

## INTRODUCTION TO SAW-46 ASSESSMENT REPORT

The Northeast Regional Stock Assessment Workshop (SAW) process has three parts: preparation of stock assessments by the SAW Working Groups and/or by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) Technical Committees/Assessment Committees; peer review of the assessments by a panel of outside experts who judge the adequacy of the assessment as a basis for providing scientific advice to managers; and a presentation of the results and reports to the Region's fishery management bodies.

Starting with SAW-39 (June 2004), the process was revised in two fundamental ways. First, the Stock Assessment Review Committee (SARC) is now a smaller panel with panelists provided by the University of Miami's Independent System for Peer Review (Center of Independent Experts, CIE). Second, the SARC no longer provides management advice. Instead, Council and Commission teams (e.g., Plan Development Teams, Monitoring and Technical Committees) formulate management advice, after an assessment has been accepted by the SARC.

Reports that are produced following SAW/SARC meetings include: an *assessment summary report* – a brief summary of the assessment results in a format useful to managers; this *assessment report* – a detailed account of the assessments for each stock; and the *SARC panelist report* – a summary of the reviewers' opinions and recommendations as well as appendixes consisting of a report from each panelist. SAW/SARC assessment reports are available online at <http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/nefsc/publications/series/crdlist.htm>. The CIE review reports

and assessment reports can be found at <http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/nefsc/saw/>.

The 46th SARC was convened in Woods Hole at the Northeast Fisheries Science Center, November 26–29, 2007, to review one assessment (striped bass, *Morone saxatilis*). CIE reviews for SARC-46 were based on detailed reports produced by the ASMFC Striped Bass Technical, Stock Assessment, and Tagging Committees.

This introduction contains a brief summary of the SARC comments, a list of SARC panelists, the meeting agenda, a list of working group meetings, and a list of attendees (Tables 1–4). Maps of the Atlantic coast of the USA and Canada are also provided (Figures 1–5).

### **Outcome of Stock Assessment Review Meeting**

The SARC review committee concluded that the assessment team successfully met all of its terms of reference. The extensive data available for the assessment appeared to be correctly compiled and used in the assessment, and the analyses were made in accordance with good scientific practice.

The review committee found that, of the candidate assessment models, the statistical catch-at-age model (SCA) best estimated parameters that could be judged against the current biological benchmarks, 1995 spawning stock biomass and fully recruited fishing mortality rate at maximum sustainable yield. Based on these, the SARC agreed with the assessment team's stock status determination that striped bass is not currently overfished and overfishing is not occurring. Fishing mortality has increased in recent years and is currently (data up to and

including 2006) at or very near the target level.

The review committee was impressed with the amount of detailed spatial data that was available. They suggested that this has the potential to be used more fully, which might reduce the difficulties encountered in the current global assessment model, e.g. conflicting abundance indices.

In addition, the SARC identified topics that deserve special attention or could be improved in future assessments. These include: examining sensitivity of assessment results to discard estimates and improving those estimates; age determination for striped bass older than about age 10;

extracting more information out of the young-of-year indices; employing better methods of averaging multiple survey indices; using regional surveys to get direct information about differences in recruitment levels for the sub-stocks of the fishery; and better standardization of state surveys.

***EDITOR'S NOTE: The appendixes referred to in this striped bass assessment report are published as Northeast Fisheries Science Center Reference Document (CRD) 08-23b, at the back of this volume.***

Table 1. 46th Stock Assessment Review Committee Panel

46th Northeast Regional Stock Assessment Workshop (SAW 46)  
**Stock Assessment Review Committee (SARC) Meeting**

November 26-29, 2007  
Woods Hole MA

**SARC Chairman:**

Michael Murphy, chair  
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission  
Fish and Wildlife Research Institute  
100 Eighth Avenue SE  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33701-5020  
Email: Mike.Murphy@MyFWC.com

**SARC Panelists (CIE):**

Dr. Neil Klaer  
CSIRO Division of Marine and Atmospheric Research  
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Table 2. Agenda, 46th Stock Assessment Review Committee Meeting

46th Northeast Regional Stock Assessment Workshop (SAW 46)  
**Stock Assessment Review Committee (SARC) Meeting**

Stephen H. Clark Conference Room – Northeast Fisheries Science Center  
 Woods Hole, Massachusetts

**November 26 - 29, 2007**

Sessions are open to the public, except where indicated.

