



## NOAA FISHERIES SERVICE

Office of Sustainable Fisheries



### CATCH SHARE PROGRAM STATUS

As of June 30, 2012, there are 15 catch share programs in operation. In addition:

- 2 existing programs are being significantly modified
- 6 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 Third Quarter

### 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 ITQ \(1992\)](#)
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 \(2011\)](#)

## Current Catch Share Programs Being Significantly Modified

**South Atlantic Wreckfish ITQ:** Amendment 20A was approved by the Council in December 2011. This amendment will redistribute existing shares from inactive/deceased shareholders, specify a share cap, and develop procedures for distributing shares among active participants. A proposed rule was published on March 30, 2012, and final regulations for Amendment 20A will be published this fall.

**Alaska Halibut Guided Sportfish (Charter):** NMFS is working with the North Pacific Council to refine and implement a new charter program in the existing halibut fishery. The new charter management program was initially recommended by the Council in 2008. 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 revise the commercial halibut IFQ program to 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, published in July 2011, NMFS has asked the Council to review the issues and provide additional input, as needed. In April 2012, the Council considered additional options for establishing commercial and charter sector catch limit allocations and revisions to the method for annually determining charter harvest restrictions. The Council also recommended minor changes to the administration of the IFQ transfer program between the commercial and charter sectors. These revisions and options are under review; final action by the Council is expected in October 2012. The program, if approved, would be implemented by 2014.

## 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 requirements, which NMFS published as a proposed rule in June 2012. NMFS worked with the voluntary cooperative to establish the proposed monitoring and catch accounting standards. NMFS anticipates that the standards, if approved, will be implemented in 2013.

## Catch Shares 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 2011 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. The Council continues to refine actions based on public comments and additional analyses. The industry and NMFS will meet in August 2012 to further discuss the program and the Council may take final action on the amendment in September.

**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. In March 2012, the Council's Catch Share Committee received a presentation from industry regarding the development of a voluntary IFQ program for the snapper-grouper fishery. The Council made a motion requesting staff initiate analysis of the industry proposal for discussion at a future Council meeting.

**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. The Council continues discussions of alternatives including an individual transferable quota system or Sector management approach among other options. 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, and announced the availability of a white paper describing design elements of catch share programs in general and issues specific to the Atlantic shark fisheries. The NOI has 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 complete, and NMFS is evaluating the comments to determine next steps.

## Other Catch Shares Activities

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

- Amendment 36 - This amendment proposes restricting purchase of IFQ shares and allocation to only commercial reef fish permit holders. The amendment will also include possible changes related to the 5-year review of the IFQ program. The Council is waiting to gather additional information before moving forward with any changes to the red snapper program. Information and analyses will be presented to the Council in October 2012.
- Amendment 33 - The Council is considering adding additional reef fish species to Gulf of Mexico IFQ programs. At the April 2012 meeting the Council asked staff to cease work on this amendment. The amendment will be discussed at the August 2012 Council meeting.
- 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 was considered at the April 2012 meeting. No additional work has been conducted on the Days at Sea pilot project. However, at the April 2012 meeting, the Council did recommend NMFS approve a request for a Gulf Headboat Cooperative Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP). The EFP is currently under review by NMFS and NOAA General Counsel.
- At the April 2012 meeting, the Council approved a motion with several recommendations for NMFS action on the Grouper allocation. This included improving the quality of IFQ allocations and share price data, as well as

collecting charter/for-hire fees, variable costs per trip, continuous client information, and demographic and socioeconomic data on commercial/charter captains and crews, dealers and processors.

**Pacific Fishery Management Council:** The Pacific Council continues development and analysis of trailing amendments associated with the Pacific Trawl Rationalization program. In addition, to comply with a recent court decision, the Council continues discussions regarding the initial allocation for the shoreside and mothership whiting fleets; in September 2012, the Council plans to select the final preferred alternative. The Council approved 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 those of concern for lenders, continues.

In addition, at the June 2012 meeting, the Pacific Council heard a NMFS report on the April workshop hosted by the Southwest Regional Office and Southwest Fisheries Science Center in Monterey, California. The workshop explored catch share management approaches as a possible mechanism for improving management of the Pacific sardine fishery. The workshop was a follow-on to the February 2010 San Francisco workshop that the two offices convened to examine international catch share programs for coastal pelagic species. Similar to the previous one, the workshop was framed around information sharing and lessons learned from existing catch share programs operating in the Pacific, North Pacific, Gulf of Mexico, and New England Councils.

**New England Fishery Management Council:** The New England Council continues work on a framework action to modify the existing Northeast Groundfish Sector program. Key topics include the mechanisms for industry funding of at-sea monitors, elimination of dockside monitoring, reduction in or elimination of minimum sizes for certain groundfish, and accountability measures for six non-allocated stocks of groundfish.