



NOAA
FISHERIES

Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Management Update

ICCAT Advisory Committee

October 2015

Rulemaking/Operations

Since March 2015:

- Published three proposed rules: bluefin tuna quota rule, 2016 shark specifications, and eBCD implementation
- Published three final rules: 2015 swordfish specifications, Amendment 6, and bluefin tuna quota rule
- Published the HMS EFH 5-Year Review, Notice of Intent on Amendment 10
- Published multiple inseason actions & oversaw 20 workshops

In 2015, so far:

- Issued 35 EFPs, SRPs, & LOAs
- Issued 7 shark research fishery permits; some changes this year due to Amendment 6
- Registered 261 HMS tournaments
- ~5,397 people receiving Atlantic HMS News

Bluefin Tuna Quota Rule

Final rule published August 28, 2015 (80 FR 52198)

- Increases the baseline annual quota from 923.7 mt (established in 2011) by 135 mt to 1,058.79 mt
- Adjusts and codifies the baseline annual subquotas for the domestic fishing categories consistent with the process established in Amendment 7
- Makes minor modifications to Atlantic tunas purse seine “transfer at sea” regulations to clarify that this text was not meant to allow "transfer at sea" (prohibited by ICCAT), but is only meant to allow the routine, limited operations of an auxiliary vessel (i.e., a skiff) in assisting its associated purse seine vessel in bluefin tuna catch operations
- Specific for 2015 and consistent with Amendment 7, notice also announces:
 - Adjustment of the Reserve quota (+94.9 mt of 2014 underharvest)
 - Recalculation of the Purse Seine and Reserve category quotas that were announced in February to reflect the increased U.S. quota

2015 Bluefin Tuna Inseason Actions

Daily Retention Limits:

➤ General category (large medium/giant):

January through March: 3

June through December: 4

➤ Angling category:

(Default limit of 1 school, large school, or small medium for private & HMS CHB:
Jan. 1 – May 14)

Private vessels: 1 school + 1 large school/small medium (May 15 - Dec. 31)

HMS CHB: 2 school + 1 large school/small medium (May 15 - Dec. 31)

2015 Bluefin Tuna Inseason Actions

Transfers:

- 21 mt within General category from December 2015 to January-March 2015 (December 2014, Amendment 7 authority)
- 87.4 mt from Purse Seine category to Reserve category (February, using Amendment 7 formula)
- 34 mt from Reserve to Longline category (July)
- 40 mt from Reserve to Harpoon category (August)

Closure of Angling category Trophy South fishery: June 7

Purse Seine category fishery start date: July 6

(Per Amendment 7, NMFS starts the fishery annually between June 1 and August 15)

2015 Purse Seine Fishery to Date

- Fishery started on July 6, 2015 (start date set annually, within a range from June 1 and August 15)
- Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) issued (for a second year); Allows retention of large medium bluefin (measuring 73” to < 81”), which would otherwise be discarded due to annual retention limits
(regulations allow a tolerance of large medium bluefin of 15% by weight of total giant bluefin landed in a fishing year)
- Net effect of the EFP: During the first two trips of the season, 36% and 31%, respectively, of the retained bluefin (by weight) were large mediums that otherwise would have been mostly regulatory discards

Bluefin Tuna Landings (as of 7/31/15)

Quota category	Current Year 2015				Previous Year 2014		
	No. of Fish	Avg. Weight (lb)	Gross Weight (mt)	Adjusted ^{1,2,3,4} Quota	Count of Fish	Avg. Weight (lb)	Gross Weight (mt)
General	737	381.1	127.4	466.7	542	382.4	94.1
Handline	0		0.0		0		0.0
Harpoon	168	363.6	27.7		158	400.0	28.7
Rod and Reel	569	386.3	99.7		384	375.2	65.4
Harpoon	245	353.2	39.2	78.6³	165	400.0	29.9
Longline (includes 25 mt in NED)	155	437.4	30.8	207.3²	361	453.7	74.3
Trap	0		0.0	1.0	0		0.0
Purse Seine	247	302.8	33.9	82.9¹	17	496.2	3.8
Reserve			0.0	147.1^{1,2,3}			
Total (landings only)	1384	368.5	231.3	983.6	1085	410.6	202.1



