

2002, 14 strikenet and 28 driftnet sets were observed during non-right whale calving season (Carlson and Baremore, 2002). One bottlenose dolphin was discarded dead in a driftnet set. No other interactions with sea turtles or marine mammals were observed. Management options to address issues in the shark drift gillnet fishery will be considered in Amendment 2.

- Vessel monitoring systems in the pelagic longline fishery

NMFS adopted fleet-wide VMS requirements in the Atlantic pelagic longline fishery in May 1999, but was subsequently sued by an industry group. By order dated September 25, 2000, the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia prevented any immediate implementation of VMS in the Atlantic pelagic longline fishery, and instructed to “undertake further consideration of the scope of the [VMS] requirements in light of any attendant relevant conservation benefits.”

On October 15, 2002, the court issued a final order that denied plaintiff’s objections to the VMS regulations. Based on this ruling NMFS implemented the VMS requirement in September 2003.

- Vessel monitoring systems in other HMS fisheries

Starting in 2004, gillnet vessels with a directed shark permit and gillnet gear onboard are required to install and operate a VMS unit during the Right Whale Calving Season (Nov. 15 – Mar. 31). In an attempt to better quantify bycatch, NMFS will attempt to include some of these vessels that are not subject to observer coverage, in its Directed Shark Gillnet Observer program. Directed shark bottom longline vessels located between 33° N and 36° 30’ N need to install and operate a VMS unit from January through July.

3.9 HMS Permits and Tournaments

This section provides updates for the number of permits that were issued in conjunction with HMS fishing activities for 2004. Furthermore, Section Atlantic HMS Tournaments, provides a comprehensive synthesis of recreational fishing tournaments and their role in the context of HMS management.

3.9.1 History of the Program Established in the 1999 Tunas, Swordfish, and Sharks FMP

The 1999 Tunas, Swordfish, and Sharks FMP initiated the limited access permit system for commercial swordfish, shark, and tuna fisheries. The objectives of this program were to:

- Minimize, to the extent practicable, economic displacement and other adverse impacts on fishing communities during the transition from overfished fisheries to healthy ones;
- Consistent with other objectives of this FMP, manage Atlantic HMS fisheries for continuing optimum yield to provide the greatest overall benefit to the Nation, particularly with respect to food production, providing recreational opportunities, preserving traditional fisheries, and taking into account the protection of marine ecosystems;
- Reduce latent effort and overcapitalization in HMS commercial fisheries;

- Develop eligibility criteria for participation in the commercial shark and swordfish fisheries based on historical participation, including access for traditional swordfish handgear fishermen to participate fully as the stock recovers; and
- Create a management system to make fleet capacity commensurate with resource status so as to achieve the dual goals of economic efficiency and biological conservation.

This program was designed to prevent further overcapitalization of the fishery and reduce latent effort, without significantly affecting the livelihoods of those who are dependent on the fisheries. Because this program did not directly reduce the capacity in these fisheries, this program was merely meant to be the first step towards reducing capacity in the Atlantic swordfish, shark, and tuna longline fisheries.

The program implemented in the 1999 Tunas, Swordfish, and Sharks FMP set up six different limited access permit types: 1) directed swordfish, 2) incidental swordfish, 3) swordfish handgear, 4) directed shark, 5) incidental shark, and 6) tuna longline. In order to address bycatch concerns in the pelagic longline fishery, these permits were designed so that the swordfish directed and incidental permits are valid only if the permit holder also holds both a tuna longline and a shark permit. Similarly, the tuna longline permit is valid only if the permit holder also holds both a limited access swordfish (directed or incidental, not handgear) and a shark permit. Swordfish handgear and shark gillnet permits are valid without another limited access permit.

3.9.2 Status of the Permit Program Established in the 1999 Tunas, Swordfish, and Sharks FMP

NMFS' HMS Management Division continues to monitor capacity in HMS fisheries. Updated permit numbers for HMS fisheries as of late 2004, are included in Table 3.119 through Table 3.124. The overall number of limited access permits for Atlantic swordfish, tunas, and sharks declined in 2004 from 1,245 to 1,187 (Table 3.119), however, this is subject to change based upon on-going permit renewal or expiration. The overall number of tuna permits increased in some categories and declined in others (Table 3.120). The HMS Angling Permit category went into effect on March 1, 2003 (67 FR 77434, December 18, 2003), and there has been a significant increase in Angling category permits over the past few years (Table 3.120). The number of tuna dealer permits decreased from 516 to 466 (Table 3.123). The number of exempted fishing permits (EFPs) and display permits decreased from 49 to 36. Scientific research permits (SRPs) increased from 2 to 4 in 2004 (Table 3.124).

