



Greater Atlantic Region Bulletin

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Date Issued: 12/13/2018

LONGFIN SQUID INCIDENTAL CATCH PERMIT CHANGES

Amendment 20

New/revised permits effective March 1, 2019

We approved Amendment 20 to the Atlantic Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish Fishery Management Plan. This action revises the current longfin squid/butterfish moratorium permit and longfin squid possession limits to preserve fishing opportunities for more recently active participants in the fishery and avoid overharvesting the Trimester II longfin squid quota. This bulletin provides a summary of approved measures. More detailed information can be found in the Amendment 20 final rule and on our Atlantic mackerel, squid, and butterfish webpage (<https://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/sustainable/species/msb/index.html>).

Changes to Longfin Squid and Butterfish Permits

Amendment 20 separates the current longfin squid/butterfish moratorium permit (SMB1) into two separate permits and creates a tiered permit system for longfin squid moratorium permits based on recent landings history. A vessel issued an open access squid/butterfish incidental catch permit (SMB3) may qualify for a new Tier 3 longfin squid incidental moratorium permit (SMB1C) if they meet the qualification criteria described on the next page.

New longfin squid and butterfish moratorium permits become effective on March 1, 2019. The Regional Administrator will issue new permits to qualified vessels in late February 2019 as part of the annual permit renewal process, or once the application is reviewed. Updated permits will then be reissued for the start of the new fishing year on May 1, 2019. **Amendment 20 changes to longfin squid moratorium permits and possession limits are in bold in the table below.**

Permit Category	Description	Possession Limit When Directed Fishery Is Open	Possession Limit When Directed Fishery is Closed
SMB1A	Tier 1 Longfin Squid Moratorium	Unlimited	2,500 lb longfin squid per trip in Trimesters I and III 250 lb longfin squid per trip in Trimester II
SMB1B	Tier 2 Longfin Squid Moratorium	5,000 lb longfin squid per trip	
SMB1C	Tier 3 Longfin Squid Incidental Moratorium	2,500 lb longfin squid per trip	
SMB3	Squid/Butterfish Incidental	250 lb longfin squid per trip 600 lb butterfish per trip	
SMB6	Butterfish Moratorium	Unlimited when fishing with at least 3-inch mesh	600 lb butterfish per trip
		5,000 lb butterfish per trip when fishing less than 3-inch mesh	

For small entity compliance guides, this bulletin complies with section 212 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement and Fairness Act of 1996. This notice is authorized by the Regional Administrator of the National Marine Fisheries Service, Greater Atlantic Region.

Longfin Squid Moratorium Tier 3 Permit (SMB1C) Qualification Criteria:

To qualify for a SMB1C longfin squid permit, a vessel must have been issued an open access SMB3 permit and landed at least 5,000 lb of longfin squid in any year during 1997-2013. The Regional Administrator will use available dealer landings data to determine whether a vessel qualifies to be issued a SMB1C permit.

Application and Appeals Process:

You may apply for a SMB1C longfin squid permit by filling out the enclosed application. To be eligible for a SMB1C permit, you must submit an application before February 29, 2020.

If you apply for a SMB1C permit, but are denied by the Regional Administrator, the denial letter will provide detailed instructions about how to appeal that denial. The appeal must be in writing and mailed to the Regional Administrator within 30 days of the denial notice. It should include the reason for the appeal and evidence to support your claim. Evidence could include additional landings records, affidavits by dealers, vessel replacement or ownership change paperwork, and other evidence documenting that your vessel landed at least 5,000 lb of longfin squid in any year during 1997-2013.

During your appeal, you may request the Regional Administrator issue you a letter of authorization (LOA) to fish under the SMB1C longfin squid possession limit instead of those for the open access SMB3 permit. A LOA is required to allow your vessel to land up to 2,500 lb longfin squid per trip while your appeal is under review, unless possession for all vessels is reduced to 250 lb per trip when the Trimester II quota is caught.

Each appeal will be reviewed by the National Appeals Office. The Regional Administrator will make the final decision on each appeal based on the decision of the National Appeals Office. If your appeal is denied, your LOA will be cancelled, and you will be limited to possessing up to 250 lb of longfin squid per trip, consistent with the SMB3 permit possession limit.

Vessel Replacement and Reporting Requirements:

Amendment 20 does not establish a vessel baseline for SMB1C permits or restrict the size of any replacement vessel. A vessel owner may move such permits onto a replacement vessel consistent with the vessel replacement/upgrade provisions applicable to other permits issued to that vessel.

The reporting requirements for the new SMB1C permit are the same as for the current SMB3 permit. Vessels issued a SMB1C permit must submit vessel trip reports (logbooks) on a weekly basis. There is no vessel monitoring system (VMS) requirement or VMS daily catch reporting requirements for this permit.

Butterfish Possession:

For vessels that qualify for and are issued a SMB1C permit, you will also need to be issued a SMB3 (squid/butterfish incidental) permit to continue landing up to 600 lb of butterfish per trip. A vessel may be issued both a SMB1C and a SMB3 permit at the same time.

Longfin Squid Possession Limit Changes

Amendment 20 reduces the longfin squid possession limit to 250 lb per trip for open access SMB3 permits year-round, and for all longfin squid permits once the Trimester II quota is caught. This action maintains a 2,500 lb possession limit for vessels qualified for a SMB1C permit, as described above, and for all moratorium permits once the Trimester I and III quotas are caught.

<i>Frequently Asked Questions</i>	
Why is Amendment 20 necessary?	Tiered longfin squid moratorium permits provide greater access to vessels that have been more active in the fishery in recent years and reduce the potential for unused permits to reactivate, which could lead to excessive fishing and the early closure of the directed fishery. Reduced longfin squid incidental possession limits better control the fishery and minimize the likelihood that excessive catch will exceed the Trimester II quota. Creating a separate butterfish moratorium permit preserves the domestic fishing capacity for butterfish.
How were the longfin squid qualification criteria selected?	The qualification years reflect the initial issuance of the original longfin squid/butterfish moratorium permit through the 2013 control date identified by the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council for this action. The landing criteria reflect a minimum amount of fishing activity necessary to document recent participation in the fishery (two trips landing an incidental amount of longfin squid).
Can I check dealer landings data for my vessel?	Yes. You can request landings data from us for any period of time during which you owned the vessel, or for any period of time if the prior owner authorized you to access his/her confidential landings data. Data requests should be submitted via email to NMFS.GAR.Data.Requests@noaa.gov .
Why is the incidental limit so low?	The Council reduced the longfin squid incidental limit to 250 lb per trip to reduce incentives to target longfin squid under the open access permit. The Council determined it would also better control fishing effort and landings, particularly during the summer Trimester II fishery, and could avoid excessive catch and quota overages during Trimester II, as observed in 2016.

If you have questions:

- About the permit application or limited access program requirements listed in this letter, contact the Greater Atlantic Region Permit Office at 978-282-8438.
- About longfin squid permits, possession limits, or need background information on these new measures, call Sustainable Fisheries at (978) 281-9315.