AGENDA (11-24-07)

TOPIC	PRESENTERS	RAPPORTEURS
<b>Monday, 26 November (1:00 – 5:00 PM).....</b>		
Welcome	James Weinberg, SAW Chairman	
Introduction	Mike Murphy, SARC Chairman	
Agenda		
Conduct of Meeting		
Striped bass (A)	Gary Nelson & Beth Versak Gary Shepherd & Nichola Meserve	
SARC Discussion	Mike Murphy	
<b>Tuesday, 27 November (9 AM – Noon).....</b>		
Striped bass (A) – finish presentations.	Beth Versak, Gary Nelson, Doug Grout	Gary Shepherd & Nichola Meserve
SARC Discussion	Mike Murphy	
<b>Tuesday, 27 November (1:15 PM – 5 PM).....</b>		
Q&A #1 between Reviewers and All Presenters, clarification of any issues. (Open Meeting)	Gary Shepherd & Nichola Meserve	
SARC Discussion	Mike Murphy	
<b>Wednesday, 28 November (9 AM – Noon) .....</b>		
SARC Panel deliberations/report writing (Closed Meeting).		
<b>Wednesday, 28 November (1:15 PM – 3:45 PM).....</b>		
Q&A #2 between Reviewers and All Presenters, clarification of any issues. (Open Meeting)	Gary Shepherd & Nichola Meserve	
SARC Discussion	Mike Murphy	
<b>Wednesday, 28 November (3:45 PM – ) .....</b>		
SARC Report writing (Closed Meeting).		
<b>Thursday, 29 November .....</b>		
SARC Report writing (Closed Meeting).		

Table 3. 46th Stock Assessment Workshop, list of working groups and meetings

<u>Assessment Group</u>	<u>Chair</u>	<u>Species</u>	<u>Meeting Date/Place</u>
ASMFC Technical Committee	Mr. Doug Grout, New Hampshire Fish and Game		
ASMFC Stock Assessment Committee	Dr. Gary Nelson, Mass. Division of Marine Fisheries		
ASMFC Tagging Committee	Ms. Beth Versak, Maryland Dept. Natural Resources		

**Committee Members:**

Michael Brown, Maine Department of Marine Resources  
 Gary Shepherd, Northeast Fisheries Science Center  
 Laura Lee, Rhode Island Division of Fish and Wildlife  
 Dr. Vic Crecco, Connecticut Bureau of Marine Fisheries  
 Andy Kahnle, New York DEC Marine Resources  
 Vic Vecchio, New York DEC Marine Resources  
 Kathy Hattala, New York DEC Marine Resources  
 Brandon Muffley, New Jersey Department of Fish, Game and Wildlife  
 Heather Corbett, New Jersey Department of Fish, Game and Wildlife  
 Dr. Des Kahn, Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife  
 Dr. Alexei Sharov, Maryland Department of Natural Resources  
 Dr. Linda Barker, Maryland Department of Natural Resources  
 Rob O'Reilly, Virginia Marine Resources Commission  
 Dr. John Hoenig, Virginia Institute of Marine Science  
 Robert Harris, Virginia Institute of Marine Science  
 Phil Sadler, Virginia Institute of Marine Science  
 Dr. Stuart Welsh, West Virginia Wildlife and Fisheries Cooperative Research Unit  
 Charlton Godwin, North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries  
 Dr. Wilson Laney, US Fish and Wildlife Service  
 Tina McCrobie, US Fish and Wildlife Service  
 and  
 Nichola Meserve, ASMFC Coordinator

