

Northeast Multispecies Sectors



**NOAA
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SERVICE**



For more information on the
NE Multispecies Sector
Program:

<http://www.nero.noaa.gov/sfd/sfd/multisector.html>

Vital Stats

First year (for expanded sector management program): 2010

Type of Catch Share Program: Annual Catch Entitlement (ACE) to each sector

Management units: Twenty stocks of groundfish; fourteen stocks are allocated to sectors with approved operations plans.

Vessels / Gear types: Seventeen sectors have submitted operations plans for 2010, representing 762 of the 1477 eligible permit holders and >98% of the commercial NE multispecies annual catch limits (ACLs) for 2010. Non-sector vessels (referred to as common-pool vessels) will continue to fish under the days-at-sea effort control program. Sector vessels fish primarily with sink gillnets, bottom longline (tub trawls), otter trawls, jigs and handlines.

Available Trend Data

Ex-vessel value: Before Program--- (2008) ~ \$85M entire groundfish fishery.

Stock status: Before Program--- (2009) Twelve stocks are considered to be undergoing overfishing, and ten of these are also overfished. Three additional stocks are overfished.

Stock	Overfishing	Overfished
GB Cod	Yes	Yes
GOM Cod	Yes	No
Yellowtail Flounder (GB; SNE/MA; CC/GOM)	Yes	Yes
Witch Flounder	Yes	Yes
GB Winter Flounder	Yes	Yes
SNE/MA Winter Flounder	Yes	Yes
GB/GOM White Hake	Yes	Yes
GB/GOM Pollock	Yes	Yes
GB/GOM Windowpane Flounder	Yes	Yes
SNE/MA Windowpane Flounder	Yes	No
Ocean Pout	No	Yes
Atlantic Halibut	No	Yes
Atlantic Wolffish	Unknown	Yes
Haddock & American Plaice (GB, GOM); Redfish	No	No
GOM Winter Flounder	Unknown	Unknown

GB= Georges Bank; GOM=Gulf of Maine; SNE= Southern New England; MA= MidAtlantic; CC= Cape Cod

Nature of Harvest Privilege

Eligibility: A sector is a voluntarily-formed group of at least three distinct owners that submit an operations plan for authorization to fish and to receive an allocation of the ACL for each stock, called the ACE. To qualify for membership in the Sector, each member must possess a limited access Northeast multispecies permit.

Members sign a legally binding contract that commits their vessels and permits to the Sector Agreement for the time specified in the contract (one or two years).

Transferability: A sector can transfer ACE to or from another sector without restriction on an annual basis, but a permanent transfer between sectors may not occur while participating in a sector, given that permits could move from one sector to another during the fishing year.

Accumulation: There is no cap on sector allocations under Amendment 16.

Initial Allocation: Sector allocation set annually, based on members' Potential Sector Contribution (PSC), and available stock ACLs



For additional Catch Share
Spotlights in this series go to:

<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/catchshares>

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more information? Contact us
via email at:

catchshares@noaa.gov

Provisions for Overages: If a sector exceeds its ACE in any given year, its allocation in the subsequent year is reduced to account for the overage. To avoid this, all or a portion of a sector's ACE of any stock can be transferred to another sector at any time during the fishing year and up to two weeks into the following fishing year. Allowing transfer of ACE provides flexibility for sectors to adjust their allocations to account for unusual circumstances or to take advantage of other opportunities. Allowing the exchanges to continue for a period after the end of the fishing year provides a limited opportunity for a sector to quota balance if an ACE was exceeded. Conversely, a sector can carry up to 10% of unused ACE forward to the next fishing year. If a sector exceeds an ACE allocated to it during the previous fishing year, but disbands in the year following the overage, or otherwise does not have sufficient ACE to address the overage during the fishing year following the overage, then individual permit holders that participated in the sector during the fishing year in which the overage occurred will have their Days-at-Sea or PSC reduced to account for that overage in the subsequent fishing year.

Management

Identified Costs: To assist with the change to a new management system, NMFS will provide \$28.6M for FY2010. Funding will be used to assist with sector start-up costs; development of permit banks; cooperative research; data management; enforcement; and other aspects of the program. Additionally, NMFS is funding at-sea monitoring for 2010, supplementing coverage with the Northeast Fisheries Observer Program. Sectors also charge membership fees to cover the sector's operational costs.

Monitoring: Amendment 16 includes increased monitoring requirements for all Northeast multispecies vessels (sector and common pool), both at-sea and dockside. Vessels also must submit vessel monitoring system (VMS) trip declarations and weekly vessel trip reports (VTRs). A VMS catch report is required on every trip if fishing in multiple stock areas. Sectors submit weekly and yearly catch reports that include detailed landings and discards of all stocks.

Summary

Requirements of the reauthorized MSA for rebuilding stocks present a challenge for multispecies fisheries, such as the Northeast groundfish fishery. For some stocks, the most recent scientific advice recommended mortality targets that are substantially reduced from recent levels, but for other stocks it was possible for mortality targets to remain the same or even increase. The problem with mixed catch composition in a days-at-sea system is when the vessel reaches the catch limit for the stock with the lowest limit, fishing for that day is finished. In an identical situation, a fisherman with quota in a sector has opportunity to continue fishing by trading or leasing additional allocation. The key is to balance catch with quota, which is the basis of the design for this catch shares system.

In the Northeast groundfish fishery, a sector is allocated ACE for each stock. Each ACE is allocated to the sector as a whole and not to individual vessels within the sector, allowing the sector to develop its own set of rules to distribute the sector's allocation among its membership. Sectors also provide a mechanism for pooling and managing risk, fishing capacity and developing new business/fishing strategies. Vessels within the sector are allowed to pool harvesting resources and consolidate operations in fewer vessels if they desire. One of the major benefits of self-selecting sectors is that they provide incentives to self-govern, therefore, reducing the need for Council-mandated measures.