

**Transboundary Resources Assessment Committee
Assessment of Eastern Georges Bank Cod, Haddock and Georges
Bank Yellowtail**

**June 23-26, 2014
Woods Hole, Ma.**

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Context

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 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.
- Depending upon the outcome of the GB Yellowtail Flounder empirical approach benchmark, results from the empirical method will either be considered alone as a basis for catch advice or considered along with the current virtual population analysis (VPA from 2005 benchmark) modeling results and relevant VPA sensitivity runs as have been conducted in the past.
- 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, Haddock, and Yellowtail Flounder, if appropriate.
- For a range of total catch values in 2015, estimate the risk that the 2015 fishing mortality rate would exceed F_{ref} values, i.e. 0.18 (Cod), 0.26 (Haddock) and 0.25 (Yellowtail Flounder) respectively. Include a table showing the 2015 catches corresponding to low (25%), neutral (50%) and high (75%) probability that the F would exceed F_{ref} .
- For a range of total catch values in 2015, estimate the risk that the biomass at the beginning of 2016 would not achieve a 0%, 10% or 20% increase compared to the beginning of 2015.
- Review the biomass distribution relative to the U.S./Canada boundary, updating results with the 2013 survey information, and apply the allocation shares formula.
- Identify alternate fishing reference points that are appropriate for the Cod VPA $M=0.8$ model.

- For Yellowtail Flounder, if recommended by the GB Yellowtail Flounder empirical approach benchmark, provide catch advice consistent with newly defined fishing mortality reference points developed for an empirical approach (noting that any change in F_{ref} used to provide catch advice would need to be negotiated) and synthesize all the available information used to provide recommendations on catch advice.
- Draft terms of reference for the 2015 TRAC assessment of cod, haddock and yellowtail.
- Other matters.

Expected Publications

TRAC Transboundary Status Reports for the eastern Georges Bank cod and haddock, and Georges Bank yellowtail flounder management units

TRAC Reference Documents for eastern Georges Bank cod and haddock, Georges Bank yellowtail flounder management units, and the allocation shares

TRAC Proceedings of meeting discussion

Participants

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