

Science, Service, Stewardship

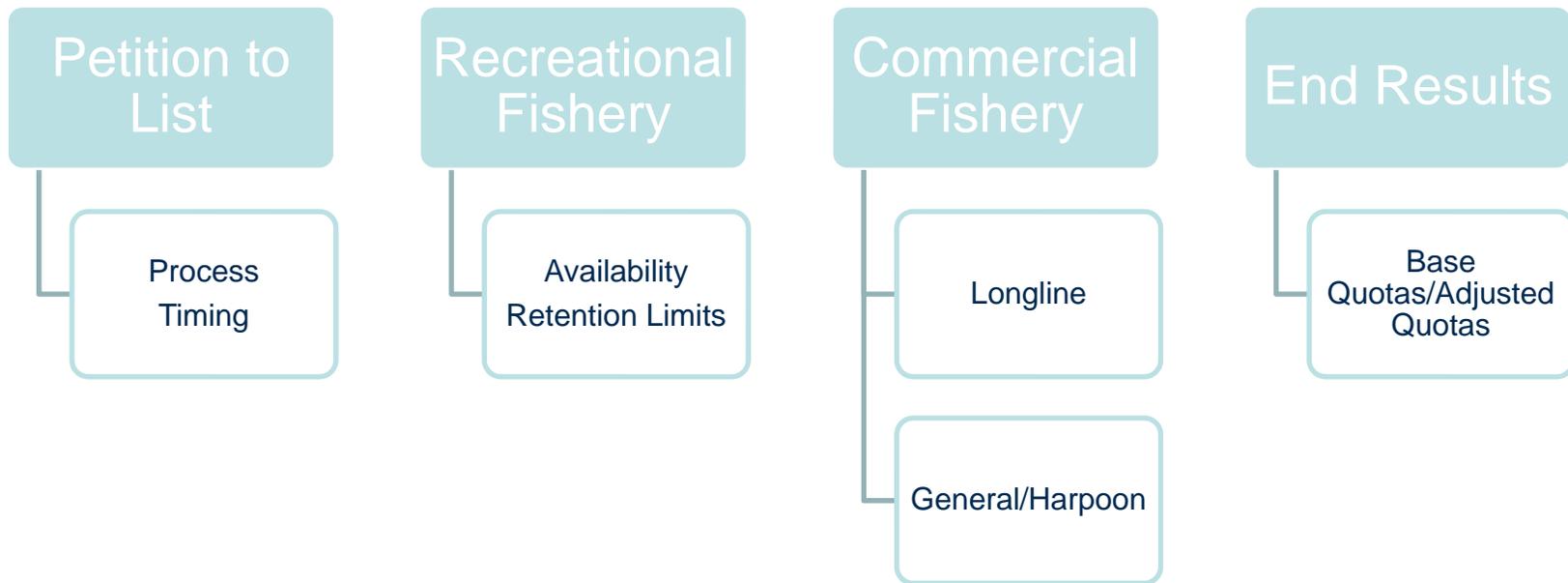


Atlantic Bluefin Tuna 2010 Review and Outlook to 2011 and Beyond

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2010 Bluefin in Review





Center for Biological Diversity Petition to List Bluefin Tuna

- The Center for Biological Diversity submitted a petition to NOAA Fisheries on May 24, 2010.
- Positive 90-day finding concluding that petition presents substantial information indicating petitioned action **may be warranted** published on September 21, 2010
- 90-day finding sought scientific and commercial information for the status review until **November 22, 2010**
- NOAA Fisheries initiated a status review and formed a team comprised of all federal NOAA Fisheries employees
- Some experts from outside federal government presented pertinent information to the team
- NOAA Fisheries held 5 listening sessions with fishermen to obtain additional information which will be incorporated into a section in the status review report



Next Steps on the Process

- SRT will provide NOAA Fisheries with a status review report
- Report peer reviewed by Center for Independent Experts
- NOAA Fisheries will use the status review report, other available information, and our best professional judgment in interpreting the status review report to make a listing determination (e.g., listing is or is not warranted)
- NOAA Fisheries expects to publish this determination 12 months after receiving the petition (no later than **5/24/11**)



Possible outcomes

If NOAA Fisheries determines that listing is **not warranted**, NOAA Fisheries publishes a notice in the *Federal Register* announcing this and that is the end of the process.



