

Fisheries Management in the Gulf of Maine

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New England Fishery Management Council

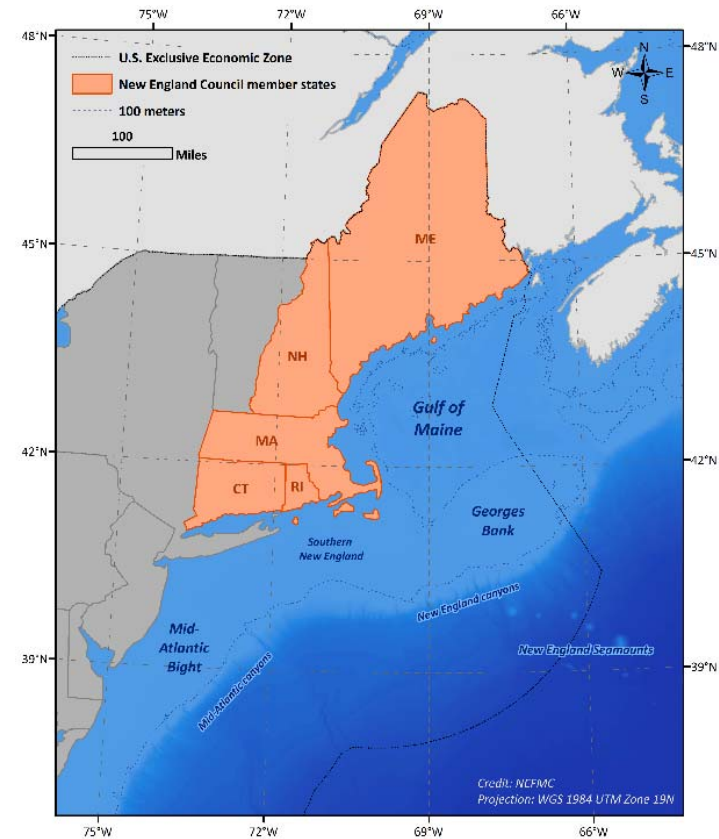
BOEM GOM Taskforce
December 12, 2019
Durham, NH



New England
Fishery Management Council

New England Fishery Management Council

- Established by statute
- Not a government agency
- Voting members: 17 total from ME, NH, MA, RI, CT, plus the NOAA Fisheries Regional Administrator
- Deliberative body
- Public meetings
- www.nefmc.org



Core Council functions

- Prepare management plans for fisheries that require conservation and management
 - Include annual catch limits and accountability measures
 - Gear and area restrictions, possession limits, etc.
 - Essential Fish Habitat
 - Consider 10 National Standards
- Conduct public hearings as appropriate





