



NOAA FISHERIES SERVICE: Northeast Region



The Northeast Region extends from Maine to Cape Hatteras, North Carolina. Geographically, the region is divided into three main oceanic areas: the Gulf of Maine, Georges Bank, and the Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic Bight. These three areas comprise the Northeast U.S. Continental Shelf Large Marine Ecosystem (LME), and contain some of the oldest fisheries in the Nation.

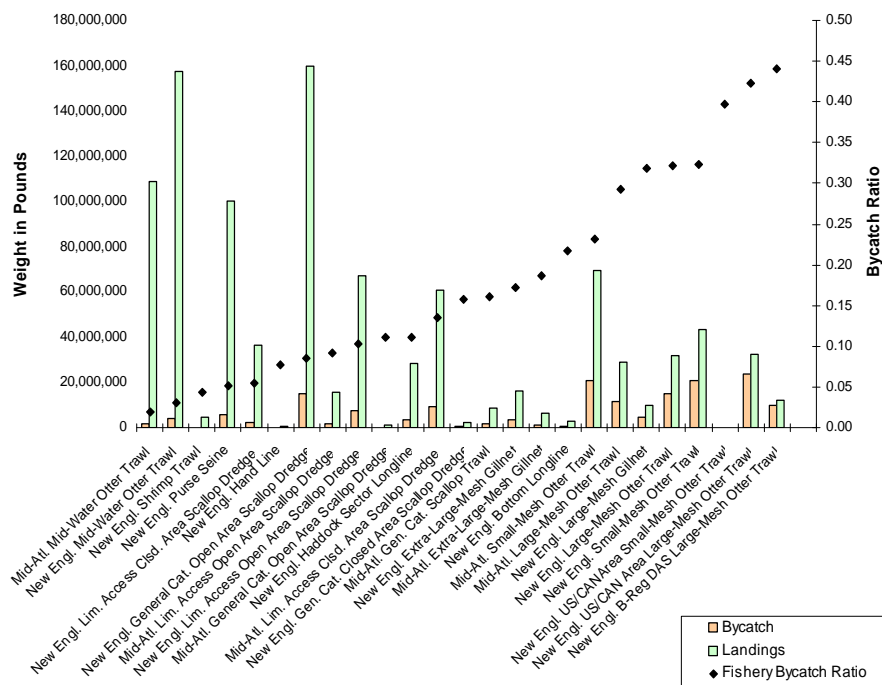
The National Bycatch Report: Northeast Region

Reducing fisheries bycatch is a top priority for NOAA Fisheries and is required under guiding legislation and international laws. Monitoring and reducing fisheries bycatch promotes healthy marine ecosystems and the best use of the nation's living marine resources. NOAA Fisheries new report, the National Bycatch Report, provides bycatch estimates by fishery and species for each of the six NOAA Fisheries Regions. The New England and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Councils, in conjunction with NOAA Fisheries, are responsible for managing fisheries in the Northeast Region.

Northeast Region Fast Facts

- A total of 63 commercial fisheries (federal, state, tribal, and international) are included in the National Bycatch Report for the Northeast Region.
- 13 fishery management plans regulate the harvest of federally managed species in the Northeast Region.
- Landings from all Northeast Region commercial fisheries included in the report were valued at approximately \$1.4 billion in 2005.
- An observer program monitors 33 of the 63 Northeast Region fisheries.
- Fish bycatch estimates were available for 25 fisheries and 34 species in 2005. (estimates could not be produced for the other 8 observed fisheries due to little or no observer coverage in 2005).
- Protected species (marine mammals, seabirds, and sea turtles) bycatch estimates were available for 13 fisheries and 7 species/species groups in 2005.

Northeast Region 2005 Fish Bycatch and Landings by Fishery



The National Bycatch Report



NEFSC



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NOAA/NEFSC



Allison Glass/NOAA

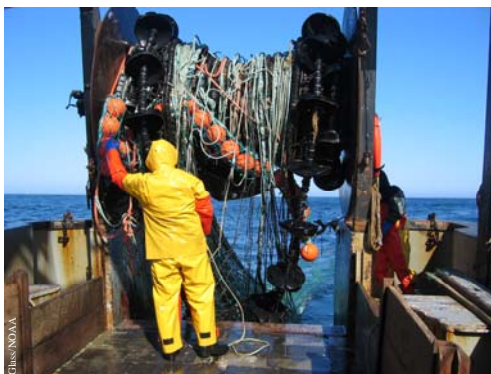
View the complete
National Bycatch Report
at:

www.nmfs.noaa.gov/bycatch.htm

National Bycatch Report: Northeast Region

Bycatch Reduction Success Stories:

- Implementation of acoustic deterrent devices (known as "pingers") on fishing gear in the Northeast gillnet fishery within seasonal management areas under the Gulf of Maine Harbor Porpoise Take Reduction Plan substantially reduced harbor porpoise bycatch interactions with gillnet gear, particularly when the pingers were used properly.
- In experiments, the Ruhle Trawl (World Wildlife Fund SmartGear competition winner) reduced bycatch in stocks of concern while catch of the target species did not significantly change (the bycatch ratio of haddock to cod improved from 3:1 in the control net to 20:1 in the test trawl, and skate bycatch was reduced by 98%).
- "Chain mats" are required in the Atlantic sea scallop dredge fishery to reduce the severity (i.e., mortality and injury) of sea turtle interactions with the gear.
- "Weak links" are required on the surface system of gillnet and trap/pot fishing gear to reduce the risk of whales becoming entangled, injured, or killed.



Hauling in a Ruhle trawl.
Credit: David Beutel/URI Sea Grant

Sea scallop fishery chain mat.
*Credit: Virginia Sea Grant/
Virginia Institute of Marine
Sciences*

