



**St Helena
Government**



ANRD

Agriculture and Natural Resources
Division



LICENSING OF SPORTSFISHING AND RECREATIONAL-BOAT FISHING

June 2015

Policy Background

Fisheries licensing in St Helena aspires to the Government of St Helena's fisheries management vision that: 'access to and allocation of fisheries resources is managed sustainably, supporting conservation of a healthy environment and the long term economic viability of St Helena's marine resources'.

St Helena's approach to licensing policy provides for a sustainable orderly harvesting of resources, in order to both promote and maintain viable fishing activities for participants in the long term and in order to fully protect the environment. Productive, sustainable and responsible fishing activities achieved through implementing an enabling fishing licensing regime is thus important in helping to realise this vision.

Licensing Principles

Licensing of fishing activities will be built on the following overarching principles:

- Consistency with the Governor's and Senior Fisheries Officer's mandates under local fisheries legislation.
- Sustainable use of fisheries resources and protection of marine species and habitats – a precautionary approach will guide decision-making to balance sustainability of fisheries.
- St Helena's fisheries are a common property resource to be managed for the benefit of all St Helenians.
- Fostering of greater economic viability of our fisheries.
- Compliance with International law and regulations, including regional fisheries management organisation recommendations and measures, where relevant.

What is a St Helena Fishing Licence?

A St Helena fishing licence is an instrument by which the Governor, pursuant to the discretionary authority under the Fisheries Limits Ordinance grants permission to an individual, or company to harvest certain species of fish subject to the conditions attached to the licence, whenever a fishery is open. This is not a permanent permission; it terminates upon expiry of the licence. The licence holder is given a limited fishing privilege; not any kind of absolute or permanent right or property.

Sportsfishing and Recreational Boat Fishing Licensing

Along with commercial and exploratory fishing categories, sportsfishing and recreational-boat fishing are proposed for recognition in the licensing of fishing activities in St Helena.

In order to be able to regulate fishing activities effectively, it is proposed that boat owners will be issued one form of fishing licence. For example, commercial fishermen will hold a commercial licence and those operators undertaking sportsfishing will hold a sportsfishing licence. Recreational licences will be held by those boat owners who will not be involved with fishing for financial gain (commercial or sportsfishing business).

A **sport** licence is issued to a fishing tour operator who, on a commercial basis, provides sport fishing opportunities to a paying clientele to fish for pleasure, and the fish able to be landed is for personal consumption and generally not for sale, or barter. Sportsfishing will be licenced for both angling and spearfishing of pelagic species (such as tunas' wahoo etc) activities.

Angling will be licenced under a catch and release system of fishing. Spearfishing of pelagic species will be trialled through licensing of up to 3 tours for 5 dive trips per tour for the next year to support ENRD data collection and information needs for this type of activity, and to inform decision-making in relation to this form of sportsfishing.

A **recreational-boat** licence is issued to a boat owner, generally not involved in any of the above, to undertake fishing activities for pleasure. The catch from these activities will be restricted to an amount used for personal consumption only, and which will not be sold or exchanged for profit.

Licence Duration and Fees

All licensing of fishing activity under this Policy will be for periods of no more than a maximum of 1 year in duration. However, the Governor reserves the right to determine in each case the duration of licenses.

Schedule 1 sets out the fees applicable to the sports and recreational-boat fishing licenses proposed in St Helena.

Fish Species Able to Be Caught and Quota Allocation

Fish species able to be caught under the different licenses and related catch limits and size restrictions are listed under Schedule 2. The taking of spiny or slipper lobster in berry, dolphins and all IUCN listed Near Threatened and Vulnerable species of shark is prohibited throughout St Helena's

fisheries. White, Blue and Black Marlin may only be caught on the basis of 'catch and release' and can be retained only in the case of record attempts (against IGFA Records) under sports and recreational licenses.

Licensing Conditions

The Governor determines the form of a fishing licence and specifies conditions of licence in respect of a list of subjects that appear to be necessary or expedient to the regulation of sea fishing. As the licensing authority he may, at any time after the grant of a licence, attach further conditions to it, vary the existing conditions or remove conditions.

General Conditions:

No fishing licenses will be issued to persons under the age of 18 years to undertake fishing activities.

A fishing licence may be issued in the name of an individual or company who is able to prove their ownership, hiring or charter arrangement of a fishing boat for the licence period.

Specific Conditions:

The range of conditions that relate to sports and recreational-boat fishing licenses are highlighted overleaf.

Licensing for SPORTSFISHING

The following general and specific licensing provisions apply to applicants for a sportfishing licence:

General

A sportfishing boat will be required to carry a local observer approved by the SFO at the expense of the licence holder, in particular where spearfishing of pelagic species is undertaken.

Catch Limits and Restrictions

Fish species able to be fished and restrictions that relate to species size classes and numbers of each species on each sport fishing trip for both angling (Table 1A) and spearfishing of pelagic species (Table 1B) are shown at Schedule 2.

Licensing Conditions

This type of licence will specify the following conditions:

- the nautical mile range covered by the licence;
- requirement for a valid seaworthiness certificate;
- that fishing privilege is granted in the name of the licence holder;
- the licence is subject to variation, suspension and/or revocation by the SFO/Governor;
- the need to keep the boat adequately insured as a minimum against liability to third parties;
- fishing method related conditions;
- the SFO/Governor reserves the right to impose stop-fishing orders on this licence to prohibit the landing of certain species of fish for any defined period of time.

