

Fishery Conservation and Management

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floats capable of supporting the mainline, and leaders (gangions) with hooks are on board. Removal of any one of these elements constitutes removal of pelagic longline gear.

(b) [Reserved]

§ 622.274 Pelagic longline closed areas.

(a) If pelagic longline gear is on board a vessel, a person aboard such vessel may not fish for or retain a dolphin or wahoo—

(1) In the Northeastern United States closed area from June 1 through June 30 each year. The Northeastern United States closed area is that portion of the EEZ between 40° N. lat. and 39° N. lat. from 68° W. long. to 74° W. long.

(2) In the Charleston Bump closed area from February 1 through April 30 each year. The Charleston Bump closed area is that portion of the EEZ off North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia between 34° N. lat. and 31° N. lat. and west of 76° W. long.

(3) In the East Florida Coast closed area year round. The East Florida Coast closed area is that portion of the EEZ off Georgia and the east coast of Florida from the inner boundary of the EEZ at 31° N. lat.; thence due east to 78° W. long.; thence by a rhumb line to 28°17' N. lat., 79°12' W. long.; thence proceeding in a southerly direction along the outer boundary of the EEZ to 24° N. lat.; thence due west to 24° N. lat., 81°47' W. long.; thence due north to the innermost boundary of the EEZ at 81°47' W. long.

(b) A vessel is considered to have pelagic longline gear on board when a power-operated longline hauler, a mainline, floats capable of supporting the mainline, and gangions with hooks are on board. Removal of any one of these elements constitutes removal of pelagic longline gear.

(c) If a vessel is in a closed area during a time specified in paragraph (a) of this section with pelagic longline gear on board, it is a rebuttable presumption that fish on board such vessel were taken with pelagic longline gear in the closed area.

§ 622.275 Size limits.

All size limits in this section are minimum size limits unless specified otherwise. A fish not in compliance

with its size limit, as specified in this section, in or from the Atlantic EEZ, may not be possessed, sold, or purchased. A fish not in compliance with its size limit must be released immediately with a minimum of harm. The operator of a vessel that fishes in the EEZ is responsible for ensuring that fish on board are in compliance with the size limits specified in this section.

(a) *Dolphin in the Atlantic off Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina*—20 inches (50.8 cm), fork length.

(b) [Reserved]

§ 622.276 Landing fish intact.

(a) Dolphin and wahoo in or from the Atlantic EEZ must be maintained with head and fins intact. Such fish may be eviscerated, gilled, and scaled, but must otherwise be maintained in a whole condition.

(b) The operator of a vessel that fishes in the EEZ is responsible for ensuring that fish on that vessel in the EEZ are maintained intact and, if taken from the EEZ, are maintained intact through offloading ashore, as specified in this section.

§ 622.277 Bag and possession limits.

Section 622.11(a) provides the general applicability for bag and possession limits.

(a) *Atlantic dolphin and wahoo*. Bag and possession limits are as follows:

(1) Dolphin—10, not to exceed 60 per vessel, whichever is less, except, on board a headboat, 10 per paying passenger.

(2) Wahoo—2.

(b) [Reserved]

§ 622.278 Commercial trip limits.

Commercial trip limits are limits on the amount of Atlantic dolphin and wahoo that may be possessed on board or landed, purchased, or sold from a vessel per day. A person who fishes in the EEZ may not combine a trip limit specified in this section with any trip or possession limit applicable to state waters. A species subject to a trip limit specified in this section taken in the EEZ may not be transferred at sea, regardless of where such transfer takes place, and such species may not be transferred in the EEZ. Commercial trip limits apply as follows (all weights

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are round or eviscerated weights unless specified otherwise):

(a) *Atlantic dolphin and wahoo.* (1) The trip limit for wahoo in or from the Atlantic EEZ is 500 lb (227 kg). This trip limit applies to a vessel that has a Federal commercial permit for Atlantic dolphin and wahoo, provided that the vessel is not operating as a charter vessel or headboat.

(2) The trip limit for a vessel that does not have a Federal commercial vessel permit for Atlantic dolphin and wahoo but has a Federal commercial vessel permit in any other fishery is 200 lb (91 kg) of dolphin and wahoo, combined, provided that all fishing on and landings from that trip are north of 39° N. lat. (A charter vessel/headboat permit is not a commercial vessel permit.)

(b) [Reserved]

§ 622.279 Restrictions on sale/purchase.

(a) Dolphin or wahoo harvested in or from the Atlantic EEZ or adjoining state waters by a vessel that has a valid commercial vessel permit for Atlantic dolphin and wahoo, as required under § 622.270(a)(1), or by a vessel authorized a 200-lb (91-kg) trip limit for dolphin or wahoo, as specified in § 622.278(a)(2), may be sold or transferred only to a dealer who has a valid Gulf and South Atlantic dealer permit, as required under § 622.270(d)(1).

(b) In addition to the provisions of paragraph (a)(1) of this section, a person may not sell dolphin or wahoo possessed under the recreational bag limit harvested in the Atlantic EEZ or adjoining state waters by a vessel while it is operating as a charter vessel or headboat. A dolphin or wahoo harvested or possessed by a vessel that is operating as a charter vessel or headboat with a Federal charter vessel/headboat permit for Atlantic dolphin and wahoo may not be purchased or sold if harvested in or from the Atlantic EEZ or adjoining state waters.

(c) Dolphin or wahoo harvested in or from the Atlantic EEZ may be first received only by a dealer who has a valid Gulf and South Atlantic dealer permit, as required under § 622.270(d)(1), and only from a vessel authorized to sell

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dolphin and wahoo under paragraph (a)(1) of this section.

[79 FR 19496, Apr. 9, 2014]

§ 622.280 Annual catch limits (ACLs) and accountability measures (AMs).

(a) *Atlantic dolphin*—(1) *Commercial sector.* (i) If commercial landings for Atlantic dolphin, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the commercial ACL of 1,157,001 lb (524,807 kg), round weight, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the commercial sector for the remainder of the fishing year. On and after the effective date of such a notification, all sale or purchase of Atlantic dolphin is prohibited and harvest or possession of this species in or from the South Atlantic EEZ is limited to the bag and possession limit. This bag and possession limit applies in the South Atlantic on board a vessel for which a valid Federal commercial or charter vessel/headboat permit for Atlantic dolphin and wahoo has been issued, without regard to where such species were harvested, *i.e.*, in state or Federal waters.

(ii) In addition to the measures specified in paragraph (a)(1)(i) of this section, if the combined Atlantic dolphin commercial and recreational landings exceed the combined commercial and recreational ACLs specified in paragraphs (a)(1)(i) and (a)(2)(i) of this section, and Atlantic dolphin are overfished, based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register, at or near the beginning of the following fishing year, to reduce the commercial ACL for that following year by the amount of the commercial overage in the prior fishing year.

(2) *Recreational sector.* (i) If recreational landings for Atlantic dolphin, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the recreational ACL of 14,187,845 lb (6,435,498 kg), round weight, then during the following fishing year, recreational landings will be monitored for a persistence in increased landings.

(ii) If the combined Atlantic dolphin commercial and recreational landings exceed the combined commercial and