For Administrative Use Only

Potential Offshore Fishery Resources of the Northwest Atlantic

Bureau of Commercial Fisheries
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Commercial fishing interests in New England are interested in increasing the U.S. catch of fish from the offshore banks and frequently inquire as to the degree to which present operations might be expanded without adversely affecting the sustained yield. Since the stocks concerned are exploited by other nations as well as by the U.S., it is impossible to answer this question since we cannot anticipate the foreign effort.

However, it is useful to estimate the total yield (all countries combined) stocks might be expected to sustain over the long-term period. The share taken by the U.S. will depend upon economic conditions in the U.S. fishing industry and in the fisheries of other interested countries.

In the following tables, landings figures have been compiled for the major species by ICNAF Subareas. Good records are available for U.S. landings for many years and for foreign countries since they started reporting to ICNAF in 1952. In the column "low year" are given the lowest annual landings since ICNAF statistics became available in 1951.

The "estimated sustainable yield" is our best estimate based on available information and conforms to the opinion of the ICNAF Committee on Research and Statistics. It is stressed that these

figures represent what might reasonably be expected of the respective stocks on the average. Stocks which fluctuate widely in abundance because of fluctuation in recruitment, may in some years produce yields below these figures. For instance, there is a good year class of haddock in Subarea 3 very infrequently so that the listed sustainable yield cannot be realized each year. In other words, our estimated sustainable yield assumes long term average recruitment.

We have listed sustainable yields only for cod, haddock, redfish, yellowtail flounder, silver hake, red hake, herring, and sea scallops. There is no information on which to base estimates of yields for the other species.

Note. This information is for the assistance of Bureau personnel in their discussions with industry regarding the New England potential of marine fisheries. The International Commission for the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries is now considering catch limitations. The figures given here are not necessarily the ones which will be used by ICNAF for that purpose. More refined estimates will be made later as the results of studies now in progress by the several countries become available.

Cod

(Thousands of Metric Tons, Live Weight)

Subarea 3	High Year	Low Year	Average 1952-1963	1963	Estimated sustain. yield
All Countries	472.0 (1954)	328.0 (1952)	400.4	466.0	400
U.S.	23.8 (1895)	0 (War)	0.2	0	--
Subarea 4					
All Countries	219.0 (1962)	132.0 (1952)	189.0	218.0	250
U.S.	43.9 (1945)	1.3 (1963)	2.3	1.3	--
Subarea 5					
All Countries	63.7 (1895)	11.2 (1953)	16.5	30.0	25
U.S.	63.7 (1895)	11.2 (1953)	14.6	16.7	--

Yellowtail Flounder

(Thousands of Metric Tons, Live Weight)

Subarea 4	High Year	Low Year	Average 1952-1963	1963	Estimated sustain. yield
All Countries	3.8 (1963)	0.0 (1956)	1.5	3.8	10?
No U.S.					
Subarea 5					
All Countries	35.8 (1964)	5.2 (1954)	13.8	35.3	25
U.S.	35.8 (1964)	5.2 (1954)	13.3	35.2	--

Flounder other than Yellowtail

(Thousands of Metric Tons, Live Weight)

Subarea 3	High Year	Low Year	Average 1952-1963	1963	Estimated sustain. yield 1/
All Countries	35.1 (1959)	11.4 (1954)	25.1	34.3	?
No U.S.					
Subarea 4					
All Countries	33.4 (1963)	15.2 (1957)	21.1	33.4	?
U.S.	3.2 (1954)	0.2 (1960)	0.9	0.3	
Subarea 5					
All Countries	20.8 (1950)	11.1 (1958)	11.5	13.0	?
U.S.	20.8 (1950)	9.7 (1962)	11.1	12.4	

1/ Probably not fully exploited

Sea Scallops

(Meat Weights in Parentheses)

