

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON BAROTRAUMA WORKSHOP  
REPORT AND POTENTIAL USE OF RECOMPRESSION CATCH-AND-RELEASE  
SURVIVAL ESTIMATES

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) reviewed the documents involved with this agenda item. The GAP believes that discard survivability determinations should be a regular part of fishery management. The time has come to pursue existing and additional information and apply it to mortality estimates with regard to descending device use. Survivability credits could be applied for the use of descending devices to mitigate effects of barotrauma on released fish.

Virtually every fishing sector could benefit from using at-depth release and avoidance strategies. Recreational, commercial fixed gear and trawl could use these release methods successfully. It is apparent that some level of survivability is realized for most barotraumas-prone species that are released at depth. This result would benefit both the fishery and the rebuilding fish stocks.

The GAP does not propose that any mandate to use descending devices be implemented in the near term. However the GAP encourages widespread use of these devices across all fishery sectors.

If lower mortality rates can be realized through the use of these devices, it could potentially benefit all fishing sectors. If impacts are determined to be less in the future, it could potentially allow for additional allocations to be given to research and exempted fishing permit processes. The greatest benefit could be with yelloweye and cowcod.

PFMC  
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