



**NOAA
FISHERIES**

Northeast Fisheries
Science Center

Industry Outreach Meetings

2015 Groundfish Operational Assessments

<http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/groundfish/operational-assessments-2015/>

Portland, Hampton, Gloucester , New Bedford , Woods Hole

July 22, 2015

Goals for Today's Webinar and Onsite Meetings

Summarize the 2015 groundfish assessment process and timeline

Overview of Assessment Types

What can and can't be included in these assessments

Incorporate fishermen's observations and perspectives in the assessment reports.

20 Groundfish Stocks Under Review



Atlantic cod
Gulf of Maine
Georges Bank

Haddock
Gulf of Maine
Georges Bank

White hake

Pollock

Yellowtail flounder
Cape Cod/Gulf of Maine
Georges Bank
Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic

American Plaice

Witch flounder

Winter flounder
Gulf of Maine
Georges Bank
Southern New England

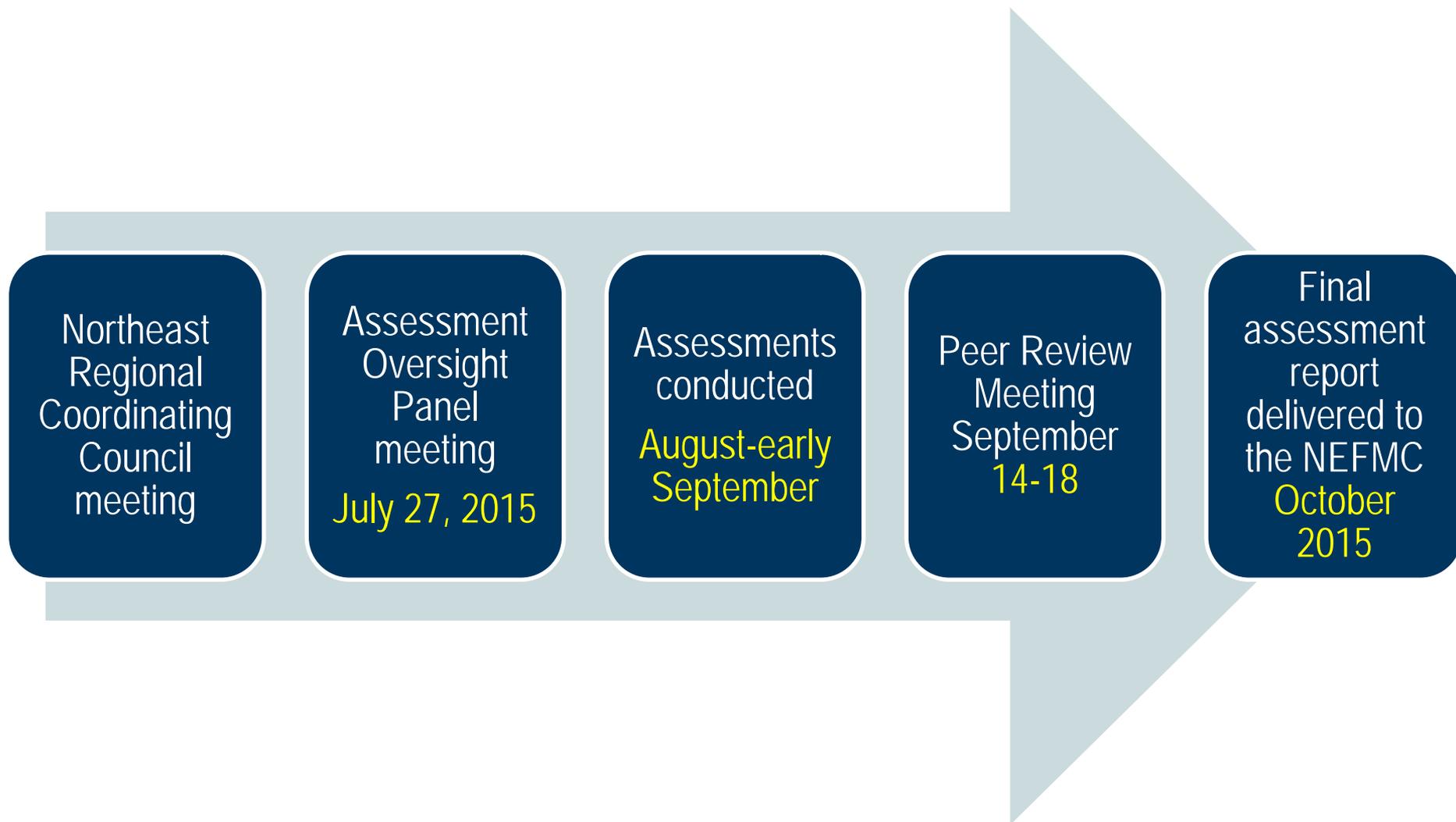
Windowpane Flounder
Gulf of Maine/Georges Bank
Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic

Atlantic halibut

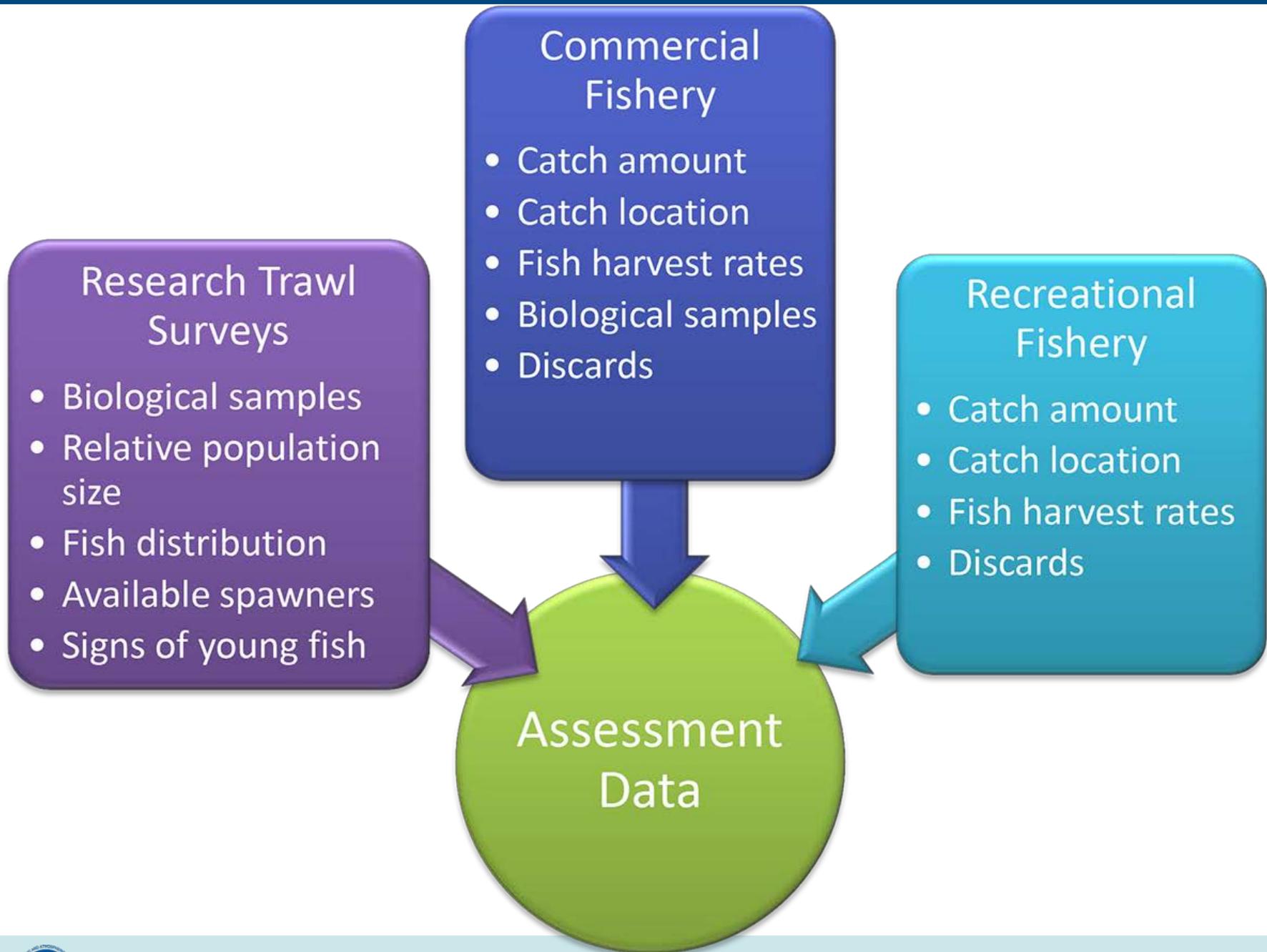
Acadian redfish

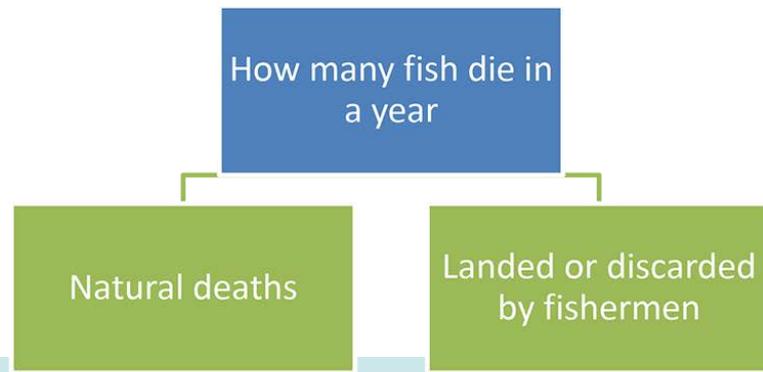
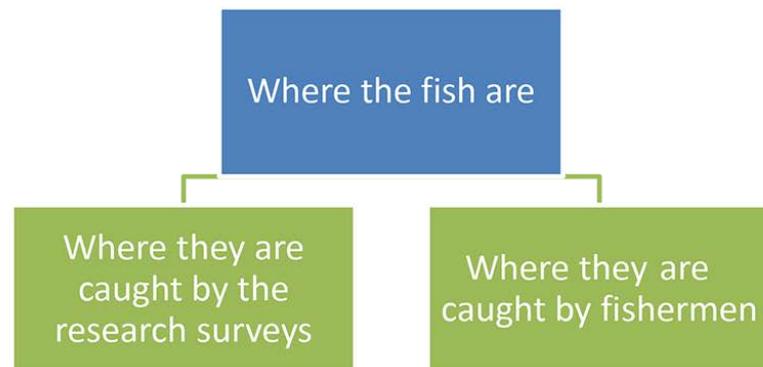
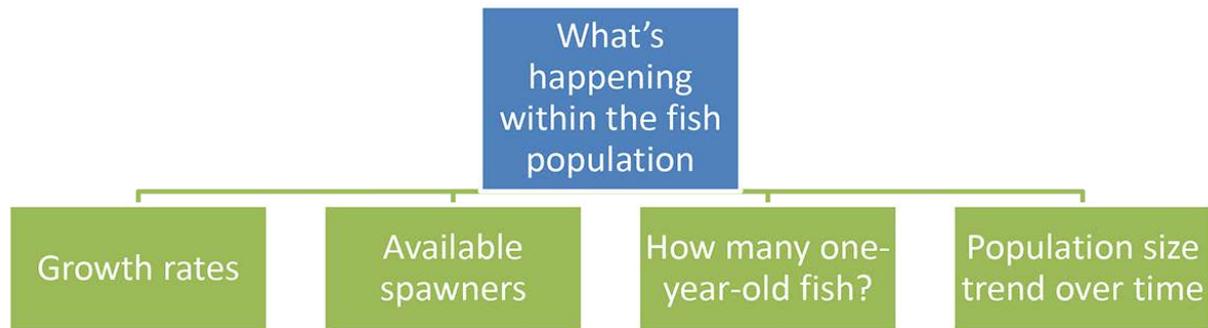
Ocean pout

Wolffish



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Simple

Moderate

Complex

Update

Use existing models, add new data

Provide current stock status

Send directly to fishery council science committees

Operational

Use existing model with limited changes, add new data to existing data sources

Provide current stock status

Integrated peer review with select fishery council science committee members

Benchmark

Comprehensive evaluation of all aspects of an assessment; consider new models, methods, data sources

Provide next generation stock assessment and current stock status

Extensive internal and external peer review

Prior Operational Assessments: 12 groundfish stocks in 2012, Pollock, Gulf of Maine winter flounder, Georges Bank winter flounder, and Gulf of Maine cod in 2014; and for Atlantic herring in 2015

Why not do a benchmark for everything, every year?

