



## **NMFS Proposes Initial Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Quotas and Effort Controls for the 2008 Fishing Year**

The current U.S. Atlantic bluefin tuna (BFT) baseline quota of 1,165.12 mt, recommended at the 2006 meeting of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) and implemented in the final 2007 quota specifications and effort controls remains in effect until changed. In accordance with the Consolidated Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Fishery Management Plan (Consolidated HMS FMP), the 2008 BFT specifications would make underharvest or overharvest adjustments, as necessary, for the 2008 fishing year (January 1-December 31, 2008).

Based on current landings information and the relatively low BFT harvest rates in recent years, NMFS anticipates that the 2007 fishing year underharvest will be substantial. However, the current ICCAT recommendation limits the amount of underharvest that may be carried forward to 595.1 mt. In this action, NMFS proposes to carry over and distribute 595.1 mt of BFT underharvest from the 2007 fishing year to the 2008 fishing year quota, as shown in the attached table. The specifications will be adjusted in the final rule, based on updated landings figures.

The proposed General and Angling category effort controls are the same as implemented for 2007 (with restricted fishing day (RFD) adjustments as needed for the 2008 calendar and specification of a General category retention limit for January 2008). Proposed RFDs are all Saturdays and Sundays from November 15-December 31, 2008, plus November 27 and December 25, 2008. RFDs are intended to extend the General category BFT fishery into the late season for the southern Atlantic region. The proposed initial General category retention limits and Angling category retention limits are as follows:

<b>Category</b>	<b>Retention Limit (per vessel per day/trip)</b>	<b>Duration</b>
<b>General</b>	3 large medium/giant BFT (measuring 73" or greater)	January 1, 2008 – January 31, 2008 June 1, 2008 – August 31, 2008
<b>Angling</b>	1 school BFT (measuring 27-<47") AND 2 large school/small medium BFT (measuring 47-<73")	January 1, 2008 – December 31, 2008

No additional changes to overall management are being proposed. NMFS reminds permit holders that vessel permits issued for the 2007 fishing year are effective through December 31, 2008. There will be an opportunity to change permit category for the 2008 fishing year, i.e., once during the period of January 1, 2008, through May 31, 2008.


You may submit comments (identified by "0648-AV58") by November 1, 2007 using any one of the following methods:

- Submit electronic comments via the Federal eRulemaking Portal <http://www.regulations.gov>
- Fax: 978-281-9340, Attn: Sarah McLaughlin
- Mail: Sarah McLaughlin, Highly Migratory Species Management Division, NMFS, One Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930

NMFS will hold two public hearings to receive comments from fishery participants and other members of the public regarding these proposed initial quota specifications and effort controls, as follows:

1. October 3, 2008, 7 p.m.-9 p.m., NOAA, 1301 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910.
2. October 23, 2008, 3:00-5:00 p.m., NMFS, One Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930.

This notice is a courtesy to BFT fishery participants 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 the HMS Management Division at (978) 281-9260.



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Alan Risenhoover, Director  
Office of Sustainable Fisheries

OCT 02 2007

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Date

**Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Proposed Quota Specifications (in metric tons)  
for the 2008 Fishing Year (January 1-December 31, 2008)**

Category (% share of baseline quota)	Baseline Allocation	Dead Discard Deduction	Adjustment to Baseline Quota <sup>1</sup>	Proposed 2008 Fishing Year Quota
<b>Angling (19.7)</b>	229.5 <b>SUBQUOTAS:</b> School 119.0 Reserve 22.0 North 45.8 South 51.2 Lg. Sch/Sm. Med 105.2 North 49.6 South 55.6 Trophy 5.3 North 1.8 South 3.5		80.0	309.5 <b>SUBQUOTAS:</b> School 119.0 Reserve 22.0 North 45.8 South 51.2 Lg. Sch/Sm. Med 183.4 North 86.6 South 96.8 Trophy 7.1 North 2.4 South 4.7
<b>General (47.1)</b>	<b>Total:</b> 548.8 <b>SUBQUOTAS:</b> Jan 29.1 Jun-Aug 274.4 Sept 145.4 Oct-Nov 71.3 Dec 28.5		191.2	740.0 <b>SUBQUOTAS:</b> Jan 39.2 Jun-Aug 370.0 Sept 196.1 Oct-Nov 96.2 Dec 38.5
<b>Harpoon (3.9)</b>	45.4		15.8	61.2
<b>Purse Seine (18.6)</b>	216.7		75.5	292.2
<b>Longline (8.1)</b>	94.4 <b>SUBQUOTAS:</b> North (-NED) 37.8 NED 25.0 South 56.6	-91.3	53.6 <sup>2</sup>	56.7 <b>SUBQUOTAS:</b> North (-NED) 22.7 NED 25.0 South 34.0
<b>Trap (0.1)</b>	1.2		0.4	1.6
<b>Reserve (2.5)</b>	29.1		178.5 <sup>3</sup>	207.6
<b>Total (100)<sup>4</sup></b>	1,165.1	-91.3	595.1	1,668.9

(1) The proposed distribution of 595.1 mt of underharvest (per ICCAT recommendation) to the quota categories would be consistent with FMP allocations, after considerations as calculated below for the Longline category and the Reserve.

(2) Adjustment to Longline category quota is intended to provide sufficient quota for the 2008 fishing year. Proposed Longline category quota=94.4-91.3+53.6=56.7.

(3) Allocation of 15% of the TAC to the Reserve (178.5 mt) for potential ICCAT transfer and other domestic management objectives.

(4) Totals are subject to rounding error.

To view the proposed rule, go to [www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/breaking\\_news.htm](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/breaking_news.htm).

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