



## Adjusted 2016 Northern Albacore Quota and 2016 Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Reserve Category Quota

August 31, 2016

### Action being taken and important dates

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) adjusts the northern albacore (NALB) annual baseline quota for 2016 with available underharvest of the 2015 adjusted U.S. NALB quota, and augments the 2016 Atlantic bluefin tuna (BFT) Reserve category quota with available underharvest of the 2015 adjusted U.S. BFT quota, consistent with the annual quota adjustment processes established in Amendment 7 to the 2006 Consolidated Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Fishery Management Plan (Amendment 7; 79 FR 71510, December 2, 2014). This action is necessary to implement binding 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. NMFS makes such adjustments annually, when complete catch information for the prior year is available and finalized. This action is effective September 1 through December 31, 2016.

#### *Adjustment of the 2016 NALB Quota*

Based on NMFS' best available information as of July 21, 2016, the total 2015 NALB catch is 247.70 mt, which is 293.61 mt less than the 2015 adjusted quota of 541.31 mt. Thus, the underharvest for 2015 is 293.61 mt. Per the current ICCAT NALB recommendation, only 25 percent of the total 2015 U.S. quota, or 131.75 mt, of that underharvest may be carried forward to the 2016 fishing year. **Consistent with the process established in Amendment 7, the adjusted 2016 NALB quota is 527 mt plus 131.75 mt, totaling 658.75 mt.**

#### *Adjustment of the 2016 BFT Reserve Category Quota*

Based on NMFS' best available information as of July 21, 2016, the total 2015 BFT catch is 896.30 mt. This total catch includes 876.80 mt of landings and 19.50 mt of dead discards, which includes the best available estimate of 14.60 mt of dead discards for the pelagic longline fishery and the observed dead discards of 4.90 mt for the purse seine fishery. The total catch of 896.30 mt is 282.36 mt less than the quota available for 2015 landings and dead discards (i.e., 1,083.79 mt plus 94.87 mt of 2014 underharvest carried forward to 2015, totaling 1,178.66 mt). Thus, the underharvest for 2015 is 282.36 mt. Per the 2014 ICCAT recommendation, only 10 percent of the total 2015 U.S. quota, or 108.38 mt, of that underharvest may be carried forward to the 2016 fishing year. Consistent with the process established in Amendment 7, NMFS is augmenting the Reserve category quota with 108.38 mt in this action. The codified Reserve category quota is 24.8 mt. Effective January 1, 2016, NMFS adjusted the Reserve category quota for 2016 to 92.2 mt by reallocating 101.4 mt of Purse Seine quota to the Reserve category (based on 2015 catch by Purse Seine category participants and provisions for calculating Purse Seine allocations in Amendment 7) and also transferring 34 mt of Reserve category quota to the Longline category

(81 FR 19, January 4, 2016). **Thus, the adjusted 2016 Reserve category quota is 200.58 mt (i.e., 92.2 mt plus 108.38 mt).**

Consistent with the BFT quota regulations, NMFS may allocate any portion of the Reserve category quota for inseason or annual adjustments to any fishing category quota pursuant to regulatory determination criteria described at § 635.27(a)(8), or for scientific research.

This notice is a courtesy to permit holders to help keep you informed about the Atlantic tuna fisheries. For further information, contact the HMS Management Division at (978) 281-9260, or go to [www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/). Official notice of Federal fishery actions is made through filing such notice with the Office of the Federal Register.

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