Table 3.119 Distribution of Shark, Swordfish, and Tuna longline Limited Access Permits as of October, 2004. Number of permit holders in each category, and state, is subject to change as permits are renewed or expire

State	# Directed Swordfish	# Incidental Swordfish	# Swordfish Handgear	# Directed Shark	# Incidental Shark	# Tuna Longline	# Permit Holders/# Permits
ME	2	1	5	2	5	1	12/16
NH	-	-	1	1	2	-	4/4
MA	12	3	17	4	14	6	33/56
RI	2	3	28	-	10	3	33/46

State	# Directed Swordfish	# Incidental Swordfish	# Swordfish Handgear	# Directed Shark	# Incidental Shark	# Tuna Longline	# Permit Holders/# Permits
CT	-	-	1	-	1	-	2/2
NY	17	3	10	10	12	16	30/68
NJ	31	17	12	28	32	21	60/141
DE	2	-	-	1	2	3	3/8
MD	7	1	-	4	7	6	11/25
VA	1	5	-	5	3	6	8/20
NC	9	11	2	22	17	10	39/71
SC	5	2	-	9	15	2	23/33
GA	1	-	-	2	4	1	6/8
FL	66	33	20	143	152	71	311/485
AL	1	2	-	3	2	1	6/9
MS	-	2	-	-	8	1	8/11
LA	33	9	-	4	45	49	49/140
TX	3	7	-	3	14	10	16/37
CA	1	-	-	-	1	1	1/3
IN	1	-	-	-	1	-	1/2
VI	1	-	-	-	1	-	1/2
Tot Totals 2004	195	99	96	241	348	208	657/1187
2003	206	99	95	251	359	235	696/1245
2002	205	110	94	251	376	226	713/1262
2001	208	112	100	252	390	213	752/1275
2000	240	203	125	287	585	292	982/1732

3.9.3 Upgrading and Safety Issues

When the limited access program was implemented, NMFS included upgrading restrictions that were the same as those implemented by the New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC) and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC) in order to help minimize the number of regulations for fishermen in those areas. These regulations restrict vessels from any increase over 10 percent length overall (LOA), 10 percent gross or net tonnage, and 20 percent horsepower. NMFS continues to receive comments that these vessel upgrading restrictions are not appropriate for primarily longline fisheries, are not the preferred vessel characteristics to limit overcapitalization, and have caused safety at sea concerns. In developing the current upgrading restrictions, hold capacity was identified by constituents as a vessel characteristic that would not impact safety at sea and would meet the objective of addressing overcapitalization in HMS commercial fisheries. NMFS did not implement hold capacity as a measure to limit vessel upgrading in 1999 due to the lack of standard measurements of vessel hold capacity as well as the lack of consistent collection of this information for HMS commercial vessels as part of existing vessel registration systems. NMFS has considered other possible options including: eliminating upgrading restrictions; limiting hold capacity instead of, or in addition to, the current restrictions; allowing a greater percentage increase; and creating vessel categories. NMFS heard similar comments as those listed above from the Advisory Panel (AP) in February of 2004. NMFS is considering these options, and, as with any potential changes in

the permitting system, will allow for adequate public comment during the rulemaking process before making any changes to the regulations.

3.9.4 Atlantic Tunas Permits

The number of Atlantic Tunas permit holders by category is listed in Table 3.120. The number of permits in the Longline, General, and Charter/Headboat (CHB) categories decreased from 2003 to 2004. The number of permits in the Harpoon category has increased slightly since 2003. In previous years, CHB vessels fishing for HMS only needed a CHB permit if they were fishing for Atlantic tunas.

In December 2002, NMFS published a final rule (67 FR 77434, December 18, 2002) that required the owner of each vessel used to fish recreationally for Atlantic HMS or on which Atlantic HMS are retained or possessed, to obtain an HMS Angling permit. Effective March 1, 2003, this permit replaced the Atlantic Tunas Angling category permit. It is discussed in greater detail in the HMS Angling Permit section.

