

ANNUAL FISHING / CAPACITY MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR TROPICAL TUNAS

Name of CPC: Canada

Fishing Plan Year: 2020

1. Introduction

➤ *Summary of fishing plan*

The Integrated Fisheries Management Plan (IFMP) for [Canadian Atlantic Swordfish and Other Tunas - 2013](#) identifies the main objectives and requirements for the swordfish and other tunas (skipjack, bigeye, yellowfin) fishery in Atlantic Canada, as well as the tactics that will be used to achieve these objectives. The IFMP provides the written description of how the fishery is pursued, the quota, number of licences, gear used, and relevant legislation. Excerpts from the IFMP have been extracted below to provide the information necessary.

➤ *Canada's catch limit for tropical tunas is as follows:*

- Bigeye - CPCs with recent average catch of less than 1,000 t are encouraged to maintain catch and effort at recent levels;
- Skipjack - No quota limit. Skipjack is a minor component of total Canadian tuna landings; and,
- Yellowfin - No quota limit but as per the ICCAT recommendation "no increase in the level of effective fishing effort exerted on Atlantic yellowfin tuna, over the level observed in 1992." However, a total Atlantic wide TAC of 110,000 was introduced by ICCAT for 2012 and maintained in 2019.

➤ *Number of fishing vessels by gear type*

- **There are 77 licences authorized to use longline, harpoon or trolling gear in Atlantic Canada**

There are four commercial gear types (longline, harpoon, trolling, and rod and reel) permitted to capture other tunas in the waters off Atlantic Canada (Nova Scotia and Newfoundland). The longline fishery is in effect, a multi-species fishery. The swordfish longline licence conditions are used in conjunction with licence conditions for the other tunas (e.g., skipjack, bigeye, yellowfin) and together identify the authorized directed species as well as the large number of permitted by-catch species (e.g., sharks and marlins). The licences for Atlantic swordfish and other tunas are authorized to utilize three different types of gear (longline, harpoon, or trolling) to fish for Atlantic swordfish and other tunas. Entry to the swordfish and other tunas fishery, regardless of fleet sector, is limited to the current 77 licences and has been since 1992. Licences have been fixed at this number, but may be reissued, within certain policy restrictions, from one fisher to another. In most recent years, approximately 60 of the 77 licences have been active using at least one of the available gear types. Licences are authorized to operate fishing operations Atlantic-wide. Total number of licences equate to the maximum number of vessels. No more than one vessel is authorized to be attached to a licence at any one time.

- **There is one offshore tuna longline licence in Atlantic Canada**

A unique offshore tuna longline licence, introduced in 2000, also operates a longline fishing operation Atlantic-wide but directs primarily for tunas. The licence is only authorized to utilize pelagic longline gear.

- **There are 42 angling licences that may direct for other tunas in Atlantic Canada.**

There are 42 inshore angling licences (<20m) which are authorized to capture and retain a catch of bigeye, yellowfin, and skipjack tunas. These same licences are also authorized to capture and retain bluefin tuna. These 42 licences are authorized to utilize to use rod and reel gear, tended line, or electric harpoon. Licence holders almost exclusively utilize rod and reel fishing gear only.

- **There are 55 Bluefin Tuna angling licences that allow for a by catch of other tunas in Atlantic Canada**

There are 55 bluefin tuna angling licences which are authorized to catch and retain an incidental catch of bigeye, yellowfin, and skipjack tunas while fishing for bluefin tuna. These 55 licences are authorized to utilize to use rod and reel gear, tended line or electric harpoon. Licence holders almost exclusively utilize rod and reel fishing gear only.

➤ **Relevant National Legislation**

In addition to the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tuna (ICCAT), conservation harvesting plans specific to swordfish and other tuna fleets and the IFMP, the fishery is governed by a suite of legislation, policy and regulations including but not limited to those noted below.

- ❖ *Fisheries Act*
- ❖ *Atlantic Fishery Regulations (AFR), 1985*
- ❖ *Fishery (General) Regulations, 1993*
- ❖ *Oceans Act, 1996*
- ❖ *Species at Risk Act, 2002*
- ❖ International Plan of Action (IPOA) and Canada's National Plan of Action (NPOA) for reducing incidental catch of seabirds in longline fisheries
- ❖ Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) International Plan of Action (IPOA) for Shark Conservation
- ❖ *Coastal Fisheries Protection Act, 1985*
- ❖ *Department of Fisheries and Oceans Act, 1985*
- ❖ *Atlantic Fisheries Restructuring Act, 1985*
- ❖ *Aboriginal Communal Fishing Licences Regulations, 1993*
- ❖ *Commercial Fisheries Licensing Policy for Eastern Canada 1996*
- ❖ Sustainable Fisheries Framework: Conservation and Sustainable Use Elements
 - Precautionary Approach policy
 - Foraging Species policy
 - Sensitive Benthic Areas policy
 - By-catch policy

**2. Details of fishing plan –For those with >1,000 t average catch (not applicable for Canada)
For those with <1,000 t average catch (applicable for Canada)**

➤ **Fishing gear groups and number of vessel that catch Tropical Tuna**

- 77 licences for Atlantic swordfish and other tunas
- One offshore tuna longline licence
- 42 inshore angling licences for other tunas (include the retention of bluefin tuna)
- 55 bluefin tuna angling licences (with incidental catch of other tunas)

➤ **How quotas are allocated to each gear group**

Since 2002, the swordfish fishery has been managed through the use of individual transferable quotas. The longline swordfish fishery is in effect, a multi-species fishery. The swordfish longline licence conditions are used in conjunction with licence conditions for the other tunas (e.g., skipjack, bigeye, yellowfin) and together identify the authorized directed species.

