



## NMFS Transfers 50 mt from Atlantic Bluefin Tuna (BFT) Reserve Category to General Category and Adjusts General Category (Commercial) BFT Daily Retention Limit for Remainder of 2011

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) adjusts the General category BFT quota by transferring 50 mt from the Reserve category. With this transfer, the adjusted General category quota for the 2011 fishing year, which ends December 31, 2011, is now 485.1 mt.

NMFS also reduces the General category daily Atlantic bluefin tuna (BFT) retention limit from three to **two** large medium or giant BFT (measuring 73" or greater) per vessel per day/trip effective November 6, 2011, through December 31, 2011. NMFS takes this action after consideration of the regulatory determination criteria at § 635.27(a)(8) regarding inseason adjustments.

This inseason action is intended to provide additional opportunities to harvest the U.S. BFT quota without exceeding it and preserving the opportunity for General category fishermen to participate in the winter BFT fishery in the mid-Atlantic region that typically begins in December.

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 **two** 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/>.

NMFS may determine that additional actions are necessary to ensure available BFT quota is not exceeded or to enhance scientific data collection from, and fishing opportunities in, all geographic areas. Subsequent adjustments to the daily retention limit, if any, will be announced through publication in the Federal Register.

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](http://www.hmspermits.gov). Official notice of Federal fishery actions is made through filing such notice with the Office of the Federal Register.

*for* Alan D. Risenhoover  
Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries

NOV - 3 2011

Date

### SIGN UP FOR ATLANTIC HMS NEWS!

-- An electronic newsletter informing you of the latest HMS-related actions --  
<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/newslist/>

