



NOAA FISHERIES SERVICE



This is a summary of, but not a substitute for, the Atlantic Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish (MSB) Federal regulations. You are strongly encouraged to read the regulations in conjunction with this information sheet to fully understand how this fishery is managed. For more information on this fishery contact Sustainable Fisheries at (978) 281-9315.

ATLANTIC MACKEREL, SQUID (*Illex* and Longfin), AND BUTTERFISH INFORMATION SHEET

The Atlantic mackerel, longfin squid, *Illex* squid, and butterfish fisheries are managed in Federal waters by the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC) and NOAA Fisheries under a single fishery management plan (FMP). For information about actions currently under development, visit the MAFMC website (www.mafmc.org).

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FISHERY SUMMARY

The mackerel, squid, butterfish (MSB) FMP operates on an annual basis from January 1 to December 31.

PERMIT CATEGORIES

Any vessel that fishes for, possesses, or lands Atlantic mackerel, squid, and/or butterfish in the Federal waters (generally waters 3 – 200 nm from shore) must have a valid Federal permit. You can get an application for a permit by contacting the Northeast Region’s Permit Office at (978) 282-8438 or online at: www.nero.noaa.gov/permits/.

Vessels fishing for mackerel that are less than 165 feet in length overall, less than 750 gross registered tons, or with a shaft horsepower less than 3,000 shp may receive one of the mackerel permits listed below. Mackerel vessels that exceed the size and horsepower restrictions can apply for an Atlantic herring at-sea processing permit.

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	Permit Category	Description	Trip Limits (for all set trip limits (other than unlimited) trip limits are per trip or calendar day)
Open Access	SMB 2	Charter Party	None while carrying passengers for hire
	SMB 3	Squid/Butterfish Incidental	Longfin squid: 2,500 lb; Butterfish: 600 lb <i>Illex</i> squid: 10,000 lb
	SMB 4*	Atlantic Mackerel Open Access	20,000 lb
Limited Access	SMB 1	Longfin/Butterfish Moratorium	Longfin squid: Unlimited Butterfish: Dependent on phase and mesh size-see table below
	SMB 5	<i>Illex</i> Moratorium	Unlimited <i>Illex</i>
	SMB T1*	Tier 1 Mackerel	Unlimited mackerel
	SMB T2*	Tier 2 Mackerel	135,000 lb
	SMB T3*	Tier 3 Mackerel	100,000 lb

*New limited access mackerel permits went March 1, 2012. The application period for mackerel limited access permits is open until February 28, 2013. More information on the new permits can be found here:

<http://www.nero.noaa.gov/nero/nr/nrdoc/11/11MackLAPermitPHL.pdf>

Butterfish trip limits

The butterfish fishery operates using a 3-phase management system. More information about the 3-phase system can be found on page 6.

Butterfish 3-Phase Management System			
Phase	Limited Access Trip Limit		Incidental Trip Limit
	>3 inch mesh	<3 inch mesh	600 lb
1	Unlimited	2,500 lb	600 lb
2	5,000 lb	2,500 lb	600 lb
3	500 lb	500 lb	600 lb

ANNUAL CATCH LIMITS (QUOTA)

The mackerel, squid, and butterfish fishing year is from January 1 through December 31. NOAA Fisheries, based on the recommendations of the MAFMC, sets the overfishing limit (OFL), allowable biological catch (ABC), annual catch limit (ACL), annual catch target (ACT), initial optimum yield (IOY), domestic annual harvest (DAH), domestic annual processing (DAP), Joint Venture Processing (JVP), total allowable level of foreign fishing (TALFF), research set aside (RSA) (from 0 to 3 percent of the overall quota for each species) for each species if applicable, as well as the butterfish mortality cap in the longfin squid fishery. Longfin and *Illex* squid are exempt from the ACL/AM requirements because they have annual life cycles. The DAH is also known as the annual quota for each fishery.

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Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish 2013 Specifications (mt)				
Specifications	Mackerel	Butterfish	<i>Illex</i>	Longfin
Allowable Biological Catch (ABC)	43,781	8,400	24,000	23,400
Annual Catch Limit (ACL)	43,781	8,400	N/A	N/A
Commercial Annual Catch Target (ACT)	34,907	7,560	N/A	N/A
Recreational ACT/Recreational Harvest Limit	2,443	N/A	N/A	N/A
Domestic Annual Harvest (DAH/quota)	33,821	2,570	22,915	22,049
Tier 3 Mackerel Allocation (7% of DAH)	2,368	N/A	N/A	N/A
Research Set Aside (RSA)	N/A	36	N/A	396
Butterfish Mortality Cap in longfin squid fishery				4,464

