



# Center For Sustainable Fisheries

115 Orchard Street, New Bedford, Massachusetts 02740 | 508-992-1170 | Fax 508-993-8696  
info@centerforsustainablefisheries.org | www.centerforsustainablefisheries.org

## **PRESS RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE DISTRIBUTION

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### **A POSITIVE STEP FORWARD IN FISHERIES MANAGEMENT**

The Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NFSC) has made a positive step forward by announcing an “empirical assessment” for the Georges Bank Yellowtail Flounder (GBYTF). As is generally known, the current assessments of GBYTF were equivocal and not suitable for management purposes, impeding the rational management of both GBYTF and scallops (GBYTF is bycatch in the scallop fishery).

The proposed empirical assessment will examine a wider variety of data from a range of sources and not be constrained by techniques that have not worked. The empirical assessment will use established techniques to obtain a better understanding of the state of the stock and a management regime that is more consistent with observations made by fishermen and scientists. CSF would like to offer its assistance to NFSC during this empirical assessment.

Considerable thanks is owed to Steve Cadrin and Kevin Stokesbury of SMAST for stimulating the empirical assessment through an End-to-End review of New England stock assessments and field surveys of yellowtail abundance using innovative technology.

CSF is pleased at the predicted success of this collaborative research. CSF understands that major constraints in the stock assessments are a shortfall in the theory and a lack of data. To be successful, the data for the empirical approach may not be sufficient. This is why CSF has advocated to the Secretary of Commerce, Penny Pritzker, that she implements an experimental, cooperative fishery to enhance the data needed to improve the assessments of GBYTF. We look forward to working with Secretary Pritzker and NFSC.