



NOAA FISHERIES SERVICE

Office of Sustainable Fisheries



CATCH SHARE PROGRAM STATUS

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

- 1 significantly revised program has been implemented
- 2 existing programs are being significantly modified
- 5 fisheries are in various stages of development or consideration of catch shares

Further details about the status of each program are provided beginning on page 2, with links to program web pages where available.

NATIONAL CATCH SHARE PROGRAM QUARTERLY UPDATE FY12 First Quarter Update

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, and 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.

Current Catch Share Programs in Operation (Year Implemented)

1. [Mid-Atlantic Surfclam & 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. [Bering Sea Groundfish \(non-Pollock\) Cooperatives \(2008\)](#)
10. [Mid-Atlantic Golden Tilefish IFQ \(2009\)](#)
11. [Gulf of Mexico Grouper & Tilefish IFQ \(2010\)](#)
12. [Atlantic Sea Scallop General Category IFQ \(2010\)](#)
13. [Northeast Multispecies Sector Program \(2010\)](#)
14. [Pacific Coast Groundfish Trawl Rationalization \(2011\)](#)
15. [Central Gulf of Alaska Rockfish Program \(2011\)](#)

Catch Share Programs Implemented Last Quarter

Central Gulf of Alaska Rockfish Program: The Central Gulf of Alaska (GOA) Rockfish Program was implemented to replace the Central GOA Rockfish "Pilot" Program that had a statutory sunset date of December 31, 2011. The North Pacific Council approved the Rockfish Program on June 14, 2010. The Secretary of Commerce approved the program on September 26, 2011 and the program went into effect on December 27, 2011. The rockfish fisheries are conducted in Federal waters near Kodiak, Alaska by trawl and longline vessels. The Rockfish Program allocates harvest privileges to holders of License Limitation Program (LLP) licenses with a history of Central GOA rockfish legal landings in either 2000 through 2006, or the entry level trawl fishery in 2007, 2008, or 2009.

Current Catch Share Programs Being Significantly Modified

South Atlantic Wreckfish ITQ: The South Atlantic Council continues to work on Amendment 20B – Changes to the Wreckfish ITQ Program – to update the program to comply with the new provisions in the reauthorized Magnuson-Stevens Act. Amendment 20A was approved by the Council in December 2011. This amendment, if implemented, will redistribute existing shares from inactive/deceased shareholders, specify a share cap, and develop procedures for distributing shares among active participants. Proposed and final regulations for Amendment 20A will be published this spring.

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. Based on policy and technical issues raised during public comment on the proposed rule, NMFS has asked the North Pacific Council to review the issues and provide additional input, as needed. The program, if approved, would be implemented by 2013.

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 2010 the Longline Catcher Processor Subsector Single Fishery Cooperative Act was signed by President Obama. The cooperative program requires additional catch monitoring, accounting, and enforcement, which will be implemented under future regulations. NMFS is working with the voluntary cooperative to establish monitoring and catch accounting standards. NMFS will work with the industry and North Pacific Council to develop the appropriate measures for implementation in 2013.

Catch Shares Are Being Considered

South Atlantic Golden Crab: The South Atlantic Council is developing Amendment 6, which proposes implementing a catch share program for the golden crab fishery. The Council conducted informal scoping on this amendment during the winter of 2011, and reviewed those comments at their March 2011 meeting. The Golden Crab Advisory Panel met in July and recommended changes to actions and alternatives contained in Amendment 6. At the September 2011 meeting, the Council continued to refine actions and alternatives related to the development of a catch share program for this fishery. At the December 2011 meeting, the Council agreed to move Amendment 6 to public hearings and will continue to refine actions based on the comments received. The Council may take final action on the amendment in March 2012.

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 fishery. While not actively working on this amendment, the Council approved distribution of a share-allocation calculator that has been developed to allow fishermen to evaluate the amount of shares/pounds they would receive under various initial distribution scenarios. The catch share calculator was posted on the web with a tutorial video in September 2011. It can be found near the bottom of this page: <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sf/SASnapperGrouperHomepage.htm>. In March 2012, the Council's Catch Share Committee will meet and will receive a presentation from industry regarding the development of a voluntary IFQ program for the snapper-grouper fishery.