- Insufficient resources
 - Scientists
 - Reviewers
 - Council process
- Benchmarks depend on new research findings
- Timeliness of data for decisions
- Lags in decisions are detrimental to businesses and perception of science

What's new?

- NRCC guidance for process
- Simplified report format
- Public data portal
- Expanded outreach

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*Northeast Regional
Coordinating
Council—Guidance
on topics that can
be considered as
part of the
operational
assessment.*



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Northeast Fisheries Science Center
166 Water Street
Woods Hole, MA 02543-1026

June 30, 2015

Dear NRCC Partners:

At our May 2015 meeting, we discussed the upcoming suite of Operational Assessments for 20 New England groundfish stocks. The NRCC recognized the value in this operational approach, in that it provides information useful to making fishery management decisions for a larger number of stocks and more rapidly and frequently. However, the NRCC also understood that trade-offs are inherent with this approach.

To provide more rapid assessments, these Operational Assessments are conducted using the existing, peer-reviewed assessment model for each stock, updated with new data collected since the last assessment. There is little to no scope for revising the underlying assessment model, as any such changes would require significant analytical work and would also require expanded peer review and discussion. This additional analytical work and peer review are typical of Benchmark Assessments, which are conducted for stocks that require incorporation of significant new information or a different analytical approach.

The NRCC supported completion of the upcoming 20 Operational Assessments and also recognized the importance of setting clear constraints on modifications to the existing models and data streams for each Operational Assessment. These constraints are essential to avoid the possibility for greatly increasing the complexity of each assessment, with resultant delays and reduction in our capacity to complete such a large number of assessments. Communication of these constraints is necessary to discourage external scientists or stakeholders from investing in developing new approaches or data streams that could not be accommodated within the Operational Assessment framework.

In the interest of setting and communicating these constraints, the NRCC reviewed a comprehensive list of types of modifications and agreed whether each type of modification could be accommodated within an Operational Assessment or if the modification could only be considered within a Benchmark Assessment. Since efficiency is essential to the success of the Operational Assessment concept, the majority of modifications could not be accommodated. However, in addition to incorporating new data from existing data streams to update current parameters in the existing assessment models, the NRCC felt that Operational Assessments could make minor adjustments to account for (a) updated information on growth and maturation of fish; (b) changes in values of reference points, but not the underlying basis for the reference



What's New?

NRCC Guidance on Changes

Allowed

- Updated growth and maturity data
- Updated values of reference points
- Look for inconsistent results in estimates of stock size or related variables
- New data on recreational discard survival for some stocks

Not allowed

- New data streams
- Changes in measures of scale (catchability, selectivity)
- Bases for reference points
- Model configuration
- Changes in natural mortality

What's New?

Expanded outreach

- Pre-assessment industry outreach meetings for industry to discuss process and observations that can help guide future research
- Summary of industry observations included materials for peer reviewers and in final report
- Dedicated website, accessible and data-rich

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What will happen to my comments?

- Comments will be summarized by staff
- Comments will be distributed to participants for review, clarification, and attribution (if desired).
- Summarized as a separate section of reports presented to reviewers
- Provide context for reviewers in relation to assessment information
- Incorporated into final report



Outreach Meetings

Industry Meeting, 2015 Transboundary Resources
Assessment Committee annual meeting
July 1, New Bedford

Discussion with US Committee chair and assessment analysts

Assessment Analyst Industry Outreach Meetings
July 22

New Bedford, Woods Hole, Gloucester,
Portland, Hampton

Discussion with stock assessment analysts/ in person and webinar

Science Meetings

St Andrews, New Brunswick
Transboundary Resources Assessment
Committee Meeting
July 7-9

Woods Hole, MA
Northeast Fisheries Science Center
Assessment Oversight Panel July 27
Peer Review September 14-18

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July 22 meetings---On Site Discussions

- Foster understanding of operational assessment boundaries
- Foster meaningful discussion of industry observations that
 - Are included in reports to reviewers and final report
 - Can guide future research
- Ask advice on future outreach activities to promote understanding of stock assessments

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