



**Tilefish Advisory Panel
Tilefish Framework 2
Meeting Summary
April 5, 2016**

The Tilefish AP met via Webinar on April 5, 2016 to provide input on Framework 2 to the Tilefish FMP. The following is the report from the Tilefish AP.¹

The Advisers in attendance were: David Arbeitman, Ron Callis, Skip Feller, Frank Green, Jeff Gutman, Michael Johnson, and Jan McDowell. They represent tilefish commercial fisherman (from New Jersey, New York); recreational fishermen (private/head boats, bait and tackle business, from New Jersey, Maryland, and Virginia); and research/academia (VIMS). Also in attendance were: Fred Akers, Greg DiDomenico, Steve Doctor, John Nolan (Sr.), Laurie Nolan, Paul Nitschke, Robert O'Reilly, and José Montañez.

Discussion: José Montañez reviewed the Framework 2 document for the AP members. These are the comments provided by the AP members.

Issue #1 - Tilefish Catch and Landings Limits Flow Chart

AP members showed support for the Council preferred alternative. Alternative 2 (Preferred: Modification to the golden tilefish catch and landings flow chart). It was indicated that deducting discards from the specific fishing sector generating them was the correct way to proceed.

Issue #2 – Interactive Voice Response (IVR) Reporting Requirements

AP members showed support for the Council preferred alternative. Alternative 2 (Preferred: Eliminate the IVR reporting requirements). It was indicated that the IVR reporting requirement is no longer needed for management purposes.

Issue #3 - Number of Allowable Fishing Allocations

AP showed support for the Council preferred alternative. Alternative 2 (Preferred: Prohibit Vessels From Fishing for More Than one Allocation at a Time). It was discussed that the current deficiency could be corrected (if alternative 1, No action/*Status quo* was implemented), if the NMFS were to create a reporting

¹¹ Comments provided by two AP members that were not able to participate in the webinar due to scheduling conflicts were shared with the group and are included in this summary. Their writing comments are attached to the end of this summary report.

mechanism to facilitate vessels and dealers to report specific IFQ allocation numbers and associated pounds landed for each fishing trip. However, this would create additional reporting burden for all vessels and dealers and the cost of IFQ-specific reporting would likely be recoverable, and therefore billed to the industry. Industry members consider that creating additional record keeping and reporting requirements is not necessary and this will only create additional burden. Alternative 2 streamlines the process and avoids potential additional reporting requirements and data processing.

Issue #4 - Golden Tilefish Product Form Landings Requirements

AP members showed support for the Council preferred alternative. Alternative 2 (Preferred: Prohibit Vessels from Landing Golden Tilefish with the “Head-Off”). It was indicated that the fishery lands golden tilefish with the head-on. The implementation of alternative 2 would also assist GARFO change to specifying IFQ quotas and the incidental landings limits in landed weight. The industry welcomes this approach.

Issue #5 - Recreational Gear Requirements

AP members showed support for the alternative 3 (Restrict the recreational golden tilefish fishery to rod and reel fishery only – with a five hook limit). It was stated that the 5 hook limit is more than appropriate and should not affect recreational fishing practices. One advisor indicated that in his opinion recreational fishermen do not need to fish with more than 3 hooks. Furthermore, the group raised concerns about the effectivity of this measure in curtailing the potential use of mini-longlines by some private anglers that may also possess open access commercial/incidental vessel permits.² The AP members believe that it is possible that some private boats that may also have commercial incidental permits may use commercial rules to bypass the 8 fish possession limit. The advisors suggested that the Council consider setting qualifiers for vessels to obtain incidental permits (e.g., captain license, income qualifier).

Issue #6 – Landings ratios / qualifiers for the incidental permit category

AP members showed support for the implementation of landings ratios/qualifiers for the incidental fishery ranging from 10% to 50%.³ However, there are concerns that for some trips, very restrictive landings ratios/qualifiers may also increase discard levels for vessels that are truly landing golden tilefish incidentally but not large amounts of other species (e.g., monkfish trips, gillnetters, etc.).

² Any vessel can apply for an open access commercial/incidental permit as long as they comply with other regulations in place (e.g., possess a vessel operator’s permit, comply with all permitting and reporting requirements, etc.).

³ For example, under a 50% landings ratio qualifier, it would be required that incidental permit holders do not possess golden tilefish at the time of landings in excess of 50% of the total of all combined species landed. Under a 10% landings ratio qualifier, it would be required that incidental permit holders do not possess golden tilefish at the time of landings in excess of 10% of the total of all combined species landed.

