



NMFS Announces 2006 Final Initial Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Quotas and Effort Controls

In accordance with the 1999 Atlantic Tunas, Swordfish, and Shark Fishery Management Plan, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) announces the final initial 2006 Atlantic bluefin tuna (BFT) quota specifications.

This action sets BFT quotas for each of the established domestic fishing categories and sets General and Angling category effort controls for the 2006 fishing year (June 1, 2006 - May 31, 2007). This action is necessary to implement recommendations of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), as required by the Atlantic Tunas Convention Act, and to achieve domestic management objectives under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

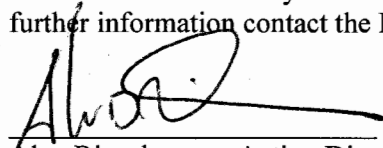
Based on the 2002 ICCAT quota recommendation and 2005 fishing year underharvests/overharvests as applied to the 2006 fishing year allocation, NMFS establishes the 2006 final initial fishing year quotas shown in the attached quota table, which also shows the time-period subquotas for the General category. Retention limits for the General category and Angling category are given in the table below.

Effective Dates	Area	BFT Size Category	Retention Limit
General Category			
June 1 – August 31, 2006	All	73" or greater	3
September 1, 2006 – January 31, 2007	All	73" or greater	1
Angling Category			
June 1, 2006 – May 31, 2007	All	47" up to 73"	2
July 1 – 21, 2006	South*	27" up to 47"	1
August 25 - September 14, 2006	North*	27" up to 47"	1

*The north/south boundary occurs at 39°18" North latitude, or approximately Great Egg Inlet, NJ

NMFS establishes the following restricted fishing days: all Saturdays and Sundays from November 18, 2006 through January 31, 2007, and November 23, 2006, and December 25, 2006 inclusive, provided the fishery remains open. These days are intended to extend the General category BFT fishery into the late season for the southern Atlantic region.

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.


 Alan Risenhoover, Acting Director
 Office of Sustainable Fisheries

 MAY 25 2006
Date



**2006 Final Initial Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Quota Specifications
and Effort Controls**

Category	Under (+) or Over (-) Harvest Results of FY 05	Annual FY 05 Adjustments including Dead Discards and Transfers from Reserve	Baseline Allocation for FY 06	Subperiod or Subquota	Final Initial 2006 FY BFT Quotas
General	473.5	0.0	689.8	June - August September Oct - Jan New York Bight	1,163.3 692.0 346.0 115.3 10.0
Harpoon	66.9	0.0	57.1		124.0
Longline	128.4	-3.8	143.6	North NED South	268.2 70.5 79.9 117.8
Trap	3.8	0.0	1.5		5.3
Purse Seine	351.7	0.0	272.4		624.1
Angling*	91.5	0.0	288.6	<u>School</u> North South School Reserve <u>Lg Sch/Sm Med</u> North South <u>Trophy</u> North South	380.1 49.2 23.2 26.0 0.0 318.4 150.3 168.1 12.5 4.2 8.3
Reserve	245.7	0.0	36.6		282.3
Total	1361.5	N/A	1489.6		2847.3

* Subsequent to the proposed rule, NMFS finalized a report analyzing methodologies used to measure BFT in the Large Pelagics Survey (LPS) which is an angler survey used to estimate recreational harvest. Based on this report, NMFS determined that an adjustment to Angling category landings in 2002-2004 of -4.88 percent was appropriate. The final rule includes a 40.9 mt increase in overall Angling category quota from the proposed rule, reflecting this adjustment. In addition, this adjustment increases the school size class (27 inches to less than 47 inches) subquota by 43.5 mt. The subquota for the trophy size class (73 inches and above) was also increased by 4.8 mt due to a mathematical error, and the large school/small medium (47 inches to less than 73 inches) was decreased by 7.4 mt due to a combination of the 4.88 percent adjustment and increase in the school subquota.