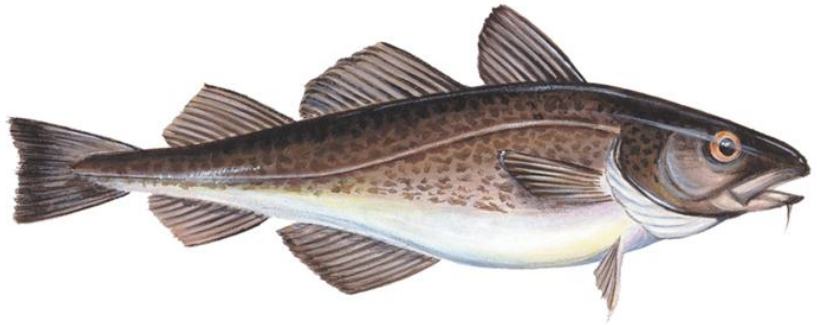
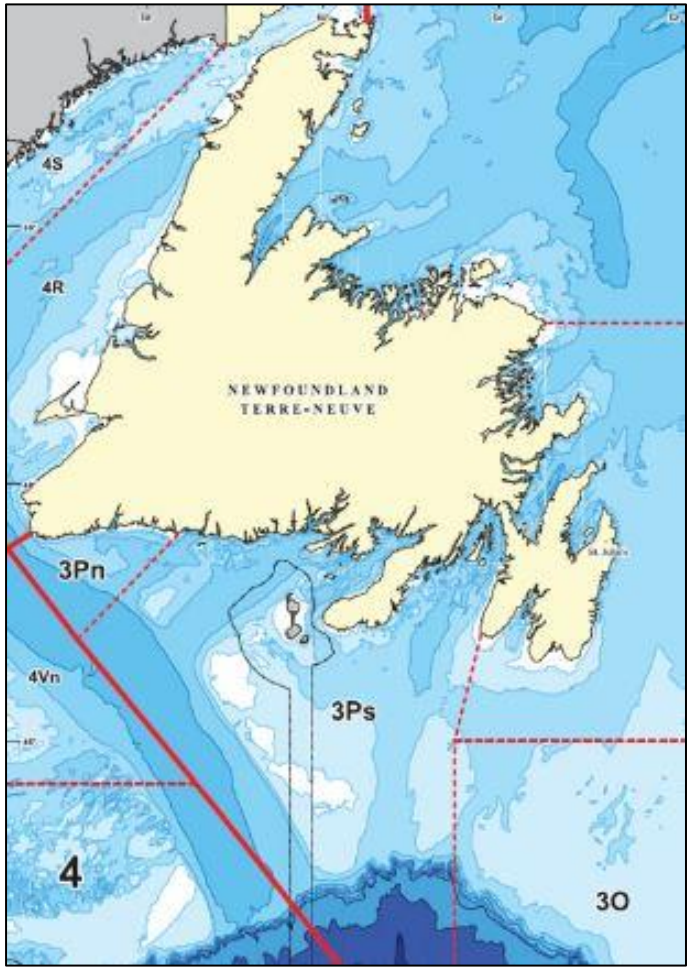
3Ps Atlantic Cod Stock Assessment



October 27-30, 2026

Purpose of this briefing

- Describe the results and science advice from a CSAS meeting that assessed the status of Atlantic cod in Subdivision 3Ps.
- The peer-review meeting was attended by scientists and resource managers from DFO, the French Institute for Ocean Science (IFREMER), industry and harvesters, and NGOs.

