



Golden Tilefish

Catch Share Program Review: April Council Meeting

April 10, 2024

Background

- December 13, 2023 - presentation of 12-year GTF IFQ Program Review Report (NEI)
 - <https://www.mafmc.org/briefing/december-2023> (Tab 11)
- Opened 30-day comment period (ending January 12)
- Staff compiled the public comment
- Oversight Team had a call January 23 to discuss issues identified and potential actions

Today

- Summary of comments received on review report
- Present issues and potential actions
- Council formally submit review package to NMFS
- Review is complete!

Written Comments Submitted

List of Written Comments Submitted:

1. Bennett Mumford
2. Brady Lybarger
3. Arhtur Sherard
4. Austin Schwerzel
5. Fred Akers
6. Laurie Nolan

Overall Themes

- Difficulty to enter the IFQ fishery, bulk of the quota caught by a few vessels from NJ North
- Difficulty entering the IFQ fishery given current program structure/regulations. Consider developing a system to allow young fishermen to get in as current participants
“Age Out”
- Keep fishery open and increase the catch limit

Overall Themes

- The golden tilefish fishery is well managed
- Initial allocation disproportionately hurt Barnegat Light (New Jersey) vessels and favored Montauk vessels (New York)
 - Lopsided allocation needs to be addressed to contribute to the long-term sustainability of golden tilefish and the well-being of the coastal communities depending on it

Overall Themes

- Improve communication and transparency when tracking allocations and making allocations transactions and transfers
 - Requesting that a Fish Online program be used to carry out allocation transfers and track current allocations to assist with quota management
 - Such a system would improve administrative efficiencies

Overall Themes

- Need to improve fishery-independent data collection. Relying on fishery-dependent data for stock assessment purposes is not ideal
- The program review did not highlight the marketing and distribution efforts being conducted at Viking Village (Barnegat Light, NJ). Viking Village has endeavored to introduce and distribute golden tilefish in many parts of the country

Overall Themes

- Need an initial stock assessment for blueline tilefish in the mid-Atlantic
- Unexpected commercial blueline tilefish fishing closures are an issue
 - Instead of a complete closure, should consider dropping the trip limit to 100 pounds when 90% of the quota is projected to be taken
- Need to revisit the blueline commercial/recreational allocation commercial quota too low
 - Should allow for a larger blueline commercial quota to help fishermen that cannot enter the golden tilefish IFQ fishery

Oversight Team

- Met January 23 to consider findings of the report and public comment
- Identified issues and potential actions
- Council can take any or all
- Staff recommend they be tasked to follow-up on best ways to address prior to 2025 implementation plan discussion (October)

1. GARFO's Fish Online Web Portal

- Currently, paper forms are used to request transfers
- Only one NOAA Fisheries employee dedicated to oversight of quota applications, allocation tracking, and allocation transfers

1. GARFO's Fish Online Web Portal

- An electronic system such as Fish Online could increase efficiency
- **Potential action:** The Council could encourage NOAA Fisheries to evaluate the possibility of expanding the use of the Fish Online web portal to track golden tilefish IFQ allocation transfers and track current allocation to assist with quota and program management

2. Barriers to New Entry

- The golden tilefish IFQ program has few share transferability rules, and in theory, it allows the entry of new entities into the fishery
- IFQ shares become more valuable (as golden tilefish prices increase) and other fishing portfolios become less valuable, it is increasingly harder for some fishermen (e.g., younger fishermen) to enter the IFQ fishery

2. Barriers to New Entry

- Imbalance between quota caught in NJ vs NY
- System to allow young fishermen to get in as current participants “age out”
- Other participants indicated
 - Current system is working well
 - IFQ system has made the fishery stable
 - Increase in ex-vessel price
 - Increase in price stability and product supply

2. Barriers to New Entry

- The Program Review

- Goal to reduce overcapitalization and latent effort in the commercial fishery, as well as FMP objectives to prevent overcapitalization and limit new entrants have been met

- **Potential action:** The Council could consider what the specific impediments are to entry into this fishery and consider how changes to the IFQ program itself or other programs could support new entrants entering the fishery

3. Data Confidentiality (“Rule of 3”)

- Program review report - small size of the fishery increasingly results in constrained data displays to prevent exposure of confidential data (“Rule of 3”)
- **Potential action:** The Council could recommend alternative metrics and indicators (including socioeconomic data) be developed for evaluating changes and assessing the health of the fishery

4. NEI “The Contractor”

- The Oversight Team discussed the benefits of the Council hiring a contractor to conduct this program review. Overall, the oversight team thought that hiring a contractor was beneficial given the savings of staff time and effort, and the ability of the contractor to efficiently conduct interviews and surveys of public

Thank you!

Oversight Team

GTF IFQ Program Review Oversight Team

Team Member	Organization	Team Role/Area of Expertise
José Montañez	MAFMC	Council staff lead for GTF IFQ Program Review
Dough Potts	NMFS GARFO	GARFO lead for GTF IFQ Program Review
Samantha Werner	NMFS NEFSC	Fisheries economist
Paul Nitschke	NMFS NEFSC	Lead stock assessment scientist
Kristopher Winiarski	NMFS GARFO	Fisheries database expert
Uvi Ajavon	NMFS GARFO	Permits/allocations
Julie Mackey	NMFS GARFO	IFQ cost recovery