2013 Longfin and Butterfish Mortality Cap Quotas by Trimester:

		Trimester I (Jan-Apr)	Trimester II (May-Aug)	Trimester III (Sep-Dec)
Longfin squid 22,049 mt total	Allocation	9,481	3,748	8,820
	Closure Threshold Directed Longfin Fishery	8,532 (90%*9,481)	3,373 (90%*3,748)	20,947 (95%*22,049)
Butterfish Cap 4,464 mt total	Allocation	2,902	147	1415
	Closure Threshold Directed Longfin Fishery	2,322 (80%*2,902)	3,348 (75%*4,464)	4,018 (90%*4,464)

The longfin squid fishery may be closed either if longfin landings are projected to reach the longfin closure threshold or if butterfish catch reaches the butterfish mortality cap closure threshold in any Trimester.

- During Trimester I, the directed longfin fishery will be closed if:
 - Longfin squid landings are projected to reach 8,532 mt (from January 1 to April 15) -OR-
 - Longfin squid landings are projected to reach 9,007 mt (from April 15 to April 30) -OR-
 - The butterfish mortality cap reaches 2,322 mt (from January 1 to April 15) -OR-
 - The butterfish mortality cap reaches 2,612mt (from April 15 to April 30)

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- During Trimester II, the directed longfin fishery will be closed if:
 - Longfin squid landings are projected to reach 3,373 mt (from May 1 to August 15, unless this allocation is increased due to under-harvest in Trimester I) -OR-
 - Longfin squid landings are projected to reach 3,561 mt (from August 15 to August 30, unless allocation is increased from Trimester I under-harvest) -OR-
 - The butterfish mortality cap reaches 3,348 mt (75% of the annual butterfish mortality cap allocation)
- During Trimester III, the directed longfin fishery will be closed if:
 - Longfin squid landings are projected to reach 20,947 mt (annual threshold) -OR-
 - The butterfish mortality cap reaches 4,018 mt (annual threshold)

FISHERY CLOSURES AND INSEASON REDUCTIONS IN TRIP LIMITS

NOAA Fisheries will announce closures of the directed fisheries for Atlantic mackerel, longfin squid, and *Illex* squid when catch reaches a particular quota closure threshold. The butterfish fishery operates on a 3 phase management system where butterfish trip limits are reduced from Phase 1 to Phase 2, and again from Phase 2 to Phase 3 when catch reaches a particular closure threshold. Fishery closures and inseason trip limit reductions will be published in the Federal Register, announced via U.S. Coast Guard and National Weather Service Radio, and through a letter to all MSB permit holders.

	When this percent of the quota is reached...	The possession limit will be reduced to this amount for the remainder of the fishing year or Trimester...
Mackerel	95%	20,000 lb
Tier 3 Mackerel Allocation	90%	20,000 lb (for Tier 3 vessels only)
Mackerel	100%	0 lb (possession prohibited)
Longfin Squid	90% in Trimesters I and II; 95% after April 15 and August 15	2,500 lb
Longfin Squid	95% in Trimester III	2,500 lb
Butterfish Mortality Cap*	80% in Trimester I, 90% after April 15	2,500 lb of longfin squid
Butterfish Mortality Cap *	90% in Trimester III	2,500 lb of longfin squid
<i>Illex</i> Squid	95%	10,000 lb
Butterfish	See information below	See information below

*Vessels using jigging gear to target longfin squid when the directed fishery is closed due to the butterfish mortality cap will not be subject to the reduced possession limit and will be allowed to possess more than 2,500 lb of longfin squid, provided that all trawl gear is properly stowed.

BUTTERFISH 3-PHASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Phase 1:

Phase 1 begins at the start of the butterfish fishing year on January 1.

During phase 1, the butterfish trip limits are:

- Unlimited for longfin squid/butterfish moratorium permit holders using mesh greater than or equal to 3 inches;
- 2,500 lb for longfin squid/butterfish moratorium permit holders using mesh less than 3 inches; and
- 600 lb for squid/butterfish incidental permits.

Phase 2: Once butterfish harvest reaches the trip limit reduction threshold to move from phase 1 to phase 2, the butterfish trip limits will be:

- 5,000 lb for longfin squid/butterfish moratorium permit holders using mesh size greater than or equal to 3-inches;
- 2,500 lb for longfin squid/butterfish moratorium permit holders using mesh less than 3 inches; and
- 600 lb for squid/butterfish incidental permits.

