



NOAA FISHERIES

NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) Regional Implementation Plan

Atlantic highly migratory species (HMS) are managed under the dual authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) and the Atlantic Tunas Convention Act (ATCA). Under the Magnuson-Stevens Act, NOAA Fisheries must manage fisheries to prevent overfishing while achieving, on a continuing basis, the optimum yield for each fishery. Under ATCA, NOAA Fisheries is authorized to promulgate regulations, as may be necessary and appropriate, to implement the recommendations from the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT).

Currently, Atlantic sharks, tunas, swordfish, and billfish are managed under the 2006 Consolidated Atlantic HMS Fishery Management Plan (FMP), and its amendments. The Atlantic HMS Management Division oversees the domestic management of these fisheries in the Atlantic, Gulf of Mexico, and Caribbean with the support of various NOAA Fisheries partners including the Office of Science and Technology, regional offices, and science centers.

Significant recreational fisheries exist for most Atlantic HMS. In 2016, nearly 24,000 vessel permits (20,020 HMS Angling and 3,944 HMS Charter/Headboat) were issued for the recreational pursuit of Atlantic tunas, billfish, swordfish, and sharks in the Atlantic, Gulf of Mexico, and the Caribbean.



Additionally, 262 tournaments pursuing HMS registered with NOAA Fisheries in 2016.

The collection of precise and timely catch and effort data is essential to the effective management of these fisheries, and a multitude of data collection methods are currently employed.

Many of these data collections fall under the umbrella of the **Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP)** including the Large Pelagic Survey (LPS).

The purpose of the Atlantic HMS MRIP Implementation Plan is to summarize the data needs associated with Atlantic HMS science and management, evaluate the existing recreational data collections, set priorities for their improvement and expansion, and identify the steps and funding needed to accomplish those improvements. Concurrent regional plans are also under development for the Atlantic, Gulf of Mexico, and Caribbean to address these needs for their respective regional fisheries. The Atlantic HMS Management Division is also participating in development of the Caribbean regional plan.

ATLANTIC HMS DATA NEEDS

The Atlantic HMS MRIP Implementation Plan examines recreational fishing effort and catch data for continued scientific understanding and management of HMS fisheries, and is divided into two parts: scientific data needs and management data needs.

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