American lobster

Gulf of Maine and Georges Bank

Fishery: Gulf of Maine and Georges Bank, US Georges Bank, United States

Assessment

Strengths
- Stock is in good shape, with good recruitment and high landings.
- Mortality rate at acceptable levels. Abundance is high.
- Management measures in place for restricted effort and catch, including min and max sizes.
- Egg-bearing females are released.
- Fishery generally has low bycatch compared to other gear types.
- Harvester compliance is generally good.

Weaknesses
- Management plan and control rules may not be precautionary enough should the stock fall below abundance limits.
- Rebuilding plans are not set in the management plan. Recent developments in SNE suggest the plan may be too flexible to allow for meaningful management action in the face of declining stock size.
- Stock has an impact on deep-sea and other corals, but has been exempted from action by the management bodies.
- Fishery gear used has a demonstrated impact on critically endangered Right whales. Effect of mitigation measures not known.
- Right whale rebuilding has stalled.
- Reference points are based on historical performance rather than stock productivity.

Scores

Management Quality:

- Management Strategy ≥ 6
- Managers Compliance ≥ 8
- Fishers Compliance ≥ 8

Stock Health:

- Current Health
- Future Health
- 10

FIPS

No related FIPs

MSC

No related MSC fisheries

Recommendations

Retailers & Supply Chain

- Start a fishery improvement project (FIP) to evaluate and address sustainability issues in this fishery. For advice on starting a FIP, see SFP's Seafood Industry Guide to FIPs and other resources at https://www.sustainablefishingprograms.org/Professional-Guidance/FIP-Resources.