



New England Fishery Management Council

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E.F. "Terry" Stockwell III, *Chairman* | Thomas A. Nies, *Executive Director*

MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 6, 2015
TO: Scallop PDT
FROM: Tom Nies, Executive Director
SUBJECT: **Request for input on ways to improve data collected by observers on discard mortality and highgrading in the scallop fishery**

The Council met in June 2015 and passed a motion based on a Scallop Committee recommendation relative to collection of observer data on discard mortality in the scallop fishery. The industry has raised concerns about discard mortality in terms of assessing the magnitude of discarded scallops, as well as the temporal and spatial location of discarded scallops. Specifically, there is interest to learn more about the specific reasons why scallops are discarded at sea. There are numerous codes that exist already for the potential reasons vessels discard scallops at sea, but the current protocols may not be specific enough. For example, it may be important to identify the season, location and magnitude of scallops discarded at sea due to grey meats, or evidence of parasites and other quality concerns. It may also be valuable to collect samples of these discarded scallops to improve our understanding of these issues potentially affecting scallop mortality and the fishery.

The Council requests the PDT discuss this issue and identify potential ways to address and evaluate these concerns. The specific motion from the Council is below.

*Ms. Tooley moved and Mr. Terry Alexander seconded:
that the Council requests the scallop PDT investigate how to potentially improve
information collected by observers on discard mortality and highgrading (e.g. modify at
sea monitoring protocols to be more specific about reasons for discards).*

The motion carried unanimously on a show of hands (16/0/0).