

Catch Share Program Quarterly Update

March 31, 2011

Office of Sustainable Fisheries



NOAA FISHERIES SERVICE

Status of Current Catch Share Programs

As of March 31, 2011, there are 15 catch share programs in operation. In addition:

- 3 existing programs are being significantly modified
- 1 new program has been recommended by a Council
- 4 fisheries are in various stages of development or consideration of catch shares; 2 fisheries have postponed development of catch shares

Further details about the status of each program are provided herein, with links to program web pages where they are available.

Policy Implementation

The [NOAA Catch Share Policy](#) was released on November 4, 2010, with the purpose of encouraging well-designed catch share programs to help maintain or rebuild fisheries, and sustain fishermen, communities, vibrant working waterfronts. The goals of the policy are to help reduce administrative or organizational impediments, inform and educate stakeholders of the different options and capabilities of catch share programs, and help organize collaborative efforts on the design and implementation of catch share programs. NMFS is finalizing an implementation plan for the remainder of FY11.

Current Catch Share Programs in Operation (Year Implemented)

1. [Mid-Atlantic Surf Clam & Ocean Quahog IFQ \(1990\)](#)
2. [South Atlantic Wreckfish IFQ \(1992\)](#)
3. [Western Alaska Community Development Quota \(1992\)](#)
4. [Pacific Halibut & Sablefish IFQ \(1995\)](#)
5. [Bering Sea AFA Pollock Cooperatives \(1998\)](#)
6. [Pacific Sablefish Permit Stacking Program \(2001\)](#)
7. [Bering Sea King and Tanner Crab \(2005\)](#)
8. [Gulf of Mexico Red Snapper IFQ \(2007\)](#)
9. [Central Gulf of Alaska Rockfish Pilot Program \(2007\)](#)
10. [Bering Sea Groundfish \(non-Pollock\) Cooperatives \(2008\)](#)
11. [Mid-Atlantic Golden Tilefish IFQ \(2010\)](#)
12. [Gulf of Mexico Grouper & Tilefish IFQ \(2010\)](#)
13. [Atlantic Sea Scallop General Category IFQ \(2010\)](#)
14. [Northeast Multispecies Sector Program \(2010\)](#)
15. [Pacific Coast Groundfish Trawl Rationalization \(2011\)](#)

Current Catch Share Programs Being Significantly Modified

[Central Gulf of Alaska Rockfish Program](#): The Central Gulf of Alaska (GOA) Rockfish Program is being implemented to replace the Central GOA Rockfish "Pilot" Program that has a statutory sunset date of December 31, 2011. This action will not result in a change to the number of catch share programs, and is expected to be implemented by January 1, 2012. History: Congress provided authorization to regulate specific processing activities under the program and limited that authorization to two years (Pub. Law 108-199, Sec. 802). MSRA Sec. 218 extended the program to five years.

[Alaska AFA Pollock Salmon Bycatch Program](#): A new bycatch program has been implemented for the 2011 Bering Sea and Aleutian Island Pollock fishery, which is managed under the Bering Sea Pollock AFA Cooperatives program. This action will not result in a change to the number of catch share programs, but will limit the amount of Chinook salmon that may be caught incidentally, and apportion that limit among fishery participants based on their directed fishery allowance of pollock. This bycatch control program includes incentive plan agreements and performance standards to encourage additional cooperation among fishermen.

[South Atlantic Wreckfish IFQ](#): The South Atlantic Council is developing Amendment 20 – Changes to the Wreckfish ITQ Program – to update the program to comply with the new provisions in the reauthorized Magnuson-Stevens Act.

Catch Share Programs Recommended by Councils

[Alaska Halibut Guided Sportfish \(Charter\)](#): NMFS is implementing a new charter program in the existing halibut fishery. The commercial fishery is managed under the Pacific Halibut & Sablefish IFQ program, but the charter sector is managed separately using a combination of limited entry permits, daily bag limits, and maximum size limits. The proposed program would establish a specific allocation target for the charter sector, and allow transfer of annual IFQ from commercial halibut IFQ permit holders to charter halibut permit holders to allow additional harvest opportunities for charter vessel anglers. Draft regulations have been reviewed by the North Pacific Council. The program, if approved, would be implemented in 2012.

Catch Share Programs Being Developed

[Bering Sea & Aleutian Islands Pacific Cod Hook & Line Cooperative](#): The freezer longline cod fleet began fishing as a voluntary cooperative in August 2010, and in December the Longline Catcher Processor Subsector Single Fishery Cooperative Act was signed by President Obama. These types of programs require additional catch monitoring, accounting, and enforcement, which will be handled under future regulations. NMFS is working with the voluntary cooperative to establish monitoring and catch accounting standards. NMFS will work with the affected industry and North Pacific Council to develop the appropriate measures. These new measures are expected to be implemented in 2013.

Catch Shares Are Being Considered

[South Atlantic Golden Crab](#): The South Atlantic Council is developing Amendment 5, which includes a catch share alternative. There is strong industry support for a catch share program in this fishery. The Council conducted informal scoping on this amendment during the winter of 2011, and reviewed those comments at their March 2011 meeting.

[South Atlantic Snapper Grouper](#): At their March 2011 meeting, the South Atlantic Council decided to postpone development of Amendment 21 – Comprehensive Catch Shares Amendment – that was being developed to consider catch shares for the Snapper Grouper fisheries.

[South Atlantic Red Snapper](#): The South Atlantic Council is developing Amendment 22 - Long-term Management of Red Snapper. The Council may consider a catch share alternative for this fishery. The Council conducted informal scoping on this amendment during the winter of 2011, and reviewed those comments at their March 2011 meeting.

[Western Pacific Hawaii Longline](#): The Western Pacific Council is in the early stages of considering a catch share program for this fishery. NMFS and Council staff are working together to merge and improve databases (ownership, permits,

catch) that are needed to develop a reasonable range of alternatives for allocating quota shares and quantification of the associated socioeconomic effects. At the October 2010 meeting, NMFS reported to the Council on additional work looking at catch histories, and how this expands the universe of potential participants in a catch share program. The Council may discuss catch shares during its June 2011 meeting in Honolulu.

New England Monkfish: The New England Council has begun development of Amendment 6, and has conducted scoping on a range of alternatives, including catch shares. Development of a catch share program in this fishery will likely require a referendum under the Magnuson-Stevens Act restrictions on such programs in New England.

Other Catch Shares Activities

Catch Share Information Group Conference Calls: NMFS is collaborating internally to share information on catch shares issues, and to address specific challenges associated with the development, implementation, and operation of catch share programs. For instance, if one region has issues with how to best address at-sea and dockside monitoring needs for a program in development, they can discuss the various alternatives with other regions that have experience with it. NMFS Headquarters coordinates the monthly calls, and they are open to all NMFS employees with an interest in catch shares.