



National Marine Fisheries Service

Notice on the Use of Green-stick gear



This notice describes the authorized use of green-stick gear in Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) fisheries. Green-stick gear is defined at 50 CFR § 635.2 as:

...an actively trolled mainline attached to a vessel and elevated or suspended above the surface of the water with no more than 10 hooks or gangions attached to the mainline. The suspended line, attached gangions and/or hooks, and catch may be retrieved collectively by hand or mechanical means. Green-stick does not constitute a pelagic longline or a bottom longline as defined in this section or as described at § 635.21(c) or § 635.21(d), respectively.

Green-stick gear may be used to harvest bigeye, albacore, yellowfin, and skipjack tunas (BAYS tunas) and bluefin tuna aboard Atlantic Tunas General, HMS Charter/Headboat, and Atlantic Tunas Longline permitted vessels. A typical green-stick gear configuration is shown in Figure 1.

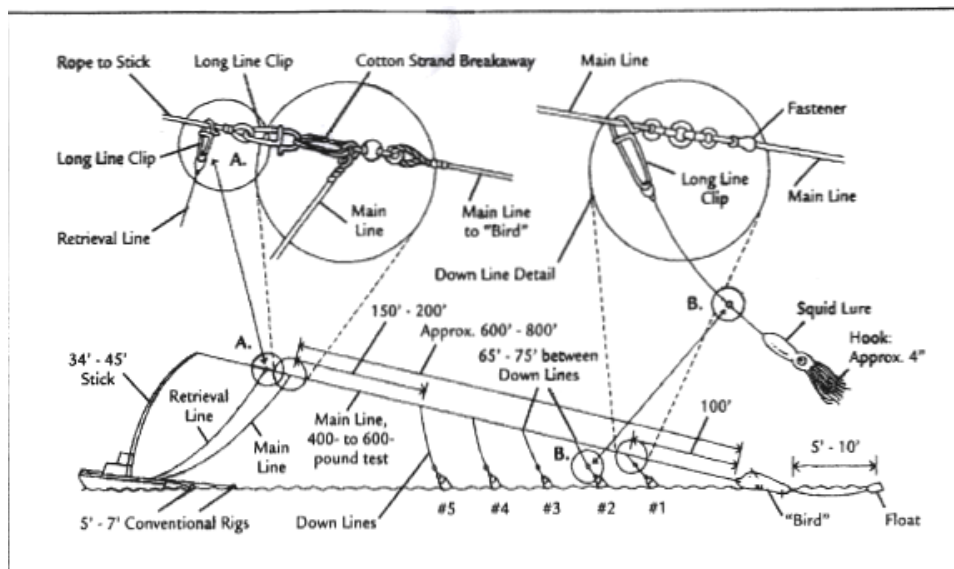


Figure 1. A typical green-stick gear configuration.

Onboard Atlantic Tunas Longline permitted vessels, up to 20 J-hooks may be possessed for use with green-stick gear and no more than 10 J-hooks may be used with a single green-stick gear. J-hooks may not be used with pelagic longline (PLL) gear and no J-hooks may be possessed onboard a PLL vessel unless green-stick gear is also onboard. J-hooks possessed and used onboard PLL vessels may be no smaller than 1.5 inch (38.1 mm) when measured in a straight line over the longest distance from the eye to any other part of the hook.

Atlantic HMS Angling permitted (recreational) vessels are not authorized to use green-stick gear as defined above. HMS Angling permitted vessels may use handgear configured as a vertical outrigger with a fiberglass pole (such as the pole used with green-stick gear) and the line from a rod and reel linked to the main line with an outrigger clip or other break-away attachment. When a fish strikes, the rod and reel line breaks away from the main line, leaving the fish attached only to the rod and reel. Then, the fish is fought individually and landed using the rod and reel.