



Office of Sustainable Fisheries  
Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Management Division

# Exempted Fishing Permit Application

Applicant Name:

Institution Affiliation:

Address:

City:

State:

Zip Code:

Phone Number:

Email:

---

## Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) Program

Please plan ahead. NOAA Fisheries requires 60 days from the date the application is deemed complete to make a determination on issuing an EFP or related permit. NOAA Fisheries may take additional time as needed to analyze the environmental, economic, and social impacts of the proposed research.

- 1) List the main purpose and goals of the exempted fishing activity, primarily describing the research or project as well as the justification for issuance of such permit.

- 2) Have you received an EFP, scientific research permit (SRP), display permit, or letter of acknowledgement (LOA) for similar research or activity in previous years?

Yes

No

If yes, when?

If yes, is this permit request the same as in previous years?

Yes

No

**3) When will these activities occur?**

**4) Where will these activities occur (select all regions that apply)?**

North Atlantic (Maine to North Carolina)

Caribbean Sea

South Atlantic (North Carolina to Florida)

State/Territorial Waters\*

Gulf of America

Closed Area/Gear Restricted Zone

**Identify the specific location within the previously marked zone:**

\*The issuance of an EFP may not authorize research or collection activities in waters under state jurisdiction. If the activities will occur in state waters, the appropriate state agency must be contacted, as separate permits may be required for activities in state waters.

**5) Are activities federally funded?**

Yes

No

**If yes, describe the type, amount, and source.**

**6) Which individuals should be listed as authorized samplers on the permit?\***

\* There may be certain circumstances which prevent the owner/operator of a vessel from being an authorized sampler. If those circumstances arise, we will provide an opportunity to request authorization for other samplers.

## Vessel Information

- 7) Provide the vessel information for each participating vessel. Include additional sheets if more than three vessels are needed for the exempted fishing activity.

### Participating Vessel(s):

- |                  |                       |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Vessel Name:  | Owner's Name:         |
| Vessel Number:   | Owner's Phone Number: |
| Operator's Name: | Owner's Address:      |

Does the vessel have registration documentation (i.e., U.S. Coast Guard or state/territory vessel registration)? If yes, submit a copy of the vessel registration with the application.

Yes No

Does the vessel have any HMS permits? If yes, submit a copy of the HMS permits with the application.

Yes No

- |                  |                       |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| 2. Vessel Name:  | Owner's Name:         |
| Vessel Number:   | Owner's Phone Number: |
| Operator's Name: | Owner's Address:      |

Vessel Documentation Included? Does the vessel have registration documentation (i.e., U.S. Coast Guard or state/territory vessel registration)? If yes, submit a copy of the vessel registration with the application.

Yes No

HMS Fishing Permit Included? Does the vessel have any HMS permits? If yes, submit a copy of the HMS permits with the application.

Yes No

- |                  |                       |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| 3. Vessel Name:  | Owner's Name:         |
| Vessel Number:   | Owner's Phone Number: |
| Operator's Name: | Owner's Address:      |

Vessel Documentation Included? Does the vessel have registration documentation (i.e., U.S. Coast Guard or state/territory vessel registration)? If yes, submit a copy of the vessel registration with the application.

Yes No

**HMS Fishing Permit Included? Does the vessel have any HMS permits? If yes, submit a copy of the HMS permits with the application.**

Yes

No

## Gear & Trip Information

**8) What is the type of fishing gear (select all that apply)?**

Pelagic Longline (PLL)	Gillnet
Bottom Longline (BLL)	Rod and Reel
Buoy Gear	Handline
Trawl	No Gear
Other:	

**9) Provide more information on gear selection and how you use the gear.**

Type and/or style of hooks used: Not Applicable

Length of mainline or net: Not Applicable

Number of hooks used per set: Not Applicable

**10) If sampling with longline or gillnet gear, have you completed a safe handling and release workshop for protected resources?**

Yes No

**11) Provide more information on the individual research trips.**

Number of research trips: Not Applicable

Expected duration of each trip: Not Applicable

## Species Information

12) List the swordfish, shark, tuna, and/or billfish species you expect to interact with. Include additional sheets if there are more than 15 target species.

[illegible]

**13) In general, what are your handling techniques for sampling HMS (i.e., tail rope, sling)?**

**14) If subsequent unintentional mortality of a species occurs, do you expect to discard the dead animal or retain the species for analysis?**

**15) If you plan to retain certain species or animals, what becomes of them?**

**16) If you plan to keep species for public display, provide a brief description of the holding facility.**

Applications will be deemed incomplete if there is missing information, if the vessel documentation (i.e., U.S. Coast Guard or state vessel registration and copies of any HMS permits) is not submitted with the application, and if the application is not signed. NOAA Fisheries cannot begin processing an application until it is deemed complete.

**Applicant Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Exempted Fishing Permit Program**

For a description of the Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) Program and the types of EFPs issued by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) HMS Management Division, please refer to the [HMS EFP Program webpage](#). Regulations governing the issuance of HMS EFPs are contained in 50 CFR part 635.32 and 50 CFR part 600.745.