Table 3.120 The number of Atlantic tuna permit holders in each category by year. The actual number of permit holders in each category is subject to change as individuals renew or allow their permits to expire.

Category	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Longline	292	213	226	235	213
Angling *	14,908	12,685	13,263	18,804	20,245
Harpoon	44	53	56	47	49
Trap	4	1	6	2	2
General	6,705	6,072	6,431	5,526	5,057
Purse Seine	5	5	5	5	5
CHB**	2,728	3,260	3,659	4,167	3,881
Total	24,686	22,289	23,646	28,789	29,452

* HMS Angling permit became effective March 1, 2003 (67 FR 77434, December 18, 2003) and includes all HMS, not just tunas.

** No longer a tuna-only permit, now a HMS CHB permit

3.9.5 HMS CHB Permits

In 2002, NMFS published a final rule (67 FR 77434, Dec. 18, 2002) expanding the HMS recreational permit from tuna only to include all HMS and define CHB operations. This established a requirement that owners of charter boats or headboats that are used to fish for, take, retain, or possess Atlantic tunas, sharks, swordfish, or billfish must obtain a HMS CHB permit. This permit replaced the Atlantic Tunas CHB permit. A vessel issued a HMS CHB permit for a fishing year will not be issued an HMS Angling permit or any Atlantic Tunas permit in any category for that same fishing year, regardless of a change in the vessel's ownership. The total number of CHB decreased between 2003 and 2004; however, this may be due in part to those anglers who have not yet renewed their permit.

Table 3.121 CHB Permits by State as of November 2004. (Total CHB permits differ between Table 3.120 and Table 3.121 because of permits sold between November and December, 2004.)

State	CHB permits	State	CHB Permits
AL	80	NH	52
CT	85	NJ	530
DC	1	NY	342
DE	134	OH	1
FL	638	OK	1
GA	31	PA	60
LA	94	PR	24
MA	494	RI	133
MD	175	SC	124
ME	48	TN	1
MI	2	TX	144
MS	29	VA	155
NC	424	VI	14
		WV	4
Total		3820	

3.9.6 HMS Angling Permit

Effective March 2003 (67 FR 77434, Dec. 18, 2002), the HMS Angling category permit allows all recreational anglers aboard permitted vessels to fish for HMS and is required to fish for, retain, or possess, including catch and release fishing, for any federally regulated HMS. These species include: sharks, swordfish, white and blue marlin, sailfish, spearfish, and federally regulated Atlantic tunas (bluefin, yellowfin, bigeye, skipjack, and albacore). Atlantic HMS caught, retained, possessed, or landed by persons on board vessels with an HMS Angling permit may not be sold or transferred to any person for a commercial purpose. By definition, recreational landings of Atlantic HMS are those that are not marketed through commercial channels, therefore it is not possible to monitor anglers' catches through ex-vessel transactions as in the commercial fishery. Instead, NMFS conducts statistical sampling surveys of the recreational fisheries. These survey programs has been used for over a decade and include the Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey (MRFSS) and the Large Pelagic Survey (LPS). A vessel issued an HMS Angling permit for a fishing year shall not be issued an HMS Charter/Headboat permit or an Atlantic Tunas permit in any category for that same fishing year, regardless of a change in the vessel's ownership.

3.9.7 Dealer Permits

Dealer permits are required for commercial receipt of Atlantic tuna, swordfish, and sharks, and are described in further detail in the 1999 Tunas, Swordfish, and Sharks FMP. Additionally, the appropriate dealer permit is necessary for those importing bluefin tuna and/or swordfish from any ocean. Fishermen caught selling HMS to unpermitted dealers and persons without a dealer permit buying HMS from fishermen could be subject to enforcement action. Similarly, persons caught buying HMS from a non-commercial fishermen could also be subject to enforcement action. All dealer permit holders are required to submit reports detailing the

nature of their business. For swordfish and shark permit holders (including those who *only* import swordfish), dealers must submit bi-weekly dealer reports on all HMS they purchase. Tuna dealers must submit, within 24 hours of the receipt of a bluefin tuna, a landing report for each bluefin purchased from U.S. fishermen. Dealers must also submit bi-weekly reports that include additional information on tunas that they purchase. To facilitate quota monitoring “negative reports” for shark and swordfish are also required from dealers when no purchases are made (i.e., NMFS can determine who has not purchased fish versus who has neglected to report). NMFS continues to automate and improve its permitting and dealer reporting systems and plans to make additional permit applications and renewals available online in the near future.

