


National Standard 1 Guidelines

Office of Sustainable Fisheries
NOAA-Fisheries

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National Standard 1

Conservation and management measures shall prevent overfishing while achieving, on a continuing basis, the optimum yield from each fishery for the United States fishing industry.



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History of Addressing Overfishing

- ❖ 1976 – Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act.
 - Established MSY, OY, and the 1st 7 National Standards.
- ❖ 1989 – *NS1 guidelines*.
 - Recommended the use of measurable definitions of overfishing.
- ❖ 1996 – Sustainable Fisheries Act.
 - Required measurable criteria for determining overfished status.
- ❖ 1998 – *NS1 guidelines revised to address SFA requirements*.
- ❖ 2007 – MSA Reauthorization.
 - Annual catch limits (ACLs) and accountability measures (AMs).
- ❖ 2009 – *NS1 guidelines revised to address MSRA requirements*.

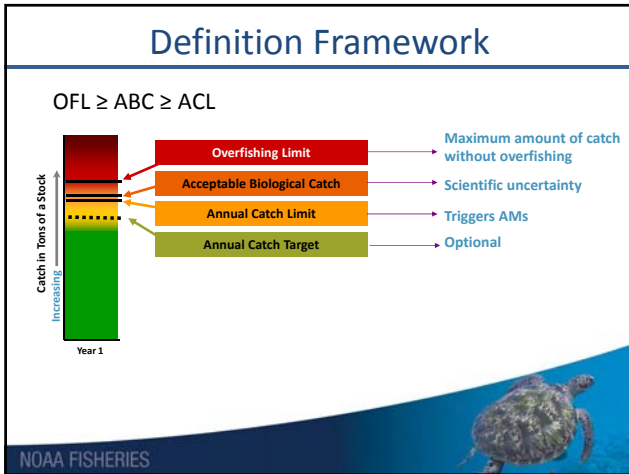
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2009 NS1 Guideline Revisions

1. Implementing ACLs & AMs by 2010 and 2011.
2. Describing exceptions to the ACL & AM requirements.
3. Classifying which stocks are in need of conservation and management (i.e., “stocks in the fishery”).
4. Relationship among reference points (e.g., MSY, OY, etc.)
5. SSC’s role in setting ABC.
6. Describing the process of accounting for scientific and management uncertainty
7. Describing the timeframes for implementing rebuilding plans.



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- ### ACL Implementation and Concerns
- ❖ Since 2007, NMFS and Councils have implemented ACLs and AMs for all FMPs.
 - ❖ Time to look back and determine if there are things we can change to improve the guidelines.
 - ❖ Understand there are concerns about the data requirements and flexibility of setting ACLs for some fisheries.
 - Stakeholder meetings and public meetings.
 - 3 Congressional hearing held in 2011.
 - Several Bills have been proposed to revise ACL, AM, and rebuilding provisions in MSA.
 - ❖ May be possible to address some of these issues through regulatory or policy processes.
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- ### National Standard 1 ANPR
- ❖ Published an Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPR) on May 3, 2012.
 - 90 day comment period ends August 1, 2012.
 - ❖ Provides an opportunity to engage the public and solicit comments on the various issues related to NS1.
 - ❖ If revisions are made to the NS1 guidelines, it will be a long-term process.
 - ❖ Focus on improving the guidelines, as opposed to adding requirements.
 - Thus, we do not anticipate that revisions will cause Councils to revise a significant number of FMPs.
 - ❖ Other policy documents could address the issues too.
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- ### National Standard 1 ANPR Issues
1. Stocks in a fishery
 2. Overfishing and multi-year impacts
 3. ACLs and optimum yield
 4. Mixed-stock fisheries and optimum yield
 5. Scientific and management uncertainty
 6. Data poor stocks
 7. Acceptable biological catch control rules
 8. Catch accounting
 9. Accountability measures
 10. ACL exceptions
 11. Rebuilding progress
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Summary

- ❖ We recognize that ACLs have been a significant change in many fisheries and a number of concerns have been raised by stakeholders and Congress.
- ❖ NMFS wants to be responsive to these concerns and believes that a public process of potentially revising the NS1 Guidelines is a good way to consider these issues.
- ❖ If revised, the revisions will focus on improving the clarity and flexibility of the guidelines.
- ❖ Technical guidance reports and policy directives are other alternatives we can consider, as opposed to NS1G revisions.

