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# Amendment 13 to the 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP

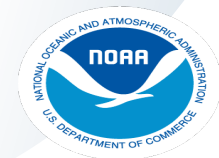
## Bluefin Tuna Management

### Public Hearing Presentation

May-July 2021

# Presentation outline

- Background
  - Why changes to the management measures are needed
  - How the proposed measures were developed
  - Objectives
- Proposed Measures
  - Bluefin quota allocation procedures
  - Pelagic longline
  - Purse seine
  - Handgear
  - Other
- Next steps



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# Why changes to the regulations are needed

- Suggested changes to the Individual Bluefin Quota (IBQ) Program – from pelagic longline fishermen, and recommendations from NOAA Fisheries’ review of Program
- Purse seine fishery has been inactive; other, active fisheries need bluefin quota
- Interest in equitable allocation of bluefin quota in the handgear fisheries; increases in landings; recent high number of permit holders



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# How the proposed measures were developed

- In 2019, NOAA Fisheries released an Issues and Options document and received public comments
- In 2019, NOAA Fisheries released the “Three-Year Review of the IBQ Program” with recent data and recommendations
- Suggestions from the Highly Migratory Species Advisory Panel
- NOAA Fisheries analysis of data (Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS))

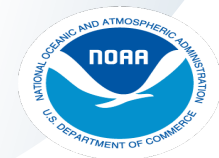


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# Objectives of Amendment 13

- (1) Evaluate and optimize the allocation of U.S. bluefin quota among bluefin quota categories\*
- (2) Maintain flexibility of the regulations to account for the highly variable nature of the bluefin fisheries and maintain fairness among permit/quota categories

\*see full text of objective in proposed rule and DEIS



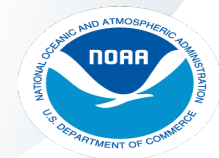
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# Objectives of Amendment 13

(3) Continue to manage the Atlantic pelagic longline fishery consistent with the IBQ Program objectives (and fishery management plan and relevant laws)\*

(4) Modify the management of the pelagic longline fishery in response to the Three-Year Review of the IBQ Program, and in response to important relevant prevailing trends (e.g., declining fishing effort and revenue for target species)

\*see full text of objective in proposed rule and DEIS



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# Proposed Measures – quota allocation procedures (all quota categories)

- Would modify a relatively minor step in the annual quota allocation methods regarding the allocation of 68 mt to the Longline category
- Instead of subtracting a fixed amount (in weight) from each category and adding 68 mt to the Longline quota, each quota category would have a slightly revised percentage allocation
- Simplifies the annual quota allocation mathematical method from a two-step process to a one-step process.
- Revised category percentages are shown on slide 24



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# Proposed Measures – Pelagic Longline – annual IBQ share determination

- Active vessels (with a valid permit) receive IBQ share based on their designated species\* landings during the 3 previous years

\*Designated species: swordfish, and bigeye, yellowfin, albacore, and skipjack tunas (based on dealer data)

- Vessels assigned to one of four percentage shares based on the vessel's weight of designated species landings relative to the total fleet-wide total



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# Pelagic Longline, cont. – annual IBQ shares determination

- 1) Active vessels ranked based on *landings percentages (vessel landings/fleet landings)*, and assigned to one of four groups, based on the 25th, 50th, 75th, and 100th percentiles
- 2) Based on the number of vessels in each group, and the sum of the *landings percentages* in each quartile, four *share percentages* are defined
- 3) Example: Based on 2015 through 2018 data, the four share percentages would be: 2.09, 1.18, 0.64, and 0.12 percent of the Longline category quota



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# Pelagic Longline, cont. - IBQ shares

## Regional Gulf of Mexico (GOM) and Atlantic (ATL) Designations

- Regional designations based on the location of individual vessel pelagic longline fishing activity during the three years used as the basis for annual determination of shares
- Amount of IBQ shares designated as GOM or ATL would change annually as fishing location of the fleet changes
- Total amount (fleet-wide) of GOM IBQ shares capped at no more than 35%



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# Pelagic Longline, cont. - IBQ shares – other alternatives analyzed (but not proposed)