Possible outcomes continued

If determined to be threatened, NOAA Fisheries proposes to list the species as **threatened**

- Secretary of Commerce must promulgate protective regulations that are necessary and advisable for the conservation of the species (e.g., a **4(d) rule**)
- Directed take, bycatch, importation and exportation most likely prohibited (unless authorized through Section 7 or 10)
- Critical habitat designated
- Recovery planning initiated



Possible outcomes continued

If determined to be endangered, NOAA Fisheries proposes to list the **species as endangered**

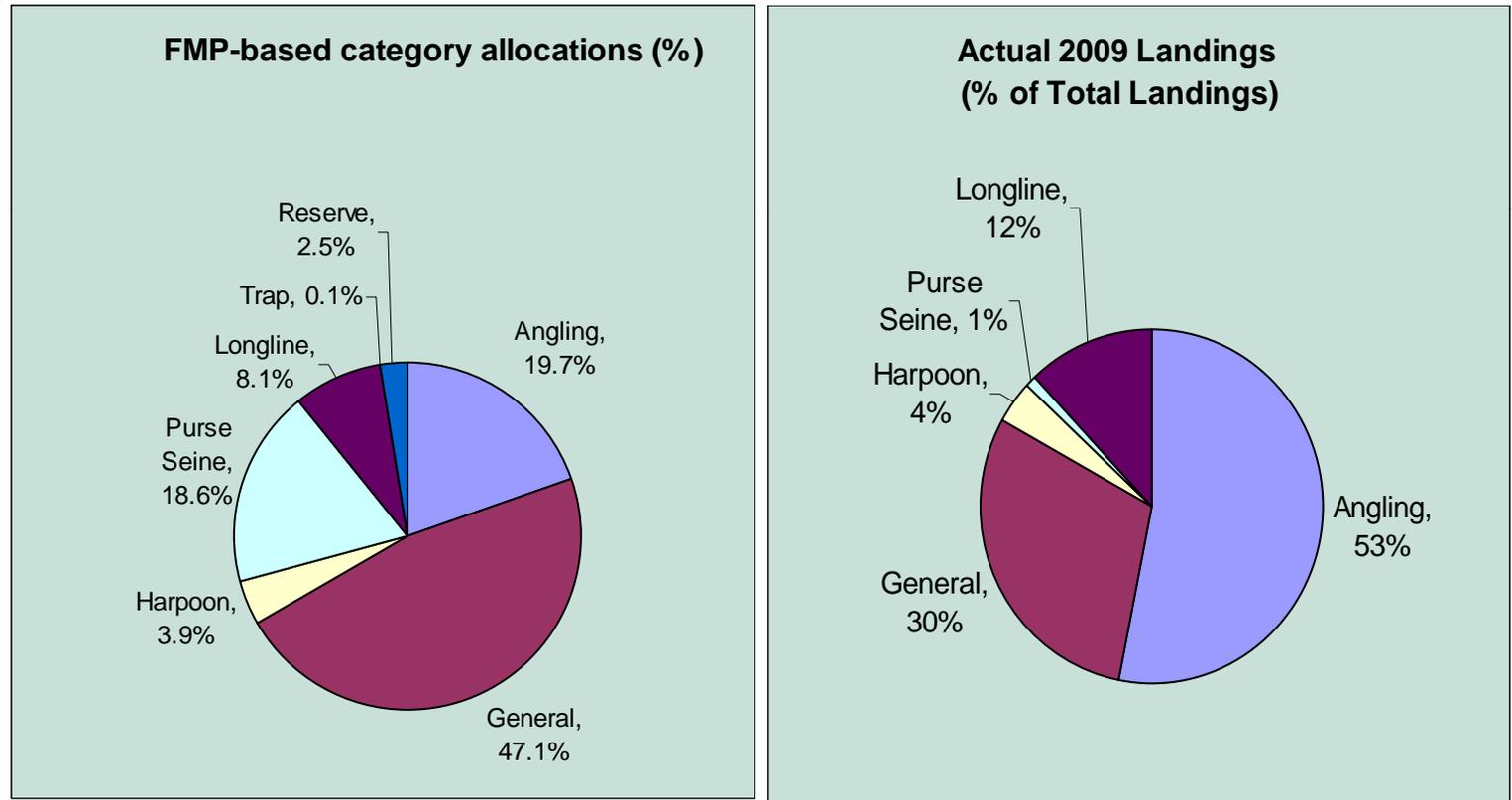
- 60 to 90 day public comment period, public hearings
- NOAA Fisheries must make a final determination no later than one year after proposed rule

—If final rule is endangered, all **take is automatically prohibited**

—NOAA Fisheries must designate critical habitat at time of final listing (to maximum extent prudent) and initiate recovery planning