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Potential Comments?

- ❖ Whether the guidelines should be revised at this time or continue to monitor implementation?
- ❖ Comments on specific issues (not limited to those listed), noting real experiences you've had in implementing ACLs and potential solutions.
- ❖ Are there issues that should be addressed, but through some other means such as Tech Memos or Policy Directives?

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time the list is submitted. The list shall also contain anniversary dates of employment of each service employee under this contract and its predecessor contracts with either the current or predecessor contractors or their subcontractors. Where changes to the workforce are made after the submission of the certified list described in this paragraph, the Contractor shall, in accordance with paragraph (d) of this clause, not less than 10 days before completion of the services on a contract, furnish the Contracting Officer with an updated certified list of the names of all service employees employed within the last month of contract performance. The updated list shall also contain anniversary dates of employment, and, where applicable, dates of separation of each service employee under the contract and its predecessor contracts with either the current or predecessor Contractors or their subcontractors. Only Contractors experiencing a change in their workforce between the 30- and 10-day periods will have to submit a list in accordance with paragraph (d) of this clause.

(2) The Contracting Officer will provide the list to the successor Contractor, and the list shall be provided on request to employees or their representatives.

(3) The Contracting Officer will direct the predecessor Contractor to provide written notice (Appendix B to 29 CFR chapter 9) to service employees of their possible right to an offer of employment with the successor Contractor. Where a significant portion of the predecessor Contractor's workforce is not fluent in English, the notice shall be provided in English and language(s) with which employees are more familiar. The written notice shall be—

(i) Posted in a conspicuous place at the worksite; or

(ii) Delivered to the employees individually. If such delivery is via email, the notification must result in an electronic delivery receipt or some other reliable confirmation that the intended recipient received the notice.

(d)(1) If required in accordance with 52.222-41(n), the Contractor shall, not less than 10 days before completion of this contract, furnish the Contracting Officer a certified list of the names of all service employees working under this contract and its subcontracts during the last month of contract performance. The list shall also contain anniversary dates of employment of each service employee under this contract and its predecessor contracts either with the current or predecessor Contractors or their subcontractors. If there are no changes to the workforce before the predecessor contract is completed, then the predecessor Contractor is not required to submit a revised list 10 days prior to completion of performance and the requirements of 52.222-41(n) are met. When there are changes to the workforce after submission of the 30-day list, the predecessor Contractor shall submit a revised certified list not less than 10 days prior to performance completion.

(2) The Contracting Officer will provide the list to the successor Contractor, and the list shall be provided on request to employees or their authorized representatives.

(e) The Contractor and subcontractor shall maintain the following records (regardless of

format, e.g., paper or electronic) of its compliance with this clause for not less than a period of three years from the date the records were created.

(1) Copies of any written offers of employment or a contemporaneous written record of any oral offers of employment, including the date, location, and attendance roster of any employee meeting(s) at which the offers were extended, a summary of each meeting, a copy of any written notice that may have been distributed, and the names of the employees from the predecessor contract to whom an offer was made.

(2) A copy of any record that forms the basis for any exemption claimed under this part.

(3) A copy of the employee list provided to or received from the contracting agency.

(4) An entry on the pay records of the amount of any retroactive payment of wages or compensation under the supervision of the Administrator of the Wage and Hour Division to each employee, the period covered by such payment, and the date of payment, and a copy of any receipt form provided by or authorized by the Wage and Hour Division. The Contractor shall also deliver a copy of the receipt to the employee and file the original, as evidence of payment by the Contractor and receipt by the employee, with the Administrator or an authorized representative within 10 days after payment is made.

(f) Disputes concerning the requirements of this clause shall not be subject to the general disputes clause (52.233-1) of this contract. Such disputes shall be resolved in accordance with the procedures of the Department of Labor set forth in 29 CFR part 9. Disputes within the meaning of this clause include disputes between or among any of the following: The Contractor, the contracting agency, the U.S. Department of Labor, and the employees under the contract or its predecessor contract. The Contracting Officer will refer any employee who wishes to file a complaint, or ask questions concerning this contract clause, to the Branch of Government Contracts Enforcement, Wage and Hour Division, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, DC 20210. Contact email: displaced@dol.gov.