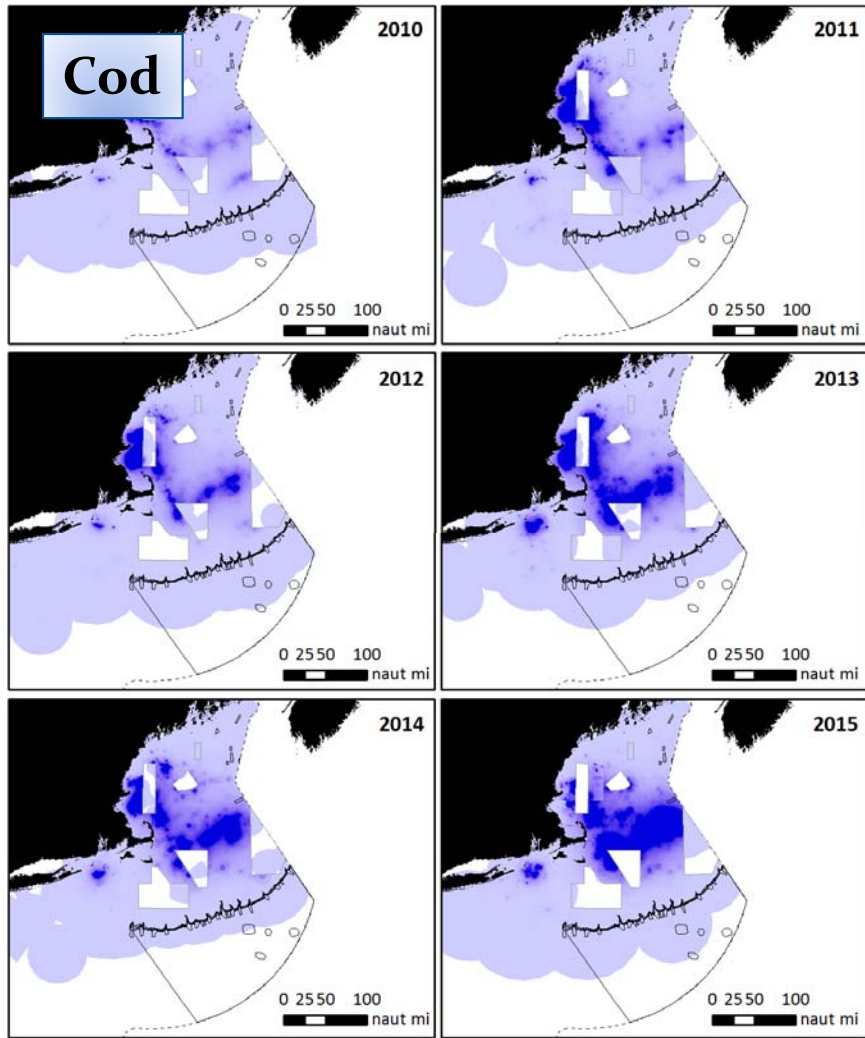
Offshore wind engagement to date

- NMFS, MAFMC, NEFMC share information/updates via NMFS wind team
- Council comments to BOEM (often collaborate with Mid Atlantic FMC)
 - NEFMC adopted offshore energy policies 2018 ([link](#))
 - Considering whether updates are warranted given potential for floating offshore wind in the Gulf of Maine
 - NEFMC has sent 14 comment letters related to renewable energy since 2011; 9 of these during 2018-2019 ([link](#))
- Councils maintain a joint offshore wind webpage
- Interact with BOEM and developers through Habitat Committee, Council
- Involved with RODA, ROSA activities