Brief Summary of Bluefin A7 Measures

- Allocation measures affecting all quota categories
 - Annual reallocation of quota from Purse Seine category
 - Codified reallocation of 68 mt to Longline category
 - Modification of Reserve category
- On-line reporting requirements for commercial categories
- Pelagic Longline fishery changes
 - Gear Restricted Areas (Cape Hatteras and Gulf of Mexico)
 - Individual Bluefin Tuna Quota Program
 - Electronic Monitoring
 - Vessel Monitoring System Reporting
- Adjustments to General, Harpoon, and Angling category bluefin tuna rules, Purse Seine fishery start date



Amendment 7 Appeals & Litigation

- Appeals of Individual Bluefin Quota eligibility
 - Initial Administrative Decisions
 - 1 Approved (eligibility of permit) and 12 dismissed
 - 3 appeals submitted to National Appeals Office

- Lawsuit from pelagic longline fishermen and related businesses
 - Judge granted partial motion to dismiss
 - Briefing underway

Bluefin Tuna Amendment 7: IBQ program

- Quota is being leased by IBQ shareholders and vessel owners: 47 metric tons of quota has been leased between 27 different shareholders
- Price information provided for 7 transactions:
 - Average: \$ 3.14/ lb (\$ 3.67/lb not including the lowest price)
 - Range: \$ 0.01 to \$ 4.50/ lb
- A substantial amount of unused quota remains in the IBQ System: 150 mt of unused quota remains in the Longline category, and 44 mt in the Purse Seine category (as of 9/29/2015)

Electronic Monitoring (EM) Status

- Installations: 111 vessels out of 136 eligible
- Number of hard drives received: June: 86; July: 105; August: 146
- Number of vessels from which hard drives were received: June: 47; July: 61; August: 73
- Foremost logistical challenge: Procedures for mailing hard drives
 - When mailing the hard drives to the NMFS contractor, some vessel operators did not include a pre-paid mailing label to enable return mailing of the replacement hard drive back to the vessel



Bluefin Reporting Requirement for General, Harpoon, and Charter/Headboat Categories

- Vessels required to report the length of all bluefin retained or discarded dead through online catch reporting system within 24 hours of landing or end of each trip
- Website: hmspermits.noaa.gov/permitidlandings.asp

Dealer data versus Online reporting; Jan – July 2015

	Dealer Data	Online Reports	Online vs Dealer (%)
# bluefin	983	408	42%
# vessels	292	61	21%
# trips	656	199	30%

- Outreach to the fishery must continue

ICCAT MCS Rule

- **Final rule published December 8, 2014 (79 FR 72557)**
- Notified owners of commercial HMS vessels ≥ 20 m. (65' 7") of the need to obtain an International Maritime Organization (IMO) number by no later than January 1, 2016 (ICCAT Rec. 13-13)
- Additional analysis indicated this affects ~ 110 commercial HMS vessels
 - ~ 77 vessels already had IMO number
 - ~ 33 vessels **did not** have IMO number because < 100 GRT
- NMFS worked with IHS/Maritime to obtain "IMO-like" numbers for vessels
- Vessel owners notified of their "IMO-like" numbers on August 17, 2015
- Next steps include incorporating numbers in reports to ICCAT, and adding a data field to HMS permit applications

2015 Swordfish Specifications

Final rule on swordfish quotas published on May 5th

SWO Specs	2014	2015
North Atl SWO Base	2,937.6 mt dw	2,937.6 mt dw
North Atl SWO Adjusted	3,653.2 mt dw	3,359.4 mt dw*
South Atl SWO Base	75.2 mt dw	75.2 mt dw
South Atl SWO Adjusted	75.1 mt dw	75.1 mt dw

* The 2015 NSW0 adjusted quota reflects the change from 25% to 15% underharvest carry over.