(g) The Contractor shall cooperate in any review or investigation by the Department of Labor into possible violations of the provisions of this clause and shall make such records requested by such official(s) available for inspection, copying, or transcription upon request.

(h) If it is determined, pursuant to regulations issued by the Secretary of Labor (Secretary), that the Contractor or its subcontractors are not in compliance with the requirements of this clause or any regulation or order of the Secretary, appropriate sanctions may be imposed and remedies invoked against the Contractor or its subcontractors, as provided in Executive Order 13495, the regulations, and relevant orders of the Secretary, or as otherwise provided by law.

(i) The Contractor shall take such action with respect to any such subcontract as may be directed by the Secretary as a means of enforcing such provisions, including the

imposition of sanctions for noncompliance. However, if the Contractor, as a result of such direction, becomes involved in litigation with a subcontractor, or is threatened with such involvement, the Contractor may request that the United States, through the Secretary of Labor, enter into such litigation to protect the interests of the United States.

(j) The Contracting Officer will withhold, or cause to be withheld, from the prime Contractor under this or any other Government contract with the same prime Contractor, such sums as an authorized official of the Department of Labor requests, upon a determination by the Administrator, the Administrative Law Judge, or the Administrative Review Board, that there has been a failure to comply with the terms of this clause and that wages lost as a result of the violations are due to employees or that other monetary relief is appropriate. If the Contracting Officer or the Administrator, upon final order of the Secretary, finds that the Contractor has failed to provide a list of the names of employees working under the contract, the Contracting Officer may, in his or her discretion, or upon request by the Administrator, take such action as may be necessary to cause the suspension of the payment of contract funds until such time as the list is provided to the Contracting Officer.

(k) *Subcontracts.* In every subcontract over the simplified acquisition threshold entered into in order to perform services under this contract, the Contractor shall include a provision that ensures—

(1) That each subcontractor will honor the requirements of paragraphs (a) through (b) of this clause with respect to the employees of a predecessor subcontractor or subcontractors working under this contract, as well as of a predecessor Contractor and its subcontractors;

(2) That the subcontractor will provide the Contractor with the information about the employees of the subcontractor needed by the Contractor to comply with paragraphs (c) and (d) of this clause; and

(3) The recordkeeping requirements of paragraph (e) of this clause.

(End of clause)

[FR Doc. 2012-10708 Filed 5-2-12; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6820-EP-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 600

[Docket No. 120425420-2420-01]

RIN 0648-BB92

Fisheries of the United States; National Standard 1 Guidelines

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Advance notice of proposed rulemaking; request for comments;

consideration of revision to National Standard 1 Guidelines.

SUMMARY: NMFS issues this advance notice of proposed rulemaking (ANPR) to provide background information and request public comment on potential adjustments to the National Standard 1 Guidelines, one of 10 national standards for fishery conservation and management contained in Section 301 of the Magnuson Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. Since the guidelines were last updated in 2009, a number of issues regarding the application of the guidelines were identified by stakeholders and managers that may warrant their revision. This action provides the public with a formal opportunity to comment on the specific ideas mentioned in this ANPR, as well as any additional ideas and solutions that could improve provisions of the National Standard 1 Guidelines.

DATES: Written comments regarding the issues in this ANPR must be received by 5 p.m., local time, on August 1, 2012.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments on this document, identified by "NOAA-NMFS-2012-0059", by any one of the following methods:

- *Electronic Submissions:* Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal eRulemaking Portal: www.regulations.gov. To submit comments via the e-Rulemaking Portal, first click the "submit a comment" icon, then enter "NOAA-NMFS-2012-0059" in the keyword search. Locate the document you wish to comment on from the resulting list and click on the "Submit a Comment" icon on the right of that line.

- *Fax:* 301-713-1193, Attn: Wesley Patrick.

- *Mail:* Wesley Patrick; National Marine Fisheries Service, NOAA; 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13436; Silver Spring, MD 20910.