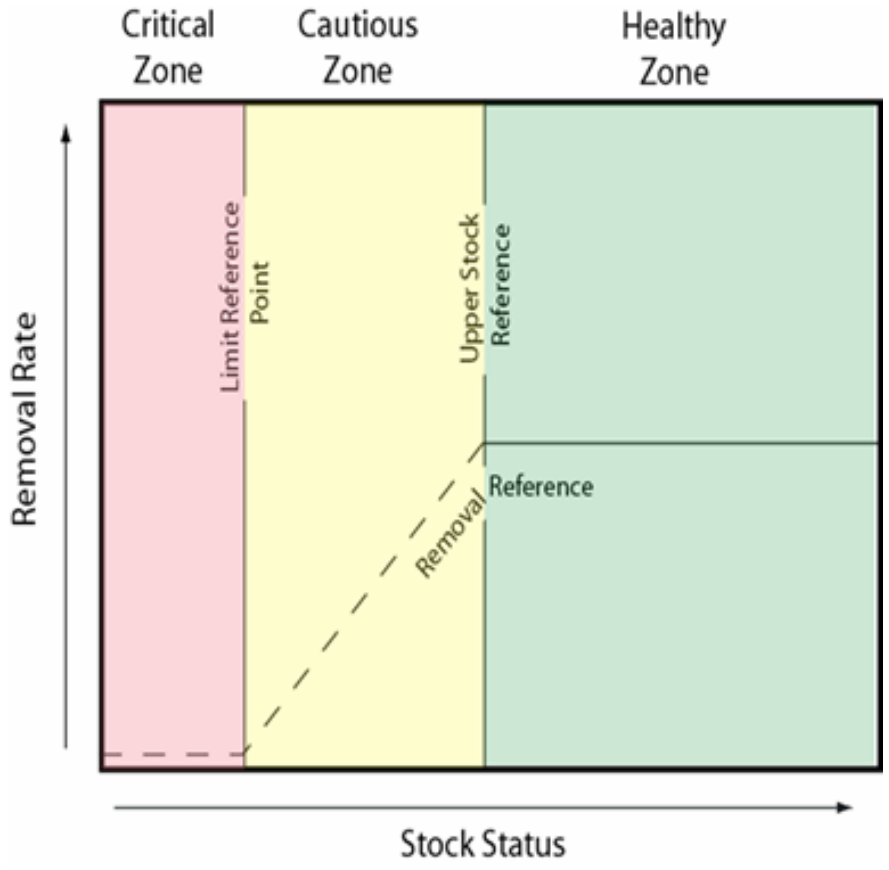


What is CSAS?

Canadian Science Advisory Secretariat. A national body that oversees the review and provision of science advice to inform DFO management decisions. Specifically, this group helps organize meetings where DFO scientists, biologists and others, which may include provincial government, fish harvesters, Indigenous groups, university researchers, and other technical experts get together to review scientific information and help inform how commercial fish stocks are managed.

Precautionary Approach Framework

- The Precautionary Approach decision framework is one part of DFO's Sustainable Fisheries Framework.
- **Limit Reference Point:** represents the stock status below which *serious harm* is occurring to the stock. Fishing is to be kept to the lowest possible level below the LRP.
- While the 3Ps Cod stock is in the Critical Zone it is subject to a **Rebuilding Plan**, which aims to promote stock growth out of the Critical Zone.



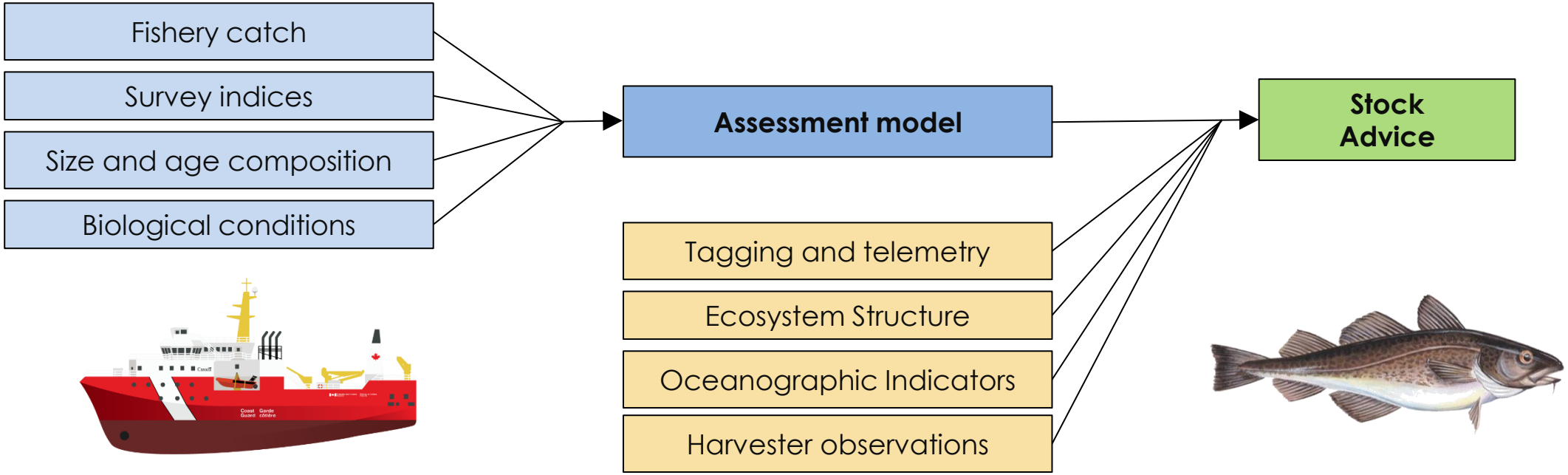
Current Status of Atlantic cod in 3Ps

- The Stock remains in the critical zone and has been less than 50% of the LRP since 2009.
- The stock has not achieved the growth expected under its Rebuilding Plan.
- Several things point to low stock growth and limited recovery potential: low recruitment, poor survival and growth.
- The ecosystem in 3Ps continues to change as ocean conditions warm.

