ACCSP SAFIS Program and Biological Sampling Targets

The Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) provides data collection standards, targets, tools, and priorities, while also providing access to statistics. Full details and documentation on the program is available on their website (www.ACCSP.org).

Two products are particularly relevant to discussion during the September Council meeting.

1) SAFIS: Standard Atlantic Fishery Information System (from www.ACCSP.org)

The partners of the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) created SAFIS to meet the increasing need for real-time commercial landings data. Through a cooperative, consensus driven process, ACCSP developed a set of data collection standards. All program partners have agreed to these standards and have been adopted for almost all aspects of fisheries dependant data collection. A process has been put into place to fund research and implementation of these standards in the partner agencies.

Since its creation in 2003, SAFIS has been used to report data for the majority of states in the Northeast. the state of Rhode Island first adopted SAFIS in February 2003. SAFIS was then adopted by Maryland for landings data and quota monitoring of important finfish and shellfish species. NOAA Fisheries Northeast Region launched SAFIS for federally permitted seafood dealers in May 2004. Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Maine now use SAFIS. ACCSP continues to work with New York, Delaware, New Jersey to accommodate specific industry needs.

- SAFIS provides up-to-date information on species caught and their impact on fisheries and quotas
- SAFIS allows confidential access to data-of-record by fisherman and dealers
- SAFIS fulfills State and Federal reporting requirements through online data entry and reporting
- SAFIS management tools facilitate maintenance of partner-owned data such as participants, online permits, and vessels.

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2) Biological Sampling Matrix

Annual prioritization of stocks and development of sampling targets and strategies is handled by the ACCSP Biological Review Panel.

"The Biological Review Panel is composed of stock assessment biologists, field supervisory personnel and industry advisors appointed by partner agencies. The Panel develops ACCSP strategies and standards to obtain biological data required for stock assessments. Biological data includes length distributions, collection of aging structures, and tissue for basic life history research. The Panel recommends annual target species and sampling levels for biological sampling and works with the Bycatch Prioritization Committee to integrate data collection protocols. "

The attached spreadsheet illustrates the target sampling sizes for many managed stocks on the Atlantic coast. The Committee updates this plan regularly.