Western Pacific Hawaii Longline: The Western Pacific Council is considering a catch share program for this fishery. NMFS Pacific Islands Fishery Science Center continues to work on merging databases (vessel ownership, permits, catch) that would enable the Council to develop alternatives for allocating quota shares and evaluate the socioeconomic effects on fishermen.

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. The Council has identified a set of objectives to be achieved through implementation of Amendment 6 and directed the Monkfish Committee to develop a range of alternatives to address these objectives, recognizing the differences between the northern and southern monkfish fisheries. Development of a catch share program in this fishery will likely require a referendum under the Magnuson-Stevens Act provisions for such programs in New England.

Atlantic Shark Fishery Pilot Program: On September 20, 2010, NMFS published an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking concerning the future of the shark fishery that included an option for a catch share program for Atlantic sharks. In late March 2011, NMFS received a draft proposal, prepared by commercial fishermen, regarding a pilot catch share program for sharks in the Gulf of Mexico. A pilot catch share program has been discussed at Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Advisory Panel (AP) and other meetings and discussions between the industry and NMFS have continued since the April AP meeting. In conjunction with the September 2011 HMS Advisory Panel meeting, NMFS hosted a workshop to discuss potential catch share programs in the Atlantic shark fisheries. NMFS published a Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare a FMP Amendment that would consider catch shares for the Atlantic shark fisheries. The NOI also established a control date for eligibility to participate in an Atlantic shark catch share program, announced the availability of a white paper describing design elements of catch share programs in general and issues specific to the Atlantic shark fisheries, and requested public comment on the implementation of catch shares in the Atlantic shark fisheries. Public scoping meetings on the concept of an Atlantic shark catch share program are ongoing.

Other Catch Shares Activities

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council: The Gulf Council has several catch share-related activities that are ongoing.

- Amendment 37- The Council is in the midst of its 5 year review of the red snapper IFQ program. The review panel met in summer 2011 and provided input for the Council to consider.
- Amendment 36- This amendment proposes restricting purchase of IFQ shares and allocation to only commercial reef fish permit holders. The Council is waiting to gather additional information before moving forward with any changes to the red snapper program.
- Amendment 33- The Council is considering adding additional reef fish species to Gulf of Mexico IFQ programs.
- The Council appointed members to a Headboat IFQ advisory panel in August 2011. The panel met in September and recommended design elements for an IFQ pilot program. In October 2011, the Council

directed staff to develop a study design for both a Headboat IFQ and Charterboat Days At Sea pilot project, which will be considered at their April 2012 meeting.

- On January 1, 2012, the Council and NMFS implemented regulations that allow any U.S. citizen or permanent resident alien to purchase red snapper shares/allocation beginning January 1, 2012, provided certain requirements are met. This will implement a change in the program that was part of the original program design approved in Amendment 26.
- The Council also requested NMFS establish a control date of January 1, 2012 for the red snapper IFQ program as the Council considers including a “use it or lose it” provision.

Pacific Fishery Management Council: The Pacific Council continues development and analysis of trailing amendments associated with the Pacific Trawl Rationalization program. The Council passed a cost recovery program and NMFS is in the process of developing proposed regulations. In addition, the Council agreed to defer quota share safe harbor provisions for community fishing associations until 2015. Additional work on community fishing associations and other issues such as quota share safe harbor and issues of concerns for lenders continues.

New England Fishery Management Council: In October 2011 NMFS published a final report on the performance of the Northeast multispecies fishery in 2010, the first year of the sector catch share system (<http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/publications/crd/crd1119/>). The report provides an evaluation of the economic and social performance of the groundfish fishery for fishing year 2010. For the fishery as a whole in 2010, more value was obtained from reduced landings and fishing effort compared to the previous three years. However, this report was not able to evaluate the relative performance of days-at-sea and sector management because of fundamental differences between these groups of vessels which were not accounted for in the analyses. Other studies are underway that will provide more information on the impacts occurring in the groundfish fishery. A report on the first nine months of the 2011 fishing year is being prepared.