How did we come to these findings?

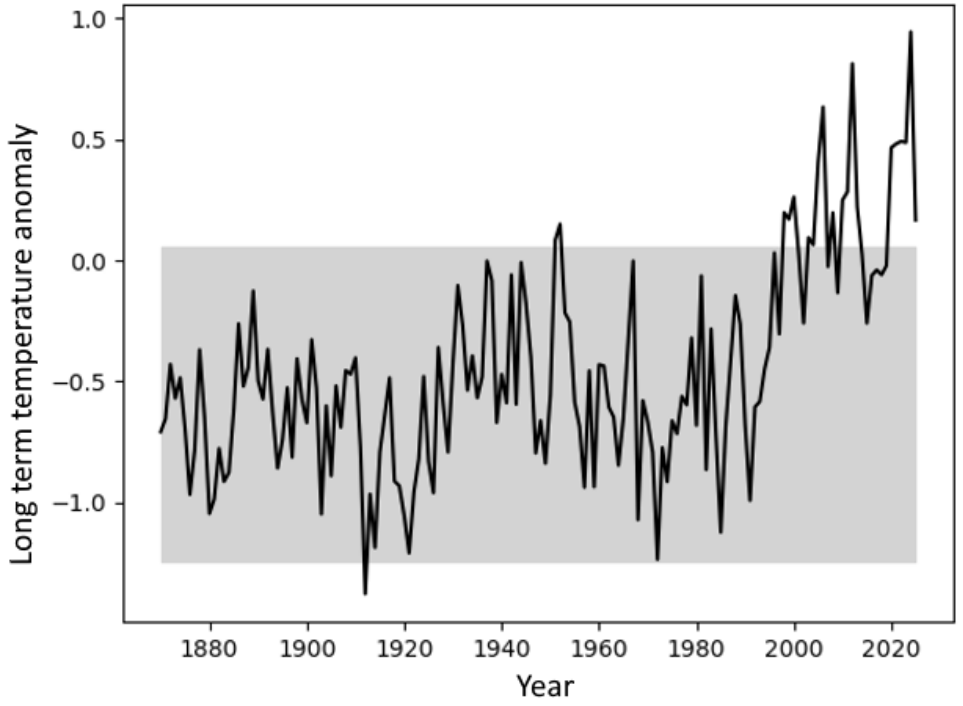
How we assess the stock

The assessment considers data from the fishery and scientific research. The status of this stock is determined with a custom model which examines stock productivity since 1959.



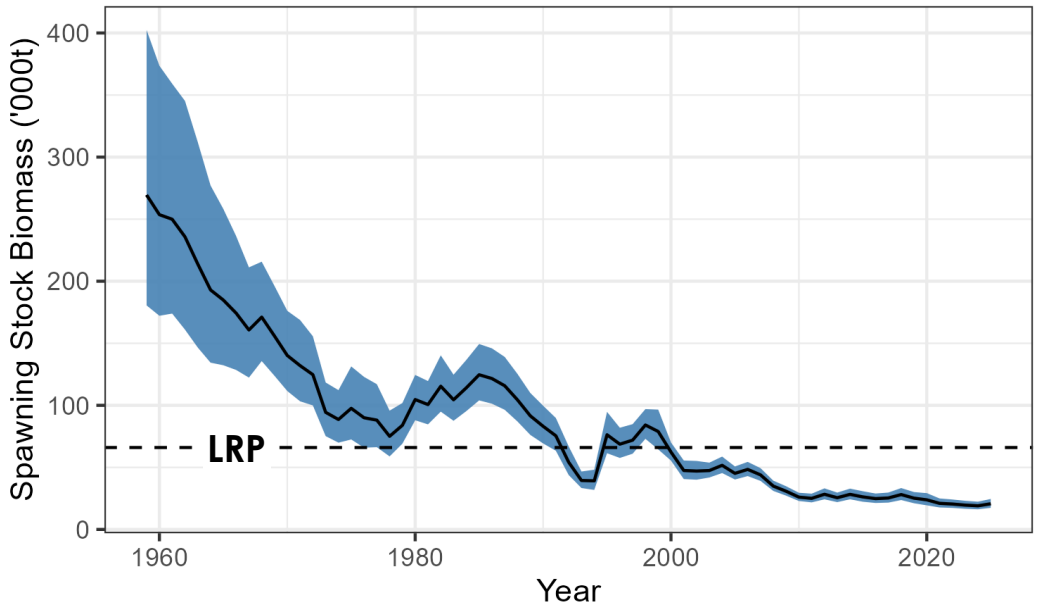
The structure of the ecosystem in 3Ps is changing

- Ocean warming continues in 3Ps.
- We are seeing a shift in the fish community in 3Ps, meaning, warmer water species are more abundant than they have been in the past.
- Harvesters have also reported changes to cod movement patterns.
- Cod productivity is expected to be negatively impacted in 3Ps as warming continues.