Table 4. 45th SAW/SARC, List of Attendees

D. Dow	NEFSC
S. Pautzke	NEFMC
S. Lucey	NEFSC
G. Nessler	ASMFC
L. Brooks	NEFSC
J. Blaylock	NEFSC
C. Legault	NEFSC
J. S. Thompson	MASS. DMF
P. Nitschke	NEFSC
M. Fogarty	NEFSC

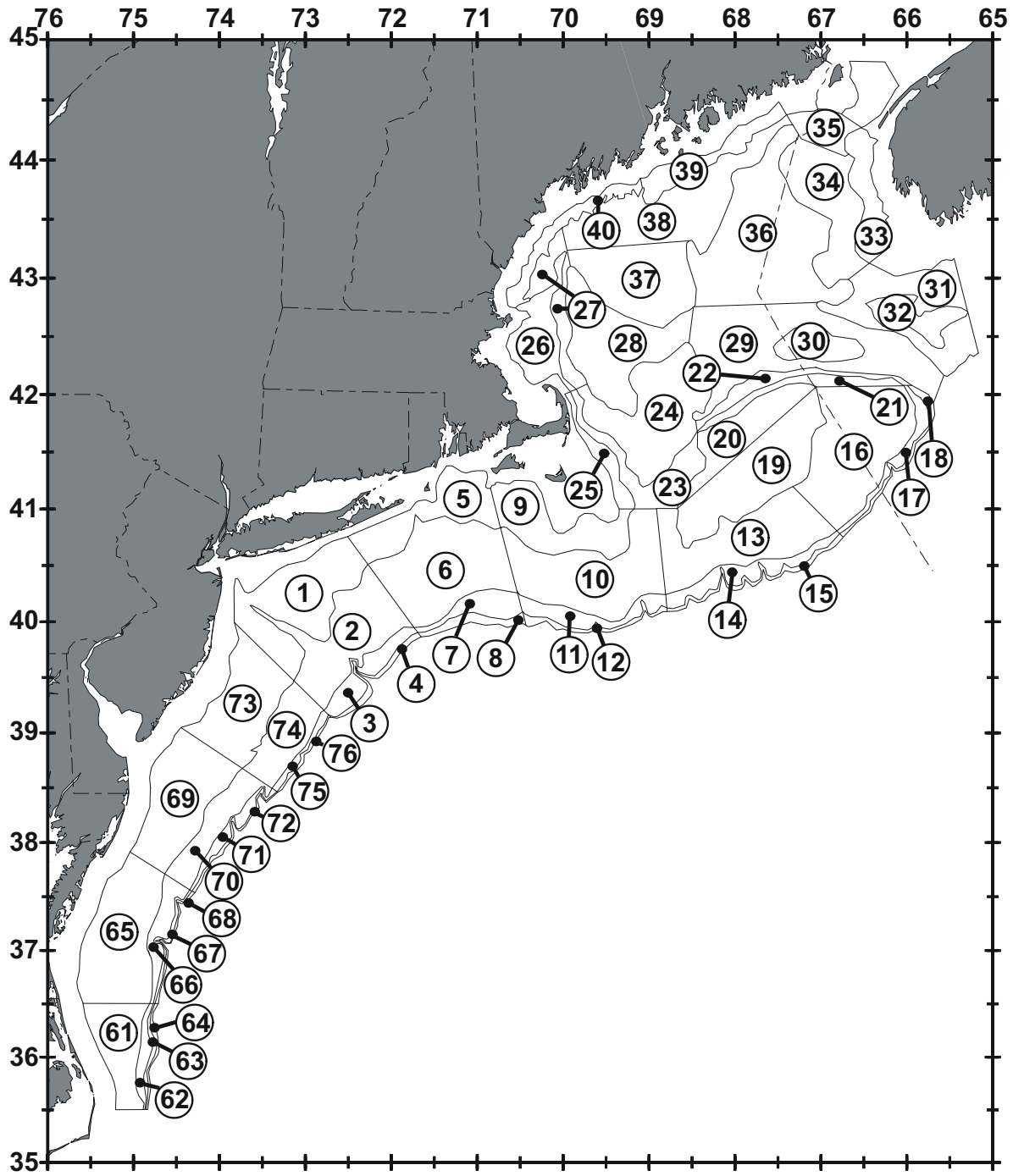


Figure 1. Offshore depth strata sampled during Northeast Fisheries Science Center bottom trawl research surveys.