- Dynamic allocation to active vessels based on numbers of hooks
- Dynamic allocation to active vessels based on numbers of sets
- Dynamic allocation based on equal division of IBQ among active vessels
- Amendment 7 allocation formula using 2016 to 2018 data



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## Pelagic Longline, cont. - IBQ Shares and Allocations

Cap amount of IBQ shares that can be issued to a permit holder at 25 percent of total shares

- Would limit acquisition of IBQ shares via acquisition of permits, or changes in the relative amount of shares due to changes in the number of active permit holders
- To prevent a single entity from holding a disproportionate amount of either IBQ shares or allocations
- An “entity” is defined in this context as an Atlantic Tunas Longline category permit holder where that permit holder is an individual, corporation, partnership, or other entity.



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# Pelagic Longline, cont. – other aspects of the IBQ program

- Dealer would no longer report vessel PIN or dead discards in the IBQ system
- Electronic monitoring (EM) program changes:
  - Hard drives mailed in every two trips instead of after every trip
  - Installation of boom-mounts for some video cameras if necessary to obtain a clear view of side of vessel where fish removed from water
  - Measuring grid on deck (painted or a mat) to serve as a size-reference



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# Pelagic Longline, cont. – other aspects of the IBQ program

- Cost Recovery Program
  - NOAA Fisheries would implement a system to recover its costs of administering the IBQ Program, as required for limited access privilege programs under the Magnuson-Stevens Act
  - Vessels would pay a fee based on amount of bluefin landed and average price
  - NOAA Fisheries would make an annual decision whether or not to charge a fee. Total fees limited to a maximum of 3% of the ex-vessel value of bluefin landed by pelagic longline vessels



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# Pelagic Longline, cont. – other aspects of the IBQ program

- Cost Recovery Program
  - Annual decision would be based on whether the amount of total fees to be recovered would result in a meaningful net benefit (\$)
  - NMFS will determine the fee associated with each vessel that harvested BFT, based on the total dressed weight of BFT sold to dealers by a vessel, and the total amount of fees that may be recovered (fishery-wide).
  - NMFS will not assess fees, if the total amount of fees that may be recovered is similar to or less than the estimated cost of implementing the cost recovery program



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# Pelagic Longline, cont. – other aspects of the IBQ program

Retention of bluefin tuna caught with green-stick gear onboard a vessel with an Atlantic tunas longline permit

- Allow retention of one 73” bluefin caught incidentally on green-stick gear (per trip)
- Account for bluefin using IBQ allocation
- Report greenstick sets with bluefin interactions via vessel monitoring system (VMS)
- Vessels abide by other IBQ Program requirements
- Use of EM not required on green-stick gear sets



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# Proposed Measures – purse seine

- Discontinue the Purse Seine quota category upon implementation of Amendment 13 (due to inactivity)
- Redistribute the Purse Seine quota proportionally among the directed quota categories: General, Harpoon, Angling, and Reserve quota categories (*not to the Longline or Trap categories because they are incidental quota categories*)
- Revised category percentages are shown on slides 23, 24



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# Proposed Measures – angling category

Create new trophy bluefin (> 73”) subquota areas in the north:

