

New England Fishery Management Council

SUMMARY

Monkfish Amendment 6 Scoping Hearing

Clarion Hotel, Portland, ME

January 19, 2011

Hearing Chair: Terry Stockwell

Staff: Phil Haring

Attendance: approx. 12

The first commenter, who said he spoke on behalf of fishermen in Port Clyde, ME, supported catch shares, either sectors or IFQs. He believes that the initial allocation should be based on fishing history during the period 1996-2006, the same period used in the groundfish sector allocation.

The second speaker also supported catch shares based on fishing history, and while he said the time period was not so important, it should be as consistent as possible with that used for the groundfish sector allocation. He said that the 300 lbs. (the incidental limit applicable to vessels fishing on a multispecies DAS but not a monkfish DAS in the northern area) does not work well for vessels fishing like he does.

The third commenter advocated an allocation decision process similar to a control date, where vessel permit holders would know their initial allocation before engaging in further amendment development and decisions. He supported using 1999-2008 as the time period for the initial allocation, because, he said, those active vessels are the ones who made the sacrifices fishing under the rules of the plan that resulted in stock rebuilding. He feels that there is too much latent effort in the fishery that could be a problem in the future. He also supports separation of the northern and southern fisheries management, saying that most of the southern boats do not have groundfish permits and are not in sectors. He also supports consideration of permit stacking as an alternative way to improve the economic performance of the fishery. He says a number of multiple permit holders in the fishery would benefit from such a program.

The final commenter supported an allocation system using the longest period possible, and that the allocation be based solely on landings history. He said that such an approach would reward those vessels that played by the rules and reported their landings, rather than landing the fish as “shack” and not reporting it. He prefers a sector approach at this time because it would integrate with the groundfish management program and help to minimize duplicative costs, but he also would support ITQs. He commented that DAS management does not work well with sectors.

The hearing started about 4:10 pm, and ended at 4:40.