



New England Fishery Management Council

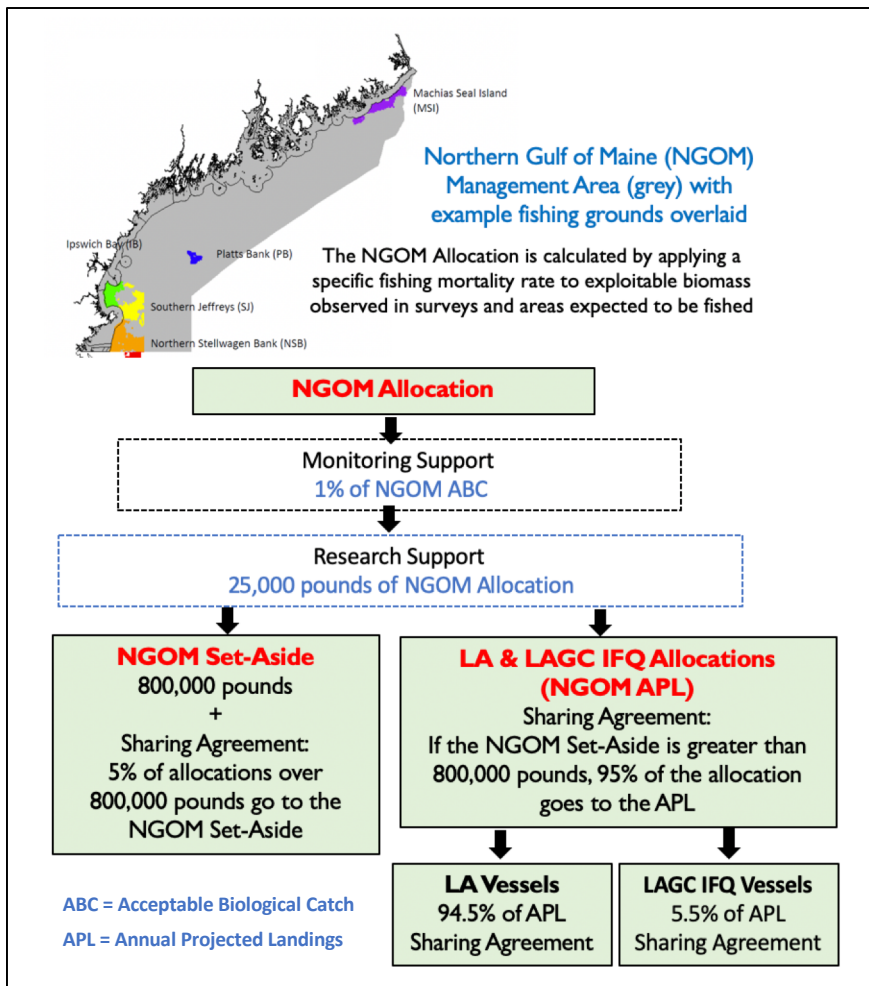
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Scallop Amendment 21: Council Adopts New Measures for Northern Gulf of Maine and LA General Category IFQ Fishery

The New England Fishery Management Council has signed off on Amendment 21 to the Atlantic Sea Scallop Fishery Management Plan, which includes new measures to: (1) better manage total scallop removals from the Northern Gulf of Maine (NGOM) Management Area by all components of the fishery; and (2) expand

flexibility in the Limited Access General Category (LAGC) Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) fishery. The amendment still needs to be approved by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS/NOAA Fisheries) before being implemented.



Northern Gulf of Maine (NGOM)

Under Amendment 21, the Council will begin accounting for scallop biomass in the NGOM area in the same flowchart it uses to calculate the overfishing limit (OFL) and acceptable biological catch (ABC) for the rest of the resource. The NGOM annual catch limit also will be set consistent with how the rest of the fishery is managed, bringing the area more in line with the Georges Bank and Mid-Atlantic scallop fishery.

The Northern Gulf of Maine area has been surveyed for several years in a row now, and scallop biomass there has increased recently. Recognizing the heightened interest in the area by many fishermen, the Council developed Amendment 21 in part to:

NGOM Allocations Under Amendment 21: Once the NGOM allocation is determined, deductions are made off-the-top to support monitoring and research. Of what's left, the first 800,000 pounds goes to the NGOM set-aside. Anything above 800,000 is shared as shown in the flowchart above.



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- Support a growing directed scallop fishery in the federal waters portion of the Northern Gulf of Maine Management Area; and
- Allow for orderly access to the scallop resource within the area by the LAGC and Limited Access (LA) components of the fishery.

