SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Council will consider final action on a framework adjustment to the Northeast Multispecies (Groundfish) Fishery Management Plan (FMP) intended to reduce the incidental take of harbor porpoise in the Gulf of Maine sink gillnet fishery. The Aquaculture Committee report will follow with a discussion for development of a policy or process that could guide future Council actions related to aquaculture in the EEZ. The Groundfish Committee will discuss public comments received to date on draft Amendment 7 to the FMP. This preliminary review is scheduled in light of the volume of information forwarded to the Council. No formal decisions will be made until after the deadline for submission of written comments on the Council's draft Amendment 7 due October 18, 1995. Other business may be added to the agenda as necessary.

Abbreviated Rulemaking Action— Framework Adjustment 12 to the FMP

The Council may take final action on Framework Adjustment 12 to the FMP under the framework for abbreviated rulemaking contained in 50 CFR 651.32. The action would extend the time and area of the Mid-coast Closure Area initiated in Framework Adjustment 4 to reduce the bycatch of harbor porpoise in

the Gulf of Maine sink gillnet fishery. The area closure is presently in effect from November 1 through November 30 of each fishing year and is described below.

Latitude	Longitude
42°45′ N.	Massachusetts shore
	line
42°45′ N.	70°15′ W.
43°15′ N.	70°15′ W.
43°15′ N.	69°00′ W.
Maine shoreline	69°00′ W.

The Council is considering a change that would extend the timing of the closure through December 31 and that would incorporate a region referred to as the Jeffreys Ledge Band west of 69°30' W. Relative to the Mid-coast Closure Area, it is described as east on 42°30′ N. from the shore to 70°00′ W., north along 70°00' W. to 43°00' N., then east on 43°00' N. to 69°30' W., then north on 69°30′ W. to 43°15′ N. According to the NMFS sea sampling data base, the harbor porpoise bycatch in this band has been relatively high as compared to other Gulf of Maine areas during previous years. Analyses of 1994 data indicate that bycatch rates in the 1994 fall period were about 3 times higher than those observed since 1991.

The harbor porpoise bycatch issue was discussed at a Marine Mammal Committee meeting held on September

12, 1995, and at the September 13-14, 1995, Council meeting held in Portland, ME. Documents summarizing the Council's proposed action, the biological analyses upon which this decision will be based, and potential economic impacts will be available to the public 5 days prior to the October 11, 1995, meeting. Written comments will be accepted through October 9, 1995, on the abbreviated rulemaking action (Framework Adjustment 12). The Council will consider public comments in making its recommendations to the Director, Northeast Region, NMFS (Regional Director), under the provisions for abbreviated rulemaking cited above. If the Regional Director concurs with the measures proposed by the Council, he will publish them as a final rule in the Federal Register.

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Douglas G. Marshall (see ADDRESSES) at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: September 28, 1995.

Richard H. Schaefer,

Director, Office of Fisheries Conservation and Management, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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