Beginning July 1, 2005, dealers who import and/or export certain HMS species will be required to obtain the NMFS HMS International Trade Permit (ITP) (69 FR 67268, November 17, 2004). The permit has been established to coordinate U.S. implementation of ICCAT and IATTC trade tracking recommendations. The HMS ITP will be required for trade of bluefin tuna, southern bluefin tuna, swordfish, and frozen bigeye tuna. Atlantic tunas and swordfish dealer permits will no longer be required for international trade of these species, and will be necessary only for domestic transactions. Additionally, the Pacific Ocean bluefin tuna dealer permit will no longer be in effect.

During the first half of 2005, an implementation plan will be developed which will identify logistical factors for the HMS ITP program including cost of the permit and how it can be obtained. Reporting associated with the HMS ITP will include biweekly reports and submission of swordfish, bluefin tuna, southern bluefin tuna and bigeye tuna statistical documents.

Table 3.122 Number of shark and swordfish dealer permits issued in each state, or country, as of December 2004. The actual number of permits per may change as permit holders move or sell their businesses.

State/Country	Atlantic swordfish	Atlantic sharks	# of permits
AL	2	5	7
CA	33	5	38
FL	101	90	191
GA	2	1	3
HI	9	6	15
LA	14	15	29
MA	31	20	51
MD	4	4	8
ME	4	3	7
MO	--	1	1
MS	--	1	1
NC	11	17	28
NJ	14	12	26
NY	24	10	34
OH	1	1	2
PA	2	--	2
RI	12	7	19
SC	10	20	30
TX	9	8	17

State/Country	Atlantic swordfish	Atlantic sharks	# of permits
VA	2	4	6
VI	1	1	2
WA	10	1	11
Canada	21	3	24
Chile	--	1	1
New Zealand	1	--	1
Ecuador	3	2	5
Totals 2004	321	238	559
2003	319	254	573
2002	321	267	588
2001	302	249	551
2000	312	251	563

Table 3.123 Number of Atlantic tunas dealer permits by state as of December 2004. Dealers may obtain a permit to sell and purchase only bluefin tuna, only BAYS tunas, or both bluefin and BAYS tunas.

State	Bluefin Only *	BAYS Only	Bluefin and BAYS	Total Atlantic Tunas Dealer Permits
AL	--	--	1	1
CA	6	--	2	8
CT	1	1	3	5
DE	--	1	3	4
FL	1	2	18	21
GA	--	--	1	1
IL	1	--	--	1
LA	3	1	14	18
MA	27	7	75	109
MD	--	--	11	11
ME	16	1	21	38
NC	6	9	32	47
NH	--	--	6	6
NJ	1	8	28	37
NY	3	12	53	68
PA	--	1	3	4
PR	--	2	2	4
RI	2	5	31	38
SC	--	4	8	12
TX	--	1	2	3
VA	1	7	14	22
VI	--	4	2	6
VT	--	--	1	1
WA	--	--	1	1
Total	68	66	332	466

* Does not include Pacific bluefin tuna dealer permits

3.9.8 Exempted Fishing Permits (EFPs), Display Permits, and Scientific Research Permits (SRPs)

EFPs, display permits, and SRPs are requested and issued under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*) and/or the ATCA (16 U.S.C. 971 *et seq.*). Regulations at 50 CFR 600.745 and 50 CFR 635.32 govern scientific research activity, exempted fishing, and exempted educational activity with respect to Atlantic HMS. Amendment 1 to the Atlantic Tunas, Swordfish, and Sharks FMP implemented and created a separate display permitting system which operates apart from the exempted fishing activities that are focusing on scientific research. However, the application process for display permits is similar to that required for EFPs and SRPs. The quota remains at 60 mt ww for all exempted fishing activities.

