



May 9, 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR: A.I.S., Inc.,  
East West Technical Services,  
MRAG Americas  
At-Sea Monitors and  
Northeast Fisheries Observer Program Observers

FROM: Amy S. Martins   
Branch Chief, Fisheries Sampling Branch (FSB)

SUBJECT: Fish Pot Sampling

This memo serves as notice that a number of Northeast Fishery Sector XIII vessels are planning to use Norwegian style fish pots (see Figure 1) commencing with the start of the fishing year in May 2014. These are trawl vessels primarily based out of Rhode Island and Southeastern Massachusetts. As a result, NEFOP is moving forward with preparations to collect data from fish pots. While NEFOP has a list of sector XIII vessels approved to use fish pots during a fishing trip, observers and ASMs will have little advance notice of a vessel's intent to deploy fish pot gear on a particular trip where the primary gear used may be trawl gear. Based on discussions with industry members and gear manufacturers, NEFOP expects that trips where fish pot gear is used will target Atlantic cod and will be short in duration as the soak time for fish pots is relatively short (24-48 hours). The vessels will likely set fish pots while transiting to their primary fishing grounds, fish their primary gear (trawl) for the majority of the trip, and haul the fish pots while transiting back to port. Prior to setting the fish pots, crew members may also deploy handline gear to confirm the presence of the target species.

### ***Instructions for NEFOP observers***

#### ***Electronic and paper data:***

- If a NEFOP observer is deployed on a trip where fish pots are used they should record electronic data for only the below tabs of the sector ASM program:
  - Fill out the Trip tab (including More Trip), Cost tab, and Trip End tab.
  - Include the comment "Fish pot gear used" in the comments section in Trip End.
- Do not include electronic data for any tabs other than those listed above.
- The correct paper logs should be used to record gear characteristics, haul level data (including catch), length frequencies, incidental takes, and IAL data associated with all gear types deployed on a trip where fish pot gear was hauled at some point during the trip.

- Attached to this memo are several Lobster, Crab, and Fish Pot haul logs and gear logs. Longline haul and gear logs are also attached. Copies of these logs will be available at MRAG bunkhouses.
- Collect gear and catch data and record the information on the proper paper gear and haul logs if handline gear is used during the trip.
- When fish pots are set, make sure to record set date, location, and time. This information will be used later in the trip to fill out set begin and end fields on paper haul logs.
- Include fish pot hauls and fish pot gear when numbering hauls and gear during the trip.
- If fish pots are set but not hauled during a trip, enter in all data from the trip as normal (ex: vessel sets pots but after fishing with trawl gear later in trip has engine problems and returns to port before retrieving the fish pot gear). Include a comment in More Trip noting that fish pots were set but not hauled.
- Observers should provide comments and photos to aid in descriptions of fish pot gear.
  - Photos of the fish pots, hauling method, surface gear, and gear modifications or repairs are especially helpful.
- Upon landing, the observer should notify the provider that fish pots were used.

#### *Gear*

- To measure the pot entrance, ask the captain to suspend one of the traps and measure the entrance with your cloth tape measure. Entrances may be circular or rectangular. If the entrance is circular, measure the entrance diameter and record in the entrance field; if rectangular, dash the entrance field but still measure the entrance length and height and record the dimensions in the comments section along with a note on entrance shape.
- Record all other gear characteristics as instructed in the program manual.

#### *Sampling:*

- Sample catch from fish pots as described in Table 1f of the biological sampling manual, regardless of area fished.

#### ***Instructions for At-Sea Monitors***

- If deployed as an ASM on a trip where fish pot gear is used, do not record any fish pot data in the sector ASM program (all tabs) with the exception of comments in the Trip End tab.
  - The first comment entered should note "Fish pot gear used".
  - Also comment on the total catch weight, by species, from the fish pots for the trip (kept and discarded catch).
- ASMs deployed on trips where fish pot gear is used should record all other data from the trip using the sector ASM program and paper logs as normal (i.e. all gear, catch, INC, IAL, and trip data associated with the trawl gear).
- Gear and haul logs should be numbered sequentially but do not include fish pot hauls or fish pot gears when recording haul or gear number.
- If handline gear is used, ASMs should record all catch and gear data electronically and on paper logs as on a standard trip.

If you have any questions concerning this memo please contact Katherine McArdle at 508-495-2377 or email [Katherine.McArdle@noaa.gov](mailto:Katherine.McArdle@noaa.gov).

Thank you for your cooperation.



Figure 1: Typical Norwegian cod pot design. Note that gear configuration may vary depending on vessel (photo courtesy of MA DMF).

**Attachments:**

- Sector XIII Vessel List
- Blank Lobster, Crab, and Fish Pot Haul Logs
- Blank Lobster, Crab, and Fish Pot Gear Characteristics Logs
- Blank Longline Haul Logs
- Blank Longline Gear Logs

**Sector XIII Vessel List**

- |                      |                   |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| FV Tradition         | FV Hope & Sydney  |
| FV Heritage          | FV Excalibur      |
| FV Illusion          | FV Asher & Ariana |
| FV Rose Marie        | FV Miss Priss     |
| FV James & Matthew   | FV Lightning Bay  |
| FV Conor and Michael | FV Rebecca Mary   |
| FV Kate & Sean       | FV Evan Christine |
| FV Hopefull          |                   |