Instructions: Comments must be submitted by one of the above methods to ensure that the comments are received, documented, and considered by NMFS. Comments sent by any other method, to another address or individual, or received after the end of the comment period, may not be considered. All comments received are part of the public record and will generally be posted for public viewing on www.regulations.gov without change. All personal identifying information (e.g., name, address, etc.) submitted voluntarily by the sender will be publicly accessible. Do not submit confidential business information or otherwise sensitive or protected information. NMFS will accept anonymous comments (enter "N/A" in

the required fields if you wish to remain anonymous). Attachments to electronic comments will be accepted in Microsoft Word or Excel, WordPerfect, or Adobe PDF file formats only.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Wesley Patrick, Fisheries Policy Analyst, National Marine Fisheries Service, 301-427-8566.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Section 301(a) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) contains 10 national standards for fishery conservation and management. Any fishery management plans (FMP) prepared under the MSA, and any regulation promulgated pursuant to the MSA to implement any such plan, must be consistent with these national standards. National Standard 1 (NS1) of the MSA states that conservation and management measures shall prevent overfishing while achieving, on a continuing basis, the optimum yield (OY) from each fishery for the U.S. fishing industry.

Section 301(b) of the MSA requires that the Secretary establish advisory guidelines (which shall not have the force and effect of law), based on the national standards to assist in the development of fishery management plans. Guidelines for NS1 are codified in 50 CFR 600.310. NMFS revised the NS1 Guidelines on January 16, 2009 (74 FR 3178) to reflect the requirements enacted by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act of 2006 for annual catch limits (ACLs) and accountability measures (AMs) to end and prevent overfishing.

From 2007 to 2012, the 46 Federal FMPs have been amended to implement ACLs and AMs to end and prevent overfishing. In the course of this work, a number of issues regarding the application of the NS1 Guidelines were identified that may warrant their revision. NMFS seeks public comments on these and any other issues related to NS1:

1. *Stocks in a fishery.* The MSA requires that Councils develop FMPs for fisheries that require "conservation and management" (MSA 302(h)(1)). The MSA provides the Councils with wide latitude in defining the scope of an FMP. Some FMPs include a relatively small number of species, focusing on the primary target species of the fishery. In other FMPs, a much broader range of species are included. The NS1 Guidelines establish and define Ecosystem Component (EC) species and

provide that EC species may be included in the FMP but are not considered stocks in the fishery and thus are not required to have biological reference points or ACLs. There has been considerable discussion about the criteria for classifying EC species and the utility of the EC species concept. Thus, revision of the guidance may be warranted to further describe criteria for classifying stocks in a fishery and EC species.

2. *Overfishing and multi-year impacts.* The current NS1 Guidelines provide that overfishing must be determined either by comparing catch to the overfishing limit (OFL) or by comparing fishing mortality to the maximum fishing mortality threshold (§ 600.310 (e)(2)(ii)(A)). Overfishing determinations are made for the most recent year for which there is information. Stakeholders have expressed interest in exploring alternative definitions of overfishing that would take a longer, multi-year view of the impact of fishing on the stock's ability to produce maximum sustainable yield (MSY).

3. *Annual catch limits and optimum yield.* In some fisheries, implementation of the guidance on acceptable biological catch (ABC) control rules, ACLs, and AMs has resulted in real or perceived reductions in catch. Questions have been raised about the relationship between ACLs and the objective of achieving the OY for a fishery. The MSA defines OY as being reduced from MSY to account for relevant economic, social, or ecological factors, and states that OY in an overfished fishery must provide for rebuilding the fishery (MSA 3(33)). There is interest from stakeholders in improving guidance to better address economic, social, and ecological considerations in the establishment of OY and to more clearly describe the relationship between ACL and OY.

4. *Mixed-stock fisheries and optimum yield.* Management of mixed-stock fisheries is challenging, because some stocks are relatively more abundant or are more or less susceptible to overfishing than others. The MSA requires that overfishing be prevented, and that the OY for a fishery provide for rebuilding overfished stocks. Nonetheless, some stakeholders believe that ACL and rebuilding requirements prevent them from achieving OY of healthy stocks. Further guidance on how OY should be specified to balance the multiple considerations in mixed-stock fisheries may be warranted.

5. *Scientific uncertainty and management uncertainty.* The NS1 Guidelines identify two types of uncertainty that should be addressed

when setting catch limits and accountability measures: Scientific uncertainty and management uncertainty (§ 600.310 (f)). Scientific uncertainty is related to the uncertainty of calculating the true OFL, and is addressed by a Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) by setting ABC below the OFL. Management uncertainty is the uncertainty of controlling catch so that it does not exceed the ACL, and is addressed when setting AMs and in setting an annual catch target below the ACL. Some stakeholders believe that consideration of both scientific and management uncertainty causes ACLs to be overly precautionary. Further clarification on the consideration of scientific and management uncertainty may be warranted.

