

I. QUICK REFERENCE: ATLANTIC SHARK REGULATIONS

AUTHORIZED SPECIES ^{5,6}			
Large Coastal Sharks (LCS)		Small Coastal Sharks (SCS)	Pelagic Sharks
Blacktip	Nurse	Atlantic sharpnose	Blue
Bull	Sandbar***	Blacknose	Common thresher
Hammerhead, great**	Silky**	Bonnethead	Oceanic whitetip**
Hammerhead, scalloped**	Spinner	Finetooth	Porbeagle
Hammerhead, smooth**	Tiger		Shortfinmako
Lemon			
<p>* For management purposes, these species are divided into regional management groups (section XII).</p> <p>** These sharks may not be retained, transshipped, landed, stored, or sold by vessels with pelagic longline gear onboard. Charter/headboat vessels cannot possess these sharks while in possession of tunas, swordfish, or billfish.</p> <p>*** Sandbar sharks can only be retained by vessels selected to participate in the shark research fishery, subject to the retention limits established by NOAA Fisheries, and only when a NOAA Fisheries-approved observer is onboard.</p>			
PROHIBITED SPECIES ^{7,8}			
Atlantic angel	Bignose	Longfinmako	Sixgill
Basking	Caribbean reef	Narrowtooth	Smalltail
Bigeye sand tiger	Caribbean sharpnose	Night	Whale
Bigeyesixgill	Dusky	Sand tiger	White
Bigeye thresher	Galapagos	Sevengill	
PERMITS ^{9,10}			
<p>To harvest Atlantic sharks, vessel owners <i>must</i> obtain a valid Atlantic shark Directed or Incidental limited access permit. When the relevant retention limit allows, an open access HMS Commercial Caribbean Small Boat permit may be used to harvest Atlantic sharks. The shark retention limit for this permit is set at zero at this time.</p> <p>NOAA Fisheries does not issue new commercial shark limited access permits. To enter the fishery, fishermen must obtain a permit from a permit holder who is leaving the fishery. Limited access permits may be transferred between vessels and are subject to upgrading restrictions. Prior to renewing or obtaining a shark limited access permit, both the vessel owner and operator must become certified at a Protected Species Safe Handling, Release and Identification Workshop if fishing with longline or gillnet gear.</p> <p>The HMS Commercial Caribbean Small Boat is open access and only valid in the U.S. Caribbean Region¹¹ (shark retention limit set at zero at this time). Contact the Southeast Regional Office at (727) 824-5326 for information on commercial shark permits.</p>			
RETENTION LIMITS ¹²			
Directed permit	36 LCS per vessel per trip. No retention limits for pelagic or SCS.		
Incidental permit	3 LCS per vessel per trip. 16 pelagic or SCS (combined) per vessel per trip.		
HMS Commercial Caribbean Small Boat permit	0 sharks per vessel per trip.		

AUTHORIZED GEARS¹³	
Longline**	Bottom or pelagic***
Handgear	Rod and reel, handline, and bandit gear
Gillnet	A gillnet cannot be longer than 2.5 km, must be attached to the vessel at one end while fishing (except during net checks), and is subject to additional restrictions in place in the Southeast Restricted Areas (North and South) between November 15 and April 15 every year per the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan (ALWTRP) regulations. ¹⁴ Gillnet checks <i>must</i> be conducted at least every 2 hours.
HMS Commercial Caribbean Small Boat permit	Rod and reel, handline, and bandit gear.
<p>** All commercial longline vessels <i>must</i> have handling and release gear and corrodible hooks on board. Fishermen using pelagic longline gear also need to comply with other hook, bait, and gear requirements.^{15,16}</p> <p>*** Vessels with pelagic longline gear onboard are not authorized to possess, retain, transship, store, or land hammerhead sharks (great, smooth, or scalloped), oceanic whitetip, or silky sharks.¹⁷</p> <p><u>Other gear notes:</u> Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) requirements apply for all pelagic longline, certain bottom longline, and shark gillnet vessels.¹⁸ There are several closed areas, some of which apply to all gear types.¹⁹ See the appropriate section of this guide, HMS webpage, or eCFR for more details and locations of area closures.</p>	
MINIMUM SIZES	
At this time, there is no commercial minimum size for Atlantic sharks.	
LANDING RESTRICTIONS	
All sharks must have their fins naturally attached through offloading. Fins may be cut as long as they remain naturally attached to the carcass by at least a small flap of uncut skin. Sharks may be eviscerated and the heads may be removed, but they cannot be filleted or cut into pieces at sea. ²⁰	
ADDITIONAL REMARKS	
<p>There are two regional quotas [Gulf of Mexico (including the U.S. Caribbean) and Atlantic] for aggregated LCS, hammerhead sharks, non-blacknose SCS, and blacknose sharks; there is one regional quota for Gulf of Mexico blacktip and pelagic sharks.²¹</p> <p>The commercial fishing year is January 1 through December 31. Open fishing seasons vary depending on available quota and other factors.^{22,23} Specified shark fishing seasons will close when 80% of quota is reached or projected to be reached, with 5 days' notice.²⁴</p>	