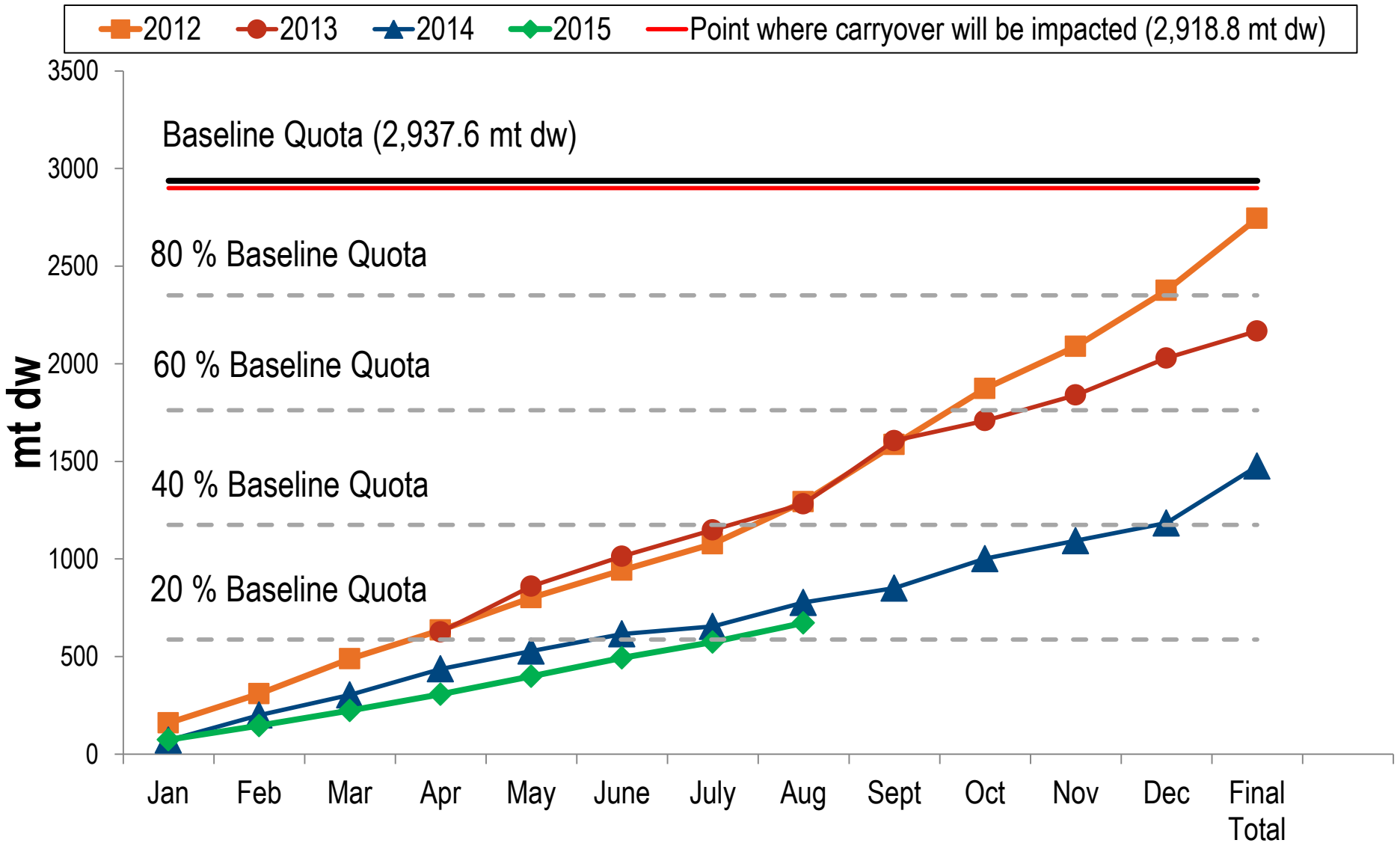
Swordfish General Commercial Inseason Action

- Adjusted Swordfish General Commercial and HMS Charter/Headboat permit (only when on a non-for-hire trip) retention limits