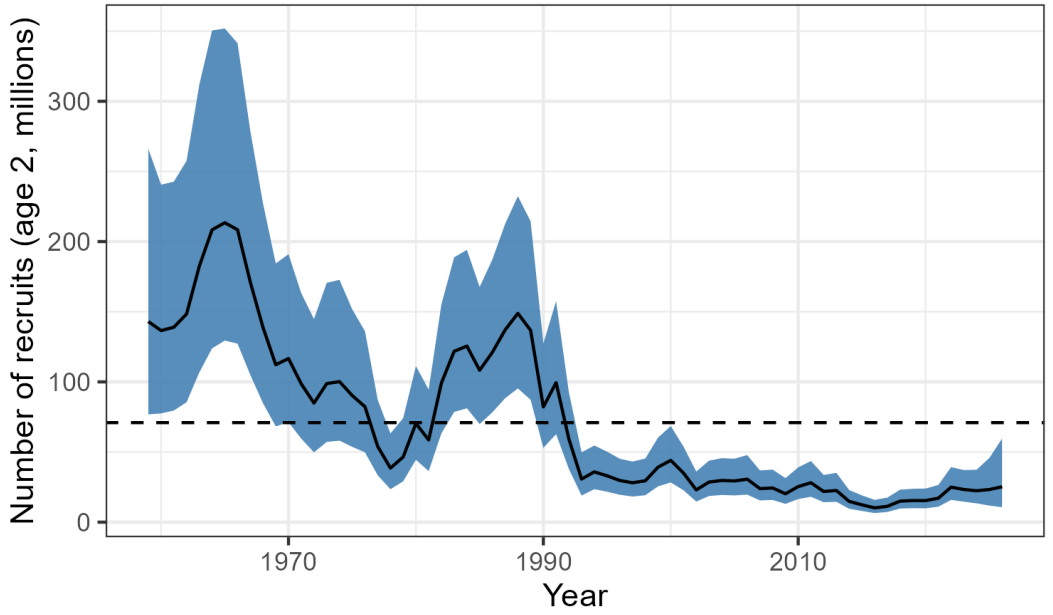
Stock size remains low

- The Spawning Stock Biomass (SSB) is below the Limit Reference Point (LRP) with a greater than 99% probability.
- SSB has remained at or near time-series lows without trend since 2009.
- SSB could not be estimated for 2026.
- While stock remains very low, recent data conflicts and inability of the model to reconcile those prevent projection of stock size and updating TAC recommendations.



