



## NMFS Announces a Final Rule Regarding the 2014 Atlantic Shark Commercial Fishing Season

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) announces a final rule that establishes quotas and opening dates for the 2014 Atlantic commercial shark fisheries. Some of the quotas may have changed from the proposed rule based on adjustments to account for additional landings reported as of October 18, 2013. Additionally, based on public comment, we have changed the opening date of the aggregated LCS and hammerhead shark management groups to June 1, 2014. The final adjusted quotas and opening dates are:

Management Group	Region	2014 Annual Adjusted Quota	Season Opening Dates
Blacktip Sharks	Gulf of Mexico	274.3 mt dw (604,626 lb dw)*	January 1, 2014
Aggregated Large Coastal Sharks		151.2 mt dw (333,828 lb dw)*	
Hammerhead Sharks		25.3 mt dw (55,722 lb dw)	
Aggregated Large Coastal Sharks	Atlantic	168.9 mt dw (372,552 lb dw)	June 1, 2014*
Hammerhead Sharks		27.1 mt dw (59,736 lb dw)	
Non-Sandbar LCS Research	No regional quotas	50.0 mt dw (110,230 lb dw)	January 1, 2014
Sandbar Shark Research		116.6 mt dw (257,056 lb dw)	
Non-Blacknose Small Coastal Sharks	Gulf of Mexico	68.3 mt dw (150,476 lb dw)	
	Atlantic	264.1 mt dw (582,333 lb dw)	
Blacknose Sharks	Gulf of Mexico	1.8 mt dw (4,076 lb dw)	
	Atlantic	17.5 mt dw (38,638 lb dw)	
Blue Sharks	No regional quotas	273.0 mt dw (601,856 lb dw)	
Porbeagle Sharks		1.2 mt dw (2,820 lb dw)*	
Pelagic Sharks Other Than Porbeagle or Blue		488.0 mt dw (1,075,856 lb dw)	

\*Change from proposed rule

All of the shark fisheries will remain open until December 31, 2014, unless NMFS calculates that the fishing season landings have reached, or are projected to reach, 80 percent of the available quota. In that case, NMFS will publish a notice in the Federal Register of the closure for that shark species group that will be effective no fewer than 5 days from the date of filing.

This notice is a courtesy to the HMS fishery participants to help keep you informed about the fishery. More details on the reasons regarding the decisions and responses to the public comments received are provided in the final rule for this action. Copies of these documents are available upon request from the Highly Migratory Species Management Division, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910 (phone: 301-427-8503, fax: 301-713-1917) or on the HMS website at: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/>. For further information on this final rule and its requirements, contact Karyl Brewster-Geisz or Guý DuBeck at 301-427-8503. The information will also be posted on the HMS website at: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/>.

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Table 1. 2014 annual quotas and opening dates for the Atlantic shark fisheries. All quotas and landings are dressed weight (dw), in metric tons (mt), unless specified otherwise.

Management Group	Region	2013 Annual Quota (A)	Preliminary 2013 Landings <sup>1</sup> (B)	Adjustments (C)	2014 Base Annual Quota (D)	2014 Final Annual Quota (D+C)	Season Opening Dates
Blacktip Sharks <sup>2</sup>	Gulf of Mexico	256.6 mt dw (565,700 lb dw)	238.9 mt dw (526,774 lb dw)	17.7 mt dw (38,926 lb dw)	256.6 mt dw (565,700 lb dw)	274.3 mt dw (604,626 lb dw)	January 1, 2014
Aggregated Large Coastal Sharks		157.5 mt dw (347,317 lb dw)	163.7 mt dw (360,806 lb dw)	-6.2 mt dw (-13,489 lb dw)	157.5 mt dw (347,317 lb dw)	151.2 mt dw (333,828 lb dw)	
Hammerhead Sharks		25.3 mt dw (55,722 lb dw)	10.5 mt dw (23,212 lb dw)	-	25.3 mt dw (55,722 lb dw)	25.3 mt dw (55,722 lb dw)	
Aggregated Large Coastal Sharks	Atlantic	168.9 mt dw (372,552 lb dw)	147.9 mt dw (325,996 lb dw)	-	168.9 mt dw (372,552 lb dw)	168.9 mt dw (372,552 lb dw)	June 1, 2014
Hammerhead Sharks		27.1 mt dw (59,736 lb dw)	13.4 mt dw (29,454 lb dw)	-	27.1 mt dw (59,736 lb dw)	27.1 mt dw (59,736 lb dw)	
Non-Sandbar LCS Research	No regional quotas	50.0 mt dw (110,230 lb dw)	10.9 mt dw (24,008 lb dw)	-	50.0 mt dw (110,230 lb dw)	50.0 mt dw (110,230 lb dw)	January 1, 2014
Sandbar Shark Research		116.6 mt dw (257,056 lb dw)	27.9 mt dw (61,525 lb dw)	-	116.6 mt dw (257,056 lb dw)	116.6 mt dw (257,056 lb dw)	
Non-Blacknose Small Coastal Sharks <sup>2</sup>	Gulf of Mexico	135.7 mt dw (299,075 lb dw) <sup>3</sup>	73.8 mt dw (162,613 lb dw)	22.8 mt dw (50,159 lb dw) <sup>4</sup>	45.5 mt dw (100,317 lb dw)	68.3 mt dw (150,476 lb dw)	
	Atlantic	193.5 mt dw (426,570 lb dw) <sup>3</sup>	101.7 mt dw (224,146 lb dw)	88.0 mt dw (194,111 lb dw) <sup>4</sup>	176.1 mt dw (388,222 lb dw)	264.1 mt dw (582,333 lb dw)	
Blacknose Sharks	Gulf of Mexico	2.0 mt dw (4,513 lb dw)	0.7 mt dw (1,574 lb dw)	-0.2 mt dw (-437 lb dw) <sup>5</sup>	2.0 mt dw (4,513 lb dw)	1.8 mt dw (4,076 lb dw)	

