



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Longline Category NED Quota Attained; Incidental Retention Limits to Apply for the Remainder of the Fishing Year

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) announces that the 25-mt quota available for the Atlantic bluefin tuna (BFT) Longline category Northeast Distant gear restricted area (NED) fishery has been attained. As of October 6, 2009, Longline landings of BFT in the NED total 37.6 mt.

Under the BFT retention limit regulations, once the NED quota has been attained, the target catch requirements specified for the Longline category apply in that area. Therefore, the following incidental BFT retention limits will apply in the NED for the remainder of 2009:

- 1 large medium or giant BFT (i.e., 73 inches or greater) per vessel per trip, provided that at least 2,000 lb of non-BFT species are legally caught, retained, and offloaded from the same trip;
- 2 large medium or giant BFT for at least 6,000 lb of non-BFT
- 3 large medium or giant BFT for at least 30,000 lb of non-BFT.

This action is effective **October 20, 2009, through December 31, 2009**, and applies to Atlantic Tunas Longline category permitted vessels that fish in the NED. The intent of this action and its timing is to prevent overharvest of the BFT quota established for the Longline category while providing sufficient time for vessels currently fishing to return to port and offload any BFT that may have been legally retained on board before this action takes effect.

NMFS will continue to monitor Longline category landings for the remainder of the 2009 fishing year and may take further action, if necessary, via notice in the Federal Register. In addition, fishermen may call the Atlantic Tunas Information Line at (888) 872-8862 or (978) 281-9260, or access the internet at www.hmspermits.gov, for fishery updates.

This notice is a courtesy to BFT fishery permit holders to help keep you informed about your fishery. Official notice of Federal fishery actions is made through filing such notice with the Office of the Federal Register. For further information, contact Sarah McLaughlin or Brad McHale at (978) 281-9260.

for Emily Menashes

Alan D. Risenhoover
Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries

OCT 15 2009

Date

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