

## Foreword

The Northeast Regional Stock Assessment Workshop (SAW) process has three parts: preparation of stock assessments by the SAW Working Groups and/or by ASMFC Technical Committees / Assessment Committees; peer review of the assessments by a panel of outside experts who judge the adequacy of the assessment as a basis for providing scientific advice to managers; and a presentation of the results and reports to the Region's fishery management bodies.

Starting with SAW-39 (June 2004), the process was revised in two fundamental ways. First, the Stock Assessment Review Committee (SARC) became smaller panel with panelists provided by the Independent System for Peer Review (Center of Independent Experts, CIE). Second, the SARC provides little management advice. Instead, Council and Commission teams (e.g., Plan Development Teams, Monitoring and Technical Committees, Science and Statistical Committee) formulate management advice, after an assessment has been accepted by the SARC. Starting with SAW-45 (June 2007) the SARC chairs were from external agencies, but not from the CIE. Starting with SAW-48 (June 2009), SARC chairs are from the Fishery Management Council's Science and Statistics Committee (SSC), and not from the CIE. Also at this time, some assessment Terms of Reference were revised to provide additional science support to the SSCs, as the SSC's are required to make annual ABC recommendations to the fishery management councils.

Reports that are produced following SAW/SARC meetings include: An *Assessment Summary Report* - a summary of the assessment results in a format useful to managers; an *Assessment Report* - a detailed account of the assessments for each stock; and the SARC panelist reports - a summary

of the reviewer's opinions and recommendations as well as individual reports from each panelist. SAW/SARC assessment reports are available online at <http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/nefsc/publications/series/crdlist.htm>. The CIE review reports and assessment reports can be found at <http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/nefsc/saw/>?

The 50th SARC was convened in Woods Hole at the Northeast Fisheries Science Center, June 1-5, 2010 to review three assessments: goosefish (also called monkfish; *Lophius americanus*), sea scallop (*Placopecten magellanicus*), and pollock (*Pollachius virens*). CIE reviews for SARC50 were based on detailed reports produced by NEFSC Assessment Working Groups. This Introduction contains a brief summary of the SARC comments, a list of SARC panelists, the meeting agenda, and a list of attendees (Tables 1 - 3). Maps of the Atlantic coast of the USA and Canada are also provided (Figures 1 - 5).

### **Outcome of Stock Assessment Review Meeting:**

The SARC review committee accepted the monkfish assessment, but expressed serious concerns regarding the high levels of uncertainty throughout the assessment. There is considerable uncertainty in estimates of stock size, recruitment, fishing mortality, biological reference points, stock status determination, and stock projections. There is a large retrospective pattern in the model for the northern management area. It is possible that similar uncertainties exist in the southern management area. Sources of uncertainty in the assessment are neither well characterized nor documented. The scientific basis of the redefined reference points is adequate, but they are uncertain given their dependence upon the uncertain assessment model. Under both the

unadjusted and adjusted retrospective scenarios, monkfish in both the northern and southern management areas are not overfished and overfishing is not occurring. The causes of the retrospective patterns in the models need to be determined.

The Panel accepted the sea scallop assessment. The assessment was rigorous and it was well supported by the available information. Strong analytical frameworks were defined for estimating fishing mortality, stock biomass and recruitment (CASA model), for defining biological reference points (SYM model) and for performing stock projections to inform ABC decisions (SAMS model). An innovative approach was developed for quantifying uncertainties around BRPs relative to exploitation levels, facilitating the incorporation of risk assessment into fishery management decisions. The stock is not overfished, and overfishing is not occurring, although the probability of overfishing is only marginally less than 50%. The SAMS model allows complex spatial management scenarios to be addressed. The principal uncertainty in the assessment concerns

whether the current high productivity levels will continue in the future.

The Panel accepted the pollock assessment. The new assessment method (ASAP) is a significant improvement over the previous method (AIM). There is significant concern over the presumed large and as of yet unobserved adult biomass (i.e. cryptic biomass) and its implications for fishery management. For the future, the Panel recommends a risk analysis approach to determine the consequences to management of different assumptions about exploitable biomass. The Panel emphasizes the need for field evidence to document whether the cryptic biomass exists. Based on the assessment the stock is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring. This conclusion is robust to the assumptions about the shape of the survey selectivity curve. However, the Biological Reference Points (BRPs) are sensitive to the assumed shape of the selectivity curve, which has consequences for the projection results.

CIE review reports can be found at <http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/nefsc/saw/> under the heading “SARC 50 Panelist Reports”.

**Table 1. 50th Stock Assessment Review Committee Panel.**

50th Northeast Regional Stock Assessment Workshop (SAW 50)  
**Stock Assessment Review Committee (SARC) Meeting**

June 1-5, 2010  
Woods Hole MA

**SARC Chairman (NEFMC SSC):**

Mr. Bob O'Boyle (SARC50 Chair)  
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**SARC Panelist (NEFMC SSC):**

Dr. Patrick Sullivan  
214 Fernow Hall  
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**SARC Panelists (CIE):**

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Table 2. Agenda, 50th Stock Assessment Review Committee Meeting.

**50th Northeast Regional Stock Assessment Workshop (SAW 50)  
Stock Assessment Review Committee (SARC) Meeting  
June 1-5, 2010**

Stephen H. Clark Conference Room – Northeast Fisheries Science Center  
Woods Hole, Massachusetts

**FINAL AGENDA\* (version: 27 May 2010)**

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TOPIC	PRESENTER(S)	SARC LEADER	RAPPORTEUR
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**Tuesday, June 1**

**8:45-9 AM**

Opening			
Welcome	<b>James Weinberg</b> , SAW Chair		
Introduction	<b>Robert O’Boyle</b> , SARC Chair		
Agenda			
Conduct of Meeting			

<b>9-11</b>	Assessment Presentation (A. Monkfish)		
	<b>Anne Richards</b> <b>John Wheeler</b>		<b>M. Traver</b>

**11-11:15**   Break

<b>11:15 -Noon</b>	SARC Discussion w/ presenters (A. Monkfish)		
	<b>Robert O’Boyle</b> , SARC Chair		<b>M. Traver</b>

**Noon – 1:15**   Lunch

<b>1:15–3:30</b>	Assessment Presentation (B. Sea Scallop)		
	<b>Dvora Hart</b> <b>Mike Bell</b>		<b>T. Chute</b>
	<b>Larry Jacobson</b>		

**3:30-3:45**   Break

<b>3:45-5:30</b>	SARC Discussion w/ presenters (B. Sea Scallop)		
	<b>Robert O’Boyle</b> , SARC Chair		<b>T. Chute</b>

**Wednesday, June 2**

<b>8:45-10:45</b>	Assessment Presentation (C. Pollock)		
	<b>Liz Brooks</b> <b>Kurtis Trzcinski</b>		<b>J. Blaylock</b>

**10:45-11**   Break

<b>11 -Noon</b>	SARC Discussion w/ presenters (C. Pollock)	<b>Robert O'Boyle, SARC Chair</b>	<b>J. Blaylock</b>
<b>Noon – 1:15</b>	Lunch		
<b>1:15–3:15</b>	Revisit w/ presenters (A. Monkfish)	<b>Robert O'Boyle, SARC Chair</b>	<b>L. Alade</b>
<b>3:15-3:30</b>	Break		
<b>3:30-5:30</b>	Revisit w/ presenters (B. Sea Scallop)	<b>Robert O'Boyle, SARC Chair</b>	<b>T. Chute</b>
<b>7:00</b>	(social)		

**Thursday, June 3**

<b>8:45-10:45</b>	Revisit w/ presenters (C. Pollock)	<b>Robert O'Boyle, SARC Chair</b>	<b>J. Nieland</b>
<b>10:45–11</b>	Break		
<b>11-Noon</b>	Review/edit Assessment Summary Report (C. Pollock)	<b>Robert O'Boyle, SARC Chair</b>	<b>J. Nieland</b>
<b>Noon–1:15</b>	Lunch		
<b>1:15–3</b>	cont. Review/edit Assessment Summary Report (C. Pollock)	<b>Robert O'Boyle, SARC Chair</b>	<b>J. Nieland</b>
<b>3–3:15</b>	Break		
<b>3:15–5:45 PM</b>	Review/edit Assessment Summary Report (A. Monkfish)	<b>Robert O'Boyle, SARC Chair</b>	<b>Alade/Traver</b>

**Friday, June 4**

<b>9-11:30</b>	Review/edit Assessment Summary Report (B. Sea Scallop)	<b>Robert O'Boyle, SARC Chair</b>	<b>T. Chute</b>
<b>11:30–1:00</b>	Lunch		
<b>1–5:30 PM</b>	SARC Report writing. (closed meeting)		

**Saturday, June 5**

**9–5:30 PM** SARC Report writing. (closed meeting)

\*Times are approximate, and may be changed at the discretion of the SARC chair. The meeting is open to the public, except where noted.

**Table 3. 50th SAW/SARC, List of Attendees**

Name	Affiliation	email
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Maurice Crawford	Elizabeth City State U	
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Gary Shepherd	NEFSC	<a href="mailto:gary.shepherd@noaa.gov">gary.shepherd@noaa.gov</a>

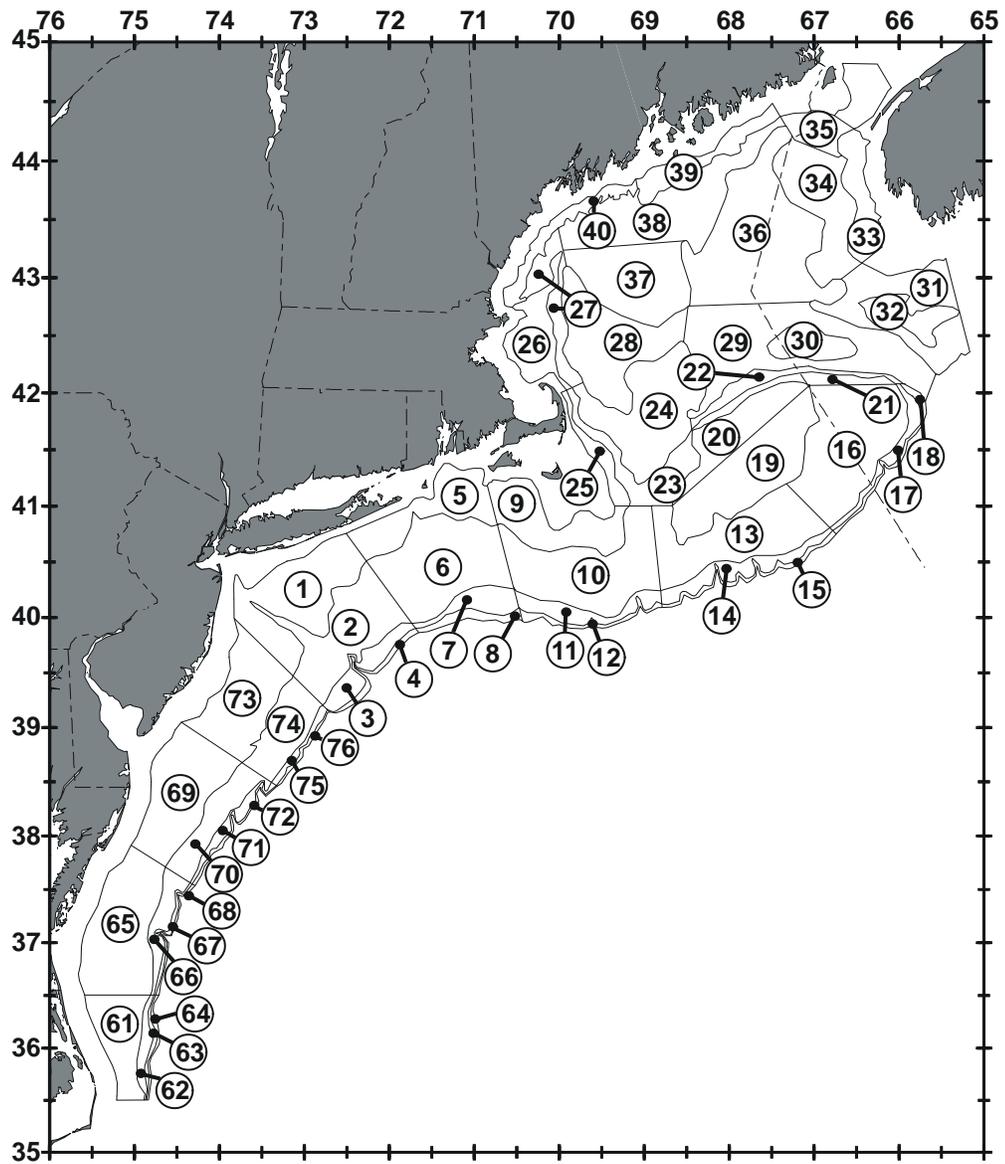


Figure 1. Offshore depth strata sampled during Northeast Fisheries Science Center bottom trawl research surveys.

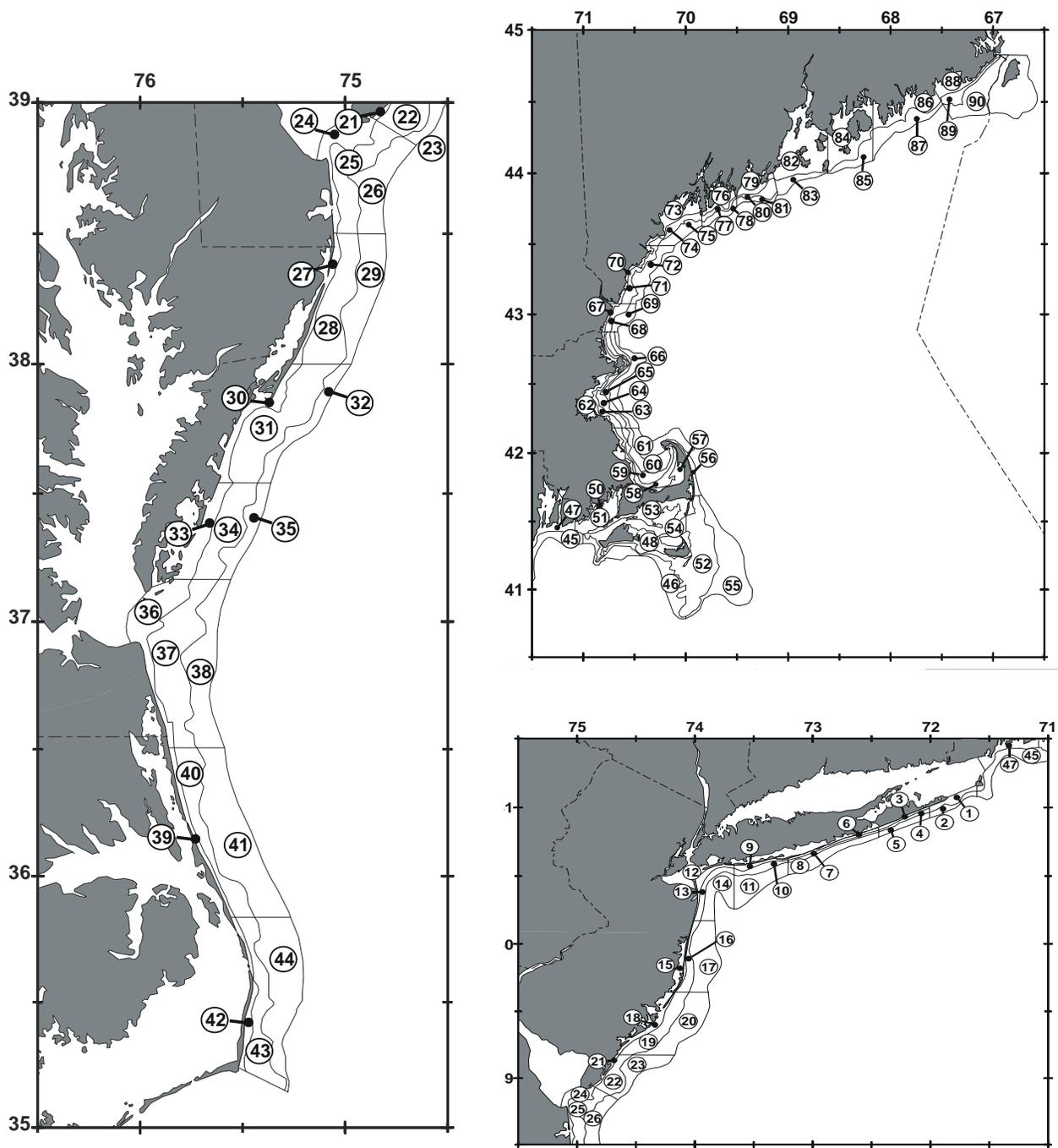


Figure 2. Inshore depth strata sampled during Northeast Fisheries Science Center bottom trawl research surveys.

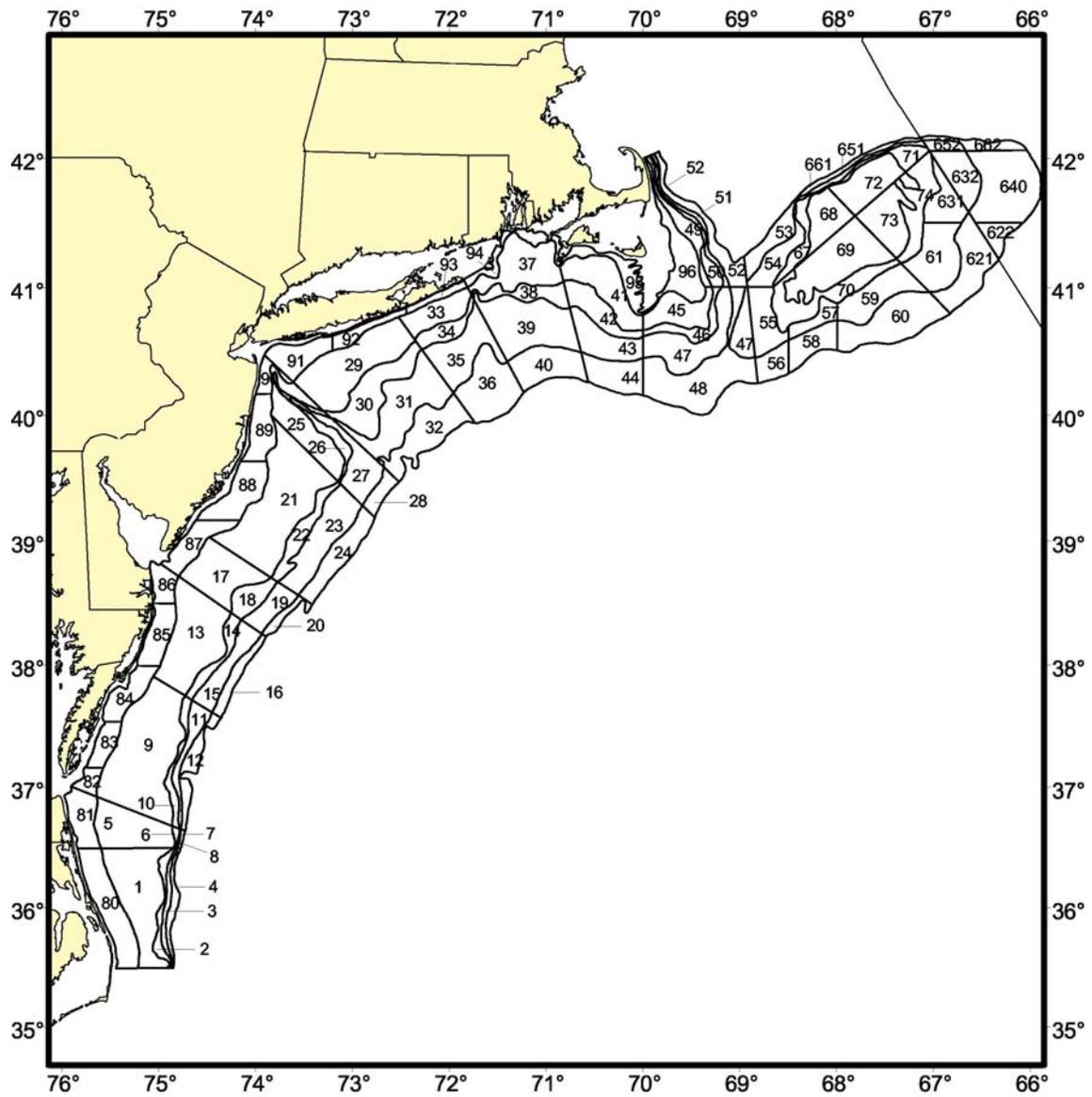


Figure 3. Depth strata sampled during Northeast Fisheries Science Center clam dredge research surveys.

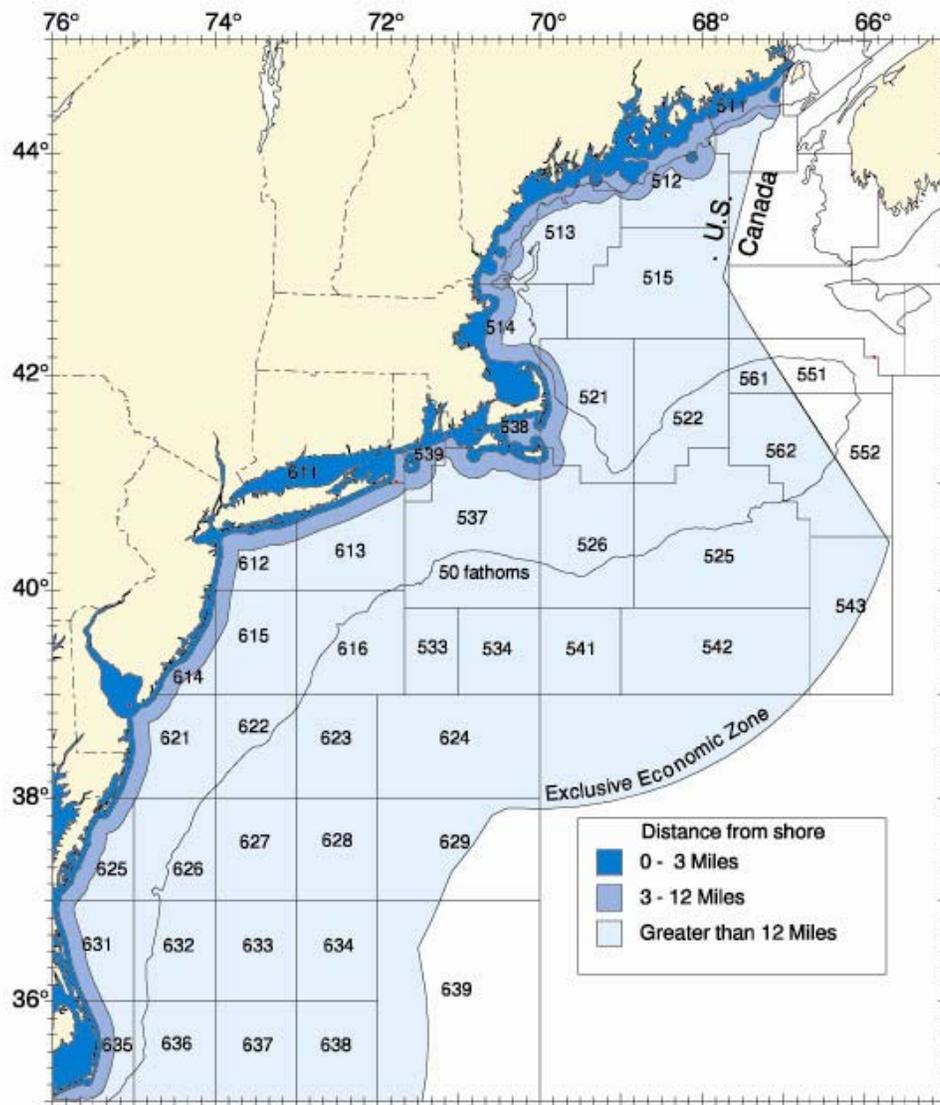


Figure 4. Statistical areas used for reporting commercial catches.

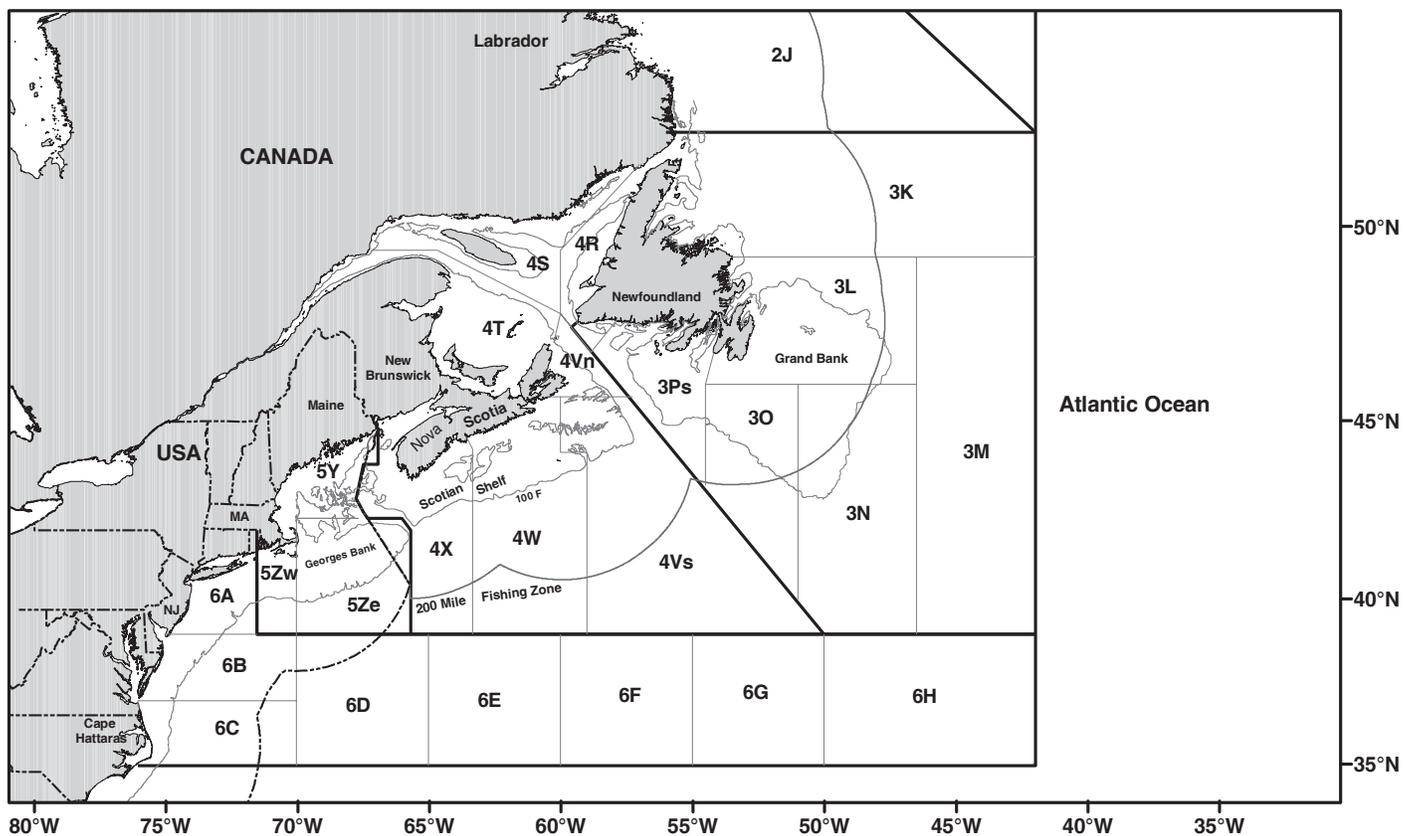


Figure 5. Catch reporting areas of the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) for Subareas 3-6.