

**APPENDIX IX**

**SCOPING FOR EFH COMPONENTS OF GROUND FISH AMENDMENT 13  
AND SCALLOP AMENDMENT 10**

## SCOPING SUMMARY FOR THE EFH COMPONENTS OF GROUNDFISH AMENDMENT 13

Suggested Alternatives from February 22, 2001 public meeting and written comments through March 29, 2001. Some editorial commentary by the Habitat Technical Team is provided in *italics* following each summary comment to assist the Habitat Committee determine which comments should be incorporated in the DEIS for analysis and which, if any, should be eliminated from further consideration.

*(Note: this list does not contain the scoping comments for EFH Designations and HAPC Identification as these topics were not covered in Amendment 13 but will be in the upcoming Habitat Omnibus Amendment 2. A new scoping period will be initiated for this action.)*

### Alternatives for Habitat Measures to Minimize Gear Effects (Groundfish)

1. Establish trawling restrictions in HAPC's
  - *The process and rationale used to designate each individual HAPC will help identify management issues related to that HAPC. Appropriate management action, if any, is only appropriately considered on a case-by-case basis and tailored specifically to the circumstances of the HAPC. For example, the juvenile cod HAPC on Georges Bank is contained within a groundfish closed area. Trawling restrictions may be appropriate in this area, but they are unnecessary as the regulations for the groundfish closed area already prohibit all types of fishing gear capable of catching groundfish. Also, the Council designated eleven rivers in Maine as an HAPC for Atlantic salmon. Trawling restrictions are not appropriate or necessary in this HAPC, as the intent of the HAPC was to protect these river systems from adverse impacts associated with non-fishing related activities such as pollution and development.*
2. Establish maximum size limits for rock hopper gear
  - *This alternative is being considered by the Habitat Technical Team and will be presented to the Habitat Committee and Council for consideration.*
3. Establish baseline protections for HAPC's
  - *See #1.*
4. Establish gear restrictions in juvenile cod habitat on Georges Bank
  - *The Council will consider an additional HAPC intended to protect juvenile cod habitat. The Council will also consider redesigning the existing groundfish closed areas to better protect habitat, and this will include juvenile cod habitat on Georges Bank. Depending on the management approach selected by the Council and the specific management alternatives considered, there may be additional gear restrictions in juvenile cod habitat on Georges Bank.*
5. Establish area restrictions
  - *This alternative is being considered by the Habitat Technical Team and will be presented to the Habitat Committee and Council for consideration.*
6. Establish closed areas
  - *This alternative is being considered by the Habitat Technical Team and will be presented to the Habitat Committee and Council for consideration.*
7. Increase and enhance the growth of dense epifauna and related communities by active intervention (i.e., seeding)
  - *The growth of dense epifauna and related communities can be increased and enhanced by protecting areas where these organisms grow. Seeding of these communities may not be practicable at this time, and in most cases is probably unnecessary as there is no demonstrated shortage of natural "seed" in*

*the environment. Suitable space with the proper physical and oceanographic conditions free from anthropogenic disturbance most likely is the limiting factor.*

8. Create more shelter (artificial reefs) and harvest predators (weed and feed)
  - *Additional shelter may not benefit all species and artificial reefs have not been demonstrated conclusively to add to production but may only serve to aggregate fish. The objective of this comment could be achieved by protecting known areas currently containing shelter. In cases where known shelter has been destroyed, this approach may have utility. Harvesting predators could have unintended adverse effects that could ripple through the food web and actually serve the opposite effect that they were intended. For example, suppose that the adults of resource species A are preyed upon by adults of predator species B, but that the juveniles of resource species A feed upon the larvae of predator species B. Removing adults of B would result in fewer B larvae, reducing the available food for species A, limiting survival and recruitment.*
9. HAPC's should have minimum management actions that protect habitat characteristics
  - *See #1.*
10. Utilize a precautionary approach regarding management of the effects of fishing on EFH
  - *The precautionary approach is an approach to decision-making, not a specific management alternative that can be implemented through regulation.*
11. Support the use of selective fishing gears such as gill nets which have little impact on the bottom
  - *This type of action is being considered under a number of alternatives for new habitat-specific closed areas and incentives for reduced impact fishing gears.*
12. Prohibit rockhopper gear greater than 22 inches
  - *Although not specifically identified by the Habitat Technical Team, a range of alternatives for rockhopper and roller trawl gear maximum sizes are being considered. A maximum size of 22" could be specifically included.*
13. Prohibit the use of the flophopper (what is it?)
  - *Need to better understand what the "flohopper" gear is.*
14. Close Closed Area (CA) I, CA II, and WGOM for 10 more years
  - *The current groundfish closed areas, except for WGOM, are indefinite in duration. Amendment 13 will examine all current groundfish closed areas and explore their effectiveness and whether they should be continued.*