**CHART (Catch and Release Tagging) Cymru Application Information 2023**

**Opportunity to Participate in the Atlantic Bluefin Tuna CHART Cymru Data Collection Programme**



**To:** Charter vessel skippers and owners

**For the Role of**: Volunteer vessels to undertake targeted fishing for a catch, (conventionally) tag and release, data collection programme for Atlantic Bluefin Tuna (BFT)

**Date Issue**: 4th July 2023

**Response Deadline**: 15th July 2023 17:00 via email only to CHARTCymru@swansea.ac.uk

Responses to be emailed to CHARTCymru@swansea.co.uk and include ‘Application: Tuna CHART Cymru Vessel’ within the Subject Line.

 **Background to requirement:**

In recent years there have been a growing number of sightings of Atlantic Bluefin tuna (BFT) in UK waters. This has led to a growing interest in the species from the science community, the recreational fishing community, and the commercial fishing sector. The CHART Cymru programme has been developed in response to a proposal from the recreational fishing sector, who highlighted the contribution such a programme could make to international Bluefin tuna (BFT) research as well as the potential socio-economic benefits it could bring to coastal communities. This programme will permit authorised and trained charter boat skippers to take out paying anglers to catch, tag (by skipper or certified crew) and then release BFT.

In 2021 and 2022 trained charter boat skippers were authorised to fish in English and Welsh waters as part of the  CHART and CHART Cymru programmes. Over the two years, in excess of 1800 BFT have been caught, tagged and released while giving the highest consideration to fish welfare. Two smaller BFT catch and release projects commissioned by the Welsh Government also ran in Wales during November 2021. These short pilot projects caught, tagged and released three tunas whilst improving our understanding of managing potential interactions with mobile species features of Welsh marine protected areas during BFT angling. Taken together these projects therefore provide the foundations for  a robust co-designed scientific programme, surpassing expectations while delivering nationally and internationally important scientific data and offering the socio-economic benefits that come with this novel recreational fishing opportunity. By authorising a CHART Cymru BFT catch and release programme  for 2023 in Wales these foundations can continue to be built upon to provide a greater understanding of BFT ecology and, in turn, inform future BFT policy.

**Requirement:**

Swansea University, acting on behalf of Welsh Government, are seeking suitable vessels and charter boat skipper applicants to recreationally target, catch, conventionally tag and release BFT under an authorisation issued by Welsh Government.

In order to take part in the Programme, applicants must be able to follow/adhere to the points listed below and also those contained within Appendix 3 - CHART Cymru Terms and Conditions (contained within the Application pack).

* The minimum criteria for qualifying vessels and skippers are detailed in Table 1 below (Appendix I of Application Form). Any vessel who does not and cannot meet the criteria specified by 1st August need not apply.
* The period of operation will be limited to the indicative date of 1st August to 10th December 2023.
* Fishing will be conducted during daylight hours only.
* The area of operation will be within the Welsh waters of ICES divisions ([map here](http://www.fao.org/fishery/area/Area27/en)) 7.f (Bristol Channel), 7.g (Celtic Sea) 7.a (Irish Sea) and therefore the vessel home (or nominated) port will need to reside in this region (secondary ports for safety will be allowed).
* The use of live bait will be prohibited.
* Attendance and engagement in a workshop to cover tagging techniques, best practice and fishing techniques is mandatory for those new vessels skippers and crews selected to be eligible for the scientific licence.
* No authorisation will be issued by Welsh Government until training and vessel checks have been carried out and suitably signed off.
* Skippers will need to record data on all fishing activity (including GPS) and each capture event (from hook-up to release).
* Camera monitoring may be undertaken by observers and skippers will be encouraged to film capture operations where practicable.
* The data collected as part of this programme must be submitted to Swansea University within 24-hours.
* No fees will be paid to participate in this programme, but vessels are able to charter to paying anglers through their own commercial / payment arrangement.
* The carriage of observers is a requirement of the programme and when selected, a space must be made available for their participation (see CHART Cymru Terms and Conditions contained within the Application pack).

 **Minimum criteria for qualifying vessels and skippers to participate in programme:**

The following criteria are essential and must be met. Applicants that are unable to demonstrate or provide the required information need not apply and will not be taken forward to the Application evaluation stage:

**Table 1 – Minimum criteria**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Type** | **Detail**  |
| Vessel requirements | 1. Insurance: All vessels must have adequate marine insurance cover for the size of vessel, numbers of personnel on board and the purpose of the activity
 |
| 1. The proposed vessels must comply with Maritime and Coastguard Agency’s (MCA) Marine Guidance Note MGN 280 (M) Small Vessels in Commercial Use for Sport or Pleasure, Workboats and Pilot Boats – Workboat Code Edition 2 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/small-craft-codes>

or MCA Safety of Small Commercial Motor Vessels (Yellow Code) pre-2004, and all associated safety requirements as a minimum. |
| 1. Vessel categorisation: Minimum MCA Coding Area of Operation category 4 (up to 20nm offshore in daylight and favourable weather)
 |
| 1. The vessel must have a Certification of Small Commercial Vessels (SCV2 compliance document) issued by one of nine certifying authorities licensed by the MCA
 |
| 1. The vessel must be capable of carrying at least 4 passengers (anglers or observer) in addition to the skipper and crew. Noting a minimum of three persons are required on board (including skipper and crew, excluding observers).
 |
| Area of operation | 1. The home or nominated port of the vessel needs to be within the ‘Welsh Zone’ of ICES Divisions 7.a, 7.f and 7g.

Fishing can be conducted within the ‘Welsh Zone’ ICES Divisions 7.a, 7.f and 7g. |
| Crewing | 1. One skipper and one crew (min.) or two crew. Paying customer or paid access to provide crew support is prohibited.
 |
| Workshop Attendance | 1. New skippers and primary crews to attend a mandatory workshop. Returning skippers and primary crews to attend a mandatory refresher workshop.
 |
| Availability | 1. Vessel and crew are available for a minimum of 10 days between the indicative dates of 1st August 2023 and 10th December 2023.
 |
| Skipper Experience | 1. The skipper must have a minimum of two-years’ experience as a Registered Charter Skipper (as of date of application) and hold a Certificate of Competence and Service with commercial endorsement which is correct for the vessel and category of water that the vessel is coded to.
 |

**Evaluation criteria used to assess suitability to participate in the CHART programme:**

Once the minimum criteria contained in Table 1 have been met, information provided in the application form will be evaluated against the criteria listed below. Scores achieved per submission will then be ranked against overall scores. The top 10 vessels that have demonstrated clear capability will be invited to participate in the CHART Cymru 2023 Programme. A copy of the CHART Cymru Scoring Guidance is contained within the Application pack for information. Please note that in the event applicant vessels are scored/ranked equally, the vessel which can provide the best geographic coverage for the programme will take precedence.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Criteria Description** | **Weighting** |
| 1 | **Skipper Experience