

Accountability Measures in Small-Mesh Fisheries

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Sub-ACL to Small Mesh Fishery

- Small mesh vessels are defined as those fishing with a codend less than 5 inches (i.e. squid and whiting fishery).
- **Georges Bank Yellowtail Flounder sub-ACL** established for the small-mesh fishery to be applied retroactively to Fishing Year 2013 catches.
 - US/CA Resource Sharing Understanding
 - To be applied to the subcomponent that caused the overage, but only if the total ACL is exceeded.
 - Requires a pound-for-pound payback of yellowtail fl. overages.
 - Must be applied the next fishing year, so that sub-ACL for that fishery is reduced by the amount of overage in the previous year.



Accountability Measures in Small Mesh Fishery

- **Use of Selective Trawl Gear:** Accountability measure includes gear modification in Georges Bank stock area (Framework 51).
 - Raised footrope trawl
 - Separator trawl
 - Rope trawl
 - Ruhle trawl
 - mini-Ruhle trawl
 - NMFS Regional Administrator to consider additional selective gear through the established gear-approval process, 50 CFR 648.85(b)(6).



2012 ACL and Catch Information

Fishing Year 2012 Catches (metric ton by live weight)

Stock	Total Catch Limit	Catches				
		Total	Groundfish Fishery	Scallop Fishery	State	Other Sub-component
Georges Bank Yellowtail FL	547.8	384.9	215.5	164	0.0	5.4
Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic Yellowtail FL	936	593.5	463.0	54.0	12.0	64.6
Cape Cod/Gulf of Maine Yellowtail FL	1,104	1,012.3	957.6	16.6	33.7	4.3*
Northern Windowpane FL	163	208.9	129.6	75.7	2.3	1.3**
Southern Windowpane FL	381	520.9	106.5	125.8	34.4	254.2***



2013 ACL and Catch Information

Fishing Year 2013 Catches (metric ton by live weight)							
Stock	Total Catch Limit	Catches					
		Total	Groundfish Fishery	Scallop Fishery	Small-Mesh	State	Other Sub-component
Georges Bank Yellowtail FL	208.5	93.3	55.8	37.5	2.5	0.0	0.0
Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic Yellowtail FL	665	466.1	373.3	48.6		14.5	29.8*
Cape Cod/Gulf of Maine Yellowtail FL	523	453.1	380.5	23.2		42.8	6.5**
Northern Windowpane FL	144	280.1	237.5	40.7		0.9	0.9
Southern Windowpane FL	527	554.7	115.9	129.1	19	37.3	253.4***



Future Outlook

- Framework 53 does **not** include any further discussion to consider establishing a sub-ACL for windowpane in the small-mesh fishery.
- Benefits to proactive use of selective trawl gear:
 - Reduction in yellowtail flounder catches
 - Georges Bank sub-ACL for small-mesh vessels
 - Avoid triggering an AM for small mesh fishery
 - Reduction in windowpane flounder catches
 - Avoid triggering an AM for other fisheries if the selective gear reduces overall windowpane catches.



Questions?



Additional Information



Accountability Measures

- 2006 Reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Act requires that NMFS: “establish a mechanism for specifying annual catch limits in the plan (including a multiyear plan), implementing regulations, or annual specifications, at a level such that **overfishing does not occur** in the fishery, including **measures to ensure accountability.**”
- Amendment 16 (2010) to the Northeast Multispecies FMP developed AMs for managed groundfish stocks, including windowpane flounder and yellowtail flounder.
- Annual Catch Limit is the sum of all sub-ACLs and ACL subcomponents
 - Sub-ACLs are set for some fisheries which are subject to AMs if catches are exceeded.
 - ACL subcomponents are those fisheries for which AMs do not exist (i.e. state waters), but still count towards the total catch that makes up the total ACL.



Accountability Measures to Groundfish FMP

- **Groundfish Fishery:** Reactive AMs set in place for sector and common pool vessels
 - Area-based AMs for windowpane flounder require the use of selective trawl gear in designated AM areas. Reactive AMs would mitigate catch overages if they occur.
 - Total ACL for northern windowpane (GB/GOM) is exceeded, then the **GB AM area** would apply
 - Total ACL for southern windowpane is exceeded (SNE/MA), then the **SNE AM area** would apply
- Groundfish AM triggers are based on Year 1 catch, to be accounted for in Year 3*** if overages take place.
 - Sub-ACLs exist for catches of groundfish in non-groundfish fisheries (i.e. scallop fishery's sub-ACL for yellowtail flounder)