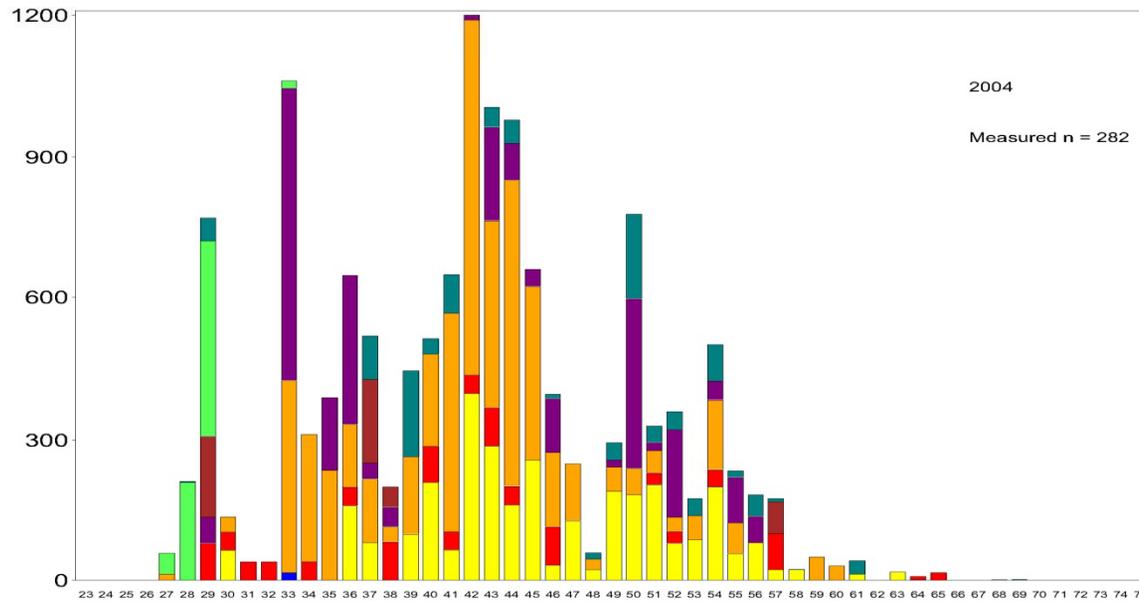
Comparison of FMP allocations to % of 2009 Landings



Landings by category as a percent of total landings (at right) compared to allocations established in the 1999 HMS FMP (at left).



