



# Belize Fisheries Department Special-Regulations



## Lobster: (*Panulirus argus*)

- Minimum carapace length of 3 inches.
- Minimum tail weight of 4 Ounces.
- No person or establishment should have in possession fillet or diced lobster tail.
- It is illegal to have in possession any soft shell (molting) lobster or females with eggs (berried).
- It is illegal to remove from any female lobster any eggs or spawn or the setae or fiber to which any eggs or spawn are or have been attached.
- **Closed season MARCH 1st to JUNE 30th.**



## Conch: (*Strombus gigas*)

- Shell length should exceed 7 inches.
- Unprocessed conch means conch that has been removed from the shell with all organs attached and has a minimum weight of 7 ½ ounces.
- Market clean weight of more than 3 ounces.
- Fillet weighs more than 2.75 ounces.
- No fisher should have in their possession diced conch meat.
- **Closed season from JULY 1st (or when the catch quota is realized) to SEPTEMBER 30th.**



## Marine Turtles:

- All species of marine turtles are protected.
- No person shall interfere with any turtle nest.
- It is illegal for any person to have in possession any marine turtles
- No person shall buy, sell or have in possession any article made of any part of the turtle or turtle egg.



## Florida Stone Crab: (*Menippe mercenaria*)

- Fishing and export of Florida Stone Crab can only be done with A **SPECIAL LICENSE** issued by the Fisheries Administrator.
- No person shall fish for stone crabs using a trap without authorization from the Fisheries administrator.
- No person shall take a stone crab using a plastic trap unless it has an escape gap of at least 2 3/8 inches and a biodegradable panel.
- No person shall fish, sell, display, offer for sale, buy, or possess any stone crab during the **closed season which is from JULY 1st to SEPTEMBER 30th.**
- A licensed person can set traps from September 15th but cannot harvest any crab during that time.
- No person shall retain or handle stone crab claws with a propodus length of less than 3 inches or the carapace/body of a stone crab.
- Any person catching a stone crab must release it back into the sea immediately after removing the claw.
- No person shall use any device that can puncture, crush, or injure a stone crab's body.
- No person shall fish for stone crabs unless equipped with a ruler or caliper on-board the vessel.



## Nassau grouper: (*Epinephelus striatus*)

- No person shall take, buy, sell, or have any Nassau grouper which is less than 20-inches or greater than 30-inches in total length.
- **Closed season DECEMBER 1st to MARCH 31st.**
- All Nassau groupers are to be landed as whole fish.



## Sharks:

- Fishing and export of sharks can only be done with A **SPECIAL LICENSE** issued by the Fisheries Administrator.
- All exports of Shark Species require a **CITES** permit.
- All sharks need to be landed with fins attached.
- No person shall take, buy, sell, or have in possession any shark during the **closed season which is from MAY 1st to OCTOBER 31st.**



## Sea-Cucumbers:

- No person shall fish, harvest, buy, sell, or have in their possession Sea-Cucumbers during the closed season which is from FEBRUARY 1st to JULY 31st.
- All Sea-Cucumbers fished or harvested should have a minimum size of :
  - \* 16cm for Donkey dung Sea-Cucumber (*Holothuria mexicana*)
  - \* 16cm for Florida Sea-Cucumber (*Holothuria floridana*)
  - \* 23cm for the three-rowed Sea-Cucumber (*Isostichopus badionotus*) measured from the mouth to the anus when first taken out of the sea.
- Fishing and export of Sea-Cucumber can only be done with A **SPECIAL LICENSE** issued by the Fisheries Administrator.



## Fish Fillet:

- All fish landed as fillet shall have a skin patch of at least 2-inches by 1- inch.



## Hicatee: (*Dermatemys mawii*)

- No person shall have in their possession more than 3 turtles or transport on any vehicle more than 5 turtles.
- No person shall buy or sell any such turtles.
- Fishing for female Hicatee is prohibited if the length is greater than 17.2-inches (43cm) or smaller than 15.2-inches (38cm).
- It is illegal to use or have in possession any Hicatee Net.
- **Closed season May 1st to May 31th.**



## Whelks:

- Fishing and export of whelk can only be done with A **SPECIAL LICENSE** issued by the Fisheries Administrator.
- The legal-size limit is 2.44 inches (62 mm) in diameter.
- All whelks need to be landed with meat.
- **Closed season JANUARY 1st to SEPTEMBER 30th.**



## Corals:

- It is illegal for any person to take, buy, sell, or have in their possession any type of Coral.
- An exception is made for the Black Coral (*Antipatharia*) which may be bought, sold, or exported with A **SPECIAL LICENSE** issued by the Fisheries Administrator.



**Bonefish**  
(*Albula Vulpes*)  
(locally known as MACABI)



**Permit**  
(*Trachinotus falcatus*)



**Tarpon**  
(*Megalops atlanticus*)

- No person shall take, buy or sell Bonefish, Permit, Tarpon. These species are for catch and release **ONLY**. Possession is prohibited.

