

8.0 HMS PERMITS AND TOURNAMENTS

This section provides updates for the number of permits that were issued in conjunction with HMS fishing activities as of October 2009. HMS fisheries permit numbers (Table 8.1 through Table 8.8), and dealer permit numbers for shark, swordfish, and tunas are updated through October 2009. Section 8.7, Atlantic HMS Tournaments, provides a comprehensive synthesis of recreational fishing tournaments and their role in the context of HMS management. These tables have been updated since the 2008 SAFE Report, which listed numbers of permits as of October 2008.

8.1 Limited Access Permits

The limited access permit program was implemented in the 1999 HMS Fishery Management plan for Atlantic tunas, sharks, and swordfish and became effective on July 1, 1999 (64 FR 29090, May 28, 1999). The program set up six different permit types for limited access provisions: Swordfish Directed, Swordfish Incidental, Swordfish Handgear, Shark Directed, Shark Incidental, and Atlantic Tuna Longline. To reduce 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 an Atlantic Tuna Longline and a shark permit. Similarly, the Atlantic Tuna Longline permit is valid only if the permit holder also holds both a swordfish (Directed or Incidental, not Handgear) and a shark permit. No additional limited access permits are required to make a Swordfish Handgear or any of the shark permits valid. The Atlantic Tuna Longline permit is now being issued from NMFS Southeast Regional Office Permits Branch to facilitate more efficient issuance of all limited access permits.

The initial permits were issued in May of 1999, and after successful application/appeals processes, 982 permit holders received limited access permits by October 2000. There was an increase in the number of permits issued between May 2008 and October 2009, from 1,079 to 1,107 (Table 8.1). There is no increase in the number of permits issued from year to year and the increase is possibly a result of seasonal fluxes influenced by the fishing season management period.

Table 8.1 Distribution of Shark, Swordfish, and Atlantic Tuna longline Limited Access Permits Between 2002 and 2009. Permit numbers as of October 2009.

State	# Directed Swordfish	# Incidental Swordfish	# Swordfish Handgear	# Directed Shark	# Incidental Shark	# Tuna Longline	# Permit Holders/# Permits
ME	1	-	1	1	1	1	3/5
NH	1	-	1	1	1	-	3/4
MA	13	2	11	5	14	16	33/61
RI	1	-	16	-	5	1	18/23
CT	1	-	1	1	2	1	4/6
NY	14	5	4	9	13	18	31/63
NJ	33	13	6	27	32	48	68/159
DE	1	-	-	-	1	3	3/5
MD	5	-	-	4	2	6	7/17
VA	1	2	-	2	2	4	6/11
NC	10	8	-	17	13	12	31/60
SC	3	1	-	4	12	3	17/23
GA	-	-	-	2	1	-	3/3
FL	71	34	40	140	139	100	332/524
AL	-	-	-	6	1	-	7/7
MS	-	-	-	-	4	-	4/4
LA	31	6	-	2	36	40	47/114
TX	-	3	1	2	6	5	12/17
CA	-	-	-	-	-	1	1/1
*Totals 2009	187	72	81	223	285	259	636/1107
2008	181	76	81	214	285	241	628/1079
2007	180	79	82	231	296	218	613/1086
2006	191	86	88	240	312	214	604/1131
2005	190	91	92	235	320	200	639/1128
2004	195	99	96	241	348	222	657/1201
2003	206	99	95	251	359	235	696/1245
2002	205	110	94	251	376	226	713/1262

* Number of permit holders in each category, and state, is subject to change as permits are renewed or expire.