The Council considered several alternatives for how to share the available biomass among the various fishery components. It ultimately voted to establish an 800,000-pound NGOM set-aside and then allocate the rest of the poundage above 800,000 pounds across all fishery components. Use of a set-aside follows the Council's existing temporary approach for establishing LAGC allocations in the Northern Gulf of Maine Management Area.

The set-aside is for Limited Access General Category NGOM and LAGC IFQ fishermen – those who hold LAGC Category A or B permits and work in the NGOM area to catch 200 pounds of scallop meats per trip. LAGC NGOM permit holders are only able to fish for scallops in federal waters in the Northern Gulf of Maine Management Area. LAGC IFQ permit holders can fish in the NGOM area while using quota that can be harvested throughout the range of the resource.

The Council voted to share available NGOM poundage above the 800,000-pound set-aside trigger as follows:

- 5% would be added to the NGOM set-aside; and
- 95% would go toward the NGOM annual projected landings (APL). Of this amount, 94.5% of the poundage would go to the Limited Access fishery under the sharing agreement, and 5.5% would go to the LAGC IFQ fishery (see page 1 flowchart).

NGOM Monitoring and Research

The Council voted to establish a monitoring program for directed scallop fishing in the NGOM area by expanding the Scallop Industry-Funded Observer Program. Pounds from the NGOM allocation will be taken off-the-top to contribute to the fishery-wide observer set-aside and used as compensation pounds to help support observer coverage.

Amendment 21 also expands the observer call-in requirement so that **all** scallop vessels operating in the NGOM Management Area, including LAGC Category B vessels, will need to call in before fishing.



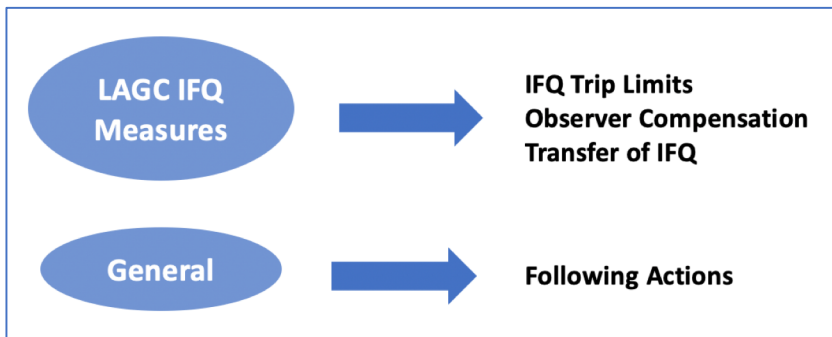
The Northern Gulf of Maine Management Area has been surveyed several years in a row now thanks to the Scallop Research Set-Aside Program. – Michael Torre, University of Maine photo



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The Council further voted to deduct 25,000 pounds from the NGOM allocation to support the Scallop Research Set-Aside (RSA) Program. This extra poundage will increase the overall RSA from 1.25 million pounds to 1.275 million pounds and provide an opportunity for RSA compensation fishing to occur in the NGOM area up to 25,000 pounds.

The Council did not make any changes to the NGOM fishing season or dredge width requirements within the Northern Gulf of Maine Management Area in Amendment 21.



The Council Talked Through Each Action in Amendment 21 as Outlined in the [Decision Document](#)

LAGC Measures in Amendment 21

The Council supported three measures in Amendment 21 that are intended to provide more flexibility to the LAGC IFQ fishery and reduce impacts of potential decreases in ex-vessel price and increases in operating costs. These are:

- An increase in the LAGC IFQ possession limit to 800 pounds for access area trips while maintaining the current 600-pound limit for open area trips;
- Allowing LAGC IFQ vessels to be eligible for additional compensation when carrying an observer on fishing trips that are longer than one day, with daily rates being prorated in 12-hour increments for trips exceeding 24 hours and total compensation being capped at 48 hours; and
- Allowing temporary one-way quota transfers from Limited Access vessels that have an IFQ allocation to LAGC IFQ-only vessels. This action maintains the existing quota accumulation caps that apply to the LAGC IFQ fishery.

The Council also voted to expand the list of measures that can be addressed through future specifications packages and/or framework adjustments rather than through a full amendment.

What People Said about Amendment 21

The Council held [four public hearings by webinar](#) on Amendment 21 in August and early September.

- A summary of all public hearing comments is available [HERE](#), and take a look at the [meeting summaries](#).
- The summary of written comments is available [HERE](#).
- All documents related to this action can be found in the [Amendment 21 library](#).
- Materials used during the Council’s October 1, 2020 scallop discussion can be found [HERE](#).



QUESTIONS?
Contact Jonathon Peros, the Council’s scallop plan coordinator, at (978) 465-0492, ext. 117, jperos@nefmc.org.