



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

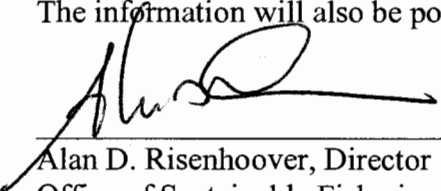
NMFS ANNOUNCES FINAL RULE TO ADJUST THE 2008 NORTH AND SOUTH ATLANTIC SWORDFISH QUOTAS

This final rule would adjust the North and South Atlantic swordfish quotas for the 2008 fishing year (January 1, 2008, through December 31, 2008) to account for underharvests in 2007, and to transfer 18.8 metric tons (mt) dressed weight (dw) to Canada per the 2006 International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) recommendations 06-02 and 06-03. The 2008 North Atlantic swordfish baseline quota is 2,937.6 mt dw. The total North Atlantic swordfish underharvest for 2007 was 3,220 mt dw, which exceeds the maximum carryover cap of 1,468.8 mt dw, established in ICCAT recommendation 06-02. Therefore, NMFS is carrying over the maximum allowable capped amount per the ICCAT recommendation. Thus, the baseline quota plus the underharvest carryover maximum of 1,468.8 mt dw equals an adjusted quota of 4,406.4 mt dw for the 2008 fishing year (Table 1).

The 2008 South Atlantic swordfish baseline quota is 75.2 mt dw. The total South Atlantic swordfish underharvest for 2007 was 150.4 mt dw, which exceeds the maximum carryover cap of 75.2 mt dw, established in ICCAT recommendation 06-03. Therefore, NMFS is carrying over the maximum allowable capped amount per the ICCAT recommendation. As a result, the baseline quota plus the underharvest carryover maximum of 75.2 mt dw equals an adjusted quota of 150.4 mt dw for the 2008 fishing year (Table 1).

Upon further review of potential socioeconomic impacts and, in part, due to opposition from the public regarding the proposed modifications to the vessel chartering regulations, NMFS has decided not to implement the proposed vessel chartering regulatory modifications in the final rule. Therefore, current vessel chartering regulations at 50 CFR 635.5 (a)(5) and 635.32(e), will remain unchanged.

This notice is a courtesy to the HMS fishery participants to help keep you informed about your fishery. Official notice of Federal actions is made through filing such notice with the Office of Federal Register. For further information on this final rule and its requirements, contact LeAnn S. Hogan or Karyl Brewster-Geisz at 301-713-2347. Copies of the final rule and supporting documents are available upon request from the Highly Migratory Species Management Division, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910 (phone: 301-713-2347, fax: 301-713-1917). The information will also be posted on the HMS website at: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/>.


Alan D. Risenhoover, Director
Office of Sustainable Fisheries

APR 07 2009
Date



Table 1. Landings and Quotas for the Atlantic Swordfish Fisheries (2005 – 2008).

North Atlantic Swordfish Quota (mt dw)		2005	2006	2007	2008 preliminary
Baseline Quota		2,937.6	2,937.6	2,937.6	2,937.6
Quota Carried Over		3,359.1	4,691.2	1,468.8	1,468.8
Adjusted quota		6,296.7	7,628.8	4,406.4	4,406.4
Quota Allocation	Directed Category	5,895.2	7,246.1	3,601.9	3,620.7
	Incidental Category	300.0	300.0	300.0	300.0
	Reserve Category	101.5	82.7	504.5	485.7
Utilized Quota	Landings	1,471.8	1,291.5	1,167.5	1,576.4 as of Dec. 31, 2008
	Reserve Transfer to Canada	18.8	18.8	18.8	18.8
Total Underharvest		4,806.1	6,318.5	3,220.1	2,811.2
Dead Discards		114.9	154.9	149.2	TBD
Carryover Available +		4,691.2	1,468.8	1,468.8	TBD
South Atlantic Swordfish Quota (mt dw)		2005	2006	2007	2008 preliminary
Baseline Quota		75.2	90.2	75.2	75.2
Quota Carried Over		319.3	394.5	75.2	75.2
Adjusted quota		394.5	484.7	150.4	150.4
Landings		0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0 to date
Carryover Available +		394.5	75.2	75.2	75.2

+ Underharvest is capped at 50 percent of the baseline quota allocation for the North Atlantic and 100 mt ww (75.2 mt dw) for the South Atlantic.