

## 2021 Terms of Reference

### Transboundary Resources Assessment Committee (TRAC) Assessment of Eastern Georges Bank Cod, Eastern Georges Bank Haddock, and Georges Bank Yellowtail Flounder

July 12-14, 2021

Virtual

EGB Cod, EGB Haddock, and GB YT Flounder

Meeting Chair: Paul Rago

TRAC Co-chairs: Tara McIntyre(Canada) and Tara Trinko Lake (United States of America)

### Objectives

The Transboundary Resources Assessment Committee (TRAC) annually obtains requests for harvest advice on transboundary resources from the Transboundary Management Guidance Committee (TMGC). For the following resources: Eastern Georges Bank Cod, Eastern Georges Bank Haddock, and Georges Bank Yellowtail Flounder:

#### Cod:

- Update the following biological and fishery indicators of the state of cod in the eastern GB management area with previously missing 2019-2020 data, as well as available 2020-2021 data: **condition factor**, swept area survey biomass indices, **fishery** and **survey catch at length, relative F, total mortality (Z)**, and catch (bold items Canadian only, time permitted).
- Identify and comment on changes in survey and fishery indicators (relative to the 2020 TRAC).
- Summarize progress and outcomes of the two-year development process for DLMtool. Assuming the DLMTool is reviewed, provide catch advice using the Management Procedure identified by the TMGC.
- In absence of advice from the DLMTool, comment on the appropriateness of advice generated from the 2018 TRAC, using the updated indicators.

#### Haddock:

- Update the following biological and fishery indicators of the state of haddock in the eastern GB management with previously missing 2020 data, as well as available 2020-2021 data: **condition factor**, swept area survey biomass indices, **fishery and survey catch at length** and **age, relative F, total mortality (Z)**, and catch. (bold items Canadian only, time permitted)

- Identify and comment on changes in survey and fishery indicators (relative to the 2020 TRAC).
- Comment on the appropriateness of the 2021 TRAC advice for 2022, including a discussion, as appropriate, on the impacts of COVID-19 restrictions in each country on achieving or completing work on any ToRs, including identifying missing data.

### **Yellowtail Flounder:**

- Apply the benchmark assessment (i.e., empirical approach) for yellowtail flounder, update results for the latest information from fisheries, including discard estimates and research surveys, and characterize the uncertainty of estimates.
- Provide catch advice for 2021 based on the empirical approach for a range of exploitation rates for 2021.
- Describe any adjustments to the benchmark assessment model applied during the TRAC, including impacts on the advice given to TMGC.
- Update and comment on trends in relative F, and total mortality (Z).
- Discuss the Georges Bank yellowtail flounder limiter approach and provide recommendations to TMGC with respect to setting average survey biomass bounds and a constant quota until the average survey biomass falls outside these bound, as a possible alternative to the empirical approach.
- Due to the impact of COVID-19, examine qualitatively or quantitatively, readily available research and fishery data that could provide context in the absence of trawl surveys.

### **Allocation Shares:**

- Review the biomass distribution relative to the U.S./Canada boundary, and update results with the 2020 survey information.
- Provide options (intersessional/options paper) to TMGC on approaches to deal with the missing survey information due to the impacts of COVID-19.
- Provide details on analyses to deal with the missing survey information due to the impacts of COVID-19.

### **Other:**

- Report on any changes to the surveys that might impact the assessments such as changes to vessels, timing, area coverage, etc. Describe any potential impacts of these changes.
- Provide an update, if any are available, on targeted research that would help identify mechanisms contributing to changes in stock productivity.
- Draft terms of reference for the 2022 TRAC assessment of Eastern Georges Bank Atlantic Cod, Eastern Georges Bank Haddock, and Georges Bank Yellowtail Flounder.

2021-06-28

- Update on planning and research progress for upcoming benchmarks/research assessments; Provide a list of potential research gaps to inform the upcoming Research Track / Benchmark process
- Discuss, as appropriate, the impacts of COVID-19 restrictions in each country on achieving or completing work on any ToRs, including identifying missing data.
- Report on results of the index-based methods Research Track.

### **Expected Publications**

- **TRAC Transboundary Status Reports** for the Eastern Georges Bank Haddock, Eastern Georges Bank Cod and Georges Bank Yellowtail Flounder management units.
- **TRAC Reference Documents** for Allocation Shares and DLMTool
- **TRAC Proceedings** of meeting discussion.

### **Participation**

- DFO Maritimes scientists and managers
- NMFS Northeast Region scientists and managers
- Canadian and U.S. fishing industry
- U.S. State and Canadian Provincial (NB and NS) representatives
- NEFMC representatives
- Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) representatives
- Public and stakeholders/rightsholders