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## **Annex 1. CHART Cymru 2022 Angler Code of Conduct / guidance.**

Thank you for supporting the CHART Cymru program by your chartering this authorised vessel to participate in this important research program.

Atlantic Bluefin Tuna (ABT) are large powerful fish and in many cases this may be your first experience of catching such a physically demanding quarry.

We hope you enjoy this experience and the opportunity to catch and release one of the world's most sought after sporting fish. CHART Cymru is first and foremost a Scientific Research Program, and as such the operational requirements of the day's activity will be different in many ways from other fishing activity you may have taken part in.

The skipper, crew, vessel, gear and techniques have been chosen with the primary objectives of creating a safe environment for anglers, and to reduce welfare risks including mortality during capture.

This Angler Code of Conduct is intended to help inform anglers of the requirements of their participation in this process. In undertaking this charter you are acknowledging and accepting the conditions and requirements outlined below.

CHART Cymru is a team effort and our joint objectives can only be achieved by working together. You are a key part of that team and as such may be asked to carry out certain tasks on the day, aiding with data collection, clearing gear after a hookup etc. Much of this is voluntary of course, and we hope will contribute positively to your enjoyment of the day.

In relation to the capture process after hookup you are required to follow the instructions of the authorised skipper and crew. Failure to follow such instructions may give cause for the charter to be terminated and the vessel return to port.

The specific requirements outlined below are there to ensure a safe, enjoyable day with fish welfare as a key objective.

### **Fishing tackle.**

The gear used has been specifically chosen and set up to facilitate the timely capture of Bluefin and reduce the number of lost, damaged or killed fish. Anglers should not adjust elements such as reel drags, rod locations etc but leave that to the trained skipper/crew.

### **Physical requirements.**

ABT provide a very physical challenge to anglers and participants should be moderately fit to undertake this task. If at any point the skipper/crew feel that an anglers physical condition may create a safety issue for them or compromise the welfare of the fish they may require



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that the angler does not directly engage in the capture via the rod/reel.

### **‘Fight time’ restrictions.**

It is generally accepted that overly long ‘fight times’ may compromise the welfare and survival rates of large pelagic species. Consequently, all CHART Cymru participants are required to follow guidelines regarding time limits regarding how long anglers can fight the fish.

The skipper/crewman have DISCRETION to intervene before the following points if they feel it necessary, but have an OBLIGATION to not exceed them.

Most Bluefin hooked should be able to be subdued well within the limits set out below, with the gear and guidance provided by the skipper/crew. However, these requirements are in place to address those situations that result in potentially extended fight times.

**45 minutes** after hookup If the fish has not already been leadered the Skipper/crew will assess the probability that the fish can be brought boatside within the next 15 minutes.

If their conclusion is no, the angler will be required to hand the rod to the authorised crewman at that point. If their conclusion is yes, the angler will continue to fight the fish.

At **60 minutes** if not already leadered the skipper/crew are **required** to take the rod over from the angler **unless** in their view leadering is imminent, and such handover may increase risks of a lost fish. Anglers will generally be required to have brought the fish boatside within 60 minutes or have handed the rod over to the skipper/crew.

Under no circumstances will anglers be permitted to continue the fight beyond **75 minutes**.

The skippers/crew have absolute discretion regarding if/when an angler must pass the rod to the crewman (or another angler if they deem appropriate) at **anytime** during the fight process, and an obligation to observe the 60 and 75 minute requirements as set out above.

### **‘Tag teaming’.**

Several anglers ‘taking turns’ on the fishing rod during the capture does bring some risks to the fish during the handover process. However, it may be desirable in the event of an angler becoming fatigued where switching to a ‘fresh’ angler could help minimise fight times.

Such a changeover during the capture process is totally at the discretion of the authorised skipper. Changing angler should be undertaken solely for that purpose of minimising fight times, and not to facilitate multiple anglers just ‘having a go’.

The changeover itself must be supervised by the authorised crewman or skipper.

### **Alcohol.**

No alcohol is to be consumed during the day’s fishing activities and skippers/crew may refuse the take on board anglers who arrive in condition that may compromise their ability to undertake the day’s activities in a safe, effective manner.

### **Data Collection.**



A large part of the day's activity will consist of collecting data to further our understanding of Bluefin, their environment and the capture process. Anglers may be requested to help in this through recording sightings, filming parts of the day's activity etc. This is not compulsory but may help the skipper/crew and underlines that this is a Team based process.

**Socio-economic survey.**

Anglers may be requested to complete a socio-economic survey that is being undertaken to help determine the potential economic and other benefits CHART Cymru and any possible subsequent programs/fishery. Participation is not compulsory but encouraged.

**On board observers.**

As part of the terms of the CHART Cymru program, a percentage of fishing trips will be accompanied by an onboard observer from Swansea University. These observers are there to guide, assist, and learn more about the fishing process, whilst ensuring that the rules governing the program are being observed. We request that anglers make these observers welcome and engage with them on the day if present.

**Covid-19.**

Skippers, crew and anglers may still be subject to Government guidance and restrictions regarding Covid-19 at the time of these fishing operations. If so all participants will be required to follow these and any specific protocols regarding charter vessel operations

The requirements and guidance outlined above are designed to ensure your safety and appropriate fish welfare in what is primarily a scientific research program.

CHART Cymru provides a legal, safe, professional environment for anglers to enjoy one of the world's greatest sporting fish whilst contributing valuable scientific insights which will help inform the future management strategy and ensure Atlantic Bluefin have a sustainable, bright future.

We hope you enjoy your day and thank you for your participation and support.