Issuance of EFPs, display permits, and SRPs may be necessary because possession of certain shark and billfish species are prohibited, possession of billfishes on board commercial fishing vessels is prohibited, and because the commercial fisheries for bluefin tuna, swordfish and large coastal sharks may be closed for extended periods during which collection of live animals and/or biological samples would otherwise be prohibited. These EFPs, SRPs, and display permits would authorize collections of a limited number of tunas, swordfish, billfishes, and sharks from federal waters in the Atlantic Ocean and Gulf of Mexico for the purposes of scientific data collection and public display. In addition, NMFS regulations at 50 CFR 635.32 regarding implantation or attachment of archival tags in Atlantic HMS require prior authorization and a report on implantation activities.

In order to implement the chartering recommendations of ICCAT, NMFS recently published a rule on December 6, 2004 (69 FR 70396), requiring U.S. vessel owners with HMS permits to apply for and obtain a chartering permit before fishing under a chartering arrangement outside U.S. waters. These permits will be issued in a similar manner as other EFPs. Under this final rule and consistent with the ICCAT recommendations, vessels issued a chartering permit shall not be authorized to use the quota or entitlement of the United States until the chartering permit expires or is terminated. Having a chartering permit will not obviate the need to obtain a fishing license, permits, or other authorizations issued by the chartering nation in order to fish in foreign waters, or obtain other authorizations such as a High Seas Fishing Compliance Act Permit, 50 CFR 300.10 *et seq.* Additionally, incidental takes of, or interactions with, protected resources will be included against the authorized take levels specified in any relevant Biological Opinions. A U.S. vessel shall not be authorized to fish under more than one chartering arrangement at the same time. NMFS will issue chartering permits only if it determines that the chartering arrangement is in conformance with ICCAT's conservation and management programs.

The number of EFPs, display permits, and SRPs issued in 2004 by category and species are listed in Table 3.124. Year-end reports for permits issued for 2004 are required, and are expected to be submitted to NMFS in early 2005.

Table 3.124 Number of Exempted Fishing Permits (EFPs), Display Permits, and Scientific Research Permits (SRPs) issued as of December 2004.

Permit type		2001	2002	2003	2004
Exempted Fishing Permit	Sharks for display	8	7	8	8
	HMS for display	1	1	1	1
	Tunas for display	0	0	0	1
	Shark research on a non-scientific vessel	5	5	9	6
	Tuna research on a non-scientific vessel	8	4	5	11
	HMS research on a non-scientific vessel	4	5	18	5
	Billfish research on a non-scientific vessel	1	0	0	1
	Shark Fishing	0	1	1	0
	HMS Fishing	0	0	0	1
	Tuna Fishing	1	6	7	2
	TOTAL	28	29	49	36
Scientific Research Permit	Shark research	2	2	1	3
	Tuna research	1	1	0	0
	Billfish research	0	0	0	0
	HMS (multi-species) research	2	1	1	1
	TOTAL	5	4	2	4
Letters of Acknowledgement	Shark research	1	3	3	2
	Tuna research	0	0	0	0
	Billfish research	0	0	0	0
	HMS (multi-species) research	0	0	0	0
	TOTAL	1	3	3	2

3.9.8 Atlantic HMS Tournaments

Fishing tournaments are an important component of HMS recreational fisheries. A tournament is defined in the HMS regulations as any fishing competition involving Atlantic HMS in which participants must register or otherwise enter or in which a prize or award is offered for catching or landing such fish. Since 1999, Federal regulations have required that each HMS tournament operator register their tournament with the HMS Management Division at least four weeks prior to the commencement of tournament fishing activities. Within one week after the tournament concludes operators may be selected to report tournament results to the SEFSC.

Tournament registration and reporting is necessary because it provides an important source of information used to assess HMS fish stocks and to estimate the annual catch of Atlantic HMS. The information may be used by NMFS to plan for the assignment of tournament observers to assist in catch/effort data compilation and to obtain biological data and samples from landed fish (length/weight, stomach contents, injuries, parasites, hard and soft tissue samples for age determination, genetic and microconstituent analysis, spawning condition, fecundity, etc.). Additionally, with an accurate tournament database, NMFS may better assess

the practicality of using tournaments for angler educational outreach efforts including distribution of written informational materials, notification of public hearings, and explanation of HMS regulations. HMS tournament registration and reporting information further allows NMFS, in the course of developing fishery management plans, to evaluate the economic impact of tournament angling in relation to other types of angling (*e.g.*, commercial, non-tournament recreational) and the relative effect of tournament angling on populations of various regulated HMS. Finally, the information is essential for the U.S. to meet its reporting obligations to ICCAT.