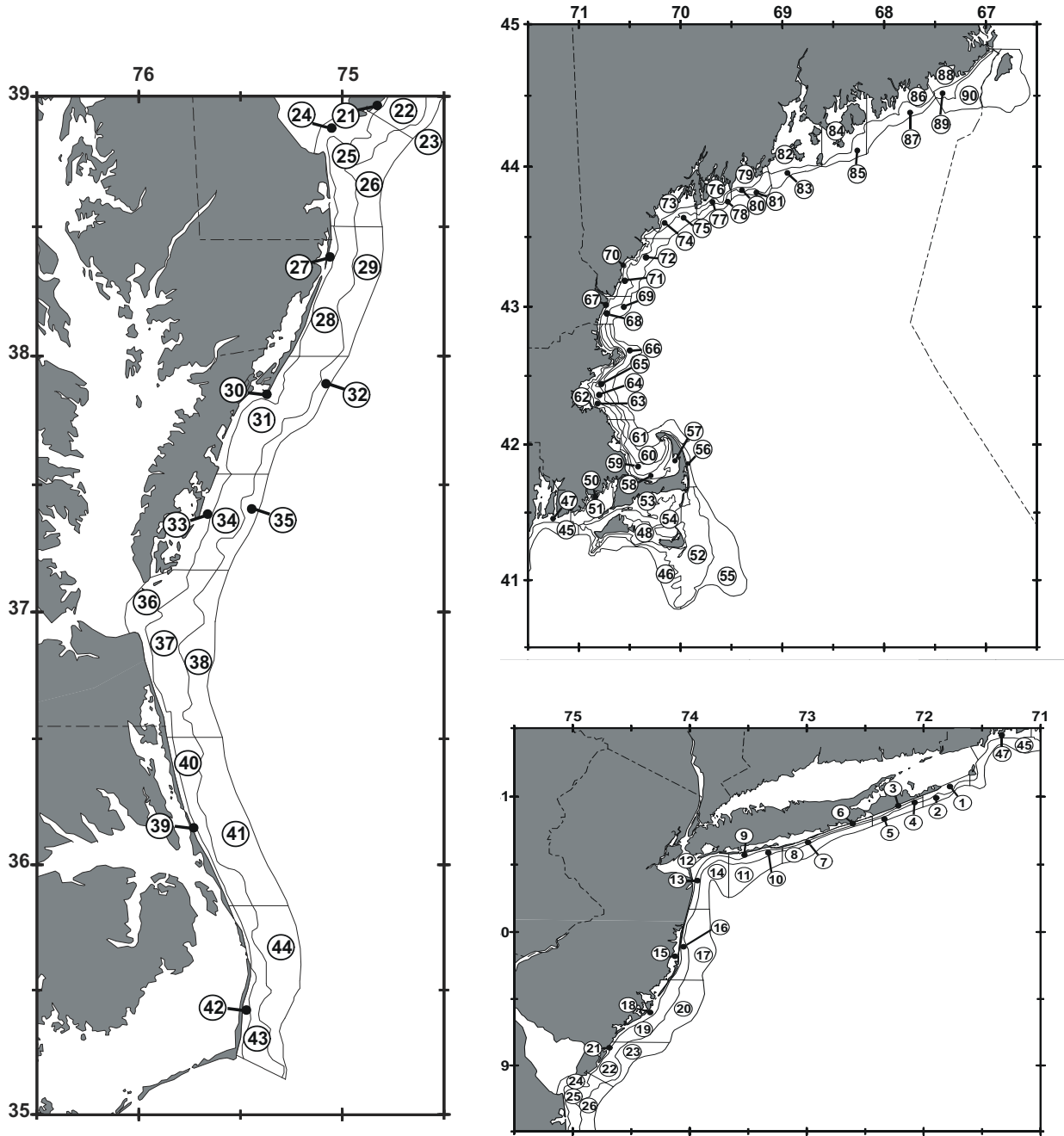


Figure 2. Inshore depth strata sampled during Northeast Fisheries Science Center bottom trawl research surveys.

