

HIGH SEAS FISHERIES MANAGEMENT FEES POLICY

POLICY NAME	HIGH SEAS FISHERIES MANAGEMENT FEES POLICY	POLICY NO.	P-01-2020
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RESPONSIBLE OFFICE	BELIZE HIGH SEAS FISHERIES UNIT	RESPONSIBLE EXECUTIVE	DIRECTOR FOR HIGH SEAS FISHERIES
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1.0 POLICY STATEMENT

This Policy outlines the fundamental fee charging principles and the various fisheries related fees and other charges established by the Belize High Seas Fisheries Unit (BHSFU). It sets out the requirements, rules and practices governing the application and administration of these charges.

2.0 SCOPE

This Policy applies to all vessel owners and operators who wish to carry out fisheries related business under the Belize Flag.

3.0 RESPONSIBILITY

The Belize High Seas Fisheries Unit is responsible for the implementation, compliance, monitoring and review of this Policy.

4.0 RELEVANT LEGISLATION

This Policy is implemented pursuant to section 23 (1) of the High Seas Fishing Act, 2013 of the Substantive Laws of Belize and its supporting regulations.

5.0 BACKGROUND

Fisheries management is expensive. There are many factors that are considered when deriving fisheries management fees, including direct and indirect associated cost of management, the value of the fisheries product, and impact of the fishery on the marine ecosystem. Developed fisheries requires more control and surveillance and the more developed and restrictive a fishery becomes, the more surveillance is required; thus, more costs are involved. The fees associated with the licensing and management of fishing vessels contribute the most to the proper management of high seas fisheries through monitoring of fishing activities, appropriate regulations, and revenue generation. Licensing fees and other supplemental fees are also instruments used to control fishing activities because it is a cost to the owners and operators, and this acts as a disincentive for illegitimate activities. It is also an instrument to generate revenue for the government and recuperate the associated cost of fisheries management.



6.0 FEES

In determining the fees established in this Policy the direct and indirect and fixed costs of management of the fisheries were considered as well as the following important factors:

- a) Accessible operational areas
- b) Catch species for which a license or authorization can be issued
- c) Size of the vessel
- d) Gear type of the vessel
- e) Value of the service we provide
- f) Market value of the fisheries regulated.

6.1 High Seas Fishing License Fees

The cost of Belize's high seas fisheries management is recovered by the revenues earned from license fees and other fees charged for fishery related services. The High Seas Fishing License fees established pursuant to the HSFA 2013 is detailed in Annex 1. These fees are comprised of the following breakdown:

Fee	Percentage of Overall Fee	Description
License Fee	60%	This fee is the cost associated with the processing and approval of the license
Monitoring Fee	15%	This fee is the cost associated with the daily monitoring and surveillance of the vessel
Administration Fee	15%	This fee is associated with the cost of ensuring that vessel maintains compliance with national and international regulations
Application Fee	10%	This fee is associated with the cost for work connected with and incidental to the review of an application and its supporting documents

The Monitoring, Application and Administration Fees are non-refundable and non-transferrable. The license fee may be refunded as indicated in section 8.0.

6.2 Quota Administration Fees

Quota Administration Fee is applied to vessels that fish for tuna and tuna like species that are regulated by a quota management and distribution system established by a Regional Fisheries Management Organization (RFMO). For the purpose of this Policy, this fee applies to those vessels that fish in the area of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT).

The Quota Administration Fee is applied based on the gear type of the vessel.

I. Long Line Vessels

A formula for the allocation has been established for long line vessels which considers the average current market value of the species to be allocated. This is multiplied by the allocation amount and a percentage surcharge is applied which constitutes the value to be paid as Quota Administration Fee.

Quota Administration Fee for long line vessels are charged and invoiced for the calendar year. Additional quotas may be requested in accordance with our Quota Allocation Policy at a cost determined using the established formula.

Example of Formulation of Quota Administration Fee for Long Line Vessels

Owner applies for 60 metric tons of bigeye tuna which has a market value of US\$1650 per metric tons. The BHSFU is applying a 4% surcharge to establish the fee to be paid by the vessel owner
 $US\$1650 \times 60 \text{ metric tons} = US\$99,000 \times 4\% = US\$3,960.00$

Vessel owner will be invoiced US\$3,960 Quota Administration Fee

NOTE: Market values are subject to change as well as percentage surcharge applied by the BHSFU.

