section 6.2.3 • Non-target species impacts: Section 6.3.3 • Protected resource impacts: Section 6.4.3 • Impacts on Physical Environment and Essential Fish Habitat: Section 6.5.3 • Economic impacts: Section 6.6.1.3 • Social impacts: Section 6.6.2.3 				

4.4 – Action 4 – Access Area Trip Allocations to the LAGC IFQ Component

Section 4.4 – Action 4 – Access Area Trip Allocations to the LAGC IFQ Component <i>Choose one alternative. If Alternative 2 is selected, choose one option.</i>		Preferred by		
		PDT	AP	CTE
Alternative 1 (Sec. 4.4.1)	<i>No Action</i>			
Alternative 2 (Sec. 4.4.2)	<i>Update LAGC IFQ Access Area Trip Allocations, Distribute Closed Area II Access Area Allocation to CAI Only</i>			
Alternative 3 (Sec. 4.4.3)	<i>Update LAGC IFQ Access Area Trip Allocations, Distribute Closed Area II Access Area Allocation evenly across the Mid-Atlantic Access Area, NLS-South, and Closed Area I</i>			
Decisions/Questions/Information to Consider				
All specifications options in Section 4.3 maintain Closed Area I as a rotational area and designate the area for LAGC access area trips and RSA compensation fishing only.				
Other important Considerations/Draft EA References				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biological impacts: Section 6.2.4 • Non-target species impacts: Section 6.3.4 • Protected resource impacts: Section 6.4.4 • Impacts on Physical Environment and Essential Fish Habitat: Section 6.5.4 • Economic impacts: Section 6.6.1.4 • Social impacts: Section 6.6.2.4 				

4.5 – Action 5.1 – RSA Compensation Fishing

Section 4.5 – Action 5.1 – RSA Compensation Fishing		Preferred by		
		PDT	AP	CTE
Alternative 1 (Sec. 4.5.1.1)	<i>No Action</i> RSA Compensation fishing in open bottom only, no access areas.			
Alternative 2 (Sec. 4.5.1.2)	<i>Mid-Atlantic Access Area, NLS-South, Closed Area II, and Closed Area I, with limited RSA compensation fishing in the NGOM Management Area</i>			
Decisions/Questions/Information to Consider				
This decision considers where scallop RSA compensation fishing can occur in FY2021. Under Alternative 2, any compensation fishing that occurs in Closed Area II would be limited to the window of time between when FW33 specifications are implemented and the start of the Closed Area II seasonal closure (i.e., August 15 th).				
Other important Considerations/Draft EA References				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biological impacts: Section 6.2.5 • Non-target species impacts: Section 6.3.5 • Protected resource impacts: Section 6.4.5 • Impacts on Physical Environment and Essential Fish Habitat: Section 6.5.5 • Economic impacts: Section 6.6.1.5 • Social impacts: Section 6.6.2.5 				

4.6 – Action 4.5.2 – Seasonal Closure of Closed Area II Access Area to Reduce Impacts on Georges Bank Yellowtail Flounder and Northern Windowpane Flounder

Section 4.6 – Action 4.5.2 – Seasonal Closure of Closed Area II Access Area to Reduce Impacts on Georges Bank Yellowtail Flounder and Northern Windowpane Flounder <i>Choose one alternative.</i>		Preferred by		
		PDT	AP	CTE
Alternative 1 (Sec. 4.5.2.1)	<i>No Action</i> No change to the current Aug. 15 – Nov. 15 closure in CAII.			
Alternative 2 (Sec. 4.5.2.2)	<i>Extend Seasonal Closures of Closed Area II Access Area through November 30th in FY 2021, Include CAII-Ext in Seasonal Closure</i>	X		
Decisions/Questions/Information to Consider				
This closure would be in place for one year only and expire after the 2021 fishing year.				
Other important Considerations/Draft EA References				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Biological impacts: Section 6.2.6 ● Non-target species impacts: Section 6.3.6 ● Protected resource impacts: Section 6.4.6 ● Impacts on Physical Environment and Essential Fish Habitat: Section 6.5.6 ● Economic impacts: Section 6.6.1.6 ● Social impacts: Section 6.6.2.6 				

Table 1 - Summary of Specifications Options (Action 3)

Alternatives in FW33	Description	Overall F rate	Open area F	Annual Projected Landings (APL) (LBS)	APL w/ set- asides removed (LBS)	LA Share (94.5%) (LBS)	LAGC IFQ Share (5.5%) (LBS)	Estimated Revenue (Mill. \$, in 2020 dollars)
Alt. 1 – 18 DAS 4.3.1	No Action	0.054	0.24	19,069,986	17,096,848	16,156,522	940,327	\$207.04
Alt. 2 – 24 DAS 4.3.2.1	3.5 FT AA Trips, 1.5 NLS-S, 24DAS	0.205	0.30	37,068,525	35,095,387	33,165,141	1,930,246	\$362.25
Alt. 2 – 26 DAS 4.3.2.2	3.5 FT AA Trips, 1.5 NLS-S, 26DAS	0.210	0.33	38,281,067	36,307,930	34,310,994	1,996,936	\$371.36
Alt. 3 – 24 DAS 4.3.3.1	4 FT AA Trips, 1 CAII, 24DAS	0.220	0.30	40,104,290	38,131,153	36,033,939	2,097,213	\$393.03
Alt. 3 – 26 DAS 4.3.3.2	4 FT AA Trips, 1 CAII, 26DAS	0.222	0.33	41,316,833	39,343,695	37,179,792	2,163,903	\$401.84
Alt. 4 – 24 DAS 4.3.4.1	4 FT AA Trips, 1 NLS-S, 24DAS	0.200	0.30	40,152,792	38,179,655	36,079,774	2,099,881	\$394.45
Alt. 4 – 26 DAS 4.3.4.2	4 FT AA Trips, 1 NLS-S, 26DAS	0.202	0.33	41,380,767	39,407,629	37,240,210	2,167,420	\$403.33
Alt. 5 – 24 DAS 4.3.5.1	4 FT AA Trips, 1 MAAA, 24DAS	0.222	0.30	40,044,765	38,071,628	35,977,688	2,093,940	\$387.07
Alt. 5 – 26 DAS 4.3.5.2	4 FT AA Trips, 1 MAAA, 26DAS	0.229	0.33	41,272,740	39,299,603	37,138,125	2,161,478	\$396.06