

## **Permit Conditions – Recreational Bluefin Tuna Catch and Release Fishery 2025**

### **THE AUTHORISED AREA**

This Permit applies to The Welsh zone only from 500m off Low water spring tide mark of coastlines to offshore in yellow area shown in Annex 1. Fishing will be permitted in an area south of a boundary line drawn due west from Trwyn Dinllaen on the north coast of the Llyn Peninsula to the median line with Irish territorial waters and west of a boundary line drawn due south from Mumbles Lighthouse, Swansea, to the median line with English Waters.

This authorised area does not include inlets and estuaries e.g. Milford Haven and will be restricted to outside of a 500m buffer from lowest astronomical tide data (Chart Datum) at shorelines including Skomer, Skokholm, Ramsey and Bardsey Islands.

Fishing is not permitted inside of Grassholm SPA, Carmarthen Bay SPA or Northern Cardigan Bay SPA and also sea area between the coastline and eastern boundary of the Northern Cardigan Bay SPA.

### **CONDITIONS**

1. Fishing shall be undertaken by rod and line only.
2. All bluefin tuna caught must be released unharmed where possible.
3. Bluefin tuna caught **must not be** removed from the sea, brought aboard a vessel, transferred to any other vessel, or landed.
4. Report activity within 24 hours of the end of each fishing trip.
5. The Authorised Person/master must comply with all demands and instructions issued by the Welsh Government Fisheries Enforcement Officers and/or any Marine Enforcement Officer.
6. The authorised person/master must comply with the bycatch protocol (Annex 2).
7. **Termination:** The Welsh Ministers may in their absolute discretion withdraw this Authorisation at any time. Where possible, prior notice of withdrawal will be given, but in any of the following circumstances, this permit may be withdrawn immediately (i.e. without prior notice):
  - a. in the case of emergency;
  - b. if the Authorised Person breaches any of the conditions of this permit;
  - c. if it should transpire that the activities authorised by this Authorisation will result or are likely to result in a significant effect to any European

Marine Site (as defined by Regulation 8(4) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (S.I. 2010/490).

d. If the fishery is shut due to the exhaustion of quota.

### **REPORTING CATCHES**

The owner of the permit is responsible for complying with the reporting requirements set out in this section.

For each trip where the permit vessel carries out bluefin tuna fishing authorised by the permit, the owner of the vessel must ensure the master provides a record of the following: (Whether any bluefin tuna are caught during the trip or not).

- the permit number,
- the master's name and address
- the name of the recreational UK fishing boat
- the date of the fishing trip,
- the number of bluefin tuna caught (null return if zero caught),
- the length of each bluefin caught, and
- whether the fish was released alive or dead.
- details of any bycatch

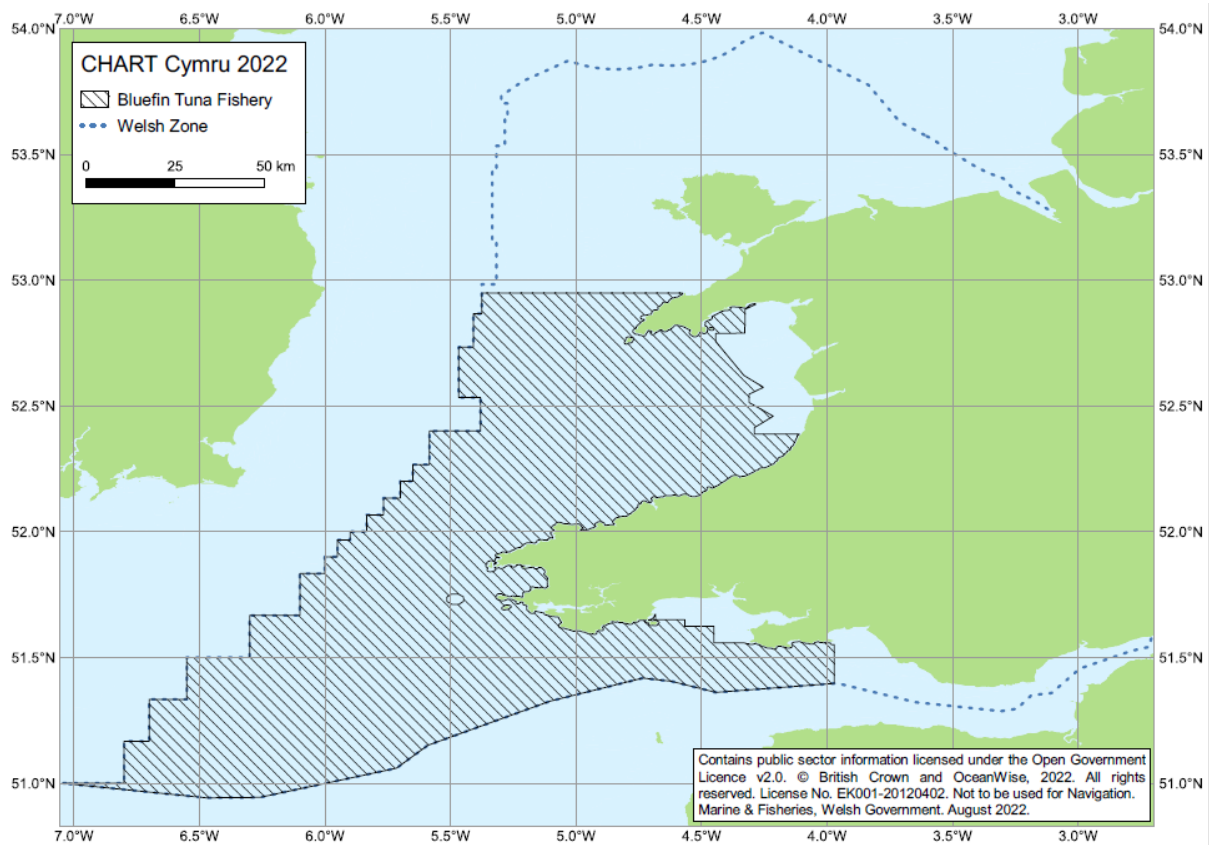
The master must submit the stated information **within 24 hours** of the end of each fishing trip in the format requested by Welsh Government.