In Canada, tropical tunas are managed through use of an overall total allowable catch and fished in a competitive basis primarily in conjunction with swordfish licences or bluefin tuna licences without vessel limits on other tunas (e.g. skipjack, bigeye, yellowfin) up to the overall Canadian allowance. Only the 77 Atlantic swordfish and other tunas licences, the one offshore tuna longline licence, and 42 angling licences are authorized to direct for tropical tunas. Canada is fully operating within their tropical tuna established catch limits, i.e. maintaining catch and effort at recent levels.

➤ **Methods used to manage established catch limits**

- Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO), is Canada's responsible federal authority for monitoring landings at the individual licence level throughout the season and determining any overages and underages of set catch limits at the end of the fishing year. This is accomplished through:
- Mandatory hail-outs and hail-ins for every trip. Hail-ins identifies the number of fish by species and accurate weight by species;
- Monitory logbooks are used to record catch and bycatch;
- Independent dockside monitoring is 100 per cent mandatory at the time of offloading to verify catch;
- Verified catch data are entered in the DFO database system by an independent dockside monitoring company within 2 weeks of landing;
- Longline vessels will have ten percent baseline observer coverage to be deployed for maximum spatial / temporal representation of the fishery. Additional observer coverage may be required if issues are revealed;
- Vessel monitoring system coverage for the portion of the fleet fishing with longline gear is set at 100 per cent;
- The Canadian fishery is monitored by a comprehensive compliance program As such, the management of Canadian fisheries requires an integrated approach to monitoring, control and surveillance that involves the deployment of fishery officers to air, sea, and land patrols;
- Compliance in the other tunas fishery is achieved through the application of the *Fisheries Act*, the *Fishery (General) Regulations*, the *Atlantic Fishery Regulations* and the *Aboriginal Communal Fishing Licences Regulations* by DFO "fishery officers". The following offers a general description of compliance activities carried out by Canada in the swordfish and other tunas fishery.
 - During sea patrols and on land, Canadian fishery officers from Fisheries and Oceans Canada conduct vessel inspections to check location, gear, catch, licences, logbooks and compliance with requirements.
 - Canada carries out investigations into reports of fraud and collusion. This may involve interaction with other orders of government and supporting agencies.
 - Canada authorizes VMS service providers, monitors the accuracy of their reporting systems, and uses the data as part of its surveillance activities.
 - Canada reserves the right to request at-sea observer coverage where circumstances dictate.
 - Routine aerial patrols are conducted in the areas covered by this plan.
 - Canada designates both at-sea and dockside observers (third parties). Designations are subject to individuals meeting background checks and eligibility criteria, and require the successful completion of exams.
 - Canada monitors the performance of at-sea and dockside observers and may initiate action to revoke the designations of observers found to be deficient in the performance of those duties.

3. Planned an expansion of capacity in 2020- for those with <1,000 t average catch

These licences previously authorized the retention of tropical tunas that were incidentally captured while angling for bluefin tuna. In 2020, these licences are permitted to direct for tropical tuna species. This small change, from a by-catch to a directing capability is not anticipated to significantly alter Canada's catch and capacity. The reasons for this are as follows: 1. These licence holders primary focus is bluefin tuna, due to the value of that species, and amount of time expected to be diverted away from catching bluefin tuna will be small due to overall economic return; 2. Availability of tropical tunas in Canada's inshore waters is dependent on water temperatures and currents. Tropical tuna are only available to be captured in the inshore waters for a few weeks annually, should ecosystem variables be favorable; and, 3. These 42 inshore licences have a capacity limit to fish up to four hooks maximum, which will prevent large catches of tropical tunas. It was not possible to provide notice of this small adjustment until after the set deadline as Canada's consultation with relevant stakeholders and Indigenous partners occurs after January 3.

4. Fisheries Aggregation Devices Management Plans (Not applicable to Canada)

CAPACITY TABLE

TROPICAL TUNA VESSEL FLEET					
Type	Number of Vessels		Estimated best catch rate per unit	Total Estimated Capacity	
	2019	2020		2019	2020
Purse seiner over 40m	0	0			
Purse seiner between 20 and 40m	0	0			
Purse seiners less than 20m	0	0			
Longliner over 40m	0	0			
Longliner between 20 and 40m	2	3			
Longliner less than 20m	75	74			
For Capacity Expansion					
Baitboat	0	0			
Other gears (specify)					
Handline less than 20m (Rod & Reel or tanded line - these same 97 vessels are able to harpoon)	97	97			
Harpoon 20m or greater	2	3			
Harpoon less than 20m	97	97			
Sport/Recreational (2 recreational tuna Derbies occur annually. Vessels are less than 20m)	27	27			
Total fishing capacity					
Quota					
Initial quota	<1575t	<1000t			
Quota transfer made to XXX (if applicable)	0	0			
Quota transfer received from XXX (if applicable)	0	0			
Total adjusted quota (if applicable)	0	0			