

## Preferred Alternatives for All NEFMC FMPs

1. Omnibus Alternative 2, standardized structure for new IFM programs that would apply to all NEFMC FMPs, includes the following components: (1) Standard cost responsibilities associated with IFM for NMFS and the fishing industry, (2) a process for FMP-specific IFM to be revised via a future framework adjustment action, and (3) standard administrative requirements for IFM service providers.
  - A. New IFM programs would be implemented via an amendment.
  - B. Both NEFOP-level observers and at-sea monitors may be deployed on the same vessel for more than two consecutive multi-day trips or more than twice in a given month.
2. Omnibus Alternative 2.2, Council-led prioritization process to allocate available Federal funding,
  - A. Equal weighting approach would be used to prioritize available Federal funding among new IFM programs.
  - B. Weighting approach would be re-adjusted on an as-needed basis.
3. Omnibus Alternative 2.6, ability to develop monitoring set-asides in a future framework.

## Preferred Alternatives for Herring Fishery

1. Herring Alternative 2, establishing an industry-funded monitoring coverage target in the herring fishery,
  - A. Requirements for industry-funded NEFOP-level observers and at-sea monitors include a High Volume Fishery Certification for the herring fishery.
  - B. Available Federal funding would be prioritized to at-sea monitoring (ASM) and electronic monitoring/portside sampling (EM/PS) coverage on Category A and B vessels (Herring Alternative 2.7) and then to NEFOP-level observer coverage on midwater trawl vessels fishing in Groundfish Closed Areas (Alternative 2.5) to maximize coverage on the most vessels.
  - C. All monitoring types would have combined coverage targets and combined coverage targets would be calculated by NMFS, in consultation with Council staff.
  - D. If coverage targets do not match for the herring and mackerel fisheries, then the higher coverage target would apply on trips declared in both the herring and mackerel fisheries.
2. Herring Alternative 2.5, 100% observer coverage on midwater trawl vessels in Groundfish Closed Areas,
  - A. This alternative would require 100% NEFOP-level observer coverage onboard midwater trawl vessels fishing in the Groundfish Closed Areas, as modified by the Habitat Amendment.
  - B. Existing slippage prohibitions, reporting requirements, and consequence measures would apply on all trips when a vessel has onboard an observer.
3. Herring Alternative 2.7, initially 50% ASM coverage on Category A and B vessels, if NEFMC determines that EM/PS coverage are an adequate substitute for ASM, then vessels may choose either 50% ASM or 50% EM/PS coverage. Once vessels are able to choose between ASM and EM/PS sampling, vessels would be required to: 1) Choose one monitoring type per fishing year and 2) declare their preferred monitoring type six months in advance of the fishing year.
  - A. Initially, the NEFMC will only be evaluating if EM/PS is an adequate substitute for ASM coverage aboard Category A and B vessels using midwater trawl gear. In the future, the NEFMC may determine that EM/PS is an adequate substitute for ASM coverage aboard purse seine or bottom trawl vessels.

- B. EM may be used in place of ASM in the herring fishery if the technology is deemed sufficient by the NEFMC. The Regional Administrator, in consultation with the NEFMC, may approve the use of EM systems for the herring fishery in a manner consistent with the Administrative Procedure Act, with final measures published in the *Federal Register*. A vessel electing to use EM in lieu of ASM must develop a vessel monitoring plan to implement EM requirements that is satisfactory to, and approved by, NMFS for monitoring catch, discards and slippage events. The vessel monitoring plan must meet the EM operational standards. The EM/PS program shall be reviewed and approved by the Regional Administrator as part of a vessel's monitoring plan on a yearly basis in a manner consistent with the Administrative Procedure Act.
  - C. Portside data would be collected via the existing voluntary state programs in 2018 and via a mandatory Federal program (50% coverage target) in 2019.
  - D. Slippage prohibition and reporting requirements would apply on all trips selected by NMFS for portside sampling (50% coverage target) and on all trips when a vessel has onboard an at-sea monitor (50% coverage target).
  - E. Existing slippage consequence measures would apply on all trips when a vessel has onboard an at-sea monitor (50% coverage target).
  - F. A standard 15-mile move requirement would apply on all trips selected by NMFS for portside sampling (50% coverage target).
- 4. Sub-Option 1, issue waivers if coverage is unavailable due to funding or logistics,
    - A. Sub-Option 1 would allow IFM coverage waivers to be issued on a trip-by-trip basis to vessels using ASM and EM/PS coverage. Vessels would notify NMFS via the pre-trip notification system (PTNS) in advance of a trip and NMFS would issue a waiver if IFM coverage was not available for that trip.
  - 5. Sub-Option 2, exempt wing vessels not carrying fish,
    - A. Sub-Option 2 would allow an exemption to IFM coverage requirements on a trip-by-trip basis to wing vessels not carrying fish. Vessels would notify NMFS via PTNS in advance of the wing vessel trip and NMFS would issue a waiver for IFM coverage requirements on that trip. If the vessel carried herring on that trip, the vessel would be out of compliance with IFM coverage requirements.
  - 6. Sub-Option 4, require Council to reconsider IFM requirements 2 years after implementation,
  - 7. Sub-Option 5, exempt vessels landing less than 50 mt of herring,
    - A. Sub-Option 5 would allow an exemption to IFM coverage requirements on a trip-by-trip basis to vessels landing less than 50 mt of herring. Vessels would notify NMFS via the PTNS in advance of the trip on which they intend to land less than 50 mt of herring and NMFS would issue a waiver for IFM coverage requirements on that trip. If the vessel landed more than 50 mt of herring on that trip, the vessel would be out of compliance with IFM coverage requirements.