8.2 Atlantic Tunas Permits

The number of Atlantic tunas permit holders by category is listed in Table 8.2. The actual number of 2009 permit holders in each category is subject to change as individuals renew or allow their permits to expire. The overall number of tuna permits considerably decreased in many categories between May 2008 and October 2009 (Table 8.2). The reason for this decrease has not been determined by the HMS Management Division at this time. The increase in Longline Category permits could be attributed to the elimination of the “sunset” provision for these permits as of August 4, 2008 (73 FR 38144, July 3, 2008). This rule allows the most recent shark and swordfish limited access permit holders on record to renew previously expired Longline permits as long as other requirements for renewal were met. Distributions for General Category permits can be found in Table 8.3. Trap Category permits (nine total) occur from North Carolina to Massachusetts. Harpoon Category permits (26 total) occur from mainly from Rhode Island north to Maine with the exception of one permit holder in North Carolina. Although there are five entities eligible to participate in the purse seine tuna fishery, recently two vessels were sold and only three Purse Seine Category permits were issued in 2009.

Table 8.2 Atlantic tuna permits by state as of October 2009

Category	2002	2003**	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Longline	226	235	222	200	214	218	241	259
Angling *	13,263	18,804	20,245	24,127	25,238	24,220	26,933	25,506
Harpoon	56	47	49	40	40	26	26	23
Trap	6	2	2	7	7	9	9	4
General	6,431	5,526	5,057	4,494	4,824	3,616	4,031	3,824
Purse Seine	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	3
Atlantic HMS Charter/Headboat*	3,659	4,167	3,881	3,963	4,173	3,899	4,297	4,150
Total	23,646	28,789	29,461	32,836	34,501	31,992	35,568	33,769

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

Table 8.3 General Category permits by state as of October 2009

State	General Category permits	State	General Category permits
AL	26	NC	618
AR	1	ND	1
CO	1	NH	175
CT	90	NJ	247
DE	33	NY	208
FL	173	OR	1
GA	4	PA	1
IA	1	PR	93
LA	44	RI	187
MA	1257	SC	68
MD	35	TX	30
ME	429	VA	73
MI	2	VI	18
MS	6	WY	1
Total			3,824

8.3 Atlantic HMS Charter/Headboat 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 defining HMS Charter/Headboat 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 Atlantic HMS Charter/Headboats permit. This permit replaced the Atlantic Tunas Charter/Headboat permit. A vessel issued an Atlantic HMS Charter/Headboat 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, even if there is a change in the vessel's ownership. The total number of Atlantic HMS Charter/Headboat permits decreased slightly between 2008 and 2009. The distribution of Atlantic HMS Charter/Headboat permits can be seen in Table 8.4.

Table 8.4 Atlantic HMS Charter/Headboat Permits by State as of October 2009.

State	Atlantic HMS Charter/Headboat	State	Atlantic HMS Charter/Headboat
AL	74	NJ	562
CT	87	NY	319
CO	1	OH	1

State	Atlantic HMS Charter/Headboat	State	Atlantic HMS Charter/Headboat
DE	95	OK	1
FL	682	PA	6
GA	26	PR	31
LA	81	RI	160
MA	728	SC	162
MD	161	SD	1
ME	110	TX	170
MI	3	VA	122
MN	2	VI	20
MS	26	VT	1
NC	462	WV	1
NH	55	Total	4,150

8.4 HMS Angling Permit

Effective March 2003 (67 FR 77434, Dec. 18, 2002), the HMS Angling Permit is required to fish for, retain, or possess, including catch and release fishing, any federally regulated HMS. Current number of permits and their distributions for the HMS Angling category are listed in Table 8.5. Species authorized for harvest with an HMS Angling permit 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 Category permit may not be sold or transferred to any person for a commercial purpose. By definition, recreational landings of Atlantic HMS are those that cannot be 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 have been used for over a decade and include the Marine recreational Fishing Statistics Survey (MRFSS) and the large pelagic survey (LPS). A vessel issued an HMS Angling Category permit for a fishing year will not be issued an HMS Charter/ Headboat permit or an Atlantic Tunas permit in any category for that same fishing year, regardless of any change in the vessel's ownership.