LPIS: Expanded Catch-at-length 2004

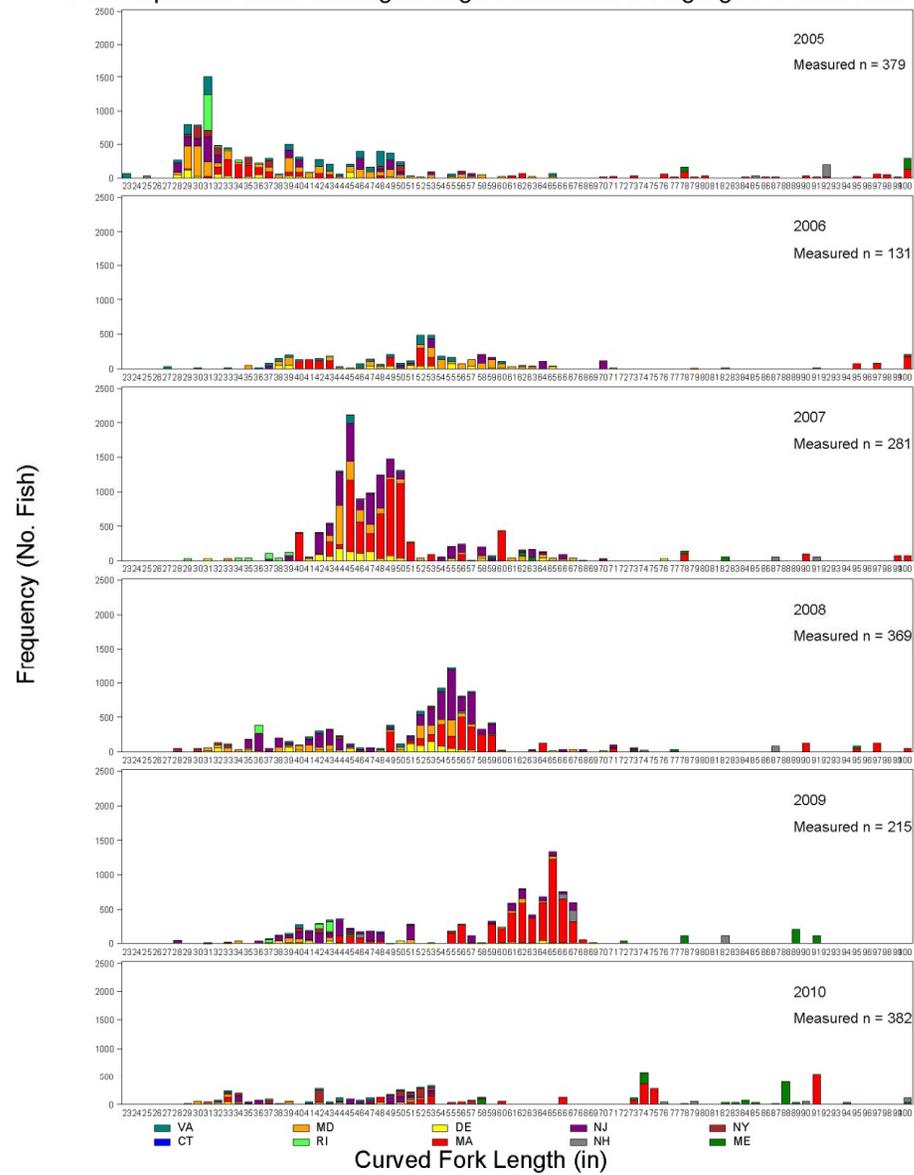


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LPIS: Expanded Catch-at-Length Length Distribution of Angling BFT 2005-2010

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2010 Final
Quota Specs.

Table 1. Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Final Quota Specifications (in metric tons) for the 2010 Fishing Year (January 1-December 31, 2010)

Category (% share of baseline quota)	Baseline Allocation	Dead Discard Deduction	Adjustment to Baseline Quota ¹	Final 2010 Fishing Year Quota
Angling (19.7)	187.6 <u>SUBQUOTAS:</u> School 97.7 Reserve 18.1 North 37.6 South 42.1 Lg. Sch/Sm. Med 85.6 North 40.4 South 45.2 Trophy 4.3 North 1.4 South 2.9		37.8	225.4 <u>SUBQUOTAS:</u> School 97.7 Reserve 18.1 North 37.6 South 42.1 Lg. Sch/Sm. Med 122.5 North 57.8 South 64.7 Trophy 5.2 North 1.7 South 3.5
General (47.1)	Total: 448.6 <u>SUBQUOTAS:</u> Jan 23.8 Jun-Aug 224.3 Sept 118.9 Oct-Nov 58.3 Dec 23.3		90.3	538.9 <u>SUBQUOTAS:</u> Jan 28.6 Jun-Aug 269.4 Sept 142.8 Oct-Nov 70.1 Dec 28.0
Harpoon (3.9)	37.1		7.5	44.6
Purse Seine (18.6)	177.2		35.6	212.8
Longline (8.1)	77.1 <u>SUBQUOTAS:</u> North (-NED) 30.9 NED 25.0 ³ South 46.2	-172.8	170.7 ²	75.0 <u>SUBQUOTAS:</u> North (-NED) 30.0 NED 25.0 ³ South 45.0
Trap (0.1)	1.0		0.2	1.1
Reserve (2.5)	23.8		46.5 ⁴	70.3
Total (100) ⁵	952.4	-172.8	388.6	1,168.2

(1) The distribution of 388.6 mt of underharvest (per ICCAT recommendation) to the quota categories is consistent with FMP allocations, after considerations as calculated below for the Longline category and the Reserve.

(2) Adjustment to Longline category quota is intended to provide sufficient quota for the 2010 fishing year. Longline category quota=77.1-172.8+170.7=75 mt. Dead discard deduction consistent with § 635.27(a)(10).

(3) 25 mt to account for bycatch of BFT in pelagic longline fisheries in the NED. Not included in total baseline allocation, which is allocated according to the category percentages contained in the Consolidated HMS FMP.

(4) Allocation of 46.5 mt to the Reserve for potential ICCAT transfer and other domestic management objectives.

(5) Totals are subject to rounding error.



