

Marysia Szymkowiak  
2012 Marine Policy Seminar  
October 25, 2012

### **Building a Framework to Evaluate Catch Share Modifications and Redistribution Programs**

*By allocating a share of the total allowable catch to participating entities, catch share programs eliminate the competition for a limited harvest that results in the destructive race for fish, and give participants the opportunity to make harvesting decisions that optimize the value of their allocations. Consistent effects of these programs include higher profits, reductions in overcapacity, efficiency gains, biological benefits, and improvements in safety at sea. Resultant consolidation and concentration of effort, however, have meant reduced participation of smaller operators with reverberating impacts on fishing communities due to employment losses for crews, processors, dockside and maintenance operators, etc. In order to stem these negative effects, maintain the participation of small operators, and distribute the wealth of fisheries among coastal communities, managers utilize two mechanisms - redistribution programs and modifications to catch share programs. Redistribution programs provide a subsidy (in the form of a free allocation or a subsidized loan) to small operators or fishing communities, while modifications to catch share programs include various mechanisms to limit consolidation and ensure fleet diversity. There are costs associated with both mechanisms, including losses of potential efficiency gains with catch share modifications and subsidization of inefficiencies with redistribution programs. These costs, the explicit impacts of the modifications, and comparisons of the effects with what would have been the status quo condition are not evaluated as part of the regular NMFS assessments of either mechanism. The following analysis begins to build a framework with which managers can evaluate these modifications and redistribution programs, and ultimately forecast which mechanism is appropriate for their contexts and goals.*