



27 March 2014

Procedures to be implemented by the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture during the 2014 recreational bluefin tuna campaign

1. All recreational vessels which have applied for a BFT recreational fishing authorisation will be authorised to fish for BFT.
2. The authorisation must be kept on board for the entire season or until the fishery is closed.
3. The fishing season is from the 16th June to the 14th October, 2014 or until the allocated quota is exhausted.
4. The global allocated quota for recreational fishing vessels is being set at 1,000kg.
5. All authorised recreational fishing vessels have to notify the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture (DFA) before leaving the port and before returning to port at least 2 hours before arriving. The pre-notification can be made by sending an sms on 99674933 or by calling the DFAs free-phone on 80072240.
6. Once the quota has been consumed the DFA will close this fishery and the authorised recreational fishing vessels will not be required to continue notifying the DFA prior to departure and before arriving.
7. Once the fishing season is closed no BFT can be fished for, caught or landed. All incidental catches of bluefin tuna must be released.
8. Only those vessels that actually catch BFT are required to land their catch in one of the designated ports. The authorised recreational fisher may choose the most convenient designated port. These include: Marfa, Valletta, Marsaxlokk and Gozo.
9. Landings must take place in the presence of an officer from the DFA.
10. The minimum size for BFT is 30 kg or with a fork length of 115cm.
11. In cases of fish caught below the minimum size, the fisher must take the necessary measures to ensure, to the greatest extent possible, the release of bluefin tuna caught alive. In cases of dead fish the DFA must be informed immediately and the catch has to be landed in one of the designated ports. Such fish shall also be deducted from the allocated quota.
12. Recreational and sports fishers can only land one fish per day during the season. Any other fish shall be confiscated and shall also be deducted from the allocated quota.
13. The fishing line used by the authorised vessels cannot be thicker than 160mm during the season. The DFA will carry out inspections of the line at landings and during routine inspections at sea to ensure the fishing gear is in line with this provision.
14. It is prohibited to carry out fishing activities within the fish farm parameters. Action shall be taken against all vessels fishing within the designated zone and any fish on board will be confiscated and deducted from the allocated quota.

The DFA and the Armed Forces of Malta (AFM) shall carry out daily inspections at sea and in ports to ensure conformity.