AMENDMENT 2 TO THE VII NORTHEAST FISHERY SECTOR, INC. OPERATIONS PLAN

APPROVED BY NOAA’S NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE APRIL 29, 2022
EFFECTIVE MAY 1, 2022, THROUGH APRIL 30, 2023

This amendment strikes all language in this operations plan at “17. Discard Rates and In-Season Discard Estimates” contained in “Exhibit A: Harvesting Rules for FY 2021 and FY 2022” and replaces it with the following:

17. Discard Rates and In-Season Discard Estimates: The Sector manager (or his/her designated representative) will derive stock specific discards for each trip. As specified by NMFS the methodology for calculating discards will vary by monitoring type.

17.1 For vessels enrolled in an ASM program: If the trip is observed by either an at-sea monitor or a Northeast Fisheries Observer Program (NEFOP) observer, discards will be derived based on data collected during that trip and will account for all hauls (observed and unobserved) on that trip. For unobserved trips taken by vessels enrolled in an ASM program, discards will be derived using the NOAA Fisheries-provided discard rate resulting from the NOAA Fisheries method to estimate 'in-season' discard rates, which may not include data from research trips or sector trips using certain exemptions.

17.2 For vessels enrolled in a maximized retention EM program: If the trip is observed by a Northeast Fisheries Observer Program (NEFOP) observer, discards will be derived based on data collected during that trip and will account for all hauls (observed and unobserved) on that trip. For trips taken by vessels enrolled in a maximized retention EM program without a NEFOP observer onboard, discards will be derived using the NOAA Fisheries-provided discard rate resulting from the NOAA Fisheries method to estimate 'in-season' discard rates, which may not include data from research trips or sector trips using certain exemptions. In-season discard rates for allocated groundfish stocks will be set to zero at the start of the fishing year, consistent with maximized retention EM requirements. In-season discard rates for unallocated groundfish stocks will be based on NEFOP data for the fishery.

17.3 For vessels enrolled in an audit model EM program: If the trip is observed by a Northeast Fisheries Observer Program (NEFOP) observer, discards will be derived based on data collected during that trip and will account for all hauls (observed and unobserved) on that trip. If the trip is observed using electronic monitoring, discards will be derived based on data collected during that trip to account for observed hauls only. For unobserved trips or hauls taken by vessels in an audit model EM program, discards will be derived using the vessel’s self-reported discards as adjusted based on the vessel’s historical reporting accuracy.