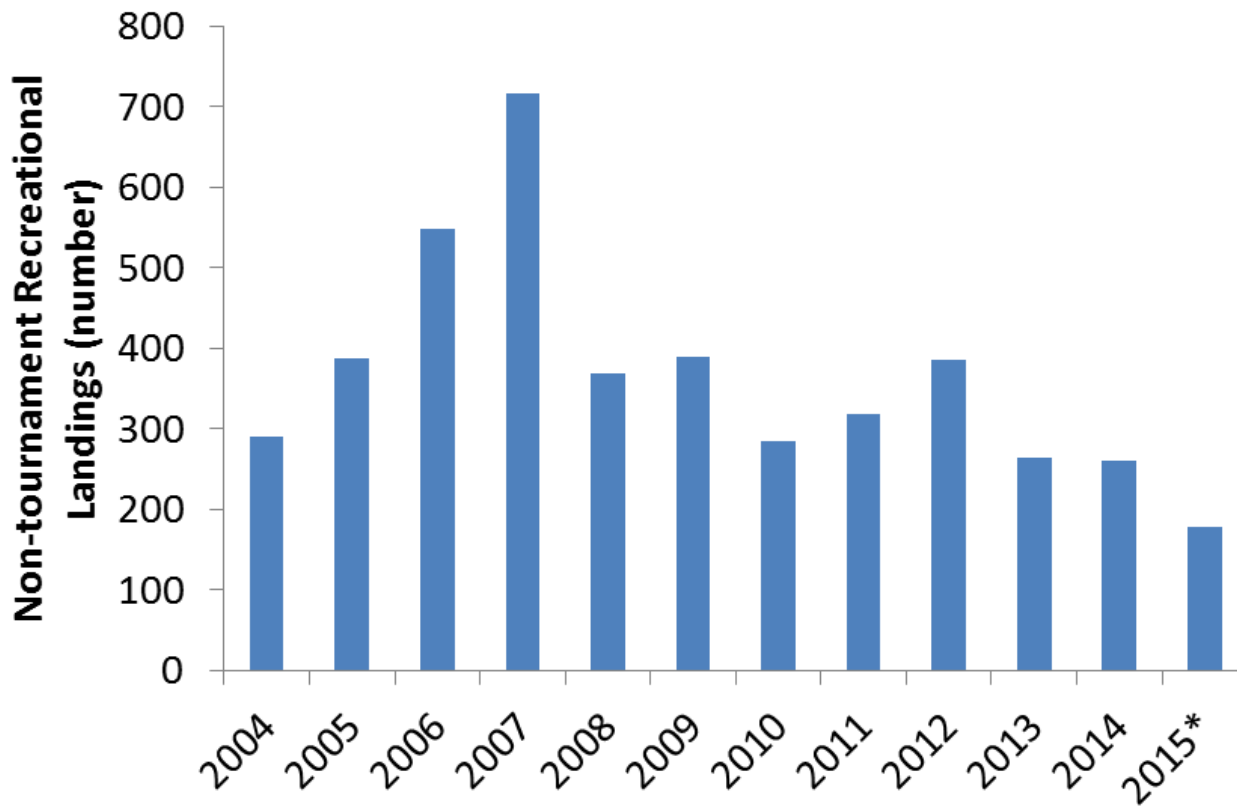
Region	<u>Default</u> Retention Limit per Vessel per Trip	<u>Adjusted</u> Retention Limit per Vessel per Trip	Effective Period (2015)
Northwest Atlantic	3 SWO/Vessel/Trip	6 SWO/Vessel/Trip	July 30 - December 31
Gulf of Mexico	3 SWO/Vessel/Trip	6 SWO/Vessel/Trip	July 30 - December 31
U.S. Caribbean	2 SWO/Vessel/Trip	6 SWO/Vessel/Trip	July 30 - December 31
Florida Swordfish Management Area	0 SWO/Vessel/Trip	0 SWO/Vessel/Trip	January 1 – December 31



