

February 2, 2022

Mr. Adam Burns
Director General
Fisheries Resource Management
Fisheries and Oceans Canada
200 Kent St
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0E6

Re: Harvest Control Rules (HCRs) for 3NO Witch Flounder

Mr. Burns,

The Atlantic Groundfish Council (AGC) and its members manage a Fishery Improvement Project (FIP) for three witch flounder stocks in the northwest Atlantic, i.e. [the 2J3KL, 3NO and 3Ps stocks](#). The FIP is critical in demonstrating to important international customers that we (and DFO) are making preparations to pass pending MSC certification assessments. All of AGC's FIPs are published and rated on the FisheryProgress (FP).org website, as requested by supply chain customers. As part of its process, FP.org requires evidence of the FIP's on-going efforts to advocate science and/or management advancements for these stocks.

AGC is requesting DFO to provide feedback on our February 2019 working draft HCRs for the 3NO stock. If the Department is able to provide feedback in the coming weeks, the AGC would produce a revised version for additional DFO feedback. We would then produce an updated draft document that would incorporate results of the June 2022 NAFO Scientific Council assessment.

Our objective in this process is to contribute towards a collaborative document that would help guide Canada's views on TAC-setting at future NAFO Commission meetings, until NAFO is in a position to consider a formal Canadian proposal to adopt its own HCRs.

We look forward to your positive response and continued collaboration.

Sincerely,

Steve Devitt
Director of Sustainability