NEFMC FMPs

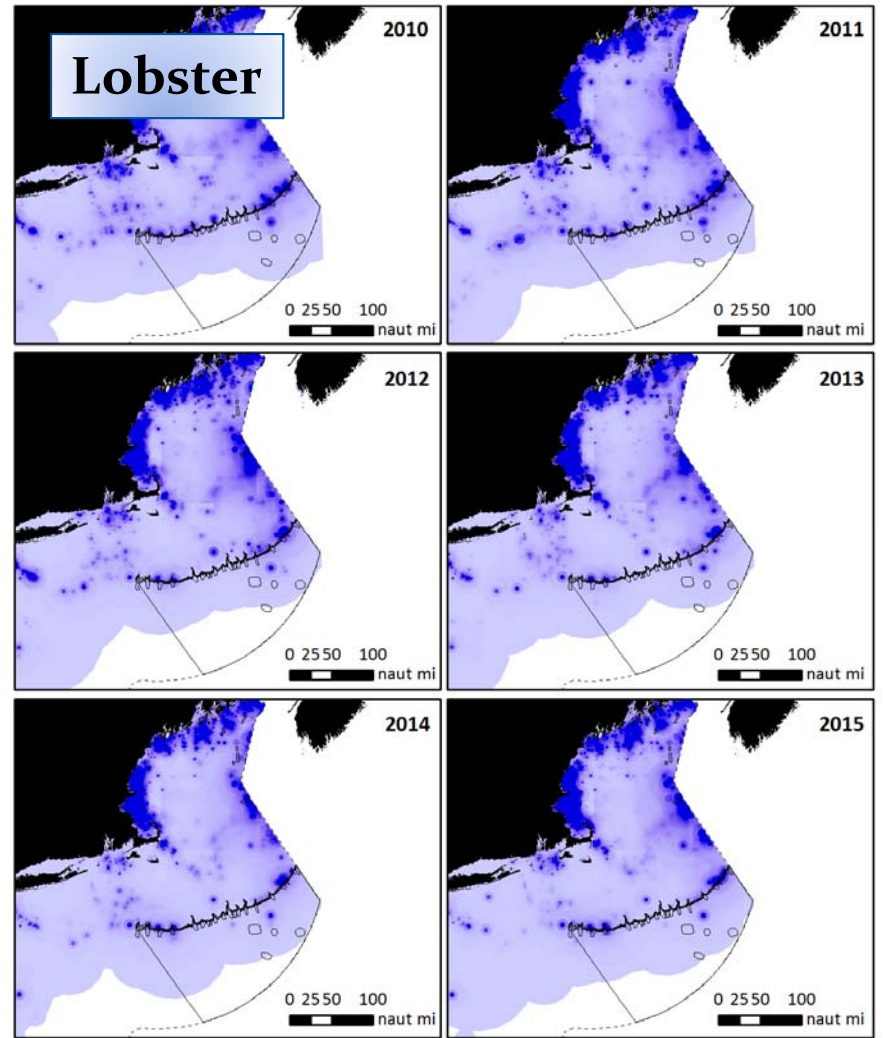
- Northeast Multispecies: 1985 (original 1978) 13 species, 22 stocks
- Atlantic Sea Scallop: 1982
- Atlantic Herring: 1986
- Atlantic Salmon: 1988, no possession
- Monkfish (joint with MAFMC, NEFMC lead): 1999
- Spiny Dogfish (joint with MAFMC, MAFMC lead): 2000
- Small Mesh Multispecies (whiting, hakes): 2000, 3 species, 5 stocks
- Red Crab: 2002
- Northeast Skate Complex: 2003, 7 species