Commercial Swordfish Landings



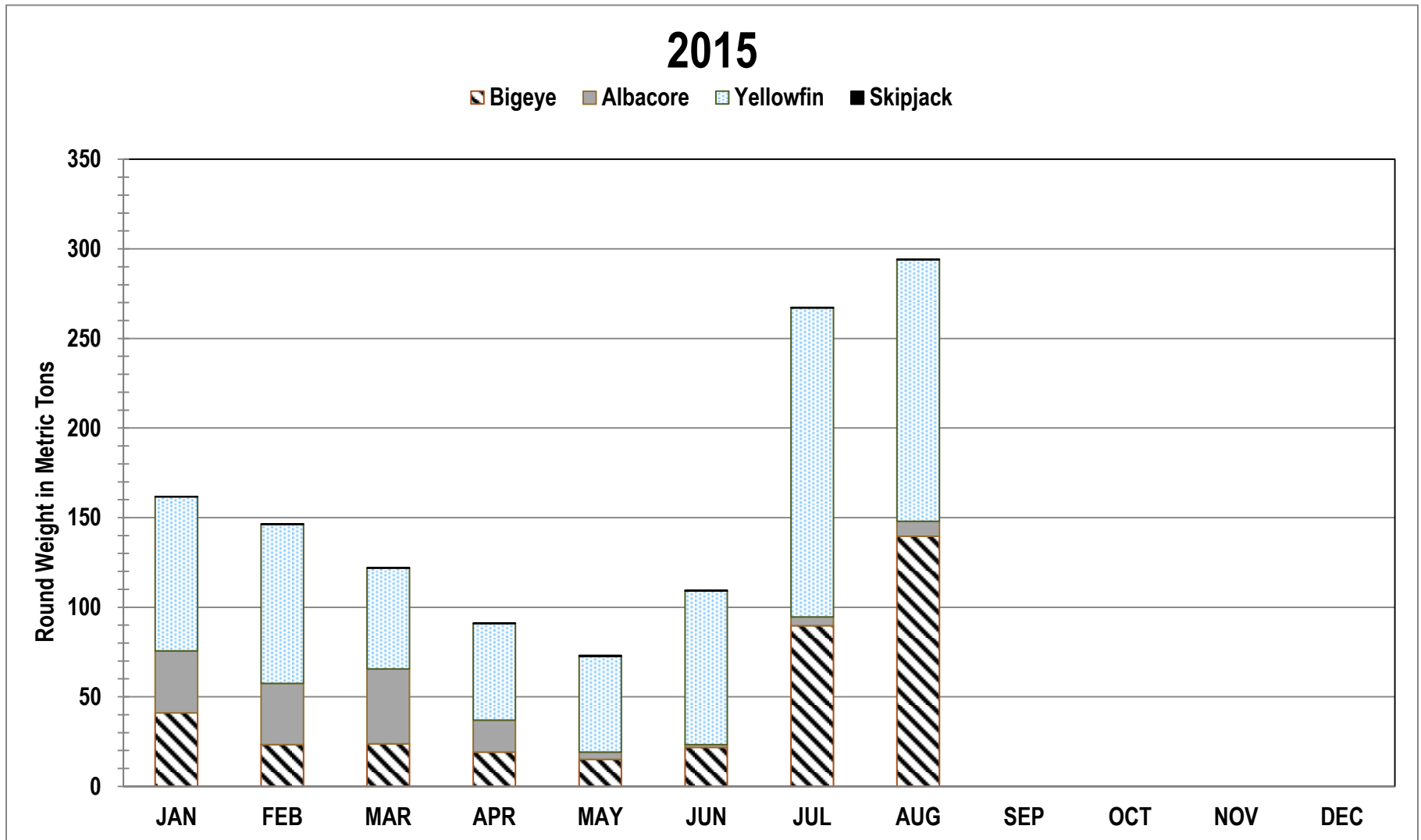
Recreational Swordfish Landings



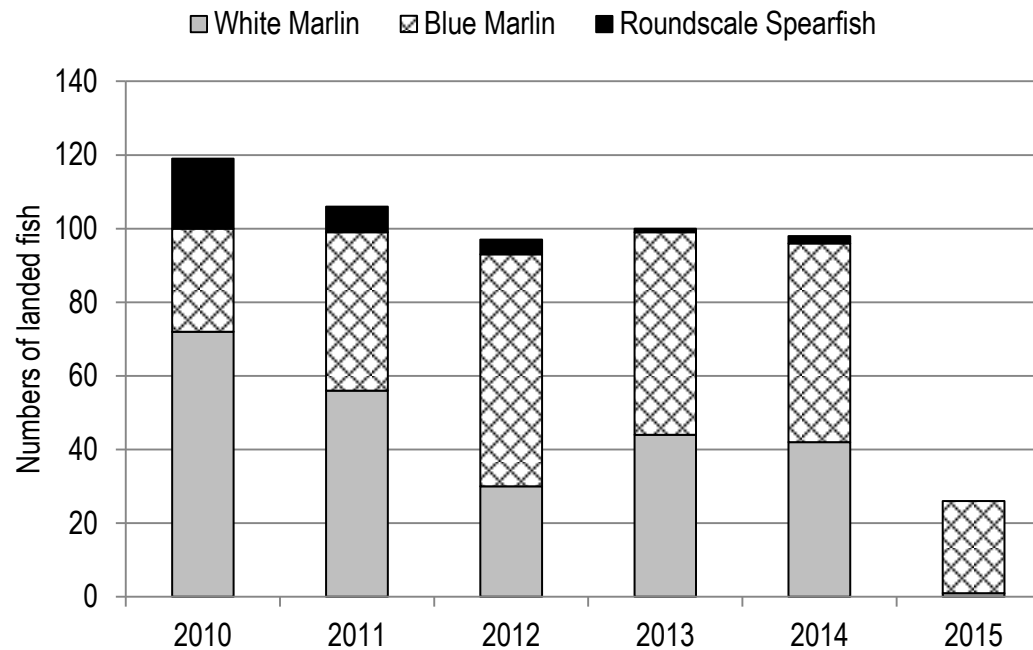
Year	Non-tournament Landings (number)
2004	290
2005	388
2006	549
2007	716
2008	369
2009	389
2010	285
2011	318
2012	386
2013	264
2014	261
2015	179*