2010 Recreational Limits

January 1 – June 11

- 1 BFT 27" to less than 73" (all vessels)
- 1 BFT 73"+ (Trophy)

June 12 – December 31

- 1 BFT 27" < 59" day/trip (private vessels)
- 1 BFT 27" < 47" + 1 BFT 47" < 59" day/trip (CHB)
- Trophy closed South

July 18 – December 31

- Trophy closed North



2010 Results (Jan 1 – Dec 31)

Landings Reported by Quota Category	# of Fish	Weight (mt)	2010 Base Quota (mt)	2010 Adj.* Quota (mt)	% Base Quota Taken	% Adj. Quota Taken
General	3,072	528.3	448.6	538.9	118	98
Harpoon	156	18.4	37.1	44.6	50	41
Longline (incl. NED)	407	88.5	102.1	100.0	87	89
Trap	0	0.0	1.0	1.1	0	0
Purse Seine	0	0.0	177.2	212.8	0	0
Angling	4,119	178.5	187.6	225.4	95	79
School	1,835	33.0	97.7	97.7	34	34
Lg Sch/Sm. Med	2,242	139.3	85.6	122.5	163	114
Trophy	42	6.2	4.3	6.9	144	90
Reserve	0	0.0	23.8	70.3	0	0
TOTAL (landings only)	7,754	813.7	977.4	1,193.1	83	68
TOTAL** (landings + dead discards)		973.7	977.4	1,193.1	100	82

* Includes transfer of 1.7 mt from Reserve to Angling Trophy North

** NOTE 2010 Dead discard estimates are not yet available (2009 estimate = 160.0 mt). The United States accounts for dead discards as part of the quota specification process and reports dead discards to ICCAT annually

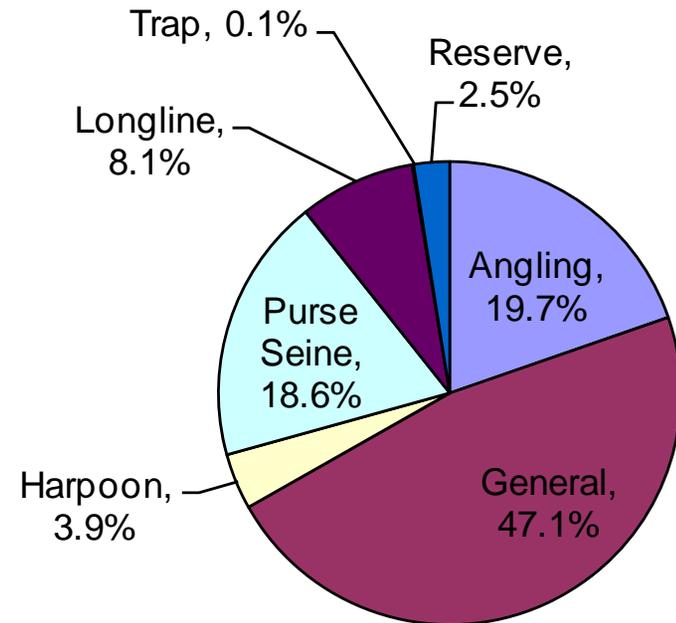


A look at FMP percentages

1999: Landings quota allocations established in Highly Migratory Species Fishery Management Plan