Overharvest charges or civil penalty are charged for any catches that are made in excess of the approved allocation and will also be charged in accordance with the formula set out above but at twice the value of the standard percentage sur-charge.

II. Purse Seine Vessels

The quota administration fee for purse seine vessels are fixed fees applied on a tiered approach based on the size of the vessel. Below is a fee chart of the quota administration fee established and applicable to the purse seine fleet. This fee chart was established in consultation with relevant stakeholders including vessel owners and operators.

Vessel Size	Annual Fee	Quarterly Fee
1000 GT or less	Contact BHSFU for Fees	Contact BHSFU for Fees
1001 GT to 2000 GT	Contact BHSFU for Fees	Contact BHSFU for Fees
2001 GT to 3000 GT	Contact BHSFU for Fees	Contact BHSFU for Fees
3001 GT or more	Contact BHSFU for Fees	Contact BHSFU for Fees

Quota Administration Fees are invoiced on a quarterly basis at the beginning of every quarter. These fees may be invoiced and paid in full for the calendar year at the request of the vessel owner.

Example of Formulation of Quota Administration Fee for Purse Seine Vessels

A vessel of over 3001 GT in size, based on the table above will be charge US\$ 75,000 annual quota allocation fee.

Vessel owner will be invoiced US\$18,750 Quota Administration Fee quarterly or they can make full payment of US\$75,000 at the beginning of the first quarter.

Additional quotas may be requested in accordance with our Quota Allocation Policy. The cost for additional allocation of tropical tuna quotas for purse seine vessels will be charged on a tiered approach based on the quantity of quotas being requested and will be calculated based on a percentage of the initial overall cost.

Quantity of Quotas	Percentage charge
Up to 100 metric tons	4% of annual fee
100-500 metric tons	6% of annual fee
500-1000 metric tons	8% of annual fee
1000 metric tons or more	10% of annual fee



Example of request for additional quotas

A request for more than 100 metric tons from a vessel between 2001 and 3000 GT in size will be charged 10% of the initial annual fee charged.

$$\text{US\$60,000} \times 10\% = \text{US\$6,000}$$

Vessel owner will be invoiced US\$6,000 Quota Administration Fee for an additional 100 metric tons of quotas requested

Overharvest charges or civil penalty are charged for any catches that are made in excess of the approved allocation and shall be charged in accordance with the percentage charges set out in above table.

6.3 Catch Contribution Fees

The Catch Contribution Fee applies to vessels which operate in any other Regional Fisheries Management Organization area which regulate tuna and tuna like species. This fee is charged separate from the license fee and is calculated using the same formulae and method used to calculate the Quota Administration Fee for long line and purse seine vessels.

6.4 Transshipment Authorization Fees

Transshipment authorization fee is a fixed fee that is based on the gear type of the vessel and fishery involved.

- I. Transshipment authorization fee for vessels that are engaged in the tuna fishery is established at (Contact BHSFU for Fees) per authorization.
- II. Transshipment authorization fee for all other vessels is set at (Contact BHSFU for fees) per authorization.

6.5 Fees for Other Certificates and Services

Fixed fees have been established for the following services

Certificate/Service	Description	Fee
Statistical Document	This fee is charged for the issue of a Statistical Document which is a document used by the RFMOs for the monitoring of import and exports of regulated species among member countries.	Contact BHSFU for fees
Certificate for Origin	This fee is charged for the issue of a certificate of origin which is a trade related document showing the origin of the product being exported.	Contact BHSFU for fees
Catch Certificate	This fee is charged for the verification and validation by BHSFU of the catch certificate which is also a trade document required for export to EU countries.	Contact BHSFU for fees
Eur.1 Certificate	This is an external trade certificate processed by the BHSFU but validated and approved by the Belize Customs Department. As a result, this fee takes into consideration external charges and may be subject to change.	Contact BHSFU for fees
Compliance Certificate	This fee is charged for the issue of a compliance certificate for vessels that are under charter to another flag but is required to maintain a level of compliance with Belize. This fee is also comprised of an annual monitoring fee of US\$2000.00 for the active monitoring of the vessel.	Contact BHSFU for fees
Amendment Fee	This fee is charged for any changes made to the license or authorization which does not constitute a change to the vessel's ownership.	Contact BHSFU for fees
Replacement Fee	This fee is charged for the replacement of any license or authorization.	