## Requirements

NOAA Fisheries issues HMS EFPs, scientific research permits (SRPs), display permits, and letters of acknowledgement (LOAs) under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) and/or Atlantic Tunas Convention Act. EFPs, SRPs, and display permits may be required in situations where scientific research activities or collection for public display would normally be prohibited by HMS regulations. LOAs are issued for bona fide research activities on species managed only under the Magnuson-Stevens Act; although LOAs are not required, they are strongly recommended to document NOAA Fisheries concurrence that the proposed activity meets the definition of scientific research and is therefore exempt from regulation.

Per HMS regulations, a valid EFP, SRP, or display permit must be: on board the harvesting vessel, available when the animal is landed, available when the animal is transported from the vessel to the research or display facility, and presented for inspection upon request of an authorized officer. An EFP, SRP, display permit, or LOA is valid only for the specific authorized vessels, authorized samplers, time, area, gear, and species indicated in the permit or letter. Except for the regulatory exemptions specifically referenced in the permit, all HMS regulations at 50 CFR part 635 shall apply during the conduct of the fishing activity.

Unless otherwise specified in the permit, all live HMS collected for public display are required to have either a conventional dart tag or a microchip Passive Integrated Transponder (PIT) tag applied by the collector at the time of the collection. Both types of tags are supplied by NOAA Fisheries. Conventional dart tags will be issued unless PIT tags are specifically requested in the permit application and their use approved by NOAA Fisheries. The Terms and Conditions of the permit will address requirements associated with the use of the tags supplied on a case-by-case basis.

NOAA Fisheries monitors all HMS landings and mortality that occur under EFP, SRP, and display permits against the appropriate quota, including, but not limited to, the shark public display and scientific research quotas and the Atlantic bluefin tuna Reserve category quota. NOAA Fisheries may stop issuing EFPs, SRPs, and display permits if the applicable quota(s) are reached.

NOAA Fisheries requires the permit holder to report all target and incidental catch to the HMS Management Division via submission of interim and annual reports. LOAs holders are encouraged, but not required, to report their target and incidental catch via the interim and annual reports.

**Interim reports** capture trip (e.g., date, vessel), species (e.g., species, length, weight, sex, disposition), and environmental (e.g., water temperature) information. Permit holders must submit interim reports within 5 days of completion of a fishing or collection trip.

**Interim “no-catch” reports** indicate months when no HMS are captured, either in or outside the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone. Permit holders must submit an interim “no-catch” report within 5 days of the last day of the month.

**Annual reports** summarize the disposition status of all fish collected under the authority of the permit. Permit holders must submit their annual report within 30 days of the expiration date of the permit.



Reports should be submitted to the HMS Management Division electronically. We strongly encourage permit holders to submit interim reports with the information specified in the online forms via our [HMS EFP Electronic Reporting](#) website. Copies of the interim and annual reports are also available for download on the [HMS EFP Program webpage](#) and may be submitted electronically to [nmfs.hms.efps@noaa.gov](mailto:nmfs.hms.efps@noaa.gov). Do not submit your own forms to meet these requirements.

## Protected Resources

EFPs, SRPs, display permits, and LOAs issued by the HMS Management Division are separate and distinct from any permit or consultation required by the National Marine Sanctuaries Act, Marine Mammal Protection Act, the Endangered Species Act, or any other applicable law. The HMS Management Division does not provide coverage for possible “take” of marine mammals or listed species under any EFP, SRP, display permit, or LOA. Additionally, federally funded activities must undergo appropriate consultation before activities are undertaken. See the [NMFS Protected Resources Permits](#) website or call the Office of Protected Resources at 301-427-8400 for information about additional requirements.

## HMS EFP Contact Information

Submit HMS EFP applications with all required information to [nmfs.hms.efps@noaa.gov](mailto:nmfs.hms.efps@noaa.gov).

The preferred method to electronically submit interim reports and generate your annual report is through the [HMS EFP Electronic Reporting Portal](#). Alternatively, you may electronically submit interim and annual reports to [nmfs.hms.efps@noaa.gov](mailto:nmfs.hms.efps@noaa.gov).

The most up-to-date versions of the HMS EFP application and reporting forms are available for download from the [HMS EFP Program webpage](#).

For additional HMS EFP information, email [nmfs.hms.efps@noaa.gov](mailto:nmfs.hms.efps@noaa.gov) or call 301-427-8503.

**PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT NOTICE:** Collection of information through an exempted fishing permit program provides essential information for the conservation and management of Atlantic tunas, swordfish, sharks, and billfish. Information on distribution and migratory patterns will be used for stock assessment and in developing international catch sharing agreements. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 40 minutes per response. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to: NMFS, Highly Migratory Species Management Division (F/SF1), 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Reporting of exempted fishing permit activity is required under the authority of the Atlantic Tunas Convention Act. It is NOAA policy to preserve the confidentiality of information submitted under this reporting requirement, except that NMFS may release such information in aggregate or summary form, such that individual identifiers are not disclosed (NAO 216-100). Notwithstanding any other provision of the law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act, unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB Control Number. OMB Control #0648-0471 Expires 9/30/2027.