

# STATES OF JERSEY



Jersey

## **DRAFT SEA FISHERIES (ATLANTIC BLUEFIN TUNA) (JERSEY) REGULATIONS 202-**

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**Lodged au Greffe on 3rd February 2026  
by the Minister for the Environment  
Earliest date for debate: 24th March 2026**

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**STATES GREFFE**

## REPORT

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Eastern Atlantic bluefin tuna (ABT) have returned to UK and Channel Island waters after their population declined in the 1960s. Stock assessments undertaken since 2012 show positive trends in abundance, and in 2021, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) moved bluefin tuna from 'endangered' to 'least concern' on its Red List of Threatened Species.

Since the 2021 Trade and Cooperation Agreement between the UK and EU, the UK now receives an allocation of bluefin tuna quota. The International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) is responsible for the management and conservation of bluefin tuna in the Atlantic Ocean, and the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) is responsible for implementing fisheries management decisions in the UK, including on the sustainable management of fish stocks. For the period 2025 to 2028, ICCAT has allocated an annual Bluefin tuna quota of 230 tonnes to the UK, which is split between the commercial fishery, the recreational fishery, and a bycatch quota for certain fishing gear types.

During Brexit negotiations, the UK became a contracting party to the International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas, the treaty which enshrines the rights and obligations of ICCAT. As a Crown Dependency, Jersey is not recognised as an independent state by the UN and so could not participate in the Convention in its own right. The UK represents Jersey as a matter of international law and, with Jersey's consent, extended the Convention to cover the Island in May 2025.

Extension of the Convention allows Jersey vessels to sustainably use this resource in Jersey territorial waters. Currently, the UK authorise charter, recreational and commercial fisheries for ABT. The Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and the Government of Jersey authorised a limited number of charter fishing vessels to target ABT in Jersey territorial waters in 2025. In 2026, it is proposed this would be extended to all fishing stakeholders to mirror the UK position. These fisheries would benefit the Island's fishing communities and allow diversification to the fishing industry.

The charter, recreational and commercial bluefin tuna trial fishery in the UK has generated a range of economic and social benefits, which have the potential to be expanded over time and with more commitment to the future of the fishery. Investments in new boats, processing facilities and relationships with international markets could all contribute to increasing the wider economic and social values of this fishery.

To establish a sustainable, well managed fishery for ABT, authorisations are required and allows licence conditions to be attached to those authorisations. The ICCAT convention requires contracting parties to ensure that recreational fishing boats fishing for ABT in waters of the Convention area are subject to a system of authorisations.

Jersey fishing licences and authorisations are managed through the [Sea Fisheries \(Licensing of Fishing Boats\) \(Jersey\) Regulations 2003](#). In this regulation, an amendment is needed to allow recreational fishing authorisations to target ABT on a catch and release basis. This protects the fishery by ensuring those vessels who do not qualify for an authorisation, cannot target ABT. Recreational authorisations are commonplace in fisheries management and Jersey already has the scheme in place for other species. These authorisations ensure the correct number of fishing vessels have access to a fishery with enforceable licence conditions attached to them. Without authorisations, fisheries can be exploited at unsustainable levels and Jersey will be breaching the ICCAT.

### Financial and staffing implications

There are no financial or staffing implications.

### **Children's Rights Impact Assessment**

A Children's Rights Impact Assessment (CRIA) screener has been prepared in relation to this proposition and is available to read on the States Assembly website.

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## EXPLANATORY NOTE

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The Sea Fisheries (Atlantic Bluefin Tuna) (Jersey) Regulations 202- provide that it is an offence to fish for Atlantic bluefin tuna (“ABT”) unless the person fishing first obtains a permit from the Minister for the Environment (the “Minister”) and complies with specified conditions. In particular –

*Article 1* is an interpretation provision.

*Article 2* provides that it is an offence to fish for ABT unless the person has a permit, and the fishing is for recreation, by rod and line and on a catch and release basis so that the fish is returned live to the water immediately after capture. A person who contravenes this Regulations is liable to a fine under Article 4 (offence of contravening Regulations) of the Sea Fisheries (Jersey) Law 1994.

*Article 3* provides that the Minister may grant a permit authorising fishing for ABT subject to the conditions that the Minister thinks fit, on receipt of the information required by the Minister and the fee that may be published by the Minister.

*Article 4* amends Regulation 5 (exception) of the Sea Fisheries (Licensing of Fishing Boats) (Jersey) Regulations 2003 (the “2003 Regulations”) to provide that a person fishing for ABT in accordance with these Regulations is excepted from the requirement to hold a licence under the 2003 Regulations.

*Article 5* gives the citation and provides that these Regulations come into force 7 days after they are made.



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## **DRAFT SEA FISHERIES (ATLANTIC BLUEFIN TUNA) (JERSEY) REGULATIONS 202-**

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Jersey

## DRAFT SEA FISHERIES (ATLANTIC BLUEFIN TUNA) (JERSEY) REGULATIONS 202-

Made [date to be inserted]

Coming into force [date to be inserted]

**THE STATES** make these Regulations under Articles 2, 7, 12, 13, 27 and 29 of the [Sea Fisheries \(Jersey\) Law 1994](#) –

### 1 Interpretation

In these Regulations –

“Atlantic bluefin tuna” means a fish belonging to the species *Thunnus thynnus* in the family *Scombridae*;

“catch and release” means fishing in which the fish is returned live to the water immediately after capture.

### 2 Restriction on fishing for Atlantic bluefin tuna

It is an offence for a person to fish for Atlantic bluefin tuna unless the fishing is –

- (a) recreational;
- (b) by rod and line fishing gear;
- (c) catch and release; and
- (d) authorised by a permit issued under Regulation 3.

### 3 Permits

(1) The Minister may grant a permit authorising a person to fish for Atlantic bluefin tuna on receipt of –

- (a) the information the Minister may require; and
- (b) the fee required by paragraph (2).

(2) The Minister may by Order prescribe fees for the purpose of this Regulation and may charge different fees for different cases as the Minister thinks fit.

(3) A permit granted under paragraph (1) may be subject to the conditions that the Minister thinks fit, which may include conditions as to –

- (a) the duration of the permit;
- (b) the part of the sea to which the permit relates; or

- (c) the periods during which the person may fish.
- (4) Different conditions may be applied in respect of different permits or classes of permits.

#### **4 [Sea Fisheries \(Licensing of Fishing Boats\) \(Jersey\) Regulations 2003](#) amended**

In Regulation 5 (exception) of the [Sea Fisheries \(Licensing of Fishing Boats\) \(Jersey\) Regulations 2003](#) –

- (a) in sub-paragraph (a), after “fishing” there is inserted “(other than for Atlantic bluefin tuna)”;
- (b) after sub-paragraph (a) there is inserted –
  - (aa) fishing for Atlantic bluefin tuna in accordance with the Sea Fisheries (Atlantic Bluefin Tuna) (Jersey) Regulations 202-; or

#### **5 Citation and commencement**

These Regulations may be cited as the Sea Fisheries (Atlantic Bluefin Tuna) (Jersey) Regulations 202- and come into force 7 days after they are made.