

**39th ANNUAL MEETING OF NAFO - SEPTEMBER 2017****Revision of New England Seamounts Closure****Explanatory memorandum**

Under the revised NAFO convention, NAFO members have recommitted themselves to applying an ecosystem approach to fisheries management, including conserving the marine biodiversity within NAFO waters. This responsibility to ensure sustainable fisheries and safeguarding the marine environment has been reflected in NAFO's efforts to protect vulnerable marine ecosystem elements, such as seamounts and their associated fisheries.

In 2014, the Scientific Council recommended expansion of the seamount protection zones surrounding the New England and Corner Rise Seamount chains located within the NAFO Regulatory Area (SCS 14/17 REV). With regards to the New England and Corner Rise seamount chains, the SC recommended that the polygons be expanded to include all relevant seamounts. Subsequently, and as directed by the Commission at its 2016 annual meeting, the Joint Commission-Scientific Council Working Group on Ecosystem Approach Framework to Fisheries Management (WG-EAFFM) gave consideration to the boundary of the New England Seamounts at its July 2017 meeting. While no proposal for amendment of the current polygon was developed, there was a general agreement that the peaks shallower than 2000m must be protected. The WG also recognized that the current seamount closures included very large areas that do not contain seamounts.

Therefore, and on this basis, the United States and Canada propose refining the boundary of the New England Seamounts closure reducing the overall footprint to 178 535 km², compared to the original closure area of 275 225 km².

Proposal

Reaffirming NAFO's commitment to ecosystem and science based management.

Recalling the Scientific Council advice from 2014, "that the polygons of the closures for both the New England and Corner Rise Seamounts be revised to the north, east and west in the NAFO Convention Area to include all the peaks that are shallower than 2000 meters";

Reiterating that "when fishing in the seamount closures defined in Article 17(1), only gear that is designed to fish for pelagic species, no portion of which is designed to be or is operated in contact with the bottom at any time. The gear shall not include discs, bobbins or rollers on its footrope or any other attachments designed to make contact with the bottom."

Noting that in their review of this proposal, the Scientific Council indicated that the "proposed redesigned seamount closure includes all seamounts at fishable depths whilst recognizing the need to include the seamount chain as a whole in sustaining the biological connectivity and function of seamount fauna at all depths.



Thereby recommends Article 17 be amended by revising Table 5 (referenced in para 17.1) to refine the closures for the New England Seamount chain, including the expansion to previously unprotected seamounts in the high seas portion of the chain, as described by the geographical coordinates below:

Description	Coordinate No.	Latitude	Longitude
Fogo Seamounts 1	1	42°31'33"N	53°23'17"W
	2	42°31'33"N	52°33'37"W
	3	41°55'48"N	53°23'17"W
	4	41°55'48"N	52°33'37"W
Fogo Seamounts 2	1	41°07'22"N	52°27'49"W
	2	41°07'22"N	51°38'10"W
	3	40°31'37"N	52°27'49"W
	4	40°31'37"N	51°38'10"W
Orphan Knoll	1	50°00'30"N	45°00'30"W
	2	51°00'30"N	45°00'30"W
	3	51°00'30"N	47°00'30"W
	4	50°00'30"N	47°00'30"W
Corner Rise Seamounts	1	35°00'00"N	48°00'00"W
	2	36°00'00"N	48°00'00"W
	3	36°00'00"N	52°00'00"W
	4	35°00'00"N	52°00'00"W
Newfoundland Seamounts	1	43°29'00"N	43°20'00"W
	2	44°00'00"N	43°20'00"W
	3	44°00'00"N	46°40'00"W
	4	43°29'00"N	46°40'00"W
New England Seamount	1	38°51'54.000" N 39°00'00" N	66°55'51.600" W 64°00'00" W
	2	37°12'0.000" N 35°40'19" N	60°48'0.000" W 64°00'00" W
	3	35°00'0.000" N 35°40'08" N	59°00'0.000" W 63°57'22" W
	4	35°00'0.000" N 35°30'43" N	56°30'0.000" W 63°16'19" W
	5	36°48'0.000" N 35°15'29" N	57°48'0.000" W 62°37'55" W
	6	39°00'0.000" N 35°00'00" N	60°00'0.000" W 62°14'24" W
	7	39°18'0.000" N 35°00'00" N	61°30'0.000" W 57°00'00" W
	8	39°56'20.400" N 39°00'00" N	65°56'34.800" W 57°00'00" W