* January 1 – August 31, 2015

Bigeye, Albacore, Yellowfin, & Skipjack (BAYS) Tuna Landings



Recreational Billfish Landings

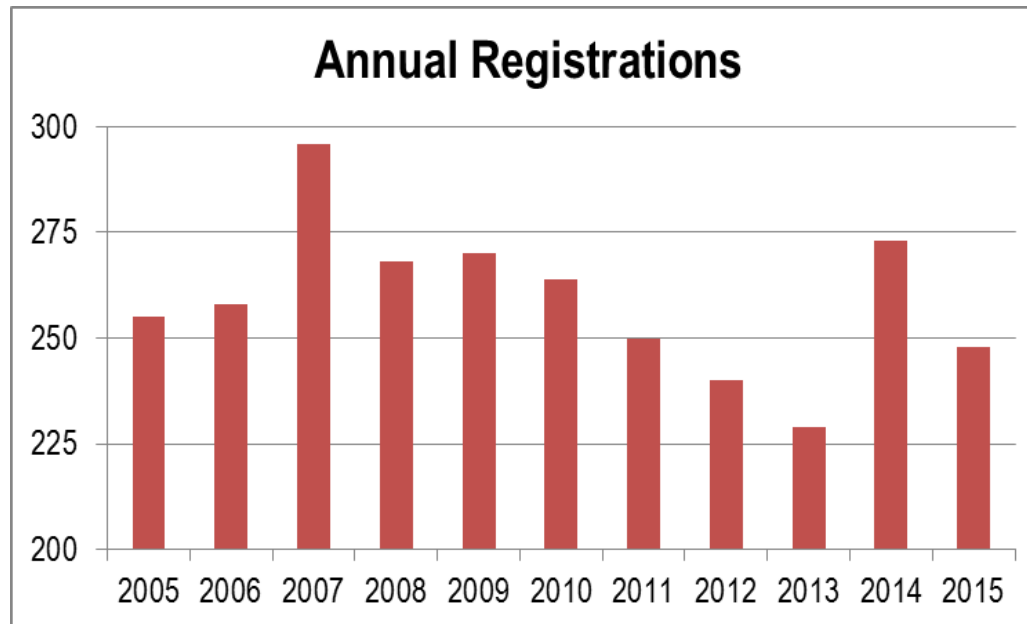


	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014*	2015*
Blue Marlin	28	43	63	55	54	25
White Marlin	72	56	30	44	42	1
Roundscale Spearfish	19	7	4	1	2	0
Sailfish	185	166	159	169	118	67

*HMS 2015 Q2 Landings Report

Source: Recreational (non-tournament) Database

Tournaments Update




Economics Study in 2016: HMS Tournament Site Visits

- Billfish Grand Championship - Orange Beach, AL
- Star Island Yacht Club Shark Tournament - Montauk, NY
- Mid-Atlantic - Cape May, NJ
- Sunburned Swordfish - Ft Lauderdale, FL
- International Billfish Tournament – San Juan, PR
- South Texas Big Game Fishing Club – South Padre, TX