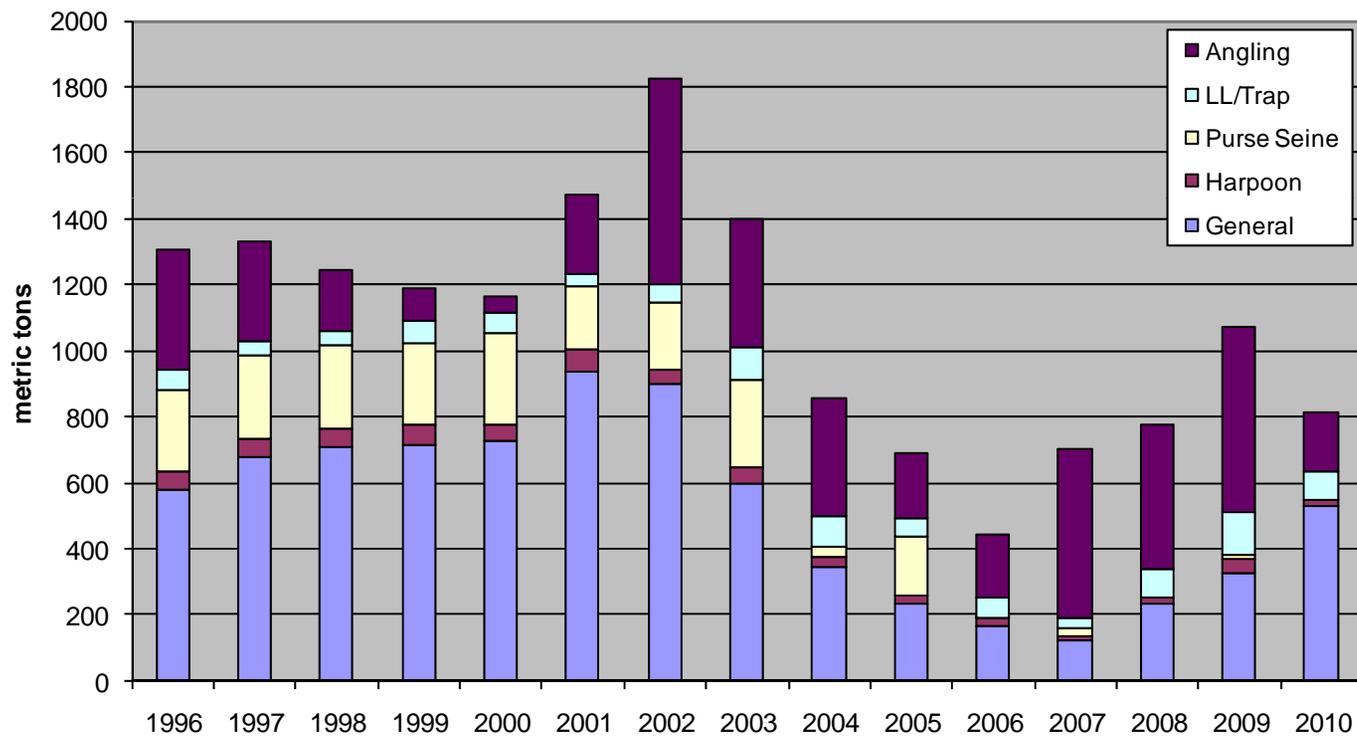
1999-2006: ICCAT Recommendations provided the United States a 68-mt dead discard allowance

2007 onward: No dead discard allowance; ICCAT Recommendations require TACs to be inclusive of dead discards.





Landings by Category (mt)

