

## NGOM TAC split Considerations

Updated for July 18, 2017 PDT Meeting

**NGOM as Council Priority:** At its April meeting, the New England Council approved a problem statement and goals for managing the NGOM management area. The Council identified the problem as unknown biomass and recent high landings from the management area, with a goal of developing tools in order to fully understanding total removals from the area and improving management. **On June 1, the scallop Committee passed the following tasking motion for the PDT to develop options that consider both the historic TAC and historic removals from the NGOM management area:**

### Motion 7: Stockwell/Kendall

The Committee tasks the PDT with developing options for splitting the NGOM TAC using a hybrid approach to splitting the NGOM TAC between the LA and LAGC component.

*Rationale:* One concept is to use an initial “floor” of lbs, a percentage split between groups, and a maximum amount of pounds from the NGOM. It would be helpful to see tables of how this approach would work under a range of TAC options.

The motion carried on a show of hands: 10/0/0

A goal for the September meetings is to have the AP and Committee consider a range of alternatives for:

1. The Overall TAC for the NGOM area.
2. The distribution of the NGOM TAC between fishery components.
3. Limited access harvest approaches.

To keep this timeline, the PDT will need to address each of these issues in August after survey work in the area is completed, and develop a reasonable range of values for the Committee to consider. The Committee will be meeting in September, October, and November, and will have a chance to weigh in on these draft measures ahead before selecting a preferred alternative.

**FOR JULY 18:** 1) Identify the approach we plan to use to set the TAC in the area (ex: exploitation rate, growth matrix), 2) and identify the *range* of potential values to begin our August discussion with, after the NGOM TAC has been considered.

1. Potential TAC Floor: Historic catch TAC: 70,000 from 2008 – 2016, Survey based TAC: 95,000
2. Split of TAC: LA/LAGC split 95/5. Since 2008, average LAGC % of NGOM landings ~16%.
  - a. High: 100%; Low: 2.7%. See Table 3.
3. Ceiling: This would cap the share of the LAGC at a certain threshold.

**Current status of NGOM TAC:** Through Amendment 11 and subsequent FW adjustments, the Council has set a NGOM TAC for the LAGC component. This TAC has been based on historical landings from the area (TAC at 70,000 lbs from 2008 to 2016), and most recently using survey information. LA vessels currently operate under DAS when fishing in the Gulf of Maine; there is not an overall landing limit from the NGOM management area for these vessels.

**Qualifying Criteria by Permit Category:** Limited entry into the Atlantic sea scallop fishery began in 1994 through Amendment 4 to the FMP. See Table 1 for a summary of the limited access programs in the fishery.

*Table 1 - Summary of scallop permit categories and qualifying criteria.*

Permit Type	Year Created	Action	Qualifying Criteria	Permit Category
Limited Access (Multiple categories)	1994	Amendment 4	One trip with more than 400 pounds in either 1988 or 1989, extended for new vessels under construction	Based on number of days used in 1990, or average of 1985-1990 days
LAGC IFQ	2008	Amendment 11	Possess Open Access GC permit	1,000 pounds landings in a year (FY2000-2004), individual allocation based on best year indexed by # of years active in the fishery
LAGC NGOM	2008	Amendment 11	Possess Open Access GC permit	No landings history required
LAGC Incidental	2008	Amendment 11	Possess Open Access GC permit	No landings history required

**Existing Allocation between LA and LAGC IFQ:** The existing allocation split between the LA and LAGC IFQ components is 94.5% LA / 5.5% IFQ of the annual projected landings. During the Amendment 11 process, the Council considered landings history as a basis for allocating between the two components. A lower and upper bound for a LAGC IFQ allocation (2.5% - 11%) of the total available scallop harvest was approved as a range for consideration at that time. The rationale for the lower bound of the range was to consider the approximate historical average from when Amendment 4 was implemented to 2005 (1994-2005). The rationale for the upper bound was to consider an amount that reflects the percent of the most recent landings (based on available data from fishing year 2005) from vessels with general category permits before the control date.

**Harvest Limits by Permit Type:** Harvest limits vary within the scallop FMP by permit category. Table 2 summarizes the existing harvest limits and the various forms of allocations across permit categories (ex: DAS, IFQ, etc.).

