

**NS Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture  
4RST Atlantic Halibut Public Review of Allocation Decisions  
April 18, 2016**

***Nova Scotia Position:***

The 4RST Halibut fishery is currently in the middle of its two-year management plan. Under the stability of this arrangement, stakeholders in the industry anticipated to operate under that plan, and to fish the TAC as announced in 2015 for the 2016 season.

Instead, Nova Scotia was informed by DFO in late March 2016 that a review was being conducted of the management plan mid-cycle.

Nova Scotia is concerned about the nature of this review for the following reasons:

- A lack of consultation which should be necessary to justify a review. Two stakeholders with one provincial interest (NL), was able to trigger a review that could significantly impact other province's interests;
- Insufficient time to comprehensively speak to the interests of the NS stakeholders in the sector. The province was given less than a month to submit a single position where offshore and inshore interests exist;
- An inconsistent approach with overarching principles of modern fisheries management, most notably transparency and consistency, as outlined in the *Independent Panel on Access Criteria for the Atlantic Coast Commercial Fishery, (March 2002)*; and
- The timing to review a fishery only weeks prior to its opening, when management decisions have already been announced.

Nova Scotia will not be providing a specific comment on allocation decisions at this time. Should the review proceed, we will consider our input accordingly.