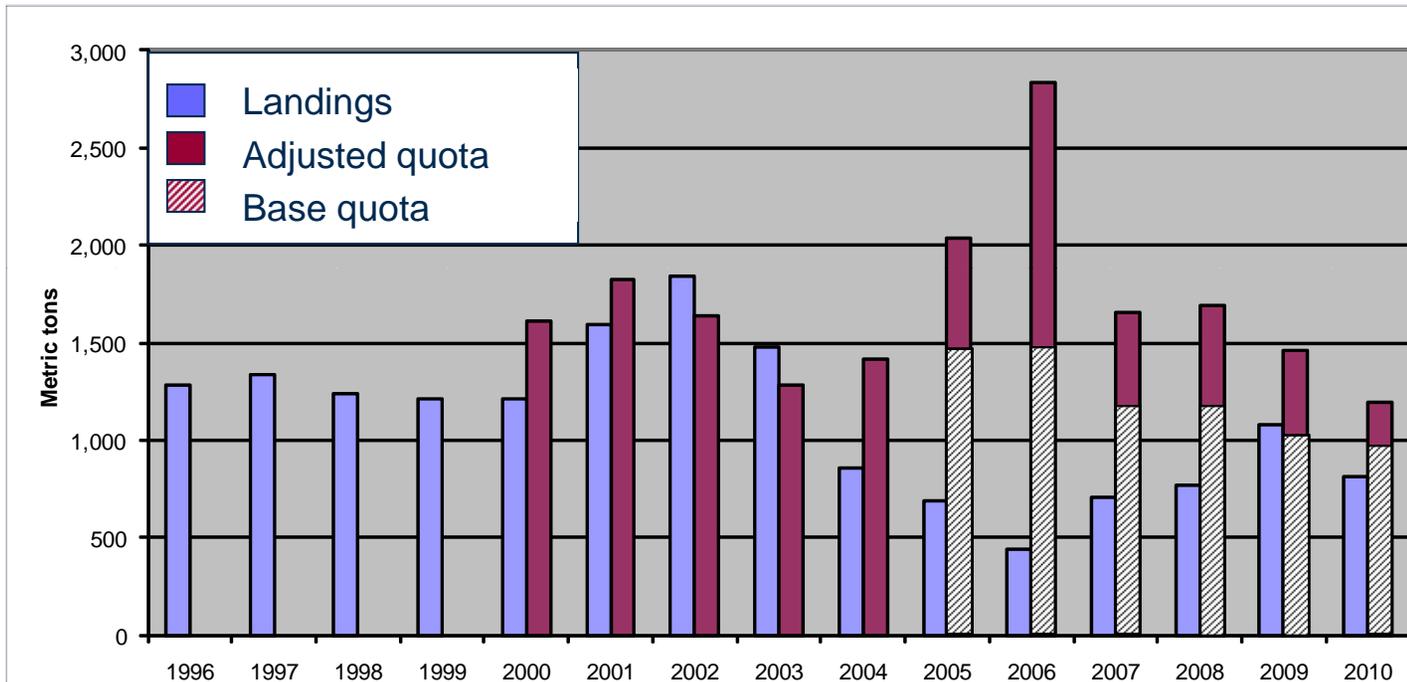


Note the decline in General category landings from 2001 through 2007 and the large proportion of Angling category landings 2007 through 2009 (associated with a spike in large school/small medium BFT landings). General category landings grew from the 2007 low in 2008, 2009, and again in 2010.

Longline and Trap combined because both incidental fisheries and data at beginning of time series combined.



U.S. BFT Landings vs. Adjusted Quotas (mt)



Reductions in landings and large amounts of underharvest beginning in the mid-2000s has precipitated requests for regulatory changes to more fully utilize U.S quota.

In 2010, total landings=813.7 mt which corresponded to 68% of adjusted quota (1,193.2 mt) and 83% of base quota (977.4 mt).

U.S. base quotas shown for 2005 through 2010 (hatched bars) to illustrate relation of recent landings to base quota.



A look back at previous conversations

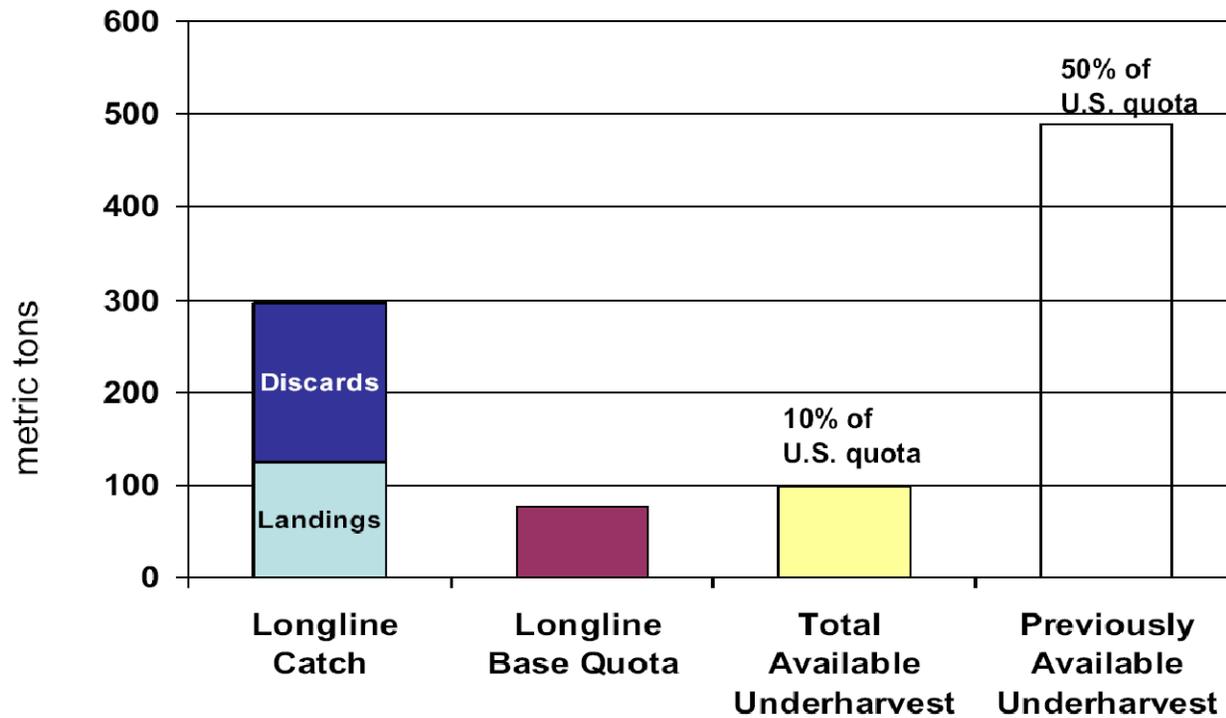
NMFS has raised BFT bycatch issues at public hearings
& with HMS Advisory Panel (AP) over last few years:

- June 2009 Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking
- Fall 2009 AP Meeting
- Spring 2010 AP Meeting
- Fall 2010 AP Meeting (incl. BFT Working Group)