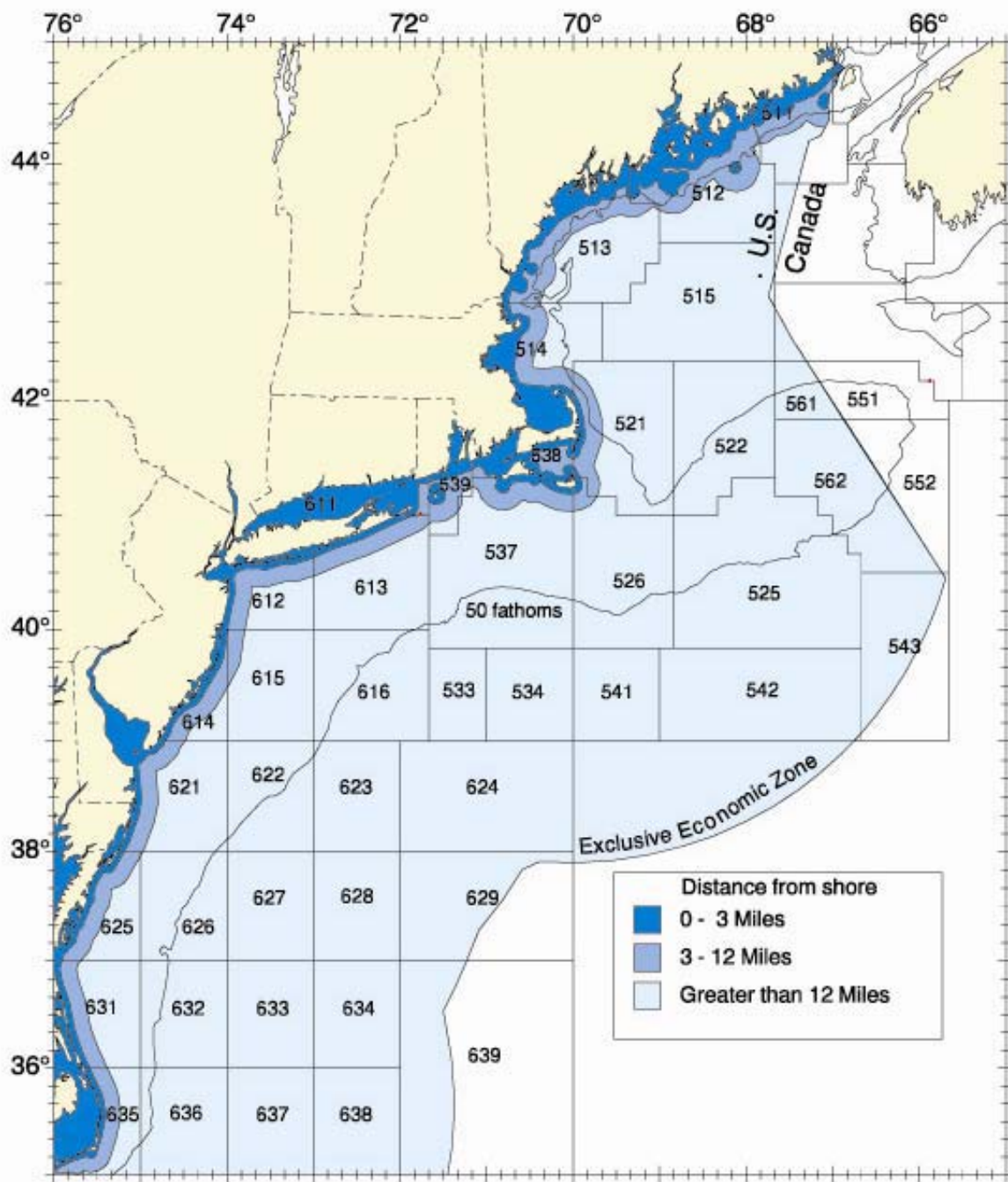


Figure 3. Statistical areas used for reporting commercial catches.