Written Comments

From: Dan Farnham [mailto:offshorefishery@aol.com]

Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2016 3:18 PM

To: Montanez, Jose <jmontanez@mafmc.org>

Cc: Moore, Christopher <cmoore@mafmc.org>; O'Reilly, Robert <rob.o'reilly@mrc.virginia.gov>

Subject: Tilefish AP meeting

 You replied to this message on 3/31/2016 3:29 PM.

Hello Jose,

As I mentioned in an earlier email, the NEFMC has scheduled a Whiting Committee meeting for the same day as the Tilefish Advisory Panel webinar meeting next week. The Whiting Committee will be evaluating options for limited access qualification criteria for the small-mesh multi-species fishery. Unfortunately, the whiting meeting is extremely important to us at this time as the fishery is still open access and I will have to miss the Tilefish AP webinar. I have attached a letter that include my thoughts on the different issues and their alternatives that will be addressed at the Tilefish AP meeting. If possible, I would like to have my comments included as part of the discussion that will take place during the AP meeting.

Thank you,
Dan Farnham
Tilefish AP member

March 30th 2016

MAFMC
Att: Jose Montanez
re: Tilefish AP comments

Jose,

As you know I have a scheduling conflict on April 5th and will not be able to attend the April 5th Advisory Panel meeting for Framework 2 to the Golden Tilefish FMP. I would like to have my comments included as part of the discussion that will take place on April 5th.

- 1) I agree that the catch and landings limit flow chart should be modified to allow for discards to be deducted from the specific component of the fishery generating them.
- 2] I agree that the IVR reporting requirements should be eliminated.
- 3] I also agree that IFQ vessels should be prohibited from fishing for more than one allocation at a time.
- 4] I agree that all tilefish should be landed with the head attached especially if this means that the fishery could be managed under managed weight instead of whole weight landings.
- 5] I also agree that the use of mini-long lines should be prohibited in the recreational fishery.
- 6] I agree that the incidental fishery should be required to have a certain level of landings of other species in order to land Golden Tilefish.

In the Tilefish Fishery Management Plan, which was approved in 2001, five percent of the overall annual quota was deducted off the top to account for the landings of vessels that incidentally caught tilefish while

targeting other species. In the document these vessels are described as mostly being in the otter trawl fisheries. The 300 lb trip limit was chosen because in recent years, pre 2000, 99% of the incidental landings were 300 lbs and below with an average of 100 lbs. The incidental trip limit was only recently raised to 500 lbs to allow the handful of trips that exceeded 300 lbs land the excess and not discard them. The FMP describes the incidental trip limit as follows: **"The 300 pound trip limit is a compromise initially to balance the non directed fisheries honest bycatch needs while trying to minimize the regulatory discards, but yet not have the limit provide incentive for anyone to direct on tilefish."**

The requirement to have a certain amount of directed catch onboard to qualify to possess any incidentally caught tilefish will keep the incidental fishery from turning into a directed fishery. I believe that incidental permit holders should not be allowed to possess tilefish in excess of 10% of all combined species [other than tilefish] at the time of landing.

Thank you,
Dan Farnham

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From: John Nolan
Sent: Monday, April 04, 2016 9:51 PM
To: Montanez, Jose <jmontanez@mafmc.org>
Subject: Framework 2 Comments

 You replied to this message on 4/5/2016 7:22 AM.

Hi Jose,

Unfortunately I will not be able to participate in the Tilefish AP meeting on Tuesday, April 5, 2016. I will be offshore tile fishing. As a Tilefish AP Member, I would like to submit my written comments on Framework 2 for consideration on this action.

I support the following Alternatives:

Issues and Alternatives

1) Tilefish Catch and Landings Limits Flow Chart:

Alternative 2 - Modification to the golden tilefish catch and landings limits flow chart

2) Interactive Voice Response (IVR) Reporting Requirements:

Alternative 2 - Eliminate the IVR reporting requirements

4) Golden Tilefish Product Form Landings Requirements:

Alternative 2 - Prohibit Vessels from Landing Golden Tilefish with the "Head-Off"

6) Explore developing landings ratios for the incidental permit category:

Alternative 2 - Require that incidental permit holders do not possess golden tilefish at the time of landings in excess of 25% of the total of all combined species landed

Thank you,

John Nolan
Captain: F/V Seacapture
Montauk, NY