

defined as described above under the GOM and GB trawl mesh restrictions.

Gillnet Vessels, When Fishing in the SNE RMA

Under this final emergency rule, limited access NE multispecies vessels that fish under a NE multispecies DAS with gillnet gear in the SNE RMA at any time throughout the fishing year are required to declare into the Day or Trip gillnet category. Vessels fishing under either the Day or Trip gillnet category in the SNE RMA during any part of a trip under a NE multispecies DAS are required to fish with nets with a minimum of 6.5-inch (16.5-cm) mesh, and are restricted from fishing more than 75 nets, with two tags fixed to each net.

Gillnet Vessels, When Fishing in the MA RMA

Under this final emergency rule, limited access NE multispecies vessels that fish under a NE multispecies DAS with gillnet gear in the MA RMA are allowed to fish the same type and number of nets as allowed prior to the implementation of the August 1, 2002, interim rule. That is, vessels are allowed to fish up to 160 nets. Vessels fishing

under the monkfish DAS program are limited to 150 nets.

Gillnet Vessels, When Fishing Under a Monkfish DAS

Under this final emergency rule, any monkfish vessel that has a monkfish limited access Category C or D permit (i.e., a vessel that possesses both a monkfish and NE multispecies limited access permit) and that is fishing under a monkfish DAS, in all areas, is restricted from fishing more than 150 nets, provided the vessel fishes with nets with a minimum mesh size of 10 inches (25.4 cm). Vessels are required to affix one tag to each net. Category A and B monkfish vessels remain unaffected by these measures.

Large-Mesh Vessel Permit Categories

Under this final emergency rule, vessels that have a valid limited access NE multispecies Large Mesh Individual DAS category or a Large Mesh Fleet DAS category permit, when fishing in the GOM, GB, and SNE RMAs, with trawl nets or sink gillnets, are required to fish with nets with a minimum mesh size of 8.5-inch (21.6-cm) diamond or square mesh throughout the entire net. Vessels fishing with trawl nets or sink

gillnets when fishing in the MA RMA are required to fish with nets with a minimum mesh size of 7.5-inch (19.0-cm) diamond or 8.0-inch (20.3-cm) square mesh throughout the entire net.

Hook-gear Vessels

Under this final emergency rule, vessels that have a valid NE multispecies limited access permit are prohibited from using de-hookers (crucifiers) with less than 6-inch (15.2-cm) spacing between the fairlead rollers. In addition, limited access Small-vessel permitted vessels and limited access permitted vessels that fish any part of a NE multispecies DAS trip in the GOM, GB or SNE RMAs are required to use 12/0 or larger circle hooks on longline gear, and are subject to a maximum number of rigged hooks on board the vessel. Specifically, vessels fishing in the GOM or SNE RMAs are prohibited from possessing more than 2,000 rigged hooks, and vessels fishing in the GB RMA are prohibited from possessing more than 3,600 rigged hooks.

Table 1 summarizes the gear restriction measures for each gear sector when fishing in the various RMAs.

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