- June 1, 2009, ANPR: requested public comment on (among other things) potential measures to:
 - Increase opportunities to fully harvest U.S. BFT and swordfish quotas
 - Continue efforts to revitalize swordfish fishery while minimizing bycatch to the extent practicable
 - Comments included *increasing* PLL BFT incidental retention limit



The Longline category needs more underharvest than likely to be available in 2011



The previous underharvests that allowed NMFS to provide the Longline category sufficient quota to operate during the entire fishing year may no longer exist due to: likely same or decreased 2011 ICCAT BFT quota, reduced amount of underharvest that can be carried forward, and expected increased availability of fish to the commercial categories in the next few years.



Pelagic Longline BFT
Incidental Catch Requirements
Public feedback

In favor of altering

- Convert discards into marketable product
- Trips more profitable
- Assist in more swordfish trips

Opposed to altering

- Close the GOM to LL fishing (Yearly/Seasonally)
- May result in targeted fishery
- U.S. should support a CITES listing
- Faulty logic regarding more trips being taken
- Quota limited
- Bycatch concerns – turtles/billfish



Convergence of factors – current issues regarding PLL BFT interactions

- As swordfish effort and landings increase, potential for increase in PLL BFT catch
- Deepwater Horizon/BP Oil Spill in Gulf of Mexico
- Petition to list BFT as threatened or endangered under the ESA
- Weak hook research promising
- Availability of commercial-sized BFT expected to increase (marching cohort)
- Must account for dead discards annually (in quota specifications)
- Available quota for 2011 is uncertain at this time
- Ability to carry forward unharvested quota diminishing
- Accounting for all PLL landings and dead discards while keeping within U.S. TAC could result in decreased quotas for directed fishing categories
- Continued requests to prohibit PLL in the Gulf of Mexico



Summary

As we move into 2011, some options for reducing and addressing PLL BFT interactions:

- Changing how we set the annual quota specifications
- Re-establishing target catch requirements in the NED
- Expanding weak hook use

From Sept. 2010 AP Mtg. (Bluefin Tuna Working Group presentation)

Annual BFT Quota Specification – A Look Back and Details to Consider for 2011

All units mt	2008	2009	2010	2011	
WBFT TAC	2,100	1,900	1,800	1,800?	
U.S. TAC	1,190.1	1,034.9	977.4	977?	A
Available BFT Underharvest (from prior year)	595.1 (max. possible)	517.5 (max. possible)	388.6	Max.97.7?	B
→ Longline category	53.6	82.5	170.7	160? (‘09 proxy)	
→ Reserve	178.5 (15% of U.S. TAC)	155.2 (15% of U.S. TAC)	46.5*	?	
→ Directed fishing categories per FMP %s	363	279.8	171.4	?	
Dead discard estimate used (source year)	91.3 (2006)	90 (2007)	172.8** (2008)	160 (2009)	C
Final Adjusted U.S. TAC	1,693.9	1,462.3	1,193.2	917?	A+B-C

* Reduced from proposed amount to maintain proposed amount of underharvest allocated to directed fishing categories

**Latest information: 158 mt, from U.S. Report to ICCAT, 2010



ICCAT WBFT Recommendation -- Quotas

	Recommendation for 2010 (Rec. 08-04)	Recommendation for 2011 and 2012 (annually) (Rec. 10-03)
W. Atl. TAC	1,800 mt	1,750 mt
U.S. baseline quota	952.4 mt	923.7 mt
Total U.S. quota (including 25 mt for bycatch in NED)	977.4 mt	948.7 mt
Limit on amount of underharvest that can be carried forward	50% of quota (489 mt)	10 % of quota (95 mt)



2011 Recreational BFT Limits

January 1 – April 2

- 1 BFT 27" to less than 73" (all vessels)
- 1 BFT 73"+ (Trophy)

April 2 – December 31

- 1 BFT 27" < 59" day/trip (private vessels)
- 1 BFT 27" < 47" + 1 BFT 47" < 59" day/trip (CHB)
- Trophy closed South



2011 General Category BFT Limits

January 1 - 31

- 2 fish per day/trip

June 1 – August 31
(other time-period
subquotas)

- Default is 1 fish per day/trip
- Past few years, 3 fish per day/trip

Considerations

- Availability
- Effort



What's Next on the Horizon?

- Proposed 2011 BFT Quota rule
 - Public hearing today
- FMP and/or Regulatory Amendments
 - Allocations
- Implementation/Operations
 - Monitoring