Administration Fee	This fee is charged for the issuance of all other miscellaneous certificates that are not captured under this Policy. This charge may be subject to increase depending on the service/certificate being requested and the work required for its processing	Contact BHSFU for fees
Laid-up Fee	This fee is charged in accordance with our Laid-up Circular and is charged on a quarterly basis for the duration of the vessel's laid up status.	Contact BHSFU for fees

6.6 Vessel Monitoring Equipment Fee

The fee for the procurement of a vessel monitoring equipment as required pursuant to our Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Regulation (MCS) is charged by the BHSFU and includes the cost of the equipment, shipping and administrative costs established by the providers. The payment of this fee is remitted to our service provider directly. Full cost and instructions for payment is communicated to the vessel owner at the time of initial registration and licensing of the vessel. This fee will be billed on a separate invoice on behalf of the service provider. Payment is due immediately in order to secure the equipment as this is required to be on board the vessel prior to the completion of the licensing process.

7.0 TERMS OF PAYMENT

Fees for most services rendered are invoiced immediately subsequent to the issue of the service. In the case of the renewal of a HSFL, other licenses and permits, the cost of this service is invoiced one month in advance of the expiration of the current license since these are required to be renewed one month prior to their expiration. For new vessels, the license fee is communicated to clients via a quotation. Once the vessel is registered, an official invoice is then issued. Invoices are expected to be paid 30 days from date of issue of invoice. Payment shall be made via wire transfer only, using the most up to date banking instructions provided on the invoice.

All fees are invoiced and shall be payable in United States Dollars **ONLY**, in addition to the relevant currency exchange and banking charges.

7.1 Payment in Installments

Payments in instalments are not encouraged, however, exceptions are made at the discretion of the Director for High Seas Fisheries. These cases include but are not limited to:

- Where a license has been pro-rated, the fee may be paid at intervals of 6 months.
- For Quota Administration Fees which is paid at every quarter.

7.2 Penalty for Default in Payments

The BHSFU reserves the right to impose a penalty up to 10% on the outstanding balance of any invoice past due.

The BHSFU also reserves the right to take appropriate action against any client who fail to make payment or make satisfactory arrangements to pay. This may include the suspension of services rendered to the vessel or any other remedies available under the Belize High Seas Fisheries (Sanctions) Regulations S.I. No.33 of 2013.

At the discretion of the Director, any overpayments held for a client may be applied to any outstanding balance, with prior notice to the client. In this context, the client will receive a receipt or notification indicating how the money was allocated.

7.3 Overpayments

Any overpayments made by a client will be held in suspense for future use by the client up to a duration of 12 months.

8.0 REFUNDS

Refunds may only be requested in cases of force majeure and will be considered on a discretionary basis. In this context refunds are only applicable on the High Seas Fishing License Fees. Where an application for HSFL has been cancelled by an applicant within three months from date of application and where fees had already been remitted, only the license fee will be considered for refund, which accounts for 60% of the overall fee paid. The balance shall be retained by the BHSFU for processing, administration, and monitoring purposes.

Where a license fee has been paid and owners fail to meet the necessary requirements for the obtainment of the license within a six-month period and where no satisfactory justification has been provided, that fee shall be forfeited, and a new fee shall become payable in order for the license to be issued after the indicated period

9.0 WAIVERS

The BHSFU may waive a fee payable or authorize a payment extension on application for an exemption or extension if such is satisfied that it is appropriate to do so.

10.0 DISCOUNTS

Vessels that are licensed may be eligible for a discount on their HSFL fee in accordance with our Discount Guideline.



11.0 REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed annually. Increases in the cost associated with fisheries management as it pertains to the Belize fishing fleet means that supplemental fees are likely to be subject to an annual increase at the discretion of the Director subject to prior notice.

Approved this 22nd day of December the year 2020 at BELMOPAN, Belize




Claude B.F. Haylock
Registrar of Merchant Shipping

Valarie Lanza
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