The owner of the permit is responsible for complying with the conditions and reporting requirements set out in this permit.

### **Please note:**

Any person who fishes for Bluefin Tuna in reliance upon the permit must comply with all other applicable legislation (including both fisheries and non-fisheries, domestic and European provisions) relevant to that activity in this location. Including the requirement to carry a valid Small Commercial Vessel Certificate in accordance with the Merchant Shipping (Small Workboats and Pilot Boats) Regulations 1998.

## ANNEX 1 – Illustrative chart of authorised area



## Annex 2 – Bycatch Protocol

| Rating           | Description   | Action  | Effect   |
|------------------|---|---|--|
| Minimal Risk     | No bird or marine mammal species feature activity visible, or isolated species feature activity may be visible but in far distance.   | Fishing carries on as normal. Observer and/or skipper advises crew of possible sightings.   | Increased awareness aboard vessel.   |
| Be Alert         | Species features active in vicinity of vessel. Marine mammals may generally approach or circle the boat out of interest or be attracted to towed spreader bar. Marine mammal behaviour will be inquisitive and playful rather than predatory. Birds may be circling or resting on water close by. | Fishing carries on as normal. Skipper and all crew to be alert to developing risks and ready to take evasive action.  | Fishing carries on but risks and species behaviour are monitored more closely to enable effective action before an interaction occurs.         |
| Avoid            | Species features begin to interact with bait or lures. For example, skipper and/or observer believes marine mammals are behaving in a predatory manner and/or targeting lures or baits. Alternatively, skipper and/or observer sees birds diving on lures or baits.                               | Skipper will instruct crew to bring in lines, tackle and baits immediately. Skipper to move out of area immediately.  | Short, temporary stop to fishing activity while interaction risk passes. Fishing can recommence once activity returns to the 'Be Alert' level. |
| Cease and Review | Marine mammal or bird feature species is accidentally hooked/captured.  | <p><b><u>Bottlenose dolphin (<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>)</u></b></p> <p><i>Instructions to skippers:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Skipper will instruct crew to bring in lines, tackle and baits immediately and individual will be released unharmed wherever possible.</li> <li>Skipper will move out of area immediately and cease tuna fishing for the day.</li> </ul> | Limitation of further damage to individuals or conservation objectives of relevant marine protected areas.                                     |

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|  |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skipper will report species of capture to WPMC, who will report it to WG Science and NRW.</li> </ul> <p><i>Review process</i><br/> As soon as possible following a reported capture, a review will take place between observers, skippers, WG Science and NRW to learn from chain of events leading to the interaction. This discussion will be guided by NRW's Mammal Mortality AEOSI position statement (NRW2022)<br/> If the captured animal is judged likely to be part of the Irish Sea MMMU population, and is seriously injured (See e.g. NMFS (2012) serious injury criteria for further information), then all tuna fishing will cease.<br/> If the animal is not judged likely to be part of the Irish Sea MMMU or is not seriously injured, interaction avoidance procedures will be adapted and tuna fishing will recommence with caution.<br/> If multiple capture reports are received from different vessels on different days, then further avoidance procedures or a re-assessment of the impact to the relevant feature will be required.</p> <p><b><u>All other marine mammal or bird feature species</u></b></p> <p>Instructions to skippers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skipper will instruct crew to bring in lines, tackle and baits immediately and individual will be released unharmed wherever possible.</li> <li>• Skipper will move out of area immediately.</li> <li>• Skipper will report species of capture to WPMC, who will report it to WG Science and NRW.</li> <li>• Skipper will recommence tuna fishing that day once activity returns to the 'Be Alert' level and capture reported to WG Science and NRW.</li> <li>• If further captures occur that same day, of the same or other feature species, skipper will report species of capture to WPMC and cease tuna fishing for the day.</li> </ul> <p><i>Review process</i><br/> As soon as possible following a reported capture, a review will take place between observers, skippers, WG Science and NRW to learn from chain of events leading to the</p> |  |
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|  |  | <p>interaction. If necessary, interaction avoidance procedures will be adapted. If multiple capture reports are received from different vessels on different days, then further avoidance procedures or a re-assessment of the impact to the relevant feature will be required.</p> <p><b><u>Information to include within capture report to WFMC which will be passed on to WG Science and NRW</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time of capture</li> <li>• Location of capture</li> <li>• Fishing method in operation at time of capture</li> <li>• Type of capture (e.g. took bait, foul hook, vessel collision)</li> <li>• Observed behaviour of animal before interaction</li> <li>• Details of any action taken at avoid stage to prevent capture</li> <li>• Action taken following capture</li> <li>• Condition of animal following capture, and if released, at release</li> <li>• Images of animal, if available</li> </ul> |  |
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