



## New Albacore and Bluefin Tuna Daily Bag Limits now effective off California



In October 2007, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) issued a new regulation establishing daily bag limits for sport-caught albacore tuna (*Thunnus alalunga*) and bluefin tuna (*Thunnus orientalis*) in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ, 3-200 nautical miles) off California. This rule has been implemented under authority of the Fishery Management Plan for U.S. West Coast Fisheries for Highly Migratory Species (HMS FMP). The State of California has issued companion regulations governing the take and possession of tuna in state waters (generally out to three nautical miles).

**The new regulations establish a daily bag limit of:**

- **Ten (10) albacore tuna if any part of the fishing trip is conducted south of Point Conception (34° 27' N. latitude) to the U.S.-Mexico border.**
- **Twenty-five (25) albacore tuna if the entire fishing trip is north of Point Conception to the California-Oregon border.**
- **Ten (10) bluefin tuna off the entire California coast.**
- **Under State of California regulations, catches of either of these species do not apply toward the overall general daily bag limit of 20 finfish in combination. See Section 28.38 of the California Sport Fishing Regulations (Title 14) for additional information.**

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Q. Why are there two bag limits for albacore?**

The two bag limits for albacore tuna are intended to accommodate differences in fishing opportunity in the two regions south and north of Point Conception. The 25 fish albacore tuna bag limit north of Point Conception is consistent with the current albacore tuna bag limit established by the State of Oregon for recreational fisheries in its waters and recognizes the more frequent weather related loss of fishing opportunity in these waters compared to waters south of Point Conception.

### **Q. What are the possession and boat limits if I intend to fish on a multi-day trip?**

State of California regulations allow, by special permit, the retention of up to three (3) daily bag limits for a trip occurring over multiple, consecutive days. State of California regulations also allow for two (2) or more persons angling for finfish aboard a vessel in ocean waters off California to continue fishing until boat limits are reached. NMFS considers these additional state restrictions to be consistent with Federal regulations implementing the HMS FMP, including this new regulation. Anglers planning to go on a multi-day trip and seek to possess in excess of the daily tuna bag limit should refer to Section 27.15 of the California Sport Fishing Regulations (Title 14) for information on obtaining the required special permit.

### **Q. If I launch my boat out of a port south of Point Conception and fish both south and north of the Point Conception dividing line, can I keep 25 albacore per day?**

No. Fishermen must comply with the most strict bag limit applicable to all areas fished during a given trip (e.g., if any part of a fishing trip takes place in the EEZ south of Point Conception, the 10–albacore bag limit applies even if the port of departure and landing or fishing takes place north of Point Conception).

### **Q. I run a charter fishing business, if I make two trips per day, can anglers that fish on both trips keep two bag limits in the same day?**

No. In addition to individual fishermen, the operator of a vessel that fishes in the EEZ is responsible for ensuring that the bag limits are not exceeded. The bag limits apply on the basis of each 24-hour period at sea, regardless of the number of trips per day.

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