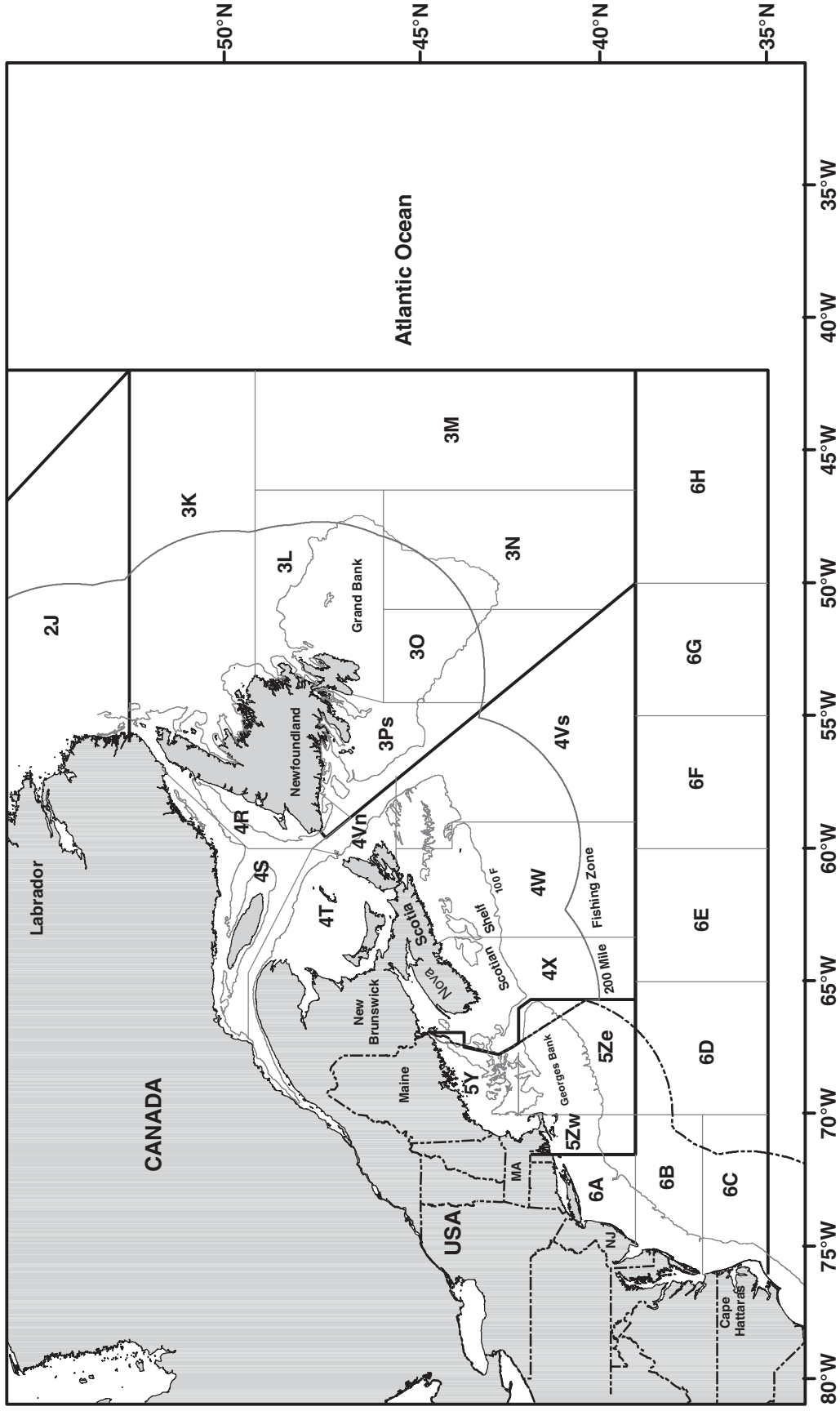


Figure 4. Catch reporting areas of the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) for Subareas 3-6.