Table 2 - Summary of harvest limits and allocation types by permit category

Permit Type	Harvest Limits	Vessel level allocation?	Form of allocation
Limited Access	94.5% of annual projected landing, after set-asides and incidental catch removed	Yes	DAS and access area trips
LAGC IFQ	5.5% of annual projected landing, after set-asides and incidental catch removed	Yes	IFQ pounds; set # AA trips at fleet level
LAGC NGOM	Up to TAC for management area, not linked to annual projected landings estimate	No	Harvest in area until LAGC fleet reaches TAC
LAGC Incidental	Deducted from annual projected landings before allocating to LA and LAGC IFQ	No	Harvest allowed until limit is reached

**Considerations:**

- a) A simple, straightforward approach to setting and splitting a TAC between fishery components increases the likelihood that NGOM measures can be in place for the start of FY2018. A complex or controversial approach would likely delay the development and implementation of NGOM measures beyond the start of the 2018 fishing year.
- b) The NGOM TAC represents a limit for removals from the area. It is not an allocation to a specific permit type.
- c) The NGOM TAC may be set and split temporarily through a Framework; however, a permanent division in the NGOM TAC between fishery components would likely require an Amendment.
- d) The NGOM management area was created in 2008 through Amendment 11. The Council's vision for the LAGC component was a fleet made up of relatively small vessels, with possession limits to maintain the historical character of the fleet and provide opportunities to various participants including vessels from small communities. The southern boundary bi-sects statistical reporting area 514 in the Gulf of Maine.
- e) LAGC removals from the area come from both IFQ and NGOM permit holders.
- f) LAGC vessels have different reporting requirements than LA vessels when fishing in this area.
  - a. LAGC vessels declare into the NGOM management area through VMS. Landings are calculated using dealer reports for declared trips.
  - b. LA vessels operate under a DAS as if in an open area of the fishery. Removals from the NGOM management area for FY 2016 were estimated using point-location VTR reports for FY 2016; this method of estimating LA removals from the NGOM has proven difficult as LA vessels can fish both inside and outside the NGOM in the same trip.
  - c. The estimate of LA removals from the NGOM in 2017 used VMS, VTR, and dealer data. VMS polls indicate that some LA vessels operated inside and outside of the NGOM on a single trip.
- g) VTR data is available from 1996 – present. This data has limitations, and working with it will take time/resources, depending on the level of detail request (ex: tracking catch by GC component pre-NGOM).
- h) Monitoring a TAC as currently implemented in the NGOM for the LA component is challenging (as illustrated in FY 2017). Given the current reporting requirements, it may not be possible to monitor Limited Access removals as quickly as necessary. Potential approaches to monitoring

activity in the area include 1) setting up a VMS code for LA fishing in the NGOM, and 2) setting a trip catch limit for LA fishing in the NGOM.

**Potential considerations for shares of the NGOM TAC: Committee tasked the PDT on June 1, 2017 to develop a range of alternatives based on c) Hybrid approach of historic TAC and historic removals from the NGOM management area.**

- a) Historic TAC in the management area. For example, the TAC for the area was set at 70,000 lbs for the LAGC component for nearly all years since the inception of the program.
- b) Split based on historic removals from the NGOM management area by fishery component. For example, dealer data is available from 2008 – present for the LAGC component. LA landings from the area would need to be estimated.
- c) Hybrid Approach of Historic TAC and historic removals from the area (combine a and b). For example, start with a baseline of pounds to a component of the fishery, and then consider how harvest over and above that value is distributed.
- d) Sunset provision: For example, develop a short-term approach that would remain in place for a set number of years. The Council has identified work on the NGOM management as a potential priority for 2018.

Table 3 – Example of available data. LAGC and LA (estimated) landings from NGOM management area, 2008 - 2017.

Fishing Year	LAGC Landings (lbs)	LA Landings (lbs)	LAGC % Landings
2008	9,936	0	100.0%
2009	5,793	0	100.0%
2010	8,639	0	100.0%
2011	6,908	0	100.0%
2012	7,440	0	100.0%
2013	55,450	0	100.0%
2014	57,842	0	100.0%
2015	72,546	0	100.0%
2016	89,083	292,517	23.3%
2017	44,557	1,578,020	2.7%
Total	358,194	1,870,537	16.1%

Table 4 – Example of available data. Comparison of actual and potential LAGC and LA landings from FY2017 (area closed before LAGC TAC achieved)

Scenario	LAGC	LA harvest	LAGC % landings
2017 landings	44,557	1,578,020	2.7%
2017 TAC	95,000	1,578,020	5.7%
2017 TAC – including reduction for overage	73,371	1,578,020	4.4%