

Terms of Reference

Transboundary Resources Assessment Committee (TRAC) Assessment of Eastern Georges Bank Cod, Haddock and Georges Bank Yellowtail

July 7-9, 2015

St. Andrews, New Brunswick
Canada

Chairpersons: Liz Brooks (U.S.) and Kristian Curran (Canada)

Objectives

The TRAC annually obtains requests for harvest advice on transboundary resources from the Transboundary Management Guidance Committee (TMGC).

For the following resources: Eastern Georges Bank Cod, Eastern Georges Bank Haddock, and Georges Bank Yellowtail Flounder:

- Apply the benchmark assessments (VPA for cod and haddock and empirical approach for yellowtail) to report on the status of the stocks, updating results for the latest information from fisheries, including discard estimates and research surveys, and characterize the uncertainty of estimates.
- Describe any adjustments to benchmark assessment models applied during the TRAC including impacts on advice given to TMGC.
- Evaluate and quantify, if possible, scientific uncertainty of the assessment output (stock status determination and catch projection), discussing current practices of characterization and alternative methods of evaluation.
- Provide sensitivity analyses to account for retrospective bias on stock biomass and fishing mortality estimates for cod and haddock, if appropriate.
- For a range of total catch values in 2016 and 2017, estimate the risk that the respective fishing mortality rate would exceed $F_{ref} = 0.26$ for haddock and $F = 0.11$ for cod. Include a table showing the 2016 and 2017 catches corresponding to low (25%), neutral (50%), and high (75%) probability that the F would exceed $F_{ref} = 0.26$ for haddock and $F = 0.11$ for cod.
- For a range of total catch values in 2016 and 2017, estimate the risk that the biomass at the beginning of 2017 and 2018 would not achieve a 0%, 10% or 20% increase compared to the beginning of 2016 and 2017 for cod and haddock.
- For yellowtail flounder, provide catch advice for 2016 based on the empirical approach for a range of exploitation rates and, if appropriate, any other approach (e.g., constant quota) that includes catch advice for 2016 and 2017. Catch advice based on the empirical approach should consider information on survey catchability, if available.
- Review the biomass distribution relative to the U.S./Canada boundary, updating results with the 2014 survey information, and apply the allocation shares formula.
- For yellowtail flounder, develop a range of harvest control rules for determining the effectiveness of potential harvest strategies (i.e., constant quota or constant exploitation rate) and initiate an exploration of Management Strategy Evaluation
- Draft terms of reference for the 2016 TRAC assessment of Eastern Georges Bank Atlantic Cod, Eastern Georges Bank Haddock and Georges Bank Yellowtail Flounder.
- Other matters.

Expected Publications

- **TRAC Transboundary Status Reports** for the Eastern Georges Bank Atlantic cod and Haddock, and Georges Bank Yellowtail Flounder management units.

- **TRAC Reference Documents** for Eastern Georges Bank Atlantic Cod and Haddock, Georges Bank Yellowtail Flounder management units, and the allocation shares.
- **TRAC Proceedings** of meeting discussion.

Participation

- DFO Maritimes scientists and managers
- NMFS Northeast Region scientists and managers
- Canadian and U.S. fishing industry
- U.S. State and Canadian Provincial (NB and NS) representatives
- NEFMC representatives
- Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) representatives