



NMFS Adjusts Atlantic Bluefin Tuna (BFT) Angling Category Daily Retention Limit, Closes Southern Trophy BFT Fishery, and Transfers Quota to Northern Trophy BFT Fishery

NMFS is taking the following three actions regarding the BFT Angling category fishery effective June 12, 2010:

- (1) Adjustment of the retention limit for the remainder of 2010, as follows:

| Permit category | Retention Limit per Vessel per Day/Trip |
|---|---|
| HMS Angling category | 1 school <i>or</i> large school BFT (27 to <59") |
| HMS Charter/Headboat category (while fishing recreationally) | 1 school BFT (27 to <47") <i>and</i> 1 large school BFT (47 to <59") |

Retention of small medium BFT (59 to <73") is prohibited through Dec. 31, 2010.

These limits are effective for all areas except the Gulf of Mexico, the designated spawning grounds for BFT and where NMFS prohibits targeted fishing. Regardless of the duration of a fishing trip, the daily retention limit applies upon landing.

- (2) Closure of the large medium/giant "trophy" BFT (73" or greater) fishery south of 39°18'N (off Great Egg Inlet, NJ) through December 31, 2010 (based on North Carolina Tagging Program data);
- (3) Transfer of 1.7 mt from the Reserve to the northern area trophy category subquota to allow northern area fishermen an opportunity to harvest the amount of trophy BFT quota established for the northern area in the recently published 2010 quota specifications.

The annual Angling category trophy limit of one large medium or giant BFT per vessel (73" or greater) remains in effect for vessels fishing in the northern area.

NMFS takes these actions to be consistent with the 2006 Consolidated Highly Migratory Species Fishery Management Plan and to prevent overharvest of the 2010 Angling category quota. In taking this action, NMFS considered the regulatory determination criteria regarding inseason adjustments, including available quota, fishery performance in recent years (particularly small medium BFT landings), and the availability of BFT on the fishing grounds.

Anglers may catch and release or tag and release BFT of all sizes, subject to the requirements of the HMS catch-and-release and tag-and-release programs. NMFS regulations at 50 CFR 635.21(a)(1) require that all released BFT be released in a manner that will maximize survivability, and without removing the fish from the water. For further information on safe handling see:

<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/PartnershipsCommunications/recfish/ethics.htm>



NMFS may make further Angling category adjustments via inseason action, if warranted. This notice is a courtesy to BFT fishery permit holders to help keep you informed about your fishery. For additional information, call (888) 872-8862 or (978) 281-9260, or go to www.hmspermits.gov. Official notice of Federal fishery actions is made through filing such notice with the Office of the Federal Register.

Emily H. Menashes

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Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries

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Date

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