Table 8.5 Atlantic HMS Angling permits as of October 2009

State	Permits by Home Port*	Permits by Residence**	State	Permits by Home Port*	Permits by Residence**
AK	4	-	ND	2	1
AL	452	427	NE	-	4
AR	9	10	NH	392	462
AZ	-	2	NJ	3543	3001
CO	5	9	NM	1	1
CT	687	784	NV	7	8
DC*	-	8	NY	1785	1868
DE	970	608	OH	14	24
FL	4335	4055	OK	10	14
GA	147	226	OR	1	-
HI	1	-	PA	245	1275
IA	2	4	PR	736	768
IL	5	29	RI	692	513
IN	8	14	SC	908	872
KS	1	8	SD	1	5
KY	6	8	TN	22	45
LA	679	671	TX	801	825
MA	3802	3775	UT	-	1
MD	1308	1267	VA	1045	1126
ME	482	432	USVI	59	29
MI	20	25	VT	27	51
MN	3	10	WA	4	4
MO	4	9	WI	2	11
MS	30	271	WV	9	15
MT	-	1	WY	-	1
NC	2002	1896	Other	39	33
Total				25,506	25,506

*The home port is identified for the Atlantic HMS Angling permit are listed as the port where the vessel is stored submitted by the permit holder

**The residence identified for the Atlantic HMS Angling permit are listed as the bill to state submitted by the permit holder

8.5 Dealer Permits

Dealer permits are required for commercial receipt of Atlantic tuna, swordfish, and sharks, and are described in further detail in the 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP. Dealer permits are open access. An Atlantic shark dealer permit is required for any entity, person, or company that is the “first receiver” of any Atlantic shark or part of an Atlantic shark. A first receiver is any entity, person, or company that takes, for commercial purposes (other than solely for transport), immediate possession of the fish, or any part of the fish, as the fish are offloaded from a fishing vessel of the United States. Shark dealers, or a proxy for each location that first receives sharks, must attend and successfully complete an Atlantic Shark Identification Workshop, and be issued a certificate in order to obtain or renew their shark dealer permit. Also, trucks or other conveyances which are extensions of a shark dealer’s place of business must possess a copy of a valid Atlantic Shark Identification Workshop Certificate. All permitted dealers are required to submit reports detailing the nature of their business. Swordfish and shark dealer permit holders must submit bi-weekly dealer reports on all HMS they purchase. Swordfish and shark dealer permit numbers and distributions are listed in Table 8.6. 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 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. Tuna dealer permit numbers and distributions can be found in Table 8.7.

Table 8.6 Number of domestic Atlantic shark and swordfish dealer permits by state issued in each between 2002 and 2009.

State/Country	Atlantic swordfish	Atlantic sharks	# of permits
AL	2	3	5
CA	6	1	7
FL	72	39	111
GA	1	1	2
HI	3	--	3
LA	8	6	14
MA	17	7	24
MD	3	3	6
ME	2	2	4
NC	14	5	19
NJ	11	10	21

State/Country	Atlantic swordfish	Atlantic sharks	# of permits
NY	11	4	15
RI	5	4	9
SC	13	15	28
TX	3	2	5
VA	5	4	9
WA	1	--	1
Totals 2009*	177	106	283
2008	171	128	299
2007	269	206	475
2006	285	336	621
2005	294	228	522
2004	321	230	559
2003	319	254	573
2002	321	267	588

*Permits for 2009 are as of October 2009. The actual number of permits per state may change as permit holders move or sell their businesses.

Table 8.7 Number of Atlantic tuna dealer permits by state as of October 2009.

State	Bluefin Only *	BAYS Only	Bluefin and BAYS	Total Atlantic Tunas Dealer Permits
CA	3	--	1	4
CT	--	1	2	3
DE	--	--	1	1
FL	1	1	12	14
GA	--	--	2	2
HI	--	--	4	4
LA	--	1	7	8
MA	8	4	77	89
MD	--	--	8	8
ME	11	1	7	19
NC	4	3	24	31
NH	--	--	5	5
NJ	--	7	42	49
NY	2	16	50	68
PA	1	--	--	1
PR	--	6	2	8
RI	1	5	24	30

State	Bluefin Only *	BAYS Only	Bluefin and BAYS	Total Atlantic Tunas Dealer Permits
SC	--	1	6	7
TX	--	2	--	2
VA	1	5	13	19
VI	--	2	1	3
WA	--	--	1	1
Total	32	55	289	376

*Does not include Pacific bluefin tuna dealer permits which were eliminated July 1, 2005.

