



# Greater Atlantic Region Bulletin

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## **Northeast Multispecies Common Pool Vessels** **Gulf of Maine Cod Possession Limit Adjustment** *Effective Date: June 15, 2015, through April 30, 2016*

The possession limit for Gulf of Maine (GOM) cod has been reduced to **zero** for all common pool vessels, for the remainder of the 2015 fishing year (through April 30, 2016).

If you have declared your trip through the vessel monitoring system (VMS) or interactive voice response system, and crossed the VMS demarcation line prior to June 15, 2015, you will not be subject to the new trip limits for that trip. Please contact us at (978) 281-9315 if you have any questions. Quota monitoring reports are updated weekly on the internet at <http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/>

### ***Frequently Asked Questions***

<b>Why is this action being taken?</b>	We are adjusting the GOM cod possession limit to zero to prevent an overage of the common pool Trimester 1 quota for this stock.
<b>How much of the quota has been caught?</b>	As of May 25, 2015, 44.5% of the GOM cod Trimester 1 quota has been caught in the first month of the trimester.
<b>If less than half of the quota has been caught, why are you prohibiting the catch of cod?</b>	The quota monitoring report for GOM cod covers most of May, yet Trimester 1 goes through the end of August. Additionally, there is generally a lot of effort in the remaining months of the Trimester. By prohibiting cod now, we intend to keep the GOM open as long as possible to provide fishermen an opportunity to fish for stocks other than GOM cod.
<b>What happens if catch is projected to reach 90 percent of the Trimester 1 quota?</b>	If we project that the common pool will catch 90% of the Trimester 1 quota, we would have to close portions of the GOM to all common pool vessels for the remainder of the trimester (i.e. through August 30, 2015).
<b>Will the possession limit remain at zero for the rest of the fishing year?</b>	We are setting the GOM cod possession limit to zero for the rest of the 2015 fishing year. However, we will continue to monitor the common pool and could make further adjustments to possession limits in the future.

*For small entity compliance guides, this bulletin complies with section 212 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement and Fairness Act of 1996. This notice is authorized by the Regional Administrator of the National Marine Fisheries Service, Greater Atlantic Region.*