Phase 3: When butterfish harvest is projected to reach the trip hold reduction threshold to move from phase 2 to phase 3, the butterfish trip limit will be:

- 500 lb for all longfin squid/butterfish moratorium permit holders, regardless of mesh size; and
- 600 lb for squid/mackerel/butterfish incidental permits.
- During Phase 3, we have the authority to change the butterfish trip limit to anywhere between 250 to 750 lb to avoid a quota overage.
- The trip limit reduction thresholds to move from phase 1 to phase 2, and to move from phase 2 to phase 3, will change bi-monthly throughout the year as shown in the table below. We will publish a notice in the Federal Register and notify the butterfish fleet via Fisheries bulletin, coast guard radio, NOAA weather radio, vessel monitoring system (VMS) message, and on our website once the trip limit reduction threshold is reached, and a new phase begins.



Butterfish Trip Limit Reduction Thresholds				
Months	Phase 2		Phase 3	
	Trip Limit Reduction Threshold (Percent of quota)	Corresponding Butterfish quota level (mt)	Trip Limit Reduction Threshold (Percent of quota)	Corresponding Butterfish quota level (mt)
Jan - Feb	40	1,028	58	1,491
Mar-Apr	47	1,208	64	1,645
May-Jun	55	1,414	71	1,825
Jul-Aug	63	1,619	78	2,005
Sept-Oct	71	1,825	85	2,185
Nov-Dec	78	2,005	91	2,339

ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES

When fish catch exceeds the ACL allocated for the year, then the amount of the overage is often deducted from the quota for the following year. Information about overage deductions for each fishery is as follows:

Mackerel

- **Commercial overage repayment:** If the mackerel ACL is exceeded by the commercial fishery, then the exact amount of the overage will be deducted from the commercial DAH as a single year adjustment between March 31 and May 1 of the following year.
- **Recreational overage repayment:** If the recreational fishery landings are responsible for the overage, then landings in overage the RHL will be deducted from the RHL in the following year.
- **Non-landings overage repayment:** If the mackerel ACL is exceeded, and the overage has not been accommodated through other landing-based AMs, but is attributable to either the commercial or recreational sector (such as research quota overages, dead discards in excess of those otherwise accounted for in management uncertainty, or other non-landing overages), then the exact amount, in pounds, by which the sector ACT was exceeded will be deducted from the following year.

Butterfish

- If the butterfish ACL is exceeded, then the exact amount of the overage will be deducted from the butterfish ACL between March 31 and May 1 of the following year.

Longfin squid

- **Trimester I underages:** If there is an underharvest in Trimester I of 25 percent or more, then the amount of the underharvest will be reallocated to Trimester II and Trimester III. The Trimester II quota may be increased by a maximum of 50 percent, and any remaining portion of the underage will be reallocated to Trimester III.
- **Trimester I overages:** Any overages of commercial quota for Trimesters I and II will be subtracted from Trimester III of the same year.

GEAR RESTRICTIONS

Minimum mesh size:

Mackerel: None.

Butterfish: Vessels fishing with otter trawl gear are limited in the amount of butterfish they can possess depending on the mesh size they are using. In order to fish with the higher trip limits in the table below, vessels must use nets that have a minimum codend mesh of **3 inches (76 mm) diamond mesh**, inside stretch measure, applied throughout the codend for at least 100 continuous meshes forward of the end of the net. For codends with less than 100 meshes, one-third of the net must have a minimum mesh of 3 inches, measured from the back of the codend to the headrope.

Butterfish 3-Phase Management System			
Phase	Limited Access Trip Limit		Incidental Trip Limit
	>3 inch mesh	<3 inch mesh	
1	Unlimited	2,500 lb	600 lb
2	5,000 lb	2,500 lb	600 lb
3	500 lb	500 lb	600 lb

Longfin squid:

Codend

The minimum mesh sizes differ by Trimester, but are required to be diamond mesh, inside stretch measure, applied throughout the codend for at least 150 continuous meshes forward of the terminus of the net. For codends with less than 150 meshes, one-third of the net must be the minimum mesh described below measured from the terminus of the codend to the headrope. No net strengtheners, ropes, lines, or chafing gear can be used that reduce the mesh size.

Net strengtheners

Owners or operators of otter trawl vessels fishing for and/or possessing longfin squid may use net strengtheners (covers), splitting straps, and/or bull ropes or wire around the entire circumference of the codend, provided they do not have a mesh opening of less than 5 inches (12.7 cm) diamond mesh, inside stretch measure.

