



NMFS Adjusts General Category Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Retention Limit for January 2009

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) adjusts the General category daily Atlantic bluefin tuna (BFT) retention limit for January 1-31, 2009, from the default limit of one large medium or giant BFT (measuring 73 inches curved fork length or greater), scheduled to take effect January 1, 2009, to **two** large medium or giant BFT per vessel per day/trip. The General category daily retention limit applies to vessels permitted in the commercial Atlantic tunas General category and the Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Charter/Headboat category *while fishing commercially*.

NMFS takes this action after consideration of the determination criteria regarding inseason adjustments. Although the 2009 quota specifications have not yet been published, NMFS plans to propose BFT quotas consistent with the 2008 ICCAT recommendation as soon as possible. However, NMFS issues this notice now to allow for advanced planning of General category fishing activities for the January General category time period.

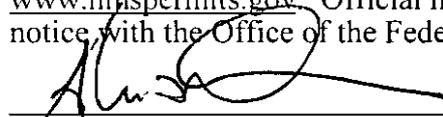
NMFS reminds BFT anglers that the default Angling category retention limit of one school, large school, or small medium BFT (measuring 27 to less than 73 inches) will apply effective January 1, 2009. The Angling category daily retention limit applies to vessels permitted in the HMS Angling category and the HMS Charter/Headboat category *while fishing recreationally*.

In summary:

Quota category	Current retention limit (through Dec. 31, 2008)	Retention limit as of Jan. 1, 2009	Effective period of adjustment
General category	3 large medium/giant BFT (73"+)	2 large medium /giant BFT (73"+)	January 1-31, 2009
Angling category	1 school BFT (27 to < 47") plus 1 large school/small medium BFT (47 to <73")	1 school, large school or small medium BFT (27 to < 73")	Until changed

These limits are effective for all areas except for the Gulf of Mexico, which are designated spawning grounds for BFT where NMFS does not allow targeted fishing. Regardless of the duration of a fishing trip, the daily retention limit applies upon landing.

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.


 Alan D. Risenhoover
 Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries

DEC 17 2008
 Date

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