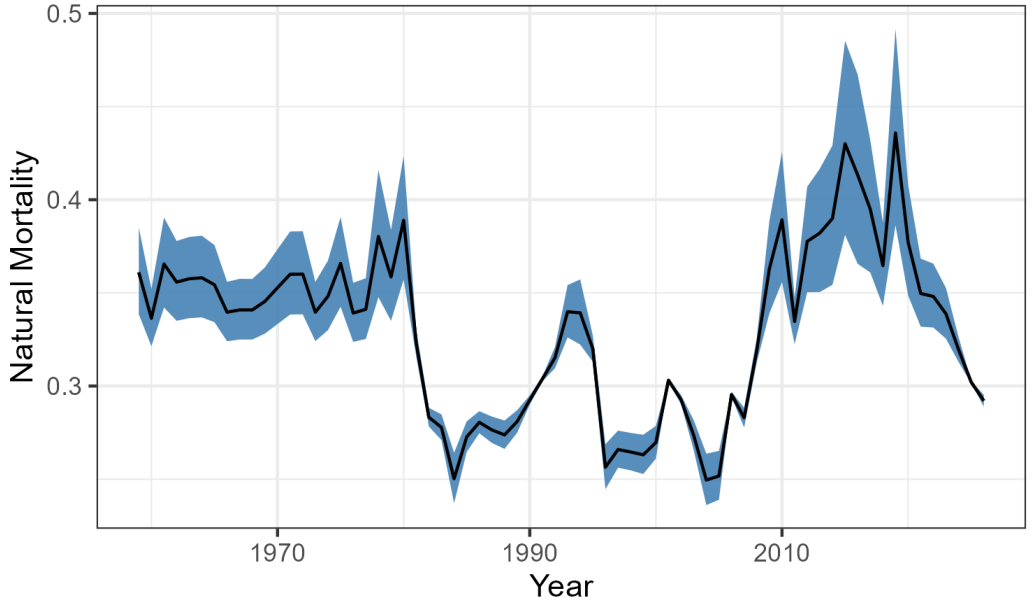
Cod productivity in 3Ps is low

- Recruitment – the number of young fish entering the stock – has been well below average levels since the early-1990s.
- Continued low recruitment combined with a critically depleted stock size suggests the potential for stock growth will remain low.



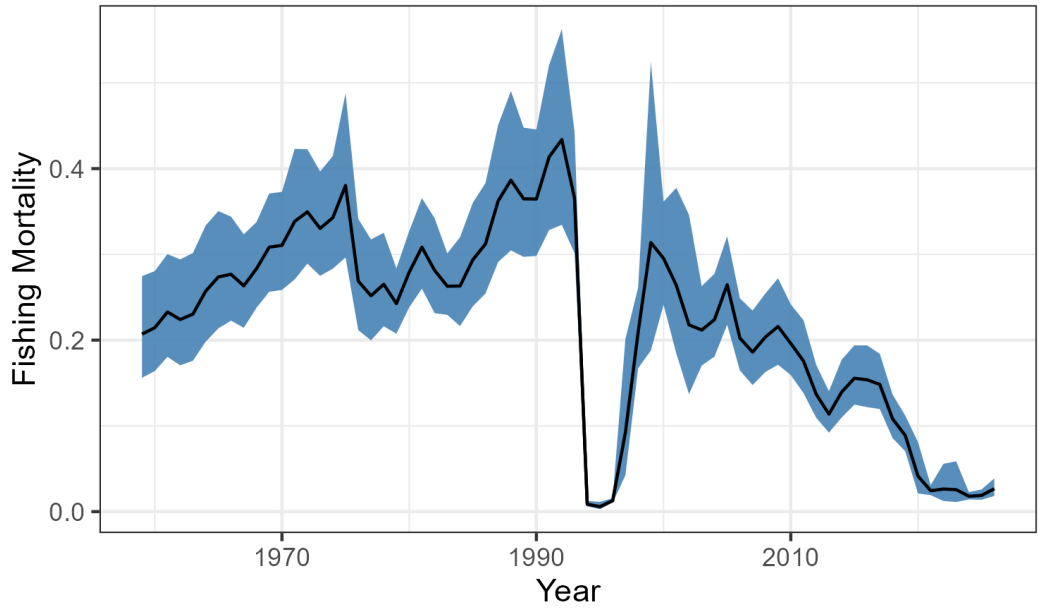
Natural Mortality

- All mortality other than fishing.
- Natural mortality (M) peaked in 2019 but has decreased over the last six years.
- However, there appear to be additional causes of mortality which are not directly captured in recent estimates.



Fishing Mortality

- All mortality related to fishing.
- Fishing mortality (F) has been low since 2020.



Science Advice

- Given the small population size and low productivity, removals from all sources should be at the lowest possible level until the stock clears the Critical Zone.

Key Takeaways

- The 3Ps cod stock on the south coast of Newfoundland remains in the Critical Zone of the Precautionary Approach Framework, well below its Limit Reference Point, and is showing no sign of recovery.

- Cod biomass declined 38 per cent, based on the research vessel survey, and there are also less older fish in the population. Few young fish entering the cod population also continues to be a challenge for the stock. This suggests that the stock's productivity and growth potential in this area are limited.

- The ecosystem in 3Ps is experiencing changes with record high ocean temperatures observed in the past decade. Cod productivity is expected to be negatively impacted in 3Ps as warming continues.

- Given the stock's low abundance and poor productivity, removals from all sources should be as low as possible until the stock clears the Critical Zone.

Next steps

- The Department is currently undertaking a review of the Rebuilding Plan, due to changes in the understanding of the stock.
- There will be an upcoming Rebuilding Plan working group meeting scheduled in the coming weeks.
- DFO will seek stakeholder perspectives on a management decision for 3Ps cod for the 2027-28 season through the 3Ps GAC in early 2027.
- The 3Ps cod stock is jointly managed by Canada and France. Following the GAC advisory process, representatives from both countries will meet to decide a management approach for 3Ps cod for the 2027-28 season.
- The management decision for 3Ps cod will consider the science advice, stakeholder input, and socio-economic factors.

QUESTIONS?