Table 5. Boundary Points Delineating the Seamount Closures in the NAFO Regulatory Area Referenced in Article 17.1

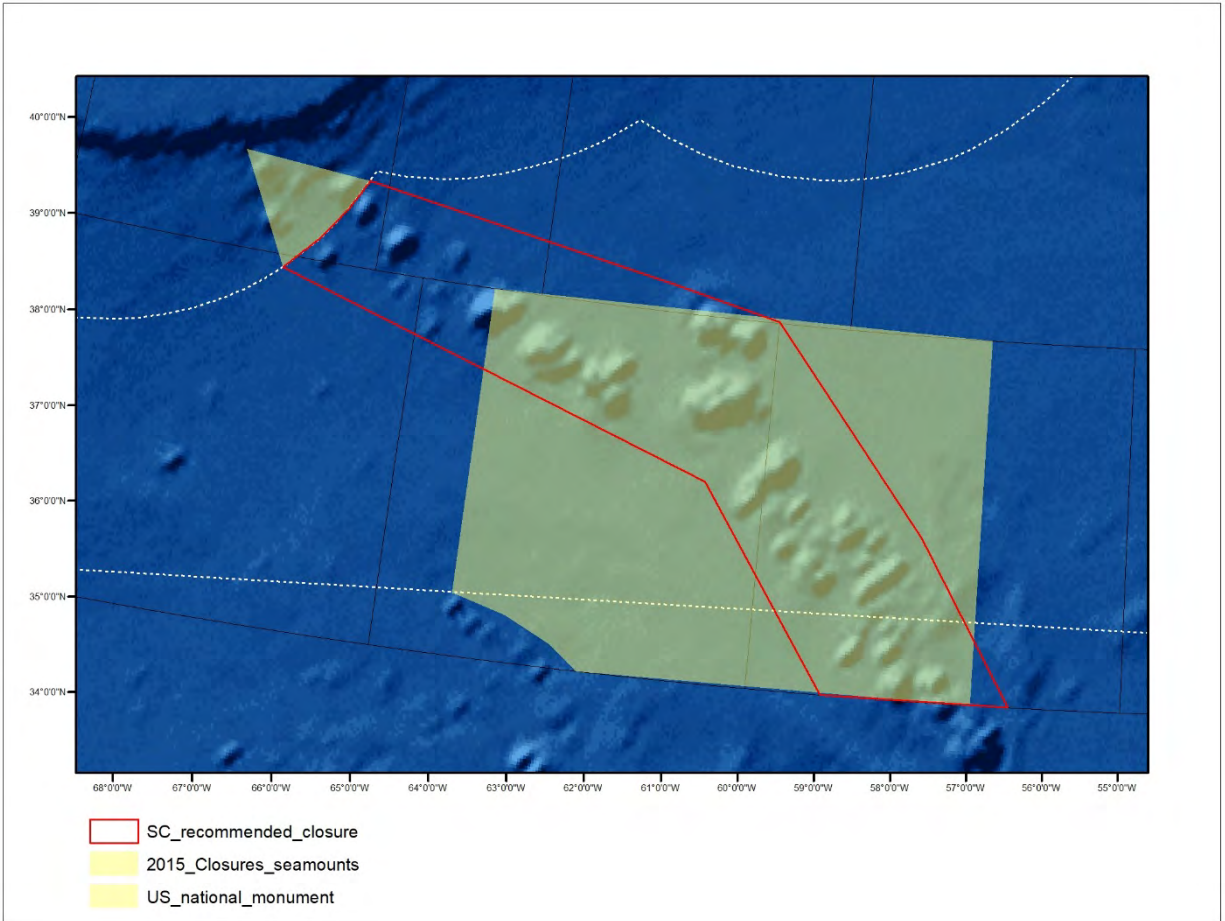