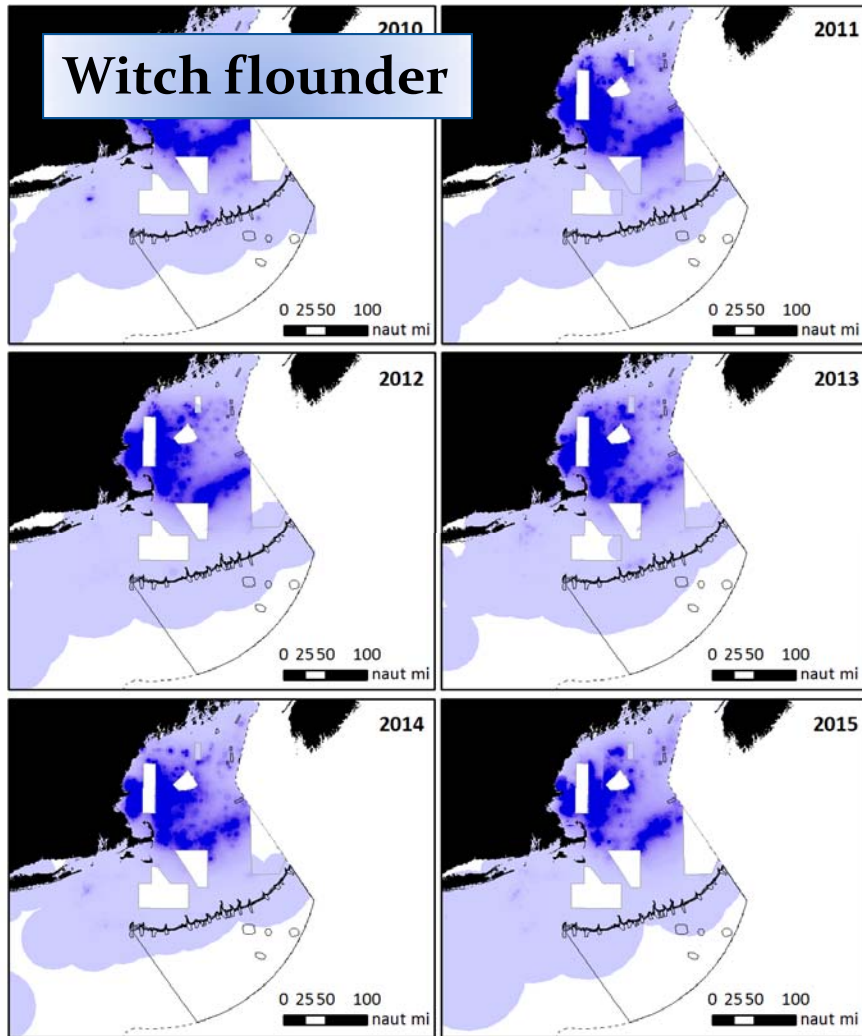
Species: Atlantic cod

Map created October 27, 2016



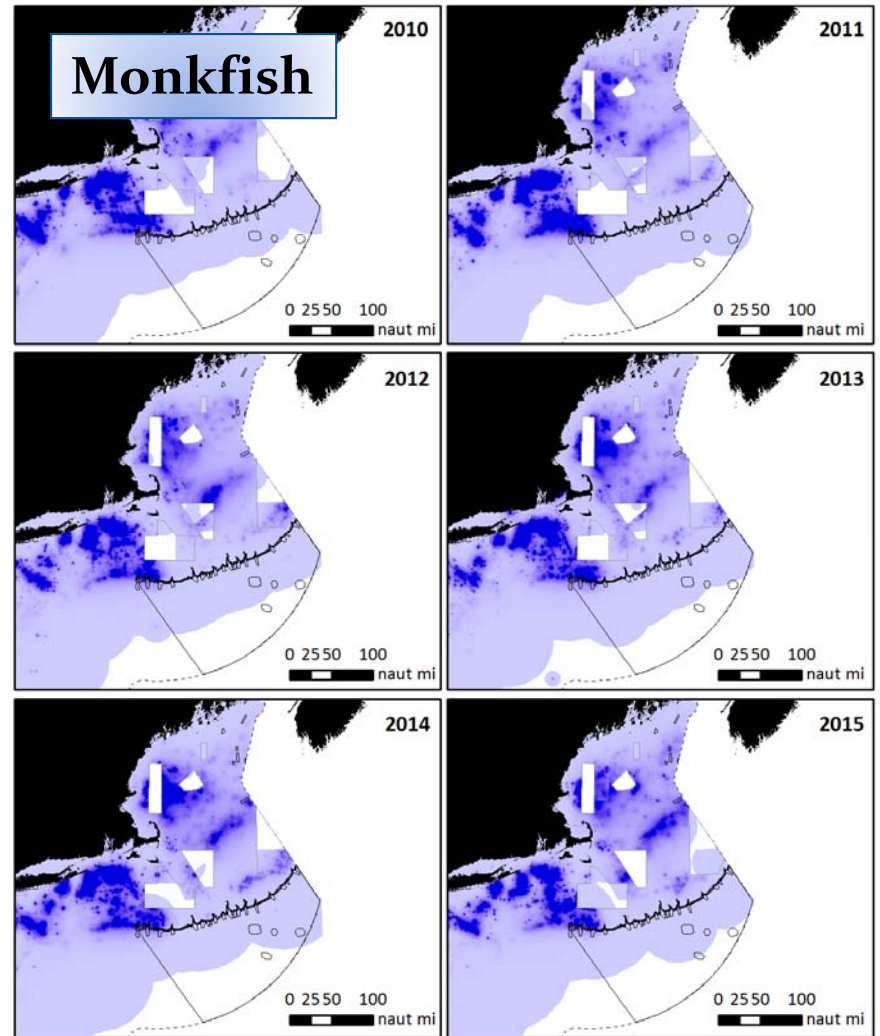
Species: American lobster

Map created October 28, 2016



Species: Witch flounder

Map created October 27, 2016



Species: Monkfish

Map created October 28, 2016



Operational concerns

- Reduced ability of fisheries to operate within and transit through wind farms depending on location and spacing of turbines
 - NEFMC managed fisheries from previous slide
 - Other fisheries: lobster, crab, tuna, mackerel, dogfish, clam, hagfish, northern shrimp (shrimp presently under moratorium)
- Interaction with export cables on/in seabed; particular concern about mobile bottom-tending gears
- Maintenance of recreational fishing opportunities for various species such as cod, haddock, and tuna – wind turbines + or -?
- Long term: possibility of offshore aquaculture? Relationship to fishing grounds, wind farms?

