



JOSH STEIN
Governor

D. REID WILSON
Secretary

KATHY B. RAWLS
Director

FF-33-2026

PROCLAMATION

RE: TILEFISH – COMMERCIAL FISHING OPERATIONS – ATLANTIC OCEAN – NORTH OF THE NORTH CAROLINA/VIRGINIA BORDER

This proclamation supersedes proclamation FF-48-2025, dated November 24, 2025. This proclamation establishes the North Carolina possession and landing limit for commercial operations harvesting golden tilefish and blueline tilefish in the Atlantic Ocean north of the North Carolina/Virginia border.

Kathy B. Rawls, Director, Division of Marine Fisheries, hereby announces that effective **12:01 A.M., Monday, July 20, 2026**, following restrictions will apply to golden tilefish and blueline tilefish harvested in the Atlantic Ocean north of the North Carolina/Virginia border:

I. PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

- A. It shall be unlawful to possess golden tilefish or blueline tilefish harvested in the Atlantic Ocean north of the North Carolina/Virginia border without a valid commercial vessel permit to fish for, possess, or land golden tilefish or blueline tilefish for a commercial purpose, in or from the Tilefish Management Unit, pursuant to 50 CFR Part § 648.4(a)(12).
- B. It shall be unlawful for a commercial fishing operation to possess or land golden tilefish in excess of the limits in Section II. unless they are in possession of an IFQ allocation permit, pursuant to 50 CFR Part § 648.294.

II. GOLDEN TILEFISH

It shall be unlawful for a commercial fishing operation, regardless of the number of people involved, to possess or land more than:

- A. 500 pounds gutted weight (with head and fins intact) of **golden tilefish** or,
- B. 50 percent, by weight of **golden tilefish**, of all fish (including golden tilefish) being landed, whichever is less, per trip.

III. BLUELINE TILEFISH

It shall be unlawful for a commercial fishing operation, regardless of the number of people involved, to possess or land more than 500 pounds gutted weight (with head and fins intact) of **blueline tilefish**, per trip.

IV. DEALER REQUIREMENTS

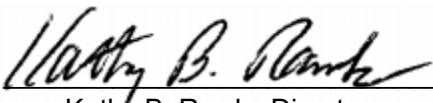
It shall be unlawful to purchase golden tilefish or blueline tilefish taken from the Tilefish Management Unit unless in possession of a valid permit for these species, pursuant to 50 CFR Part § 648.6.

V. TRANSPORTATION EXEMPTION

Commercial operations shall be exempt from the transportation requirement set out in NC Marine Fisheries Commission Rule 15A NCAC 03I .0120 when transporting golden tilefish or blueline tilefish in Coastal and Joint Fishing Waters. Commercial operations are not exempt when in possession of golden tilefish or blueline tilefish and fishing in Coastal and Joint Fishing Waters.

VI. **GENERAL INFORMATION**

- A. This proclamation is issued under the authority of N.C.G. S. 113-134; 113-134.1; 113-170.4; 113-170.5; 113-182; 113-182.1; 113-221.1; 143B-289.52 and N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission Rules 15A NCAC 03H .0103, and 03M .0512.
- B. It is unlawful to violate the provisions of any proclamation issued by the Fisheries Director under his delegated authority pursuant to N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission Rule 15A NCAC 03H .0103.
- C. In accordance with N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission Rule 15A NCAC 03I .0101(5)(f)(i) fish shall be considered landed when fish reach the shore or a structure connected to the shore.
- D. In accordance with N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission Rule 15A NCAC 03I .0101(2)(g) fish shall be considered possessed when under any actual or constructive holding whether under claim of ownership or not.
- E. In accordance with N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission Rule 15A NCAC 03I .0113 it shall be unlawful for any licensee under Chapter 113, Subchapter IV of the N.C. General Statutes to refuse to allow the Fisheries Director or their agents to obtain biological data, harvest information, or other statistical data necessary or useful to the conservation and management of marine and estuarine resources from fish in the licensee's possession.
- F. In accordance with 50 CFR Part § 648.2 Tilefish Management Unit means an area of the Atlantic Ocean from the latitude of the VA and NC border (36°33.36' N. Lat.), extending eastward from the shore to the outer boundary of the exclusive economic zone and northward to the United States-Canada border.
- G. It is the intent of the Fisheries Director to allow commercial fishing operations to land golden tilefish and blueline tilefish harvested north of the North Carolina/Virginia border that possess a valid commercial vessel permit for the Tilefish Management Unit and to manage tilefish fisheries under a Total Allowable Landings limit.
- H. In accordance with N.C. General Statute 113-221.1(c) all persons who may be affected by proclamations issued by the Fisheries Director are under a duty to keep themselves informed of current proclamations.
- I. Contact the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries, P.O. Box 769, Morehead City, NC 28557, phone 252-515-5500 or 800-682-2632 for more information or visit the division website at www.ncmarinefisheries.net.
- J. **This proclamation establishes the North Carolina possession and landing limit for commercial operations harvesting golden tilefish and blueline tilefish in the Atlantic Ocean north of the North Carolina/Virginia border.**

By: 
Kathy B. Rawls, Director
DIVISION OF MARINE FISHERIES

July 17, 2026
1:00 PM