



New England Fishery Management Council

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 12, 2022

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Atlantic Herring: Council Receives Update on 2023-2025 Specs; Discusses Status of Framework 7, Industry-Funded Monitoring

The New England Fishery Management Council covered [three issues](#) related to Atlantic herring when it met [June 28-30, 2022](#) for a hybrid meeting in Portland, Maine.

SPECIFICATIONS: The Council received a brief update on 2023-2025 herring specifications, which are under development. The Herring Plan Development Team (PDT) is working on the action, and the Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee will develop the overfishing limit (OFL) and acceptable biological catch (ABC) recommendations at an [August 4, 2022](#) meeting. The annual catch limit (ACL), area-specific sub-ACLs, and other fishery specifications will flow from the ABC. The Herring Advisory Panel and Herring Committee will meet later this summer to review the specifications and recommend preferred alternatives for Council consideration. The Council will take final action during its [September 27-29, 2022](#) meeting.

The specifications will be informed by the peer reviewed results of the [June 2022 Herring Management Track Assessment](#), which was conducted immediately preceding the start of the Council meeting. Herring was last assessed in [2020](#) and was determined to be overfished, although overfishing was not occurring. Results from the new 2022 assessment are being finalized, but it does not appear the status of the resource has changed much from the previous assessment.

FRAMEWORK ADJUSTMENT 7: The Council initiated [Framework 7](#) in 2019. The [current focus](#) is to protect spawning adult herring on Georges Bank and Nantucket Shoals. The Council agreed to pause further PDT work on the framework for the summer. At its next meeting, the Herring Committee will take up a [tabled motion](#) about whether Framework 7 should be discontinued given: (a) very little fishing is presently occurring in offshore areas, and the limited activity is occurring outside of the spawning season; and (b) much more work is needed to develop spawning protections that can be effectively monitored.



*Sampling Atlantic herring.
—UMass Dartmouth SMAST photo*

INDUSTRY-FUNDED MONITORING (IFM): The Council considered whether to revise the [IFM program](#) for herring but opted not to initiate an action considering: (1) the IFM program will be on hold after April 2023 unless federal funds are identified to administer the program; and (2) a program review is required in 2023.