8.6 Exempted Fishing Permits (EFPs), Display Permits, Letters of Acknowledgement (LOAs) Chartering Permits, and Scientific Research Permits (SRPs)

EFPs, display permits, LOAs and SRPs are issued under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Act (MSA) (16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*) and/or Atlantic Tunas convention Act (ATCA) (16 U.S.C. 971 *et seq.*). EFPs are issued to individuals for the purpose of conducting research or other fishing activities using private (non-NOAA) vessels, whereas an SRP would be issued to agency scientists who are using NOAA vessels as their research platform. Similar to SRPs, LOAs are issued to individuals conducting research from “bona fide” research vessels on species that are only regulated by Magnuson-Stevens Act and not ATCA. NMFS does request research plans for these activities and indicates concurrence by issuing an LOA. Display permits are issued to individuals who are fishing for, catching, and then transporting HMS to certified aquariums for public display. 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. The 2003 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. The application process for display permits is similar to that required for EFPs and SRPs. When NMFS implemented Amendment 2 to the 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP (73 FR 35788 June, 24 2008), the shark quota for EFPs, display permits, and SRPs remained the same. However, the quota for sandbar shark was reduced to 1.39 mt. authorized for display and 1.39 mt authorized for research under EFPs and SRPs.

Amendment 2 to the Consolidated HMS FMP also implemented a shark research fishery. This research fishery is conducted under the auspices of the exempted fishing program. Research fishery permit holders assist NMFS in collecting valuable shark life history data and data for future shark stock assessments. Fishermen must fill out an application for a shark research permit under the exempted fishing program to participate in the shark research fishery. In 2008, NMFS received 25 applications from 17 applicants. Of the 15 qualified applicants, 11 were chosen to participate in the shark research fishery. Shark research fishery participants are subject to 100 percent observer coverage in addition to other terms and conditions.

Issuance of EFPs, display permits, and SRPs may be necessary because possession of certain shark and billfish species are otherwise prohibited, possession of billfishes onboard commercial fishing vessels is prohibited, 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, or for other reasons. These EFPs, SRPs, and display permits would authorize collections 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 pop-up satellite archival tags in Atlantic HMS require prior authorization and a report on implantation activities.

In order to implement the chartering recommendations of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), NMFS 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 are issued in a manner similar to other EFPs. Under this final rule and consistent with the ICCAT recommendations, vessels issued a chartering permit are not authorized to use the quota or entitlement of the United States until the chartering permit expires or is terminated. This is because of the fact that under a chartering arrangement that U.S. vessels have attained authorization to harvest another ICCAT Contracting Parties' quota. Having a chartering permit does 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. 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. Due to interest from the commercial industry, NMFS is currently considering changes to the vessel chartering regulations to potentially allow catches taken under a chartering arrangement to count against the Atlantic HMS quota.

The number of EFPs, display permits, and SRPs issued from 2005 – 2009 by category and species are listed in Table 8.8. Year-end reports for permits issued for 2009 are required, and are expected to be submitted to NMFS in early 2010.

Table 8.8 Number of Atlantic HMS Exempted Fishing Permits (EFPs), Display Permits, and Scientific Research Permits (SRPs) issued between 2002 and 2009.

Permit type		2005	2006	2007	2008	2009*
Exempted Fishing Permit	Sharks for display	6	7	6	5	4
	HMS for display	1	1	3	1	2
	Tunas for display	0	0	0	0	0
	Shark research on a non-scientific vessel	5	7	4	4	4
	Tuna research on a non-scientific vessel	7	5	4	4	4
	HMS research on a non-scientific vessel	3	4	9	7	5
	Billfish research on a non-scientific vessel	2	3	3	3	1
	Shark Fishing	0	0	0	0	0
	HMS Chartering	0	0	0	0	0
	Tuna Fishing	0	5	0	0	0
	TOTAL	24	32	29	24	20
Scientific Research Permit	Shark research	4	2	2	0	4
	Tuna research	0	0	1	0	0
	Billfish research	0	1	0	0	0
	HMS (multi-species) research	4	4	1	1	0
	TOTAL	8	7	4	1	4
Letters of Acknowledgement	Shark research	4	5	8	6	5
	TOTAL	4	5	8	6	5

Permit numbers for 2009 are as of October 1, 2009.