6. *Data poor stocks.* Stocks without sufficient data to conduct a formal scientific stock assessment are considered to be data poor stocks. Establishing appropriate ACLs for data poor stocks can be challenging. The experience of the Councils and their SSCs in implementing ABCs and ACLs for data poor stocks may provide valuable information on which to base improvements in the NS1 Guidelines for data poor stocks.

7. *Acceptable biological catch control rules.* The NS1 Guidelines require a Council to establish an ABC control rule for each stock and stock complex, based on scientific advice from its SSC (§ 600.310 (f)). ABC control rules are a specified approach to setting the ABC that addresses scientific uncertainty, and incorporate a policy decision on the acceptable level of risk that overfishing might occur. A variety of ABC control rules have been implemented and a review of those control rules could lead to improvements in the NS1 Guidelines. In addition, for some fisheries there is interest in implementing provisions that carry over unharvested allocations from one year to the next. Guidance may be needed on how to consider carry-over within ABC control rules.

8. *Catch accounting.* Questions have been raised by managers about the types

of "catch" that must be considered within the ABC and ACL, particularly in regard to catch resulting from exempted fishing permits and scientific research activities. The definition of catch in the NS1 Guidelines includes fish taken in commercial, recreational, subsistence, tribal, and other fisheries. Catch includes fish that are retained for any purpose, as well as mortality of fish that are discarded. In the final rule response to comment number 35 (74 FR 3718; January 16, 2009), NMFS stated that this definition would include allocations for scientific research and mortality from any other fishing activity. Additional guidance may be needed to clarify how to account for all sources of mortality (e.g., bycatch, scientific research catch, etc.) when establishing ABCs and ACLs.

9. *Accountability measures.* AMs are management controls to prevent ACLs from being exceeded, and to correct or mitigate overages of the ACL if they occur. AMs must be tailored to the specific needs of a fishery, and are key to the success of ACL systems in ending and preventing overfishing. NMFS invites comments on the guidance for AMs.

10. *ACL exceptions.* Under the MSA, stocks that have a life cycle of approximately 1 year and stocks subject to international agreements are not required to have ACLs. The NS1 Guidelines describe that the life cycle exception applies to "a stock for which the average length of time it takes for an individual to produce a reproductively active offspring is approximately 1 year and that the individual has only one breeding season in its lifetime" (§ 600.310 (h)(2)(i)). The NS1 Guidelines also describe that the international agreement exception applies to stocks that are subject to "any bilateral or multilateral treaty, convention, or agreement which relates to fishing and to which the United States is party" (§ 600.310 (h)(2)(ii)). NMFS invites comments on the guidance pertaining to these exceptions from the ACL requirements.

11. *Rebuilding progress and revising rebuilding plans.* The current NS1

Guidelines address how NMFS should respond if a stock reaches the end of its rebuilding plan and is not fully rebuilt, or its rebuilding status is unknown. However, the guidelines do not address the situation that occurs during the course of a rebuilding plan when rebuilding progress is determined to be inadequate. Inadequate progress can result from a number of factors, including:

- a. Management measures that do not adequately control the fishery.
- b. Environmental factors that limit stock growth.
- c. Significant changes in the rebuilding target (Bmsy) resulting from a new stock assessment. NMFS intends to improve guidance on evaluating the progress of stocks in rebuilding plans and on revising the rebuilding plans in these situations.

Public Comments

To help determine the scope of issues to be addressed and to identify significant issues related to this action, NMFS is soliciting written comments on this ANPR. The public is encouraged to submit comments related to the specific ideas mentioned in this ANPR, as well as any additional ideas and solutions that could improve provisions of the NS1 Guidelines. In addition to considering revisions to the NS1 Guidelines, NMFS will consider whether it may be more appropriate to address some topics in technical guidance reports or policy directives than to change the guidelines codified at 50 CFR 600.310. NMFS welcomes comment on the appropriateness and utility of additional technical guidance reports and policy directives.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: April 27, 2012.

Alan D. Risenhoover,

Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2012-10683 Filed 4-30-12; 4:15 pm]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P