When registering an HMS tournament, the following information is required to be submitted to the HMS Management Division in St. Petersburg, FL: 1) Tournament name; 2) tournament location; 3) name, address, phone number, fax number, and e-mail address of tournament operator; 4) fishing dates; and 5) HMS species for which points or prizes are awarded. If selected for reporting, operators must submit the following information to the SEFSC: 1) Tournament name; 2) tournament dates; 3) tournament location; 4) number of boats fishing; 5) hours fished; 6) recorder's name, phone number, and e-mail address; 7) the number of each species kept; 8) the number of each species lost; 9) the number of each species tagged and released; 10) the number of each species released without a tag; 11) the number of each species released dead; and, 12) the weight and length of all fish boated. This information is routinely collected during tournament operations to award prizes. Generally, 100 percent of all billfish tournaments are selected for reporting, as this information is critical to determining billfish landings.

The reasons for participation in fishing tournaments include, but are not limited to, competition, camaraderie, and the opportunity to win valuable prizes. A recent search on the Internet for fishing tournaments (December, 2004) indicated that many saltwater tournaments target HMS. It has been estimated that approximately 300 – 400 HMS fishing tournaments occur annually along the U.S. Atlantic coast, including the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean (NMFS, 1999). These tournaments may range from smaller, club member-only events with as few as ten participating boats (40 - 60 anglers) to larger, statewide tournaments with 250 or more participating vessels (1,000 – 1,500 anglers). For the larger tournaments, corporate sponsorship from tackle manufactures, marinas, boat dealers, beverage distributors, resorts, publications, chambers of commerce, restaurants, and others are often involved.

Many HMS fishing tournaments, particularly those that target billfish, adhere to strict conservation principles as described in their rules. For example, significant numbers of blue and white marlin tournaments are “release-only,” utilizing observers, angler affidavits, polygraph tests, or photographs to document the live release of marlins. Minimum sizes for fish that are landed are oftentimes larger than state and federal requirements. Also, some tournaments prohibit treble hooks and may require circle hooks on certain baits. Because tournament participants are often well-respected anglers (*i.e.* highliners), these conservation trends and ethics likely influence the general angling population in a positive manner.

It is also important to mention that many HMS fishing tournaments support charitable and other non-profit organizations. For anglers in these tournaments, winning the prize money may not be the only motive for participation. An Internet search revealed that some of the

charities which have recently benefited from fishing tournaments include the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, Make-A-Wish Foundation, Sloan-Kettering Skin Cancer Center, Boy Scouts of America, Ducks Unlimited, The Boys and Girls Club, The Broadstreet Clinic, Core Sound Waterfowl Museum, Hope Mission Christian Ministries, Sertoma by the Bay (breast cancer research), Take A Kid Fishing, Capt. Bob Lewis Scholarship Fund, South Nassau Communities Hospital, South Texas Children's, T. H. Rogers School for Impaired Children's Home, The Billfish Foundation, Kids In Distress, and many more.

Table 3.125 presents the number of registered HMS tournaments, by state, since 2000. These numbers are likely to be less than the actual numbers of HMS tournaments that are operating due to non-compliance with the registration requirements by some tournament operators. This table indicates that HMS fishing tournaments are especially important in Florida, Texas, Louisiana, North Carolina, South Carolina, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico, Virginia, Alabama, Georgia, and other coastal states. The largest numbers of registered HMS tournaments have consistently occurred in the state of Florida.