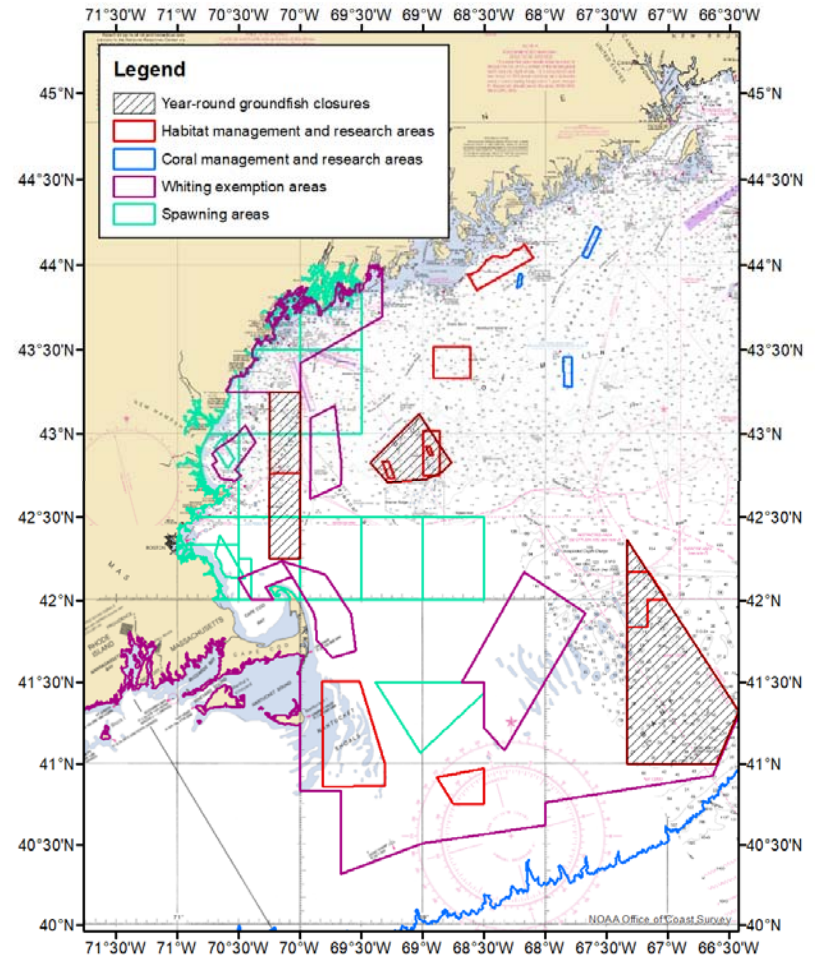
Conservation concerns

- Protection of habitats, natural resources within spatial management areas
 - Cashes Ledge and Western Gulf of Maine Closure Areas
 - Various Habitat Management Areas, EFH more generally
 - Deep-sea coral management areas
- Potential for sub-lethal effects on managed resources due to noise, mechanical disturbance, EMF from construction and operations
- Measuring changes in fish stocks is already challenging; installation of WTGs will affect fisheries surveys, making this more challenging



A complex issue

- Fishery management areas distributed throughout the region – these change over time in response to changing stock and environmental conditions
- In aggregate fishing occurs throughout the GOM; grounds and species shift in importance over time
- Challenging to interpret past effort data given these complexities
- Outreach to fishermen and fisheries organizations is critical





Questions?