

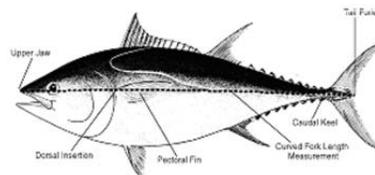
II. QUICK REFERENCE: ATLANTIC TUNAS REGULATIONS

AUTHORIZED SPECIES	
Atlantic bluefin tuna; and bigeye, albacore, yellowfin, and skipjack (BAYS) tunas ²⁵	
PERMITS	
<p>Vessel owners must obtain an Atlantic tunas, Atlantic HMS Charter/Headboat, or an HMS Commercial Caribbean Small Boat permit (valid only in the U.S. Caribbean Region²⁶) for their vessel to harvest regulated Atlantic tunas within the territorial sea of the United States adjacent to, and within the boundaries of, certain states.^{27, 28} Only one type of permit (i.e., Atlantic tunas or HMS Charter/Headboat, or the Commercial Caribbean Small boat permit) may be issued to a vessel per year.²⁹</p> <p>Information on Atlantic tunas permits can be obtained by calling (888) 872-8862 or by visiting http://hmspermits.noaa.gov. For information about the limited access Atlantic Tunas Longline category permit or the HMS Commercial Caribbean Small Boat permit, call the Southeast Regional Office at (727) 824-5326.</p>	
RETENTION LIMITS	
<p>There are regional and seasonal differences in the number of tunas that may be kept for some permit types. Please visit http://hmspermits.noaa.gov or call the Atlantic Tunas Information Line at (888) 872-8862 or (978) 281-9260 for more information. HMS Commercial Caribbean Small Boat permit holders may retain up to 10 BAYS tunas per vessel per trip.³⁰</p>	
AUTHORIZED GEARS³¹	
Bluefin Tuna	
HMS Charter/Headboat	Rod and reel (incl. downriggers), bandit, green-stick, handline
General category	Rod and reel (incl. downriggers), bandit, green-stick, handline, harpoon
Harpoon category	Harpoon
Trap category	Pound net and fish weir
Purse Seine category	Purse seine (mesh and inspection restrictions apply)
Longline category(incidental ONLY)*	Longline and green-stick (no directed fishery; limited incidental allowance based on 'target' catch in the pelagic longline fisheries for swordfish and other tunas)
<p>* If fishing with longline gear, both the vessel owner and operator must become certified at a Protected Species Safe Handling, Release and Identification Workshop. All commercial longline vessels must have handling and release gear and corrodible hooks on board. Fishermen using pelagic longline gear also need to comply with other hook, bait, and gear requirements.³² Vessels with pelagic longline gear onboard are not authorized to possess, retain, transship, store, or land hammerhead sharks (great, smooth, and scalloped), oceanic whitetip, or silky sharks.³³ Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) requirements apply to pelagic longline vessels.³⁴</p>	
BAYS Tunas	
<p>The gear types authorized for bluefin tuna (listed above) are also authorized for BAYS tunas, regardless of permit category, except trap³⁵, purse seine, and longline gear. Purse seine or Longline category permits must be held to use purse seine or longline gears to fish for BAYS tunas.</p> <p>The HMS Commercial Caribbean Small Boat permit may be used to fish for BAYS tunas with rod and reel, bandit, green-stick, handline, harpoon, buoy gear.</p>	

Other Gear Notes: There are several closed areas, some of which apply to all gear types.³⁶ See the appropriate section of this guide, the HMS webpage, or 50 CFR part 635 for more details and locations of area closures.

MINIMUM SIZES

Curved fork length (CFL) - line tracing the contour of the body from the tip of the upper jaw to the fork of the tail.³⁷



Curved Fork Length (CFL)

Bluefin tuna	73 inches (186 cm) CFL ³⁸ , with some additional restrictions by permit type
Bigeye tuna	27 inches (69 cm) CFL ³⁹
Yellowfin tuna	27 inches (69 cm) CFL ⁴⁰
Albacore and skipjack tunas	No minimum size

LANDING RESTRICTIONS

Atlantic tunas may be landed round with fins intact, or eviscerated with the head and fins removed as long as one pectoral fin and the tail remain attached. They cannot be filleted or cut into pieces at sea. The upper and lower lobes of the tail may be removed from tunas for storage purposes but the fork of the tail must remain intact.⁴¹

Commercial permit holders cannot retain or possess bluefin tuna intended for sale with the head removed that is less than 54 inches (137 cm) pectoral fin curved length.⁴²

Commercial permit holders may *not* remove the head of a bigeye tuna or yellowfin tuna if the remaining portion would be less than 27 inches (69 cm) from the fork of the tail to the forward edge of the cut.⁴³

ADDITIONAL REMARKS

Federal regulations for tunas apply in all waters (i.e., shoreline to the outermost boundary of the EEZ) of the Atlantic Ocean, including the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Sea, except for the state waters of Maine, Connecticut, and Mississippi.⁴⁴