

*Gulf Region*

Notice to Fish Harvesters

2026 – Interim Conservation Harvesting Plan for the southern Gulf of St. Lawrence mackerel bait fishery

Moncton, New Brunswick – May 26, 2026 – As an interim management measure pending results of the 2026 Atlantic mackerel assessment on May 27th, Fisheries and Oceans Canada will release 220 tonnes of the Atlantic mackerel Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for the competitive, personal-use bait fishery.

The 2026 mackerel bait fishery in the southern Gulf of St. Lawrence in Mackerel Fishing Area 16 will open on May 27, 2026 at 10:00 Atlantic Daylight Time (ADT) for fish harvesters from the Gulf Region.

Eligible fish harvesters who wish to participate in this fishery must refer to conditions of licence that will be available on the [National Online Licensing System](#).

Following the stock assessment and subsequent discussions with the Atlantic Mackerel Advisory Committee, the Department will communicate additional information to the 2026 management approach for Atlantic mackerel.

NEW IN 2026

Changes to Reporting of Lost / Retrieved Fishing Gear

DFO is advising fish harvesters of changes in the conditions of licences related to lost and retrieved fishing gear. Please consult the document [2026 - Conditions of Licence : Changes to Reporting of Lost / Retrieved Fishing Gear](#) for additional information.

The voluntary use of an electronic logbook (ELOG) is allowed. Additional information can be found on the following website: [Electronic logbooks \(ELOGS\)](#).

OTHER MANAGEMENT MEASURES

First allocation

The first allocation is set at 220 t within the Atlantic Canada and Quebec Regions.

Authorized species

Conditions of licence are **only valid for mackerel**.

Mandatory hail out

Mandatory hail out is required for all licence holders going out on a fishing trip.

Mandatory hail in

Mandatory hail in is required for all licence holders entering port after a fishing trip. An accurate catch estimate must be provided before entering port.

Mandatory logbook

Gulf Region harvesters must obtain either a paper logbook or an electronic logbook from a prequalified supplier listed on the following websites:

- Herring and Mackerel logbook - Fixed gear (paper format) :
[Prequalified Logbook Suppliers.](#)
- Electronic logbook (ELOG) :
[Qualified electronic logbooks \(ELOG\) client applications.](#)

Maximum daily limit

The maximum daily quantity of mackerel authorized to catch and retain is 454 kg in total.

Gear authorized

A maximum of 3 gillnets for a maximum total length of 50 fathoms with a minimum mesh size of 66.7 mm or; a maximum of 36 hooks and a maximum of 6 lines.

Fishing restrictions

It is strictly forbidden to sell any species of fish caught under the authority of a bait licence.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Harvesters must refer to the conditions of licence for the following reporting requirements:

- Species at Risk
- Marine mammal interaction
- Lost gear reporting
- Retrieved gear reporting

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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