Table 3.125 Number of Registered HMS Tournaments by State. Source: NMFS Atlantic HMS Tournament Registration Database

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
ME	0	2	3	3	5
NH	0	0	0	0	0
MA	4	7	1	7	10
RI	1	2	2	3	3
CT	0	1	0	0	0
NY	2	5	4	14	14
NJ	9	11	5	18	17
DE	0	2	0	0	1
MD	7	4	2	14	14
VA	3	5	1	5	4
NC	16	11	5	15	16
SC	7	6	3	13	9
GA	4	6	1	12	3
FL	51	46	26	66	56
AL	6	7	7	9	8
MS	1	3	2	7	2
LA	11	19	0	20	22
TX	18	14	1	17	10
MI	0	1	0	0	0
PR	19	16	4	13	17
USVI	9	9	0	6	1
Bahamas ¹	0	3	2	1	2
Mexico ¹	0	1	0	0	0
Turks/Caicos ¹	0	0	0	1	0
TOTAL	168	181	68	244	214

¹Some foreign tournaments voluntarily registered because the participants were mostly U.S. citizens.

Table 3.126 shows the number and percentage of HMS tournaments awarding points or awards for a particular HMS, based upon 2003 tournament registrations (the most recent, complete, and largest year of registrations). Blue marlin, yellowfin tuna, white marlin, and sailfish are the predominant target species in HMS fishing tournaments.

Table 3.126 Number and Percent of All 2003 HMS Tournaments Awarding Points or Prizes for a HMS.
Source: NMFS Atlantic HMS Tournament Registration Database

Species	No. Tournaments	Percent tournaments
Blue Marlin	143	58.6%
Yellowfin Tuna	128	52.5%
White Marlin	125	51.2%
Sailfish	114	46.7%
Bluefin Tuna	59	24.2%
Bigeye Tuna	54	22.1%
Pelagic Sharks	50	20.5%
Swordfish	45	18.4%
Albacore Tuna	31	12.7%
Ridgeback Sharks	16	6.5%
Skipjack Tuna	12	4.9%
Small Coastal Sharks	7	2.9%
Non-Ridgeback Sharks	7	2.9%

Table 3.127– Table 3.129 indicate the percentage and number of 2003 HMS registered tournaments, by state (or country), for blue marlin, white marlin and sailfish, respectively.

Table 3.127 Registered Blue Marlin Tournaments, 2003. Source: NMFS Atlantic HMS Tournament Registration Database

State	Number of 2003 Tournaments Awarding Points or Prizes for Blue Marlin	Percent of Total 2003 Tournaments Awarding Points or Prizes for Blue Marlin
Florida	31	21.7%
Texas	16	11.2%
South Carolina	13	9.1%
Puerto Rico	12	8.4%
Georgia	11	7.7%
Maryland	11	7.7%
New Jersey	10	7.0%
Alabama	9	6.3%
North Carolina	9	6.3%
Virginia	5	3.5%
Louisiana	4	2.8%
Massachusetts	4	2.8%
Mississippi	3	2.1%
Rhode Island	2	1.4%
New York	1	0.7%
Bahamas	1	0.7%
Turks & Caicos	1	0.7%
TOTAL	143	100%

Table 3.128 Registered White Marlin Tournaments, 2003. Source: NMFS Atlantic HMS Tournament Registration Database.

State	Number of 2003 Tournaments Awarding Points or Prizes for White Marlin	Percent of Total 2003 Tournaments Awarding Points or Prizes for White Marlin
Florida	30	24.0%
Texas	15	12.0%
South Carolina	11	8.8%
Maryland	11	8.8%
New Jersey	10	8.0 %
Georgia	10	8.0%
Alabama	9	7.2%
North Carolina	8	6.4%
Virginia	4	3.2%
Massachusetts	4	3.2%
Mississippi	3	2.4%
Puerto Rico	3	2.4%
Louisiana	2	1.6%
Rhode Island	2	1.6%
New York	1	0.8%
Bahamas	1	0.8%
Turks & Caicos	1	0.8%
TOTAL	125	100%

Table 3.129 Registered Sailfish Tournaments, 2003. Source: NMFS Atlantic HMS Tournament Registration Database).

State	Number of 2003 Tournaments Awarding Points or Prizes for Sailfish	Percent of Total 2003 Tournaments Awarding Points or Prizes for Sailfish
Florida	40	35.1%
Texas	15	13.2%
South Carolina	10	8.8%
Georgia	10	8.8%
Alabama	9	7.9%
Maryland	9	7.9%
North Carolina	8	7.0%
Virginia	4	3.5%
Puerto Rico	4	3.5%
Louisiana	2	1.7%
Mississippi	1	0.9%
Bahamas	1	0.9%
Turks & Caicos	1	0.9%
TOTAL	114	100%

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