Windowpane AM Area

Figure 1 – Gear restricted AMs for windowpane flounder

Entire area shaded



Entire area shaded

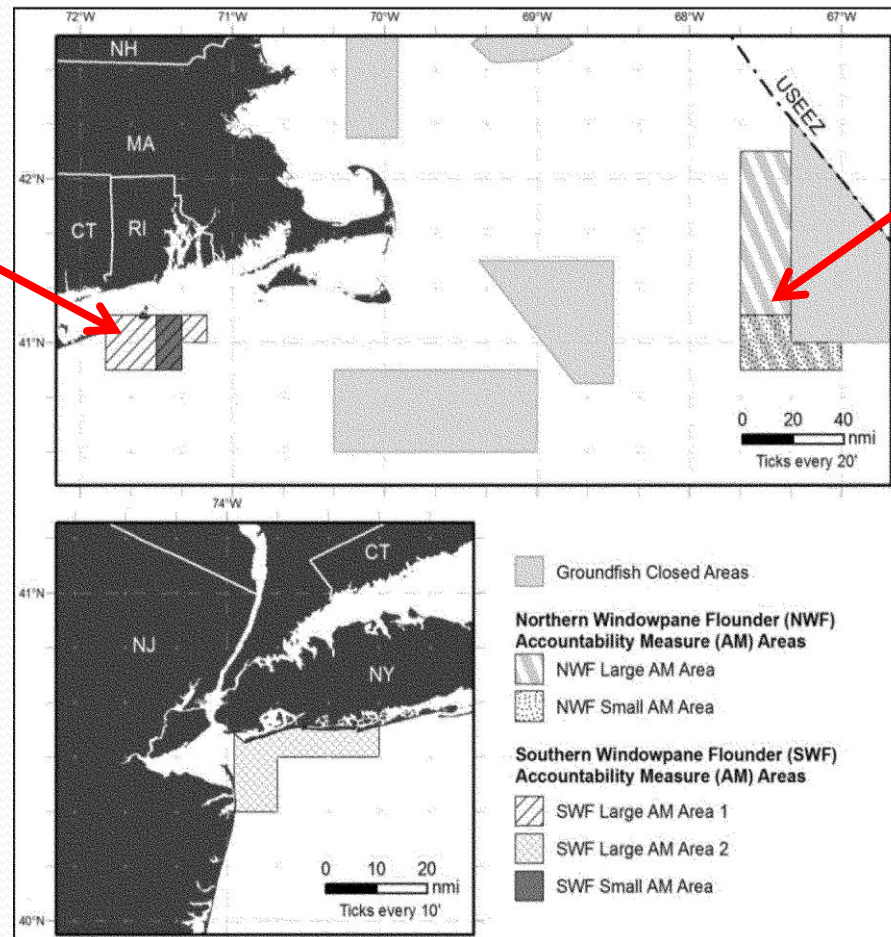
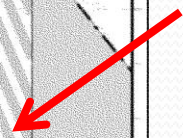


Photo Credit: NOAA Fisheries



Accountability Measures

- In 2014, AMs were set in place due to overages in the Northern and Southern windowpane flounder ACLs for FY 2012 and 2013

Overages in ACLs		
Stock	Fishing Year	
	2012	2013
Northern Windowpane	128%	195%
Southern Windowpane	136%	105%

- Groundfish vessels required to use selective trawl gear when fishing in AM areas:
 - Haddock separator trawl
 - Ruhle Trawl
 - Rope Separator Trawl
- Since scallop and other non-groundfish fisheries AMs were not established until 2013, the 2012 AMs only apply to groundfish vessels



Framework 52

- Framework 52: Proposed rule (November 17, 2014)
- Applies only to commercial groundfish vessels
 - Due to negative economic impacts of WP AMs, FW 52 proposes modifications to mitigate these impacts:
 - Updated survey and catch information (i.e. improved WP stock health?)
 - Did the fishery remain within its sub-ACL following an overage in the previous year?
 - Proposed Alternative 1: Apply the small AM area if stock is rebuilt
 - Proposed Alternative 2: Reducing duration of AM in-season
 - If Year 1 overages occur, and fishery does not exceed its sub-ACL in Year 2
- FW 52 for 2014 AMs for WP
 - Northern windowpane: GB large AM area applies
 - Southern Windowpane: Reduce the SNE AM area to apply the small AM area, based on updated stock status information
 - Since 2013 overages took place, will not apply small AM in-season (FY 2014)