Tournaments Update

Program Improvements

- Step 1: Merging HMS and Recreational Billfish Survey databases (complete by EOY)
- Step 2: Online Registration Portal (internal beta testing complete; seeking volunteer tournament operators for actual registration testing)


NOAA FISHERIES
NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

OMB Control # 0648-0023
 Expiration date 01/31/2016

Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Tournaments

Register a Tournament

Tournament Name:

Start Date:

End Date:

Director Name:

Tournament Type:

CPUE Category:

Director Address 1:

Director Address 2:

Director City:

Director State:

Director Zip:

Director Country:

Phone:

Fax:

Mobile:

Mail:

Web Site:

Summary Report:

Hook Restriction:

Bait Restriction:

Registration Date:

Comments:

Has this tournament registered with NOAA Fisheries before? _____ * Year? _____

Billfish & Swordfish	Tunas	Sharks
<input type="checkbox"/> Blue Marlin <input type="checkbox"/> White Marlin <input type="checkbox"/> Sailfish <input type="checkbox"/> Longbill Spearfish <input type="checkbox"/> RoundScale Spearfish <input type="checkbox"/> Swordfish	<input type="checkbox"/> Bluefin Tuna <input type="checkbox"/> Yellowfin Tuna <input type="checkbox"/> Bigeye Tuna <input type="checkbox"/> Albacore <input type="checkbox"/> Blackfin <input type="checkbox"/> Skipjack Tuna	<input type="checkbox"/> Ridgeback Shark <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Ridgeback Shark <input type="checkbox"/> Small Coastal Shark <input type="checkbox"/> Pelagic Shark

Number of regulation booklets and other outreach materials requested for tournament participants: _____

ESA Updates

- On August 27, 2014, NMFS published a final rule to list 20 coral species as threatened under the ESA; 7 of these species are distributed in U.S. Atlantic, Gulf of Mexico, and Caribbean waters
- NMFS reinitiated ESA consultation on these coral species, and the newly listed Western and Central Atlantic DPS of scalloped hammerhead for all HMS fisheries (including pelagic longline fishery for which consultation had already been reinitiated) on October 30, 2014
- Consultation ongoing now for all HMS fisheries

ESA Updates continued – Shark Petitions

- Porbeagle Sharks – Full range of populations
 - The original negative 90-day finding was remanded by the court; NMFS accepted two 2010 petitions to list the species in March 2015; results expected in Dec 2015
- Smooth Hammerhead and Bigeye Thresher Sharks
 - 90-day finding on a petition to list the species range-wide or any identified distinct population segments (DPSs) on Aug 11, 2015
 - Comments are due by Oct 13, 2015
- Oceanic Whitetip Sharks – petition received Sept 21

Operations/Other

- Continued coordination with Councils & Commissions; ASMFC for sharks
- Louisiana greenstick gear study continuing in FY15
- ICCAT monthly submissions: BFT landings, 20m & BET/YFT vessel lists
- ICCAT e-BCD system in progress
- Caribbean Council closures – Council voted to discontinue this amendment
- Atlantic HMS Electronic Dealer Reporting system ~active 453 HMS dealers submit all landings data/negative reports weekly; weekly compliance monitoring; monthly shark & swordfish commercial landings reports
- Online Individual Bluefin Quota system has active accounts associated with 246 Atlantic Tuna Longline permits and 424 dealers with tuna permits.



National Rules

- National VMS final rule - Reminder
 - Type-approvals for all Skymate & CLS America Thorium TST units expired September 30 (June 5; 80 FR 32095); new Skymate Units approved
 - Reimbursement funds available at this time
(<http://www.psmfc.org/program/vessel-monitoring-system-reimbursement-program-vms?pid=17>)
- National Standards One, Three, and Seven
 - Proposed rule published January 20 (80 FR 2786); 6 month comment period
 - 106 individual/~100,000 campaign public comments received
- Billfish Conservation Act of 2012 Proposed Rule
 - To codify the prohibition of possessing billfish (marlins, spearfish, sailfish) for sale including exemptions for Hawaii or Pacific Insular Areas per the Act
- Shark Conservation Act of 2010
 - To implement national fins-attached requirement in all shark fisheries, with a limited exception for smooth dogfish to be implemented via Amendment 9 to the 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP

Questions?

Thank you!