

Record of Discussion
Canadian Redfish Fishery Improvement Projects
January 31, 2023, 12:45 – 16:00
200 Kent Street, Ottawa, ON.

Participants

DFO

Todd Williams, Senior Director, Resource Management Operations, National Capital Region (NCR)
Leigh Edgar, A/ Manager, Resource Management Operations, NCR
Liliya Baranova, Senior Fisheries Management Officer, Resource Management Operations, NCR
Dirk Algera, Fisheries Management Officer, Resource Management Operations, NCR
Derek Osborne, Manager, Atlantic Fisheries Science, NCR
Robyn Morris, Senior Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Management Officer, NL Region
Danny Ings, Science Advisor, Atlantic Fisheries Science, NCR
Julie Diamond, Regional Manager, Groundfish, International Fisheries & Species at Risk, NL Region
Kathy Cooper-MacDonald, Senior Fisheries Management Officer, Fisheries Management, Maritimes Region

AGC

Bruce Chapman, President
Steve Devitt, Director of Sustainability

Purpose

AGC currently manages one MSC certification for the 3LN redfish stock, has a fishery improvement plan (FIP) underway for the Unit 1 & 2 stock and is launching a FIP in March for the Unit 3 and 3O stocks. Redfish markets in Europe are impeded by confused messaging about the sustainability of redfish (the primary supply being from eastern North Atlantic stocks). In order to ‘break through’ such constraints to Canadian redfish exports to Europe, AGC, in collaboration with Sustainable Fisheries Partnership (SFP), is preparing an approach that will highlight the sustainable management of Atlantic Canadian redfish fisheries with the objective of differentiating our redfish products and fisheries.

This meeting was requested by AGC to solicit specific information and assistance from the Department in order to meet current and future requirements for our four non-MSC certified redfish stocks that are or will soon be in FIPs. Discussion included specific deliverables and timelines as noted below.

Agenda and Discussion Points

For each of the 4 Redfish FIP Fisheries:

- Fisheries of interest: Unit 1, Unit 2, Unit 3 and 3O
- Only redfish directed fishery data requested.
- Most three recent years of complete data (e.g., 2019 – 2021).
- Mobile gear only including both otter trawl (OT) and mid-water trawl (MWT).
- Vessel size classes or license categories can be collated into one group

1. SFP/AGC Itinerary for meetings with DFO (Date TBC)

- SFP will review Canada's redfish FIPs in March to confirm their sustainability scoring. They will subsequently visit Canada to meet DFO, ENGOs and AGC members to better understand stock science, environmental interactions and fishery management within the FIP context.
- An illustrative itinerary for timing and purpose of meetings with AGC and SFP personnel was presented.
- Feedback on meeting content and attendees was requested.
- Possible meeting dates of early May were discussed.

2. Principle 1 Issues

- a. HCRs – Formal HCRs have not been adopted in Units 1, 2, and 3O, and revised HCRs may be possible for Unit 3. Example HCR approaches from other redfish fisheries were provided as examples of approaches that could be considered through the advisory process.
 - o Unit 1 and 2 – AGC requested a timeline update of likely finalization of HCRs. DFO confirmed that a specific timeline is not yet available however management processes are planned.
 - o Unit 3 –Existing requirements for management objectives in the 4VWX5 Groundfish IFMP cover some management controls and harvest decision rules for Unit 3 Redfish. A model-based framework is anticipated to start in 23/24. AGC requested clarification on possible timeline for development.
 - o NAFO 3O – (NAFO managed stock) No current model-based assessment in place. Survey-based rules will be required. There is no plan in the short- or medium-term to develop HCR for this stock.
- AGC requested confirmation of the likely timeline to consult with stakeholders on a 'straw dog' outline of HCRs for each of these stocks, as part of the process towards development of HCRs.

3. Principle 2 Issues - AGC requested the following data by end of February 2023.

- a. Bycatch profile (data or format for data); (if necessary aggregated for most recent 3-5 years) – Bycatch data is necessary to evaluate the impact of the redfish fisheries on bycatch species including redfish bycatch (e.g., fasciatus in U1), other managed commercial species (e.g. cod, turbot, etc.) and non-commercial discard species including marine mammals, birds and other fish/ invertebrate species.

Where available for all four fisheries, AGC requested:

- o Redfish species composition
- o Landed bycatch (non-redfish)
- o ETP (SARA) Species bycatch
- o At-Sea Observer Data

- b. Fishing Footprint (directed fishing); (aggregated for most recent 3-5 years) - FIP requirements (based on MSC performance indicators) include verification of the interactions between fisheries and habitats after which an impact assessment can be conducted. To

achieve this, fishing footprint is mapped against closed areas (MPAs, MR), VMEs and substrates outside these closed areas.

For each FIP fishery, AGC requested either or both data sets:

- Actual Geospatial coordinates (Lat/ Long) of fishing activity.
 - Binned/ Gridded (3x3nm) Catch (or effort) data from the fishery.
- c. Describe On-Going Ecosystem Research - The MSC Ecosystem performance indicators examine the issues of what do we know about the redfish fisheries impacts (i.e., redfish/bycatch removals and potential benthic habitat impacts) on the broader ecosystem. Provide information on ecosystem research relative to redfish and/or in the primary areas in Eastern Canada where redfish reside, including a list of recent published articles and a description of on-going studies.

4. Principle 3 Issues

- a. Fishery-Specific Objectives – Formal fishery specific objectives have not been adopted for any of the four FIP fisheries. By way of example, AGC presented stock-specific objectives common in other redfish stocks that may be appropriate for consideration by Groundfish Advisory processes for the four stocks.
 - AGC request confirmation of the likely timeline to consult on a ‘straw dog’ outline of fishery specific objectives for each of these stocks, as part of the process towards development of HCRs.
- b. C&P Reports – Monitoring, control and surveillance (DFO C&P) reports are necessary to demonstrate that the fishery is monitored, is compliant with regulations and has a system of sanctions that is effective to maintain orderly conduct of the fishery.
 - AGC requested redfish fishery specific data by the end of February 2023.

Meeting Conclusion

AGC thanked DFO for their time and consideration of these issues, summarizing their request for information as described above regarding Principle 2 and Principle 3, and a plan with target timelines for development of HCRs and fishery specific objectives.

DFO undertook to review internally and provide feedback by the end of February, if possible.