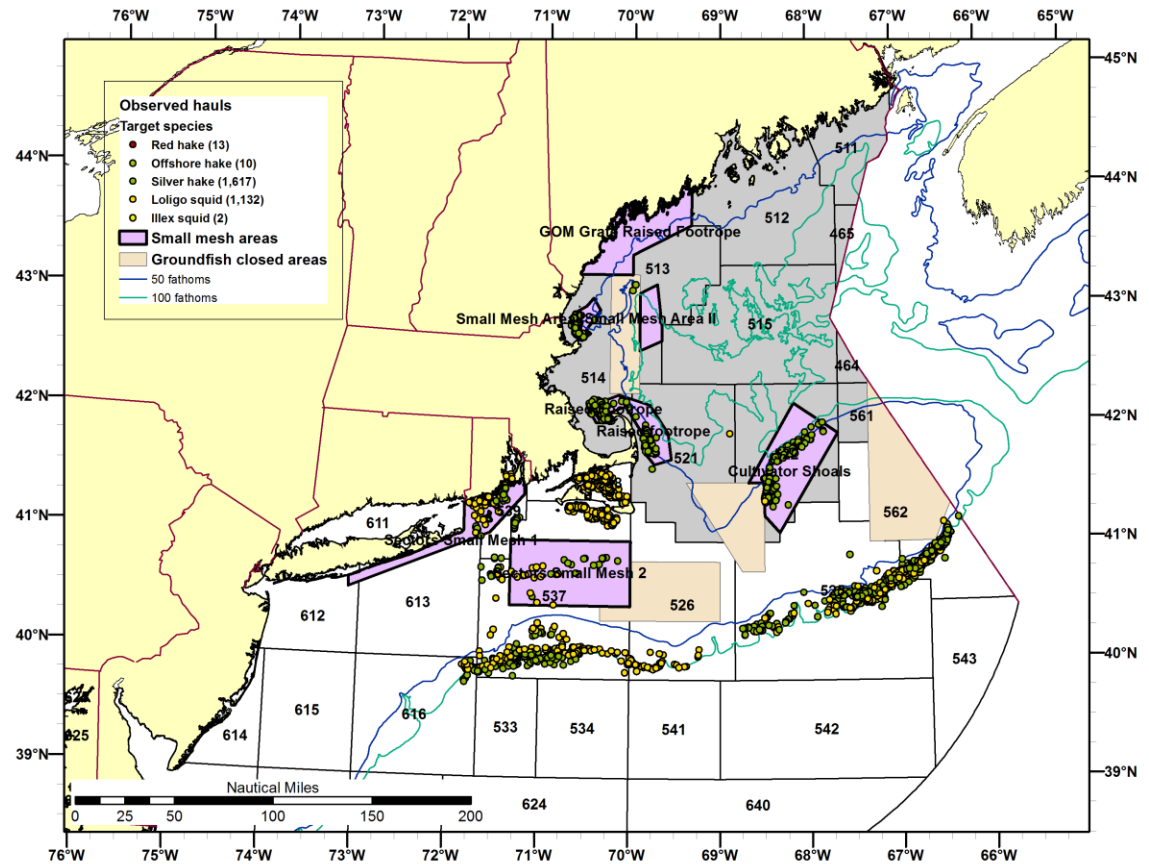
AMs for Scallop Fishery

- **Scallop fishery** is allocated sub-ACLs for GB and SNE/MA Yellowtail Flounder
 - LA Vessels: Sub-ACLs overages for GB and SNE/MA YT
 - AM trigger would apply a seasonal area closures in stat areas with the highest YT catch rates for limited access scallop vessels if:
 - Overall ACL exceeded and scallop sub-ACL is exceeded, **or**
 - Scallop sub-ACL portion is exceeded by 50%.
 - LAGC Vessels: Sub-ACLs for SNE/MA YT
 - Catch of GB YT by LAGC vessels is minimal, so no sub-ACL for that stock was implemented.
 - AM triggered if:
 - (1) LAGC dredge catch exceeds 3% (dredge vessels) or 10% (trawl vessels) of SNE/MA sub-ACL for the scallop fishery, (2) scallop fishery exceeds its sub-ACL, **and** (3) the overall ACL for the SNE/MA YT stock is exceeded.
- Beginning in 2013, scallop fishery was allocated a sub-ACL for the **SNE/MA windowpane stock**.



Small-Mesh Multi-Species Fishery

- Northern Silver Hake
- Southern Silver Hake
- Northern Red Hake
- Southern Red Hake
- Offshore Hake



Credit: NOAA



Small-Mesh Multispecies Fishery

- **Gulf of Maine/Georges Bank**

Table 1. Northern area exemption program seasons

	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
Cultivator			June 15 – October 31									
GOM* Grate			July 1 – November 30									
Small I			July 15 – November 15									
Small II	– June 30								January 1 –			
Cape Cod RFT†					Sept 1 – Nov 20							
					September 1 – December 31							

* GOM = Gulf of Maine

† RFT = Raised Footrope Trawl

- **Southern New England (Year-round)**
- **Mid-Atlantic (Year-round)**



YT and WP Flounder Stock Status

- Northern windowpane fl.: overfishing; overfished
- Southern windowpane fl.: no overfishing; not overfished
- GB yellowtail fl.: overfishing; overfished
- CC/GOM yellowtail fl.: overfishing; overfished
- SNE/MA yellowtail fl.: no overfishing; not overfished

