OBSERVER/MONITOR PROTOCOLS ON EM VESSELS

Gulf of Maine Research Institute (GMRI): Operationalizing Open-Source Electronic Monitoring Systems in New England Groundfish Sectors

Project Summary

GMRI, in collaboration with the Maine Coast Community Sector, Northeast Fishery Sector XI, and The Nature Conservancy, is managing this EM study and has contracted EM services with Ecotrust Canada from British Columbia. The Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) and the Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office (GARFO) are also collaborative partners in this project in an effort to further investigate the applicability of EM in the multispecies fishery.

Building off of the EM work completed by the Fisheries Sampling Branch (FSB), the project aims to develop program design, improve data management, and document the first year of a fully functional EM program. Project objectives include developing a monitoring program that can collect data comparable to the ASM program on gillnet and trawl vessels. This includes comparing EM data to fishermen self-reported data (VTRs) as well as NEFOP and ASM data. The GMRI project is expected to continue through 2016 and may incorporate additional vessels.

EM targets: large-mesh groundfish species list

- Atlantic cod
- Haddock
- Pollock
- Yellowtail flounder
- American plaice flounder
- Winter flounder
- Witch flounder
- Atlantic halibut
- Redfish, NK
- White hake
- Windowpane flounder
- Ocean pout
- Atlantic wolfish
- Monkfish

Preferred Sampling Protocols

- After sampling, observers should return all fin fish discards back to the crew and the crew will be responsible for discarding off the vessel. This does not apply to ***Skates*** and ***Dogfish*** and they can be discarded per regular observer protocols.
- Crew can be handed fish during regular sorting or immediately after sorting is done for the haul. Captains and crew are aware of the change in protocols and will work with the observer to comply.
- *Note: If the discard volume does not allow for this method and observers need to utilize other catch handling methods to perform their duties, observers should inform the captain and proceed with their duties while discarding fish within camera view when possible.*
    - An example scenario is as follows: There are numerous Pollock discards on a gillnet string and there is not enough time to coordinate with the crew to have them discard the Pollock once they have been sampled. In addition, the observer cannot store the Pollock discards because their baskets are filled up and they need to make room for other species to be sampled. The observer should inform the captain of the situation, stop returning the Pollock discards to the crew and discard them themselves while attempting to do so within camera view.
- *Note: These are preferred methods, observer's duties take precedence over the modified sampling*

Participating Vessels

Vessel	Homeport	Gear	Sector
Pamela Grace	Portland, ME	Gillnet	Maine Coast Community Sector
Safe Haven	Portland, ME	Gillnet	Maine Coast Community Sector
Jeanne C	Boothbay Harbor, ME	Bottom otter trawl	Maine Coast Community Sector
Ella Christine	Port Clyde, ME	Bottom otter trawl	Maine Coast Community Sector
Lady Victoria	Seabrook, NH	Bottom otter trawl/Gillnet	Northeast Fishery Sector XI

EM Pre-Briefs

If observers and ASMs have questions related to sampling methods on these EM vessels they are encourage to contact:

Glenn Chamberlain, (508) 495-2153

Kelly Neville, (508) 495-2151

Uploading Data

Observers and ASMs will need to flag these EM trips during their trip upload. The most recent ASM software update includes a field for EMS_used when uploading groundfish sector trips. OBPRELIM also has an EMS_used field to check off