



**NOAA** NATIONAL OCEANIC AND  
ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE



**Statement by Eric Schwaab,  
Assistant Administrator for NOAA's Fisheries Service,  
on Gulf of Maine Cod**

December 1, 2011

The Gulf of Maine Cod stock assessment has been going through peer review this week by a team of independent scientists at the 53rd Stock Assessment Workshop at the Northeast Fisheries Science Center in Woods Hole Massachusetts. It is important that we await final feedback from that peer review process, which we expect in January. However, given the preliminary results and the implications of the assessment for groundfish fishermen and communities across the region, after consultation with industry leaders, NMFS is taking the extraordinary step of convening a team to explore potential management options for reducing disruption to the fishery while responding to the new assessment. That team will work with stakeholders across the region to explore the flexibility in the Magnuson Stevens Act and outline appropriate management responses. Next week, the team will meet with industry leaders and other stakeholders to discuss these potential management responses.

Eric C. Schwaab  
NOAA Assistant Administrator for Fisheries