



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

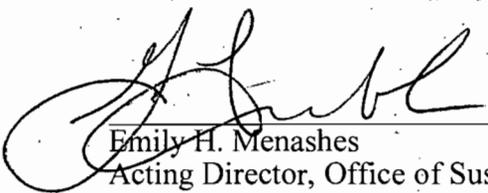
NMFS Maintains Three-fish General Category (Commercial) Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Daily Retention Limit for September-December 2011

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) maintains the current General category daily Atlantic bluefin tuna (BFT) retention limit of **three** large medium or giant BFT (measuring 73" or greater) per vessel per day/trip for September 1 through December 31, 2011. NMFS takes this action after consideration of the regulatory determination criteria at § 635.27(a)(8) regarding inseason adjustments.

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*. These limits are effective for all areas except for the Gulf of Mexico, which are designated spawning grounds for BFT and where NMFS does not allow targeted fishing. Regardless of the duration of a fishing trip, the daily retention limit applies upon landing. For example, whether a vessel fishing under the General category limit takes a two-day trip or makes two trips in one day, the daily limit of three fish may not be exceeded upon landing.

NMFS regulations at 50 CFR 635.21(a)(1) require that all BFT that are released be handled in a manner that will maximize survivability, and without removing the fish from the water. For additional information on safe handling, see the Careful Catch and Release brochure available at <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/>.

This notice is a courtesy to BFT fishery permit holders to help keep you informed about the 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
Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries

AUG 23 2011

Date

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