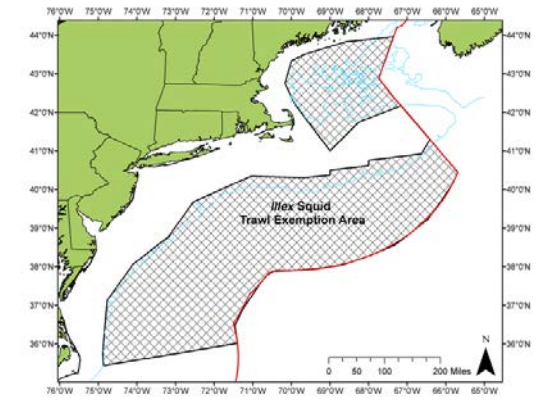
Trimester	Minimum Mesh Size
Trimester I	2 1/8 inches (54 mm)
Trimester II	1 7/8 inches (48 mm)
Trimester III	2 1/8 inches (54 mm)

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***Illex* squid:**

Vessels fishing for *Illex* squid with otter trawl gear that possess longfin squid during **June, July, August, and September** seaward of the following coordinates are exempt from the Longfin minimum mesh sizes above, provided they do not have any net or piece of net with a mesh size less than 1 7/8 inches (48 mm) diamond mesh available for immediate use, when the vessel is landward of the line showed here (see attached for coordinates). Regulations describing net stowage (“not available for immediate use”) can be found at §648.23(b).

Mid-water trawl gear: Vessels with a mackerel or squid permit must obtain a Letter of Authorization (LOA) to fish with mid-water trawl gear in the Gulf of Maine/George’s Bank (GOM/GB) Regulated Mesh Area, including Closed Area I, Closed Area II, the Nantucket Lightship Closed Area, and other areas closed for NE multispecies conservation.



When fishing north of 42°20' N. Latitude, the vessel may not fish for, possess, or land any other species of fish except for Atlantic herring, blueback herring, or Atlantic menhaden. When fishing south of 42°20' N. Latitude, the vessel may not fish for, possess, or land any other species of fish except for Atlantic herring, blueback herring, or Atlantic mackerel, or squid.

Scup Gear Restricted Areas

Purse seine gear: Vessels with a mackerel permit must obtain a LOA to fish with purse seine gear in the GOM/GB Regulated Mesh Area. The vessel may not fish for, possess, or land any other species of fish except for Atlantic mackerel, Atlantic herring, blueback herring, or menhaden. Appropriate Federal permits are required for these species, with the exception of blueback herring and menhaden.

To request a LOA from the Regional Administrator, contact the Northeast Region Permit Office at (978) 282-8438.

RESTRICTED AREAS

- Mackerel, squid, and butterfish permitted vessels may not fish with bottom trawl gear in the Oceanographer or Lydonia Canyons (see attached for coordinates). Vessels may transit this area if bottom trawl gear is stowed and not available for immediate use (see regulations at §648.23(b)).
- Vessels targeting *Illex* squid should also refer to the gear restrictions on p. 5 of this info sheet.

Scup Gear Restricted Areas (GRA):

- Vessels fishing for longfin squid, black sea bass, or whiting in the Northern GRA from November 1 through December 31, or in the Southern GRA from January 1 through March 15, (see attached for coordinates) must have a minimum mesh size of 5.0-inch diamond mesh applied throughout the codend for at least 75 continuous meshes forward of the terminus of the net, and all other nets are properly stowed.

- For trawl nets with codends (including the extension) of fewer than 75 meshes, the entire trawl net must have a minimum mesh size of 5.0 inches throughout the net..
- Vessels may transit these areas provided that net codends of smaller mesh are properly stowed and not available for immediate use.

TRANSFERS AT SEA

A vessel with a valid longfin squid, *Illex* squid, and/or butterfish permit must apply for an LOA from the Regional Administrator to transfer and receive longfin squid, *Illex* squid, and/or butterfish at sea. If the vessel has been issued a valid incidental squid and butterfish permit, it may transfer these species at sea, consistent with the applicable possession limits, but may not receive them. Current valid incidental possession limits are: 2,500 lb of longfin, 600 lb of butterfish per trip and 10,000 lb of *Illex* per trip.