Specific for Angling:

- the species able to be fished, where (the authorised area of operation), when (fishing season), how (gear requirements);
- how much fish is allowed to be landed per person per day (daily bag limits) where fish is not able to be released,
- any necessary health and safety requirements;
- data collection and reporting requirements;
- the use to which the fish taken may be put – used for boat owner and clients personal consumption.

Specific for Spearfishing of Pelagic Species:

- the species and number of each species per boat per trip able to be caught, where (if any restricted areas for no fishing), when (fishing season);
- the number of trips able to be undertaken during the year and the number of divers able to be used per trip;
- no spearfishing on scuba;
- safety – safe distances from persons swimming and persons undertaking other forms of fishing, the need for use of diver down safety flags when spearfishing is underway;
- observer requirements;
- data collection requirements;

- the use to which the fish taken may be put – used for boat owner/clients personal consumption and offer to SHFC.

Licensing for RECREATIONAL-BOAT FISHING

Traditional rock-fishing will continue without a licence provided this is not done for commercial purposes. The following general and specific licensing provisions apply to applicants for a recreational-boat licence:

Quota

Fish species able to be fished and restrictions that relate to species sizes, classes and numbers of each species that may be landed on each recreational fishing trip are provided in Table 2, Schedule 2.

Licensing Conditions

This type of licence will specify the following conditions:

- the nautical mile range covered by the licence;
- requirement for a valid seaworthiness certificate;
- that fishing privilege is granted in the name of the licence holder;
- the licence is subject to variation, suspension and/or revocation by the SFO/Governor;
- the need to keep the boat adequately insured as a minimum against liability to third parties;
- fishing method related conditions;
- the SFO/Governor reserves the right to impose stop-fishing orders on this licence to prohibit the landing of certain species of fish for any defined period of time; what species is allowed to be caught, where (the authorised area of operation), when (fishing season), how (the type of gear to be used);
- how much fish is allowed to be taken per person per day (bag limits);
- that no fish caught under a recreational licence can be exchanged or sold for profit.
- environmental conditions and reporting;
- any necessary health and safety requirements.

Consultations So Far

This document has been informed by discussions with the Fisheries Task Group representing stakeholders of ENRD, ESH, ARGOS, St Helena Fisheries Corporation, SHFC Board and Fishermen's Association, and through recent meetings with a number of recreational fishermen and operators undertaking/interested in sportfishing activities.

Schedule 1: Fees Applicable to Sportsfishing and Recreational-Boat Fishing Licenses in St Helena

Fee Type	Licence Type and Fee Per Licence Per Annum (£)	
	Sportsfishing	Recreational-boat fishing
1. St Helenian Applicant		
Application Fee		
Licence Fee : <u>Part-Time</u>		
Licence Fee : <u>Full-Time</u>		
Licence Fee	150.00 ¹	12.00
2. Foreign Applicant		
Application Fee	50.00	12.00
Licence Fee	150.00 ¹	12.00

Note: ¹Licence fee relates to a boat and not numbers of clients undertaking fishing

Schedule 2: Table 1A: Sports fishing (Angling): Landing and Size Restrictions Per Boat Per Day

Species	Permitted Catch Limits (Number of Individuals Per Boat Per Day/Per person per day)	Size Limits
• Big eye tuna	1 per person or 3 per boat across the 6 species	No take of fish <10kg in size
• Yellow fin tuna		No take of fish <10kg in size
• Albacore (Long fin) tuna		No take of fish <10kg in size
• Dorado		
• Wahoo		
• Skipjack		
• Billfish (Marlin - all species and Swordfish)		Catch and release only (except for record attempts)
• Shark		Catch and release only
• Grouper	5	No take <35cm
• Mackerel	Unlimited	
• Moray eel/Conger (all species)	5	
• Glasseye snapper/ Bullseye	5	
• Spiny Lobster/Crayfish	5	No take for carapace length<6cm; No take with eggs
• Other groundfish species	Unlimited	

Schedule 2: Table 1B: (Spearfishing of Pelagic Species Only): Landing and Size Restrictions Per Boat Per Day

Species	Permitted Catch Limits (Number of Individuals Per Boat Per Day)	Size Limits
• Big eye tuna	3 in total across the 6 species	No take of fish <10kg in size
• Yellow fin tuna		No take of fish <10kg in size
• Albacore (Long fin) tuna		No take of fish <10kg in size
• Dorado		
• Wahoo		
• Skipjack		
• Billfish (Marlin - all species and Swordfish)	No take	
• Shark	No take	
• Amber and Almaco Jacks	3	No take <35cm

Note: Where a quota for a given day for a boat has not been reached, the remaining quota cannot be caught on another day

Schedule 2: Table 2: Recreational Boat Fishing: Catch and Size Restrictions

Species	Permitted Catch Limits (Number of Individuals Per Boat Per Day)	Size Limits
• Big eye tuna	2 in total across the 6 species	No take of fish <10kg in size
• Yellow fin tuna		No take of fish <10kg in size
• Albacore (Long fin) tuna		No take of fish <10kg in size
• Dorado		
• Wahoo		
• Skipjack		
• Billfish (Marlin - all species and Swordfish)		Catch and release only (except for record attempts)
• Shark		Catch and release only
Species	Permitted Catch Limits (Number of Individuals Per Person Per Day/Per Boat per day)	Size Limits
• Grouper	5	No take <35cm
• Mackerel	Unlimited	Unlimited
• Moray eel/Conger (all species)	5	
• Glasseye snapper/ Bullseye	1 Dozen per person (max.5 dozen per boat)	
• Spiny lobster /Crayfish (caught through handpicking and pots only)	4 per person (max.20 per boat)	No take for carapace length<6cm; No take with eggs
• Other groundfish species	Unlimited	