Subarea 4					
All Countries	11.5 (1963) (1.4)	1.6 (1960) (0.2)	4.9 (0.6)	11.5 (1.4)	5? (0.6)
No U.S.					
Subarea 5					
All Countries	129.0 (1962) (15.5)	61.5 (1955) (7.4)	91.6 (11.0)	115.9 (13.9)	100 (12)
U.S.	89.8 (1961) (10.8)	44.8 (1958) (5.4)	65.3 (7.8)	66.9 (8.0)	--

Herring[1/]

(Thousands of Metric Tons, Live Weight)

Subarea 3	High Year	Low Year	Average 1952-1963	1963	Estimated sustain. yield
All Countries	10.8 (1958)	4.0 (1961)	6.0	5.8	10?
U.S.	0	0	0	0	
Subarea 4					
All Countries	115.6 (1962)	77.9 (1956)	94.3	111.4	100?
U.S.	0	0	0	0	
Subarea 5					
All Countries	223.3 (1962)	47.6 (1959)	87.0	167.4	120?
U.S. [2/]	71.8 (1962)	47.6 (1959)	60.8	70.1	?

1/ Inshore and offshore
2/ All inshore

Other Miscellaneous Fish

(Thousands of Metric Tons, Live Weight)

Subarea 3					
All Countries No U.S.	14.4 (1955)	5.1 (1961)	8.9	5.9	?
Subarea 4					
All Countries No U.S.	16.7 (1963)	5.9 (1961)	10.1	16.7	?
Subarea 5 (All U.S.)					
All Countries	11.9 (1957)	2.4 (1958)	7.2	11.2	?
U.S.	11.9 (1957)	2.4 (1958)	6.8	7.0	

Pollock

(Thousands of Metric Tons, Live Weight)

Subarea 3	High Year	Low Year	Average 1952-1963	1963	Estimated sustain. yield
All Countries	7.0 (1954)	1.9 (1963)	4.6	1.9	?
No U.S.					
Subarea 4					
All Countries	33.0 (1962)	2.3 (1954)	23.0	30.5	?
U.S.	3.1 (1959)	1.0 (1957)	2.0	2.0	
Subarea 5					
All Countries	13.6 (1958)	6.1 (1963)	8.9	6.1	?
U.S.	12.3 (1958)	4.7 (1963)	8.4	4.7	

Redfish

(Thousands of Metric Tons, Live Weight)

Subarea 3	High Year	Low Year	Average 1952-1963	1963	Estimated sustain. yield
All Countries	246.1 (1959)	17.6 (1955)	78.8	68.7	150-200
U.S. (all from 3 NOP (So. Grand Banks)	33.1 (1953)	4.7 (1957)	17.7	12.1	--
Subarea 4					
All Countries	76.7 (1949)	28.6 (1953)	48.9	58.6	125?
U.S.	44.1 (1955)	19.6 (1953)	33.8	28.2	--
4RST					
All Countries	49.8 (1955)	6.6 (1962)	23.7	19.7	(50?)
U.S.	34.6 (1955)	0 (1962)	10.3	4.8	--
4VWX					
All Countries	77.0 (1949)	9.7 (1955)	24.0	38.3	(75)
U.S.	77.0 (1949)	9.4 (1955)	20.7	23.4	--
Subarea 5					
All Countries	59.8 (1941)	10.0 (1963)	14.9	10.0	50
U.S.	59.8 (1941)	9.0 (1963)	14.5	9.0	--

Other Groundfish (Associated with Catches of Major Groundfish Species)

(Dogfish, Skate, Scup, Tautog, Sea Robin, Tilefish,

Wolffish, Eelpout, White Hake, Cusk, Ling)

(Thousands of Metric Tons, Live Weight)

Subarea 5	High Year	Low Year	Average 1952-1963	1963	Estimated sustain. yield 1/
All Countries	15.8 (1963)	12.4 (1961)	13.8	15.8	?
U.S.	7.8 (1963)	5.9 (1961)	6.7	7.8	--

1/--Probably not fully exploited.