VESSEL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

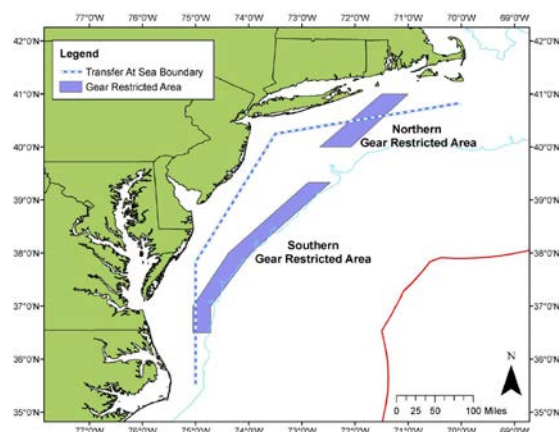
Pre-Trip Observer Notification:

Vessels with longfin squid permits that land greater than 2,500 lb of longfin squid must request an observer at least 48 hours before the start of a trip. Vessels must provide the following information to the observer program: vessel name, vessel permit number, contact name for coordination of observer deployment, telephone number for contact; and the date, time, port of departure, and approximate trip duration.

How to request an observer (3 different options):

1. Use the Pre-Trip Notification System (PTNS) by going to this link: <http://fish.nefsc.noaa.gov/PTNS>. The username is your permit number and the password is the same as used for Fish-On-Line.
2. Email the following information to nefsc.ptns@noaa.gov:
 - Vessel permit number
 - Planned sail date and time
 - Fishery: Loligo squid
 - Estimated trip duration in whole days
 - Port of sail
 - Phone number, if new to using PTNS
3. Call the NMFS Pre-Trip Notification System at 1-855-FISHES1 at least 48 hours prior to departing on a trip. The line is staffed from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm on business days. Outside of these hours, the line is staffed by an answering service that is qualified to accept requests for observers and answer questions.

Scup Gear Restricted Areas



Vessel Trip Report (VTR) Reporting:

- If vessels have a NE multispecies, Atlantic herring, or Tier 3 Atlantic mackerel permit, they are required to send VTRs to NOAA Fisheries weekly. VTRs must be postmarked by midnight of the Tuesday following the reporting week.
- If vessels DO NOT have a NE multispecies, Atlantic herring or Tier 3 Atlantic mackerel permit, they are required to send VTRs to NOAA Fisheries monthly. VTRs must be postmarked by 15 days following the reporting month.
- Even when no fishing trip is made during a reporting week or month, a VTR stating “no catch” must be sent to NOAA Fisheries each week or month depending on the permits held.

DEALER REPORTING

All federally permitted seafood dealers are required to submit trip level reports to NMFS via computer, using one of the approved electronic means, unless otherwise directed by the Regional Administrator. Dealers must submit all reports for a reporting week (Sunday to Saturday) by midnight the following Tuesday.

HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES

You must also be aware that if you also hold an Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Permit the regulations at 50 CFR Part 635 will apply to your activities. Please visit their website at <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/> or call them at 978-281-9260.

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COORDINATES FOR MANAGEMENT AREAS

Oceanographer Canyon

N. Lat.	W. Long.
40°10.0'	68°12.0'
40°24.0'	68°09.0'
40°24.0'	68°08.0'
40°10.0'	67°59.0'
40°10.0'	68°12.0'

Lydonia Canyon

N. Lat.	W. Long.
40°16.0'	67°34.0'
40°16.0'	67°42.0'
40°20.0'	67°43.0'
40°27.0'	67°40.0'
40°27.0'	67°38.0'
40°16.0'	67°34.0'

Illex squid exemption area:

N. Lat.	W. Long.
43°58.0'	67°22.0'
43°50.0'	68°35.0'
43°30.0'	69°40.0'
43°20.0'	70°00.0'
42°45.0'	70°10.0'
42°13.0'	69°55.0'
41°00.0'	69°00.0'
41°45.0'	68°15.0'
42°10.0'	67°10.0'
41°18.6'	66°24.8'
40°55.5'	66°38.0'
40°45.5'	68°00.0'
40°37.0'	68°00.0'
40°30.0'	69°00.0'
40°22.7'	69°00.0'
40°18.7'	69°40.0'
40°21.0'	71°03.0'
39°41.0'	72°32.0'
38°47.0'	73°11.0'
38°04.0'	74°06.0'
37°08.0'	74°46.0'
36°00.0'	74°52.0'
35°45.0'	74°53.0'
35°28.0'	74°52.0'

Scup Gear Restricted Areas (GRA):

Southern GRA

N. lat.	W. long.
39°20'	72°53'
39°20'	72°28'
38°00'	73°58'
37°00'	74°43'
36°30'	74°43'
36°30'	75°03'
37°00'	75°03'
38°00'	74°23'
39°20'	72°53'

Northern GRA

N. lat.	W. long.
41°00'	71°00'
41°00'	71°30'
40°00'	72°40'
40°00'	72°05'
41°00'	71°00'