Figure 1. 3D Map of proposed revised New England Seamount closures

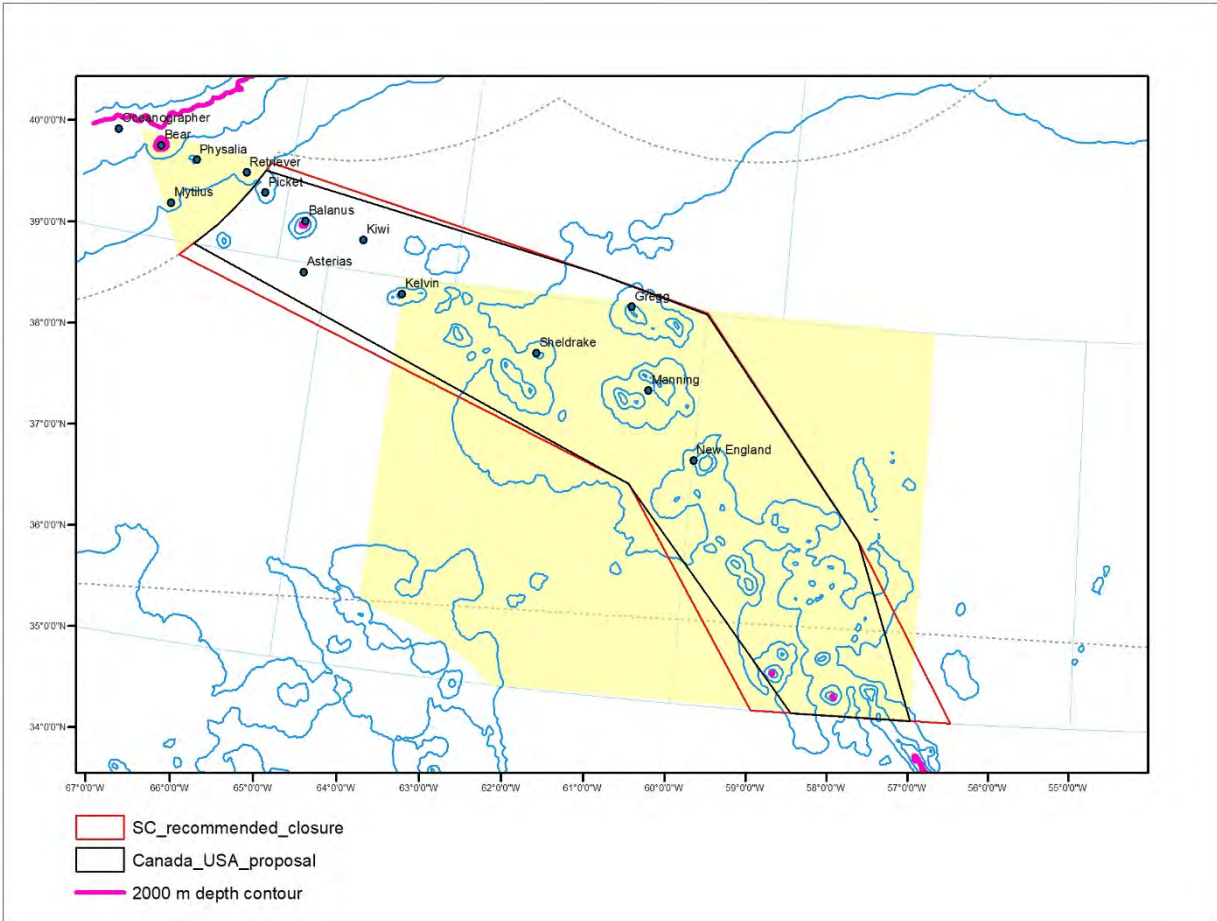


Figure 2. Contour map of proposed revised New England Seamount closures