



## *Gulf Region*

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# *Notice to Fish Harvesters*

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EKME: 4408499

### **2025 PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND – BLUEFIN TUNA FISHERY**

**Charlottetown, PEI – June 19, 2025** - Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO), is announcing the PEI Bluefin Tuna Fishery Conservation and Harvest Plan (CHP) for the 2025 fishing season.

The opening date for the Bluefin tuna season in Gulf home waters (4RST and 4WD) and in Ex-sector waters is **July 1, 2025**. The fishery will remain open until December 31, 2025 or until the quota is harvested, whichever comes first.

#### **NEW in 2025**

- The hail-out period during the bluefin tuna fishery will be modified in 2025 to go from 3 hours to 1 hour. This change will provide licence holders greater flexibility in planning their fishing activities and applies to all Gulf tuna fleets.

#### **Management measures in place for the 2025 fishing season**

##### **Tag Issuance**

- Each eligible licence holder will be issued two tags at the beginning of the season.
- Licence holders must land one tuna by 23:59hrs on September 23, 2025 to be eligible for a reallocation tag. Licence conditions will only be valid until 23:59hrs on September 23, 2025. New conditions will only be issued to eligible licence holders.
- Additional tags will be issued if more quota becomes available.
- Fishers will not be authorized to retain blue shark as bycatch, while on a tuna fishing trip.
- Eligible licence holders who are active (hail out) in the fishery prior to 23:59 hrs on September 23, 2025, but did not land a fish, will be authorized to retain their original tag. If a second tag was obtained, it must be returned. Licence holders who have not landed a fish by 23:59 hrs on September 23, 2025 will not be eligible for a reallocation tag.
- Licence holders who have no fishing effort (no hail) by 23:59 hrs on September 23, 2025 must return all unused tags and will not be eligible to continue fishing for the remainder of the season.
- Licence holders will only be authorized one vessel transfer during the 2025 season. A licence holder may transfer their vessel to another licence holder, then have the vessel transferred back. If the vessel is then transferred to another tuna licence holder after the original transfer, new tuna licence conditions will not be issued.
- The PEI bluefin tuna fleet will have access to a portion of the quota transferred from Mexico to Canada. The Mexican and Canadian quotas will be combined for the 2025 season. The Prince Edward Island Fishermen's Association (PEIFA) will charge a registration fee of

\$250.00 for all members holding a tuna licence to cover the cost of the Mexican quota transfer.

- Possessing a bluefin tuna tag allows access to fish but does not guarantee your quota. The fishery will close once the quota has been reached.
- Each tuna tag will include a temporary dart tag that is recorded in Annex II associated with that tag. Dart tags are non-transferrable.
- Licence holders will have to print licence conditions for 4RST and 4WD separately.
- Licence holders/operators are permitted to release any bluefin tuna tagged with a scientific tag. Please refer to your licence conditions for details on this authorization.

### **Pooling Groups**

- A maximum of three tuna licence holders will be permitted to form a pooling group to fish from the same vessel. Only the primary licence holder is required to be onboard during a bluefin tuna fishing trip.
- For pooling groups with two licence holders, fishers must land two tuna by 23:59hrs on September 23, 2025 to be eligible for a reallocation tag.
- For pooling groups with three licence holders, fishers must land three tuna by 23:59hrs on September 23, 2025 to be eligible for a reallocation tag.
- Pooling groups will be valid for the whole season, unless DFO is notified otherwise.
- Pooling groups will not be authorized for vessel transfers.
- The deadline to apply to be in a pooling group is June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

### **Mackerel Bait**

Licence holders are permitted to catch and retain 20 live mackerel per fishing trip for bait purposes. This will be reflected in conditions of licence.

### **Discarding Waste**

As of 2022, all commercial fisheries in Canada have a new condition of licence relating to the discharge of garbage from Canadian fishing vessels. The licence holder/operator is prohibited from discarding in Canadian fisheries waters from their vessel any time that may be harmful to fish or fish habitat.

New condition: *The licence holder/operator is prohibited from discarding in Canadian fisheries waters from their vessel any item that may be harmful to fish or fish habitat including but not limited to plastics, ropes, fishing gear, garbage bags, fuel, oil, rags, glass, bottles, metal, extruded polystyrene foam (e.g. Styrofoam), and tires.*

### **LOGBOOK**

Licence holders are required to submit a copy of the Atlantic bluefin tuna log document to the dockside monitoring company that was hailed in to within seven (7) days following the end of the fishing trip when no tuna has been caught or immediately at the end of each fishing trip when a tuna is on board. A reminder for licence holders to use the new version of the tuna logbook as the old version is no longer valid.

## HAIL OUT

Fish harvesters from both Gulf and Quebec Regions will be required to dial a **new telephone number** when hailing out, as required by condition of licence. The new telephone number **1-833-699-2013 (toll free) or 1-506-431-3223 (satellite phone only)** will need to be used for new hails, modified hails, and cancelled hails. This will direct fish harvesters to a call centre, and replace the Vessel Hail Out System (Interactive Voice Recognition System - IVR) until further notice.

**2025 TAG AVAILABILITY:** Beginning on Tuesday, June 24, Bluefin tuna tags will be available at the DFO PEI Area Office (165 John Yeo Drive, Charlottetown, PEI) from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm, Monday through Friday. Licence holders are eligible to pick up their initial two tags at the same time. The price per tag is \$179.91. Each bluefin tuna tag will include one temporary dart tag, depending on availability. Temporary dart tags will be free of charge, compliments of the PEIFA.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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