	Atlantic	18.0 mt dw (39,749 lb dw)	15.1 mt dw (33,276 lb dw)	-0.5 mt dw (-1,111 lb dw) <sup>5</sup>	18.0 mt dw (39,749 lb dw)	17.5 mt dw (38,638 lb dw)
Blue Sharks	No regional quotas	273.0 mt dw (601,856 lb dw)	4.4 mt dw (9,767 lb dw)	-	273.0 mt dw (601,856 lb dw)	273.0 mt dw (601,856 lb dw)
Porbeagle Sharks		0 mt dw (0 lb dw)	< 1 mt dw (54 lb dw)	-0.5 <sup>6</sup> (adjustments from 2012 and 2013 overharvests)	1.7 mt dw (3,748 lb dw)	1.2 mt dw (2,820 lb dw)
Pelagic Sharks Other Than Porbeagle or Blue		488 mt dw (1,075,856 lb dw)	86.6 mt dw (190,902 lb dw)	-	488.0 mt dw (1,075,856 lb dw)	488.0 mt dw (1,075,856 lb dw)

<sup>1</sup> Landings are from January 1, 2013, through October 18, 2013, and are subject to change.

<sup>2</sup> Based on stock assessment results, these management groups are considered not overfished and overfishing is not occurring. Thus, NMFS may increase the following year's base annual quota by an equivalent amount of the underharvest up to 50 percent above the base annual quota.

<sup>3</sup> Transfer of non-blacknose SCS quota from the Atlantic to the Gulf of Mexico region on September 2, 2013 (78 FR 54195).

<sup>4</sup> This adjustment accounts for underharvest in 2013. While the total underharvest is 153.7 mt dw, NMFS may account for underharvest only up to 50 percent of the base annual quota or 110.8 mt dw (244,270 lb dw). Based on regional splits, the Atlantic region (79.5%) would receive 88.0 mt dw of the underharvest amount, while the Gulf of Mexico (20.5%) would receive 22.8 mt dw. Therefore, the Atlantic non-blacknose SCS adjusted quota would be 264.1 mt dw and the Gulf of Mexico non-blacknose SCS adjusted would be 68.3 mt dw for the 2014 fishing season.

<sup>5</sup> This adjustment accounts for overharvest in 2012. After the final rule establishing the 2012 quotas published, late dealer reports indicated the blacknose shark quota was overharvested by 3.5 mt dw (7,742 lb dw). Since Amendment 5a to the 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP established regional quotas, NMFS decided to implement a 5-year adjustment of the overharvest amount by the percentage of landings in 2012. Thus, NMFS would reduce the Gulf of Mexico blacknose sharks by 0.2 mt dw (437 lb dw) and the Atlantic blacknose sharks by 0.5 mt dw (1,111 lb dw) for the next 5 years.

<sup>6</sup> This adjustment accounts for overharvest in 2013 and previous fishing years. In 2013, NMFS did not open the porbeagle shark management group due to overharvest from 2011 and 2012 (2.1 mt dw; 4,622 lb dw). This overharvest amount exceeded the 2013 base annual quota by 0.4 mt dw (874 lb dw), therefore, 0.4 mt dw (874 lb dw) would be reduced from the 2014 base annual quota. In addition, there was < 0.1 mt dw (54 lb dw) of illegal landing of porbeagle sharks in 2013.