Industrial Groundfish

Other than Silver Hake and Red Hake

(Thousands of Metric Tons, Live Weight)

Subarea 5	High Year	Low Year	Average 1952-1963	1963	Estimated sustain. yield 1/
All Countries	31.5 (1957)	6.1 (1960)	16.5	13.2	--
U. S.	31.5 (1957)	6.1 (1960)	13.7	8.3	--

1/--Probably not fully exploited.

Silver Hake (Includes Industrial Landings)

(Thousands of Metric Tons, Live Weight)

Subarea 4	High Year	Low Year	Average 1952-1963	1963	Estimated sustain. yield
All Countries	123.0 (1963)[1/]	---	13.4	123.0	100 ?
No U.S.					
Subarea 5[2/]					
All Countries	156.6 (1963)	45.8 (1961)	71.0	156.6	200 ?
U.S.	78.7 (1957)	45.8 (1961)	58.5	50.0	---

1/--1963 was first year of exploitation. In 1964, 81,000 metric tons were taken by U.S.S.R.

2/--Includes U.S. industrial catch.

Red Hake (Includes Industrial Landings)

(Thousands of Metric Tons, Live Weight)

Subarea 5	High Year	Low Year	Average 1952-1963	1963	Estimated sustain. yield
All Countries	38.7 (1957)	8.6 (1960)	30.2	30.8	100
U.S.	38.7 (1957)	8.6 (1960)	29.8	23.9	---

Swordfish

(Thousands of Metric Tons, Live Weight)

Subarea 3	High Year	Low Year	Average 1952-1963	1963	Estimated sustain. yield
All Countries	1.0 (1963)	0	0.3	1.0	?
U.S.	0.1 (1963)	0	--	0.1	
Subarea 4					
All Countries	4.8 (1963)	1.3 (1961)	2.3	4.8	?
U.S.	NIL				
Subarea 5					
All Countries	3.8 (1963)	0.3 (1954)	1.1	3.8	?
U.S.	0.9 (1963)	0.1 (1954)	0.4	0.9	

Tuna

(Thousands of Metric Tons, Live Weight)

Subarea 5					
All Countries	3.2 (1962)	0.2 (1956)	1.2	2.9	?
U.S.	3.2 (1962)	0.2 (1956)	1.2	2.9	?

Other Pelagic Fish

(Mackerel, Blueback, Menhaden, etc.)
(Thousands of Metric Tons, Live Weight)

Subarea 3					
All Countries No U.S.	1.3 (1955)	0.0 (1960)	0.5	0.4	?
Subarea 4					
All Countries No U.S.	11.8 (1954)	4.2 (1959)	7.6	7.5	?
Subarea 5					
All Countries	38.9 (1956)	7.9 (1963)	18.0	7.9	?
U.S.	38.9 (1956)	4.1 (1963)	17.4	4.1	

Haddock

(Thousands of Metric Tons, Live Weight)

Subarea 3	High Year	Low Year	Average 1952-1963	1963	Estimated sustain. yield
All Countries	104.5 (1955)	14.5 (1963)	51.1	14.5	50.0
U.S.	0	0	0.1	0	0
Subarea 4					
All Countries	54.9 (1952)	43.1 (1955)	48.4	51.3	60.0
U.S.	50.0 (1935)	6.4 (1962)	12.7	7.0	--
4X					
All Countries	24.4 (1963)	7.9 (1953)	18.4	24.4	(20.0)
U.S.	15.0 (1931)	5.4 (1959)	8.3	7.2	--
4VW					
All Countries	34.9 (1959)	13.0 (1953)	24.8	25.3	(35.0)
U.S.	9.3 (1948)	0.1 (1963)	2.5	0.1	--
Subarea 5					
All Countries	120.0 (1929)	40.7 (1959)	51.1	59.6	50.0
U.S.	120.0 (1929)	40.5 (1959)	49.4	48.9	--