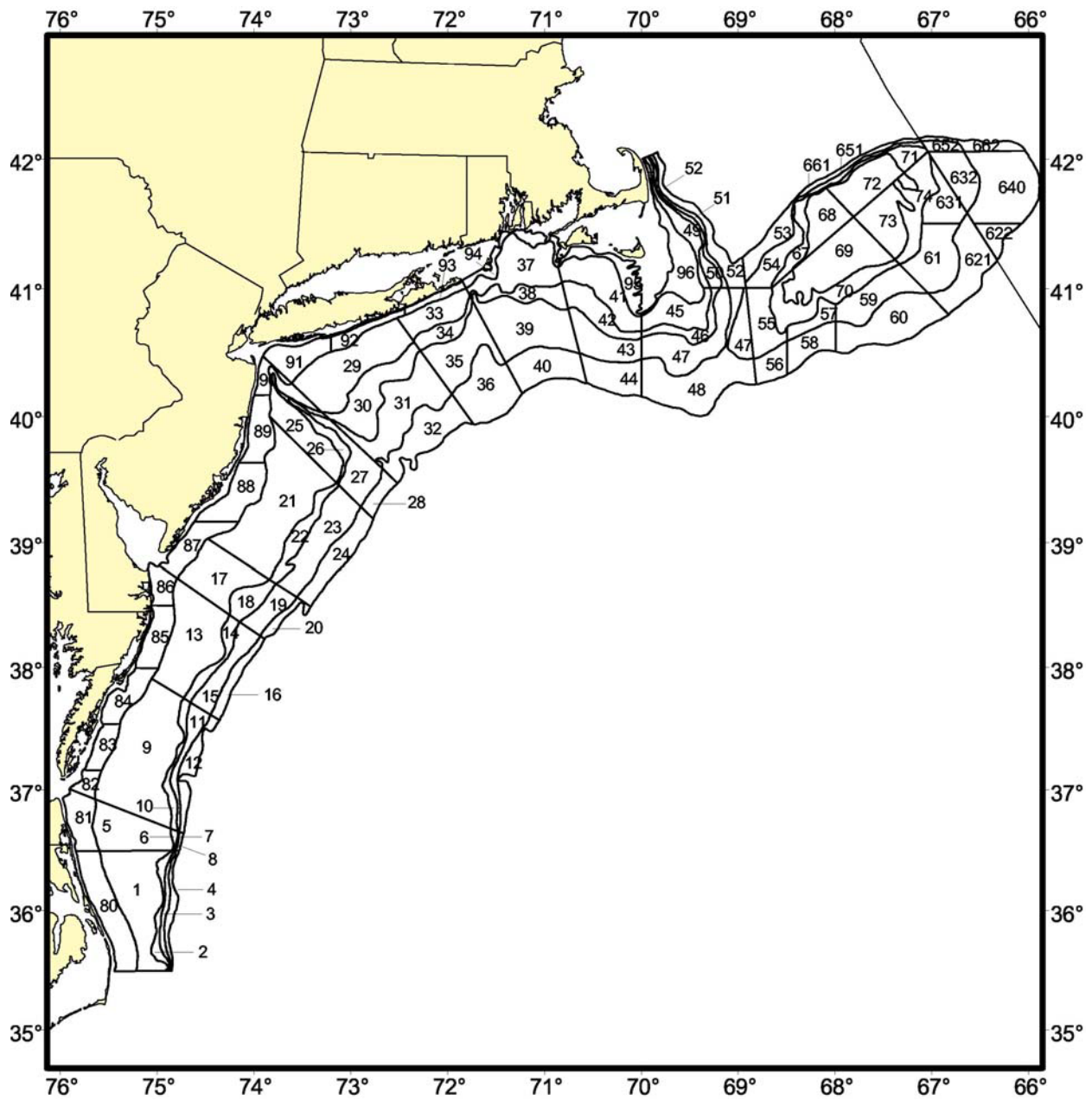


Figure 5. Shellfish strata for NEFSC resource surveys.