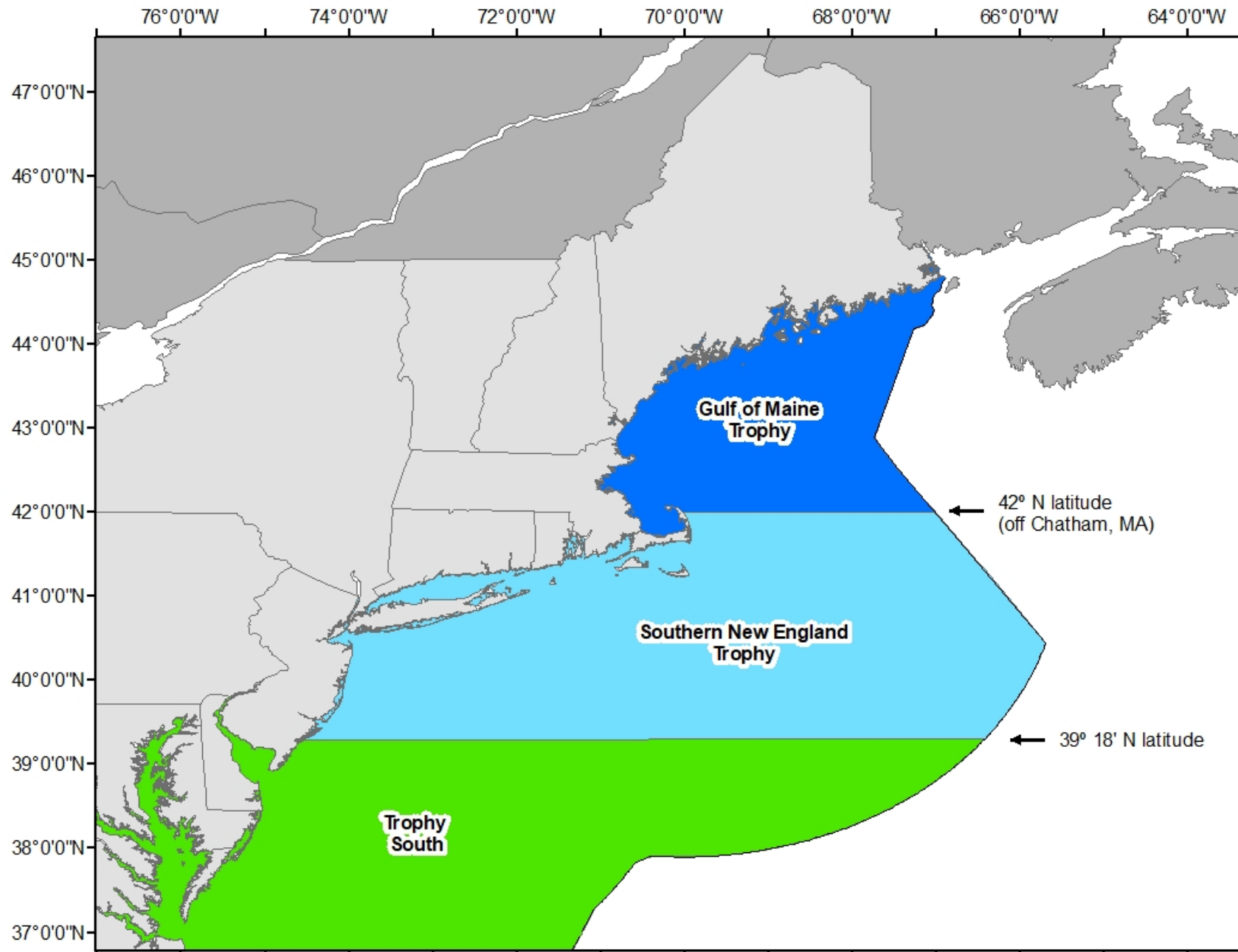
- Divide the current Trophy North area into two zones: north and south of 42° north latitude (off Chatham, MA)
- Minor increase in subquota for trophy fishery, with equivalent reduction of the subquota for large school/small medium bluefin (47” - < 73”)

(change in the portion of the Angling category quota allocated for trophy bluefin from 2.3 percent to 3.1 percent)



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# Proposed Gulf of Maine Trophy and Southern New England Trophy Subquota Areas



# Proposed Measures – harpoon category

- Daily Retention Limits:
  - Maintain current Harpoon category retention limit (range of 2\* to 4 fish) on large medium bluefin (>73”)
  - Set a limit on the total number of bluefin (large medium *and* giant ( $\geq 81$ ”)) of 10 fish total (per day or trip)

\*2 fish is the default retention limit of large medium fish; may be adjusted by NOAA Fisheries to up to four fish inseason



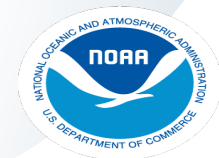
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# Proposed Measures – changes in permit categories

- For vessels issued an open access permit\*

Allow to change permit categories within a fishing year, provided the vessel has not landed any bluefin

\*Open access permits: Atlantic Tunas General category, Charter/Headboat category, Angling category



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# Examples of other alternatives – analyzed but not proposed

## Modifications to General category subquota periods and/or allocations:

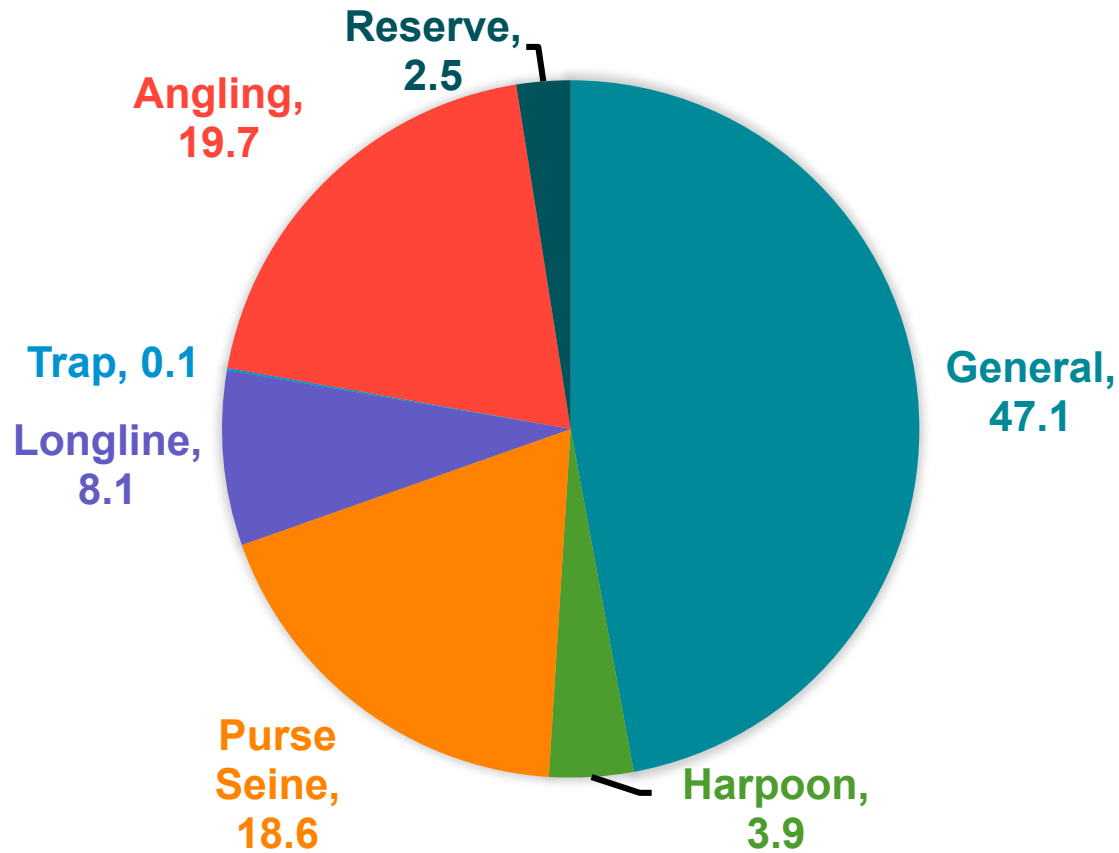
- Modify General category subquota periods: 12 equal months
- Extend the January through March subquota period to April 30
- Increase the January through March amount
- Increase the September, and October to November amounts and decrease the June through August amount



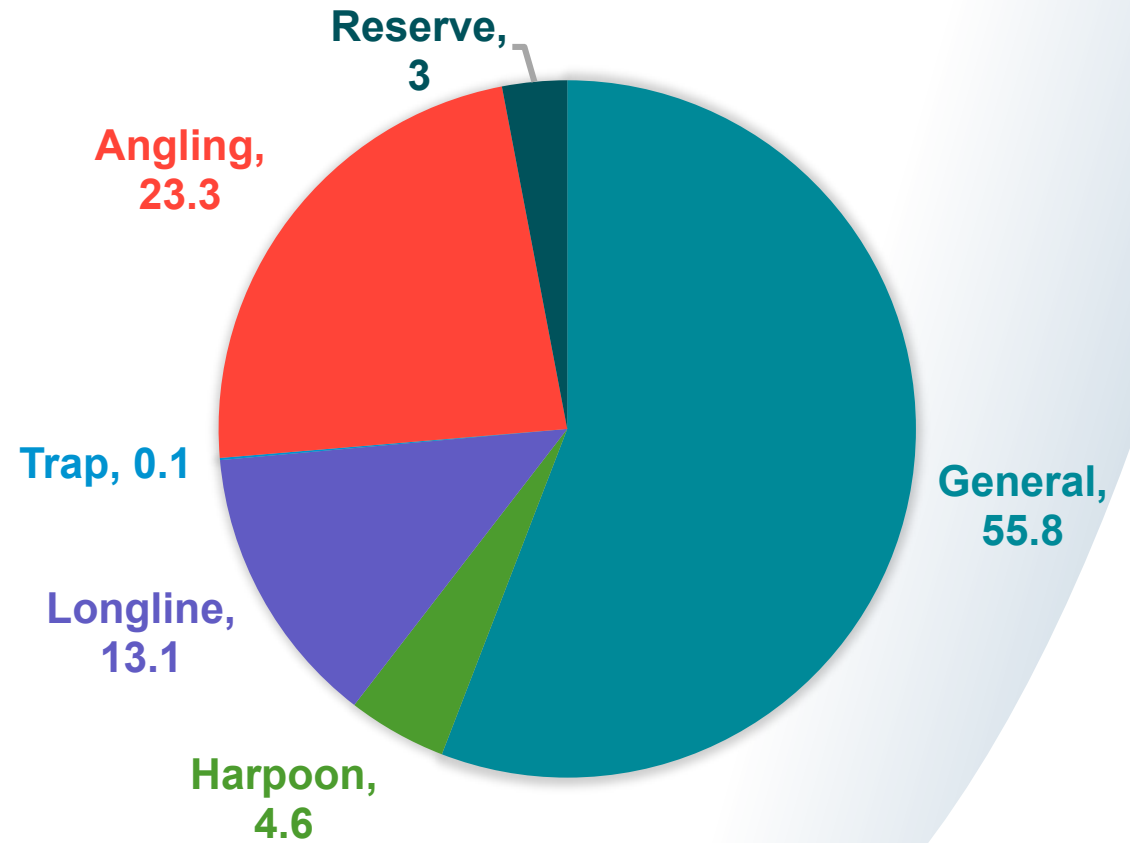
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# Bluefin quota percentages

## Current



## Proposed



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# Proposed bluefin quota percentages

Quota Category	Current Percentages	Column A (Revisions from Simplified Method of Allocating 68 mt to Longline category*)	Net Revisions Proposed (from "A" and Reallocation of Purse Seine category quota)
General	47.1	44.5	<b>55.8</b>
Harpoon	3.9	3.7	<b>4.6</b>
Purse Seine	18.6	17.6	<b>0</b>
Longline	8.1	13.1	<b>13.1</b>
Trap	0.1	0.1	<b>0.1</b>
Angling	19.7	18.6	<b>23.3</b>
Reserve	2.5	2.4	<b>3.0</b>

\*slide 7



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# Amendment 13 - next steps

Public Comments Accepted through **July 20, 2021**

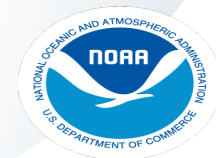
- Submit comments via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal.
- Go to: <https://www.regulations.gov/docket/NOAA-NMFS-2019-0042> and click the “Comment” icon, complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments.



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# Amendment 13-public webinars

Date	Time	Details: HMS Amendment 13 Webpage
June 8, 2021	2 to 4 p.m.	<a href="https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/action/amendment-13-2006-consolidated-hms-fishery-management-plan-bluefin-management-measures">https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/action/amendment-13-2006-consolidated-hms-fishery-management-plan-bluefin-management-measures</a>
July 8, 2021	2 to 4 p.m.	<a href="https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/action/amendment-13-2006-consolidated-hms-fishery-management-plan-bluefin-management-measures">https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/action/amendment-13-2006-consolidated-hms-fishery-management-plan-bluefin-management-measures</a>
July 14, 2021	2 to 4 p.m.	<a href="https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/action/amendment-13-2006-consolidated-hms-fishery-management-plan-bluefin-management-measures">https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/action/amendment-13-2006-consolidated-hms-fishery-management-plan-bluefin-management-measures</a>



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