8.7 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 NMFS at least four weeks prior to the commencement of tournament fishing activities. Tournament operators may be selected for reporting and must submit tournament results to NMFS within seven days of the conclusion of the tournament.

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 social and 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 United States to meet its reporting obligations to ICCAT.

Generally, all billfish tournaments are selected for reporting to the Recreational Billfish Survey (RBS), because the information is critical to determine U.S. billfish landings for ICCAT compliance purposes. Tournament registration and reporting forms are available at: http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/gpea_forms/forms.htm.

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 manufacturers, marinas, boat dealers, marine suppliers, beverage distributors, resorts, radio stations, publications, chambers of commerce, restaurants, and other local businesses is often involved.

Many HMS fishing tournaments, particularly those that target billfish, promote strict conservation principles in their rules. For example, significant numbers of blue marlin, white marlin, and sailfish tournaments are “release-only,” utilizing observers, angler affidavits, polygraph tests, photographs, or digital video camcorders to document the live release of billfish. Minimum sizes for fish that are allowed to be landed in many tournaments are often larger than state and Federal requirements. Also, since January 1, 2008, NMFS has required that anglers fishing from an HMS permitted vessel in any tournament awarding points or prizes for Atlantic billfish must deploy only non-offset circle hooks when using natural bait or natural bait/artificial lure combinations. Because fishing tournament participants are often well known and/or respected anglers, these conservation trends likely influence the general angling population in a positive manner.

Table 8.9 shows the number of registered HMS tournaments, by state, between 2003 and 2008. In 2008, 267 tournaments registered with the HMS Management Division and were conducted along the U.S. Atlantic coast, including the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean. This is a decrease of 32 tournaments from 299 registered tournaments in 2007. The reason for the decrease is unknown, but anecdotal information from some

tournament operators indicated that high fuel cost and poor economic times may have been contributing factors. In 2008, most HMS fishing tournaments were conducted in Florida, Louisiana, Texas, New Jersey, Puerto Rico, North Carolina, South Carolina, New York, Maryland, Georgia, and Massachusetts. By far, the largest number of registered HMS tournaments has consistently occurred in the state of Florida.

Table 8.9 Number of registered Atlantic HMS tournaments by state (2003-2008). Source: NMFS Atlantic HMS Tournament Registration Database

STATE	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
ME	3	5	3	5	5	4
NH	0	0	0	0	0	0
MA	7	10	4	7	10	10
RI	3	3	2	2	2	2
CT	0	0	1	1	0	1
NY	14	14	10	12	13	13
NJ	18	17	16	19	17	20
DE	0	1	0	0	1	1
MD	14	14	14	13	11	13
VA	5	4	5	4	6	5
NC	15	16	18	17	17	16
SC	13	9	9	12	13	16
GA	12	3	13	11	11	10
FL	66	57	74	83	97	80
AL	9	8	7	8	10	8
MS	7	2	2	1	1	1
LA	20	22	26	20	24	24
TX	17	10	17	17	33	21
PR	13	17	22	19	20	19
USVI	6	1	10	7	7	2
Bahamas*	1	2	2	1	1	1
Bermuda*	0	0	1	0	0	0
Turks/Caicos*	1	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	244	215	256	259	299	267

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

Table 8.10 shows the number and percentage of HMS tournaments awarding points or prizes for a particular HMS based upon 2008 tournament registrations. Blue marlin, yellowfin tuna, sailfish, and white marlin are the predominant target species in HMS fishing tournaments. In 2008, the percentage of tournaments that awarded points or prizes decreased for all billfish species (except longbill spearfish), increased for swordfish, and decreased for small coastal sharks compared to 2007.

Table 8.10 Number and percent of 2008 Atlantic HMS tournaments awarding points or prizes by species (2007 values in parentheses). Source: NMFS Atlantic HMS Tournament Registration Database

Species	Number of Tournaments	Percent of tournaments
Blue Marlin	153 (201)	57% (67%)
Yellowfin Tuna	152 (168)	57% (56%)
Sailfish	148 (184)	55% (62%)
White Marlin	136 (186)	51% (62%)
Bluefin Tuna	90 (93)	34% (31%)
Swordfish	90 (83)	34% (28%)
Longbill Spearfish	78 (71)	29% (24%)
Pelagic Sharks	60 (59)	22% (20%)
Bigeye Tuna	56 (53)	21% (18%)
Albacore Tuna	28 (29)	10% (10%)
Skipjack Tuna	24 (21)	9% (7%)
Ridgeback Sharks	14 (11)	5% (4%)
Non-Ridgeback Sharks	10 (10)	4% (3%)
Small Coastal Sharks	7 (21)	3% (7%)

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

Table 8.11, Table 8.12, and Table 8.13 show the percentage and number of 2008 HMS registered tournaments, by state (or country) for blue marlin, white marlin and sailfish, respectively. These tables indicate that Florida is the leading state in terms of numbers of registered billfish tournaments, especially for sailfish. Of note is the absence of Atlantic billfish tournaments in Georgia in 2008 due to billfish categories not being offered for a series of tournaments organized by a fishing club. Prior to 2008, that series of tournaments had billfish categories and Georgia ranked as the number 5 to 6 state with the most Atlantic billfish tournaments.

Table 8.11 Registered Atlantic Blue Marlin Tournaments in 2008. Source: NMFS Atlantic HMS Tournament Registration Database.

State	Number of 2008 Tournaments Awarding Points or Prizes for Blue Marlin	Percent of 2008 Tournaments Awarding Points or Prizes for Blue Marlin
Florida	36	24%
Texas	19	12%
Louisiana	19	12%
Puerto Rico	15	10%
North Carolina	13	8%
New Jersey	10	7%

State	Number of 2008 Tournaments Awarding Points or Prizes for Blue Marlin	Percent of 2008 Tournaments Awarding Points or Prizes for Blue Marlin
South Carolina	10	7%
Maryland	9	6%
Alabama	8	5%
Virginia	4	3%
Massachusetts	3	2%
U.S. Virgin Islands	2	1%
New York	1	1%
Bahamas*	1	1%
Rhode Island	1	1%
Delaware	1	1%
Mississippi	1	1%
Total	153	100%

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

Table 8.12 Registered Atlantic White Marlin Tournaments in 2008. Source: NMFS Atlantic HMS Tournament Registration Database.

State	Number of 2008 Tournaments Awarding Points or Prizes for White Marlin	Percent of 2008 Tournaments Awarding Points or Prizes for White Marlin
Florida	34	25%
Louisiana	19	14%
Texas	15	11%
North Carolina	13	10%
New Jersey	11	8%
South Carolina	10	7%
Maryland	9	7%
Alabama	8	6%
Virginia	4	3%
Massachusetts	3	2%
Puerto Rico	3	2%
U.S. Virgin Islands	2	1%
New York	1	1%
Bahamas*	1	1%
Rhode Island	1	1%
Delaware	1	1%
Mississippi	1	1%
Total	136	100%

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

Table 8.13 Registered Atlantic Sailfish Tournaments in 2008. Source: NMFS Atlantic HMS Tournament Registration Database.

State	Number of 2008 Tournaments Awarding Points or Prizes for Sailfish	Percent of 2008 Tournaments Awarding Points or Prizes for Sailfish
Florida	59	40%
Louisiana	19	13%
Texas	16	11%
North Carolina	13	9%
South Carolina	10	7%
Maryland	9	6%
Alabama	8	5%
Puerto Rico	5	3%
Virginia	4	3%
U.S. Virgin Islands	2	1%
Bahamas*	1	1%
Mississippi	1	1%
New Jersey	1	1%
Total	148	100%

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