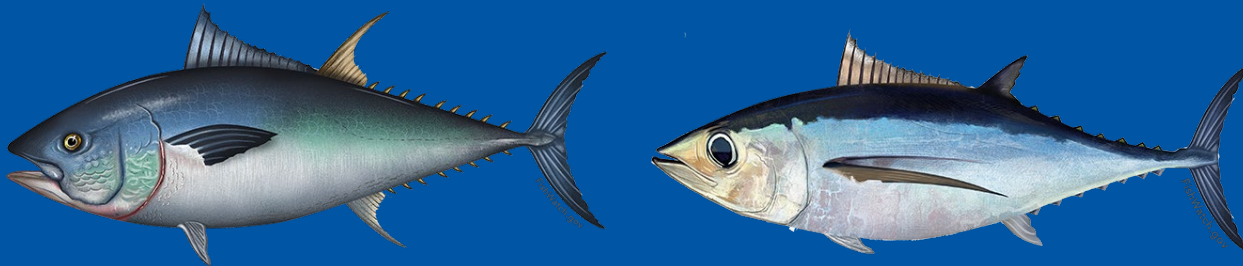


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Proposed Rule to Modify Atlantic Bluefin Tuna and Northern Albacore Quotas

Highly Migratory Species Management Division

March 24, 2022



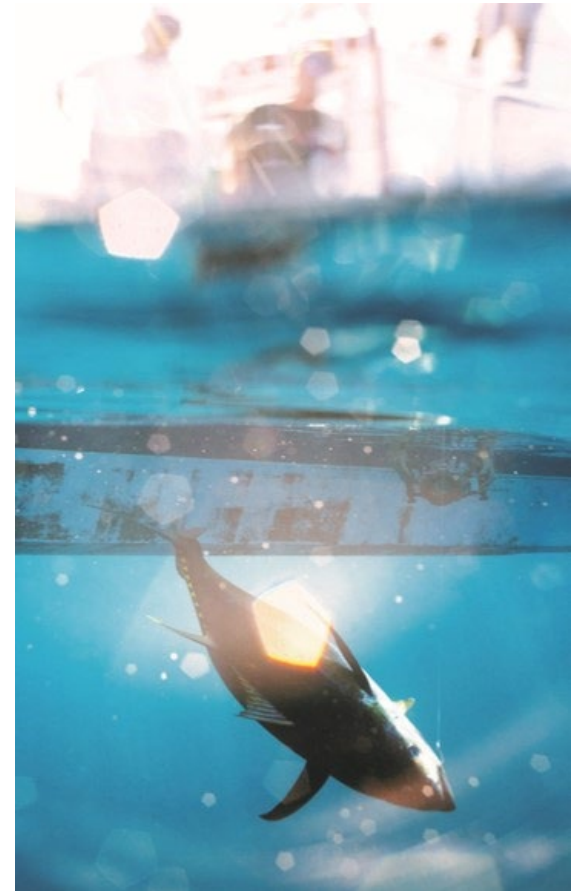
Outline

- Purpose and Need
- Terminology
- Northern Albacore
 - 2021 ICCAT Recommendation
 - Proposed Quota
- Bluefin Tuna
 - 2021 ICCAT Recommendation
 - Proposed Quota and Subquotas
- Anticipated Timing
- Request for Public Comments



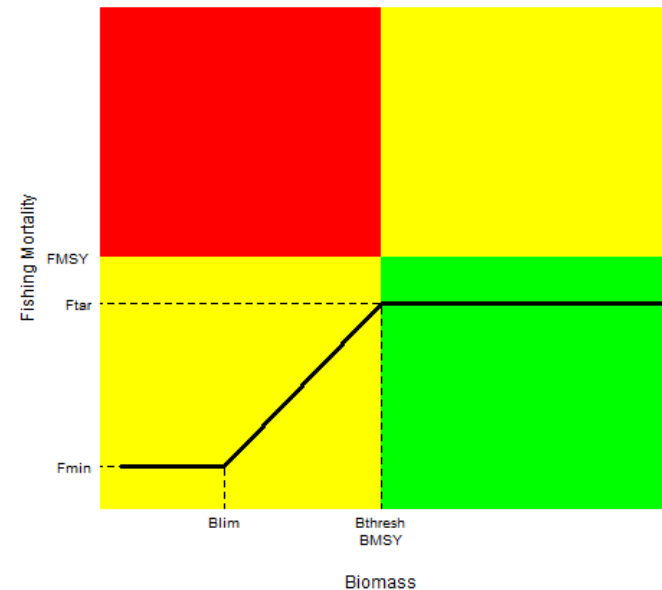
Purpose and Need for Action

- Implement U.S. quotas based on 2021 ICCAT recommendations on western Atlantic bluefin and North Atlantic albacore tunas
- Adjust bluefin tuna subquotas per existing regulatory formulas



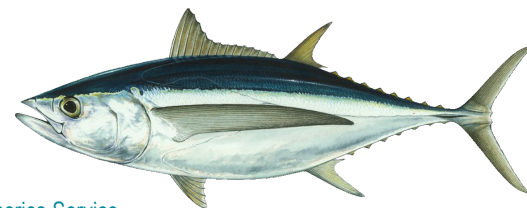
Terminology

- **Management strategy evaluation (MSE)** is an inclusive, interactive, and iterative process for evaluating the performance of potential harvest control rules and reference points (such as target biomass) in relation to management objectives.
- **Harvest control rules (HCRs)** implement pre-agreed management actions that will occur in response to various stock status and other performance indicators to help ensure identified management objectives are achieved.
- **Management procedures**, sometimes called harvest strategies, include stock monitoring, HCRs, and MSE. They help ensure the identified management objects are met.



ICCAT Rec. 21-04: Conservation and Management Measures, Including a Management Procedure and Exceptional Circumstances Protocol, for North Atlantic Albacore

- Adopts a management procedure for northern albacore
 - Sets a process for establishing a 3-year constant annual total allowable catch (TAC)
 - Uses values estimated from each stock assessment and through application of the recommendation's HCR
- Application of the management procedure resulted in maintaining the 2021 TAC of 37,801 mt (Rec. 20-04) for 2022 and 2023
- Maintained U.S. quota of 711.5 mt from Rec. 20-04
 - 12.5% increase from U.S. baseline quota of 632.4 mt in current regulations



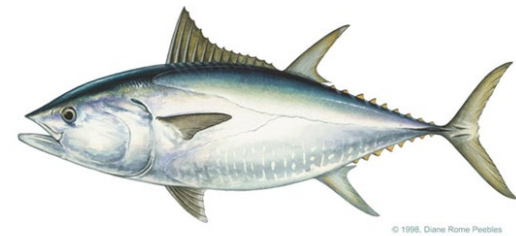
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Proposed Northern Albacore Quota

- Proposed quota = 711.5 mt
- Preferred Alternative B3 analyzes 3-year quotas of up to 950 mt, set through application of HCR in Rec. 21-04
 - 950 mt is derived from the maximum allowable catch limit of 50,000 mt in HCR
 - Represents an approximately 32% increase over the current TAC of 37,801 mt
 - Assumes U.S. portion of overall TAC remains the same
- Analysis of this alternative anticipates that NOAA Fisheries would implement U.S. northern albacore quotas in accordance with the ICCAT management procedure, up to analyzed maximum baseline quota of 950 mt

ICCAT Rec. 21-07: Amending Rec. 17-06 for an Interim Conservation and Management Plan for Western Atlantic Bluefin Tuna

- Adopted TAC of 2,726 mt for 2022 - precautionary TAC that:
 - prevents overfishing with a high probability
 - prioritizes continued stock growth, including long-term
 - ensures relative stability by avoiding a large fluctuation in catches
- U.S. quota of 1,316.14 mt
 - 5.5% increase from U.S. baseline quota of 1,247.86 mt in current regulations
- ICCAT anticipates adopting a management procedure in 2022 to set TACs for 2023 onward



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Proposed Bluefin Tuna Quota and Subquotas

Comparison of baseline bluefin tuna quotas and subquotas*

	Current	Proposed
ICCAT Recommendation	17-06 (TAC=2,350 mt)	21-07 (TAC=2,726 mt)
	mt	mt
Baseline Annual U.S. quota	1,247.86	1,316.14
Suballocations:		
General category	555.7	587.9
Harpoon category	46.0	48.7
Longline category	163.6	169.1
Trap category	1.2	1.2
Purse Seine category	219.5	232.2
Angling category	232.4	245.9
Reserve category	29.5	31.2
Northeast Distant gear restricted area (NED) set-aside (for use by Longline category)	25	25
Annual Total U.S. quota	1,272.86	1,341.14

* Subquota percentages from the current regulations; does not represent percentages proposed in Amendment 13 to the 2006 Consolidated Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Fishery Management Plan (Amendment 13).

Proposed Bluefin Tuna Quota and Subquotas* - Detailed

Category	Annual Baseline Quota (mt)	Subquotas	Subquota Amounts (mt)
General	587.9	January-March	31.2
		June-August	293.9
		September	155.8
		October-November	76.4
		December	30.6
Harpoon	48.7		
Longline	169.1		
Trap	1.2		
Purse Seine	232.2		
Angling	245.9	School	134.1
		Reserve	24.8
		North of 39°18' N. lat.	51.6
		South of 39°18' N. lat.	57.7
		Large School/Small Medium	106.1
		North of 39°18' N. lat.	50.1
		South of 39°18' N. lat.	56.0
		Trophy	5.7
		North of 39°18' N. lat.	1.9
		South of 39°18' N. lat.	1.9
		Gulf of Mexico	1.9
Reserve	31.2		
U.S. Baseline Quota Including 25 mt for NED	1,316.14 1,341.14		

* Subquota percentages from the current regulations; does not represent percentages proposed in Amendment 13.

Anticipated Timing

Quota Rule

- Proposed rule published March 7, 2022 (87 FR 12648)
- Comment period ends April 6, 2022
- Intend to publish final rule in June 2022



Upcoming bluefin tuna actions that affect the U.S. quota and subquotas:

- Adjustment of Reserve category quota for available underharvest of the adjusted U.S. quota from prior year
 - For 2022, NOAA Fisheries likely will announce with the final rule for this action
- Reallocation of BFT quota proposed under Amendment 13
 - Amendment 13 final rule expected to follow the final quota rule

ICCAT anticipates renegotiating the bluefin tuna recommendation, including possible adoption of a management procedure, in November 2022.

Request for Public Comments

- Comment period closes on **April 6, 2022**
- Please submit comments at <https://www.regulations.gov> (Search “NOAA-NMFS-2022-0024”)
- Action webpage:
<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/action/changes-atlantic-bluefin-tuna-and-north-atlantic-albacore-quotas-proposed>
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