



# Northeast Groundfish

## Gear Conservation Engineering & Demonstration Network

The Northeast Groundfish Gear Conservation Engineering & Demonstration Network (GEARNET) was established in September 2010, to tackle **critical gear-related research questions in the groundfish fishery**, within the context of the catch shares management system.

Funded by NOAA's Northeast Fisheries Science Center Cooperative Research Program, GEARNET is **one of seven new network-oriented research projects** across different fisheries.

### Top priority gear research based on YOUR ideas

GEARNET's primary objective is to help Northeast groundfish fishermen develop and adopt fishing equipment that improves efficiency and selectivity, reduces environmental impact, and helps secure a sustainable, profitable groundfish resource and industry for future years.

GEARNET is taking a **bottom-up approach**, and we are interested in meeting with you and your sector to hear about your most pressing research needs. Our goal is to address **top priority gear research needs**, through pilot-scale projects **with each groundfish sector and the common pool**.

### The GEARNET Process

**December 2010 - January 2011:** We will be holding scoping meetings with individual groundfish sectors (and the common pool) to identify the fisheries research needs or gear needs that are most urgent to each sector's fishermen. Additional meetings will be arranged as needed, to help fishermen prepare short project proposals that outline their top needs. **All proposals must be submitted by 5.00 pm on February 28th 2011.**

**March 2011:** The GEARNET Technical Committee will finalize an action plan for top priority gear research or gear demonstration projects based on the ideas you submit.

**Spring/Summer/Fall 2011:** GEARNET will work with each groundfish sector and the common pool to undertake their selected/prioritized proof-of-concept gear conservation research/demonstration project.

**Winter 2011/2012:** Findings from all projects will be shared with the wider groundfish industry at a workshop during the winter of 2011/2012.

### Why should I get involved?

- Are you struggling to fish your target species because you run into fish for which you have no allocation?
- Would you like to try using equipment that lets you know when your net is full, or how your net is performing?
- Do you have ideas for improving your gear's selectivity, but can't afford to make the changes?
- Would you like to try a separator trawl? Or other bycatch reduction designs that you've heard about but don't have access to?
- Are you interested in improving the fuel and energy efficiency of your vessel and lowering your operating costs?
- Do you want to help collect information that may contribute to improving the accuracy of stock assessments?

### For further information and to get involved

For more information, please visit our website ([www.gearnnet.org](http://www.gearnnet.org)). You can also send us an email ([info@gearnnet.org](mailto:info@gearnnet.org)) or contact the project partner who is working with sectors in your state (\*= lead contacts, CP=common pool).

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