

# Response to NEFMC, MAFMC, and NERO Comments on Proposed 2009 Sea Day Allocation

NRCC Meeting  
Providence, RI  
NEFSC  
April 1, 2009

## Process Outline

- Reports provided to NEFMC (2/9/09) and MAFMC (2/12/09)
  - Annual Discard Report 2009
  - Updated SBRM filtered days for 30% CV using 2007-2008 data
  - Initial 2009 Prioritized Allocation
- Comments Received from Councils and NERO by mid March.
- Revised Sea Day Allocation (this report)

## NEFMC Comments

- Too many observer days allocated to the NE large-mesh mixed trawl fishery.
- Reassign some fraction of days from this fleet to fishing modes that catch whiting and herring.

## MAFMC Comments

- General concern that proposed sea sampling intensity for the fisheries in the Mid-Atlantic region will not be sufficient to obtain an acceptable CV for bycatch for most species groups.
- Small-mesh trawl fisheries in SNE and MA regions are of particular concern
- Precision of butterfish discards in the Loligo fishery.

## NERO Comments

- General concerns regarding major departures from the “Available Coverage with Shortfall applied proportionally”
- Seven Fleets (Gill net, trawl, and mid-water trawls, large and small mesh, NE and MidAtl)
- Concerns about reduction from 3,000 to 1,940 days in SAP/B DAS/US Can
- Coverage in Mid Atlantic for butterfish cap under Amendment 10.

## Some Overarching Themes

- Funding
  - Constraints on funding sources limit reallocation of days to MidAtl from NE
- Compliance vs Precision Monitoring
  - 1,940 days for SAP etc. vs 3,000 in 2008
- Relationship between SBRM and Optimization Methods
- Distinctions between Fisheries and Fleets
- Emphasize Tradeoffs: Increasing coverage for Fleet A improves its precision but degrades precision for remaining fleets.
- Tradeoffs by species groups are important. In some instances, large allocations to a fleet are justified by a single species group. Large reductions to that fleet retain desired precision for most, but not all, species.

Summary of Differences between Optimization Method and SBRM

Factor	<u>Optimization</u>	<u>SBRM</u>
Temporal Scale	Quarterly	Annual
Spatial Resolution	6 subregions	2 regions
Trip Length	Not considered	Two groups for otter trawl and gill net
Mesh size	3 mesh groups for otter trawl and gill net	2 mesh groups for otter trawl and gill net.
Number of Species Groups	Three	Fifteen groups(14 fish, 1 turtle)
Number of gears	Three: Longline, Otter trawl, gill net	Fifteen (44 fleets)

## Suggested Changes

- Reduce NE Large Mesh Otter trawl by 38%
- Reduce NE Large mesh Gillnet by 67%
- Increase NE Mid Water Trawl by 352%
- Increase NE Small-Mesh Trawl by 790%
- Increase MA Small-Mesh Trawl by 154%
- No Change in MA small mesh gill net
- No change in SAP/B DAS/US Can

*Table 2. Summary of recommended changes in sea day allocation from Feb 2009 report to Council.*

<i>Fishery</i>	<i>Initial Sea Day Allocation</i>	<i>Revised Sea Day Allocation</i>	<i>Comment/ Rationale</i>
<b>MA Small-mesh Gillnet</b> (Row 8)	0	0	192 days are allocated for protected species coverage. Coverage requirement of 1,115 is based solely on turtles. All fish species are excluded based on importance filter in SBRM.
<b>NE Large-mesh Gillnet</b> (Row 9)	680	225	In addition to the recommended coverage, 134 days are added for turtle coverage. The combined total of 359 days exceeds the total based on SBRM for all species except turtles. The 225 days allocated for fish species exceeds the 60 days needed for groundfish and all other fish species. However optimization results suggested that variations at finer scales were important and overall CVs could be reduced by increased coverage.
<b>NE Mid-Water Trawl</b> (Row 19)	123	433	Reallocation increased to cover overall SBRM requirement. This will provide improved basis for estimating variance of discard rates for all species.

*Table 2. (continued)*

<i>Fishery</i>	<i>Initial Sea Day Allocation</i>	<i>Revised Sea Day Allocation</i>	<i>Comment/ Rationale</i>
<b>NE Small-Mesh Trawl</b> (Row 21)	129	1,019	Achieves a less than 30% CV for large mesh groundfish and small mesh groundfish based on SBRM. The optimization model did not consider the discards of fluke, scup and sea bass in NE so the previous estimate of 129 days was probably too low.
<b>MA Small-Mesh Trawl</b> (Row 22)	225	347	This total includes 122 days left over from the 2008-09 allocation that originally targeted the large mesh otter trawl fishery in New England. This transfer of coverage is a one time transfer.
<b>NE Large-Mesh Trawl</b> (Row 23)	1,978	1,233	Represents SBRM coverage for 30% CV of small mesh groundfish. All other species groups would have CVs lower than 30%.

Table 2. (continued)

<i>Fishery</i>	<i>Initial Sea Day Allocation</i>	<i>Revised Sea Day Allocation</i>	<i>Comment/ Rationale</i>
<b>SAP/B DAS/US-CAN</b> (Row 40)	1,940	1,940	No changes proposed. Analyses of sea day requirements, based on an approximate method suggested that coverage was sufficient for cod and yellowtail flounder but deficient for haddock. High number of days for haddock may be reflective of the size limit problems in 2007-08 when the slow growing 2003 year class was just entering the legal size fishery. Reductions in the size limit and continued growth of this year class may reduce this problem. See Appendix A.

## Summary

- Changes Reflect contemporary interests and needs of Councils and NERO.
- Minimal impact of reductions on overall discard monitoring of NE groundfish although potential consequences for stock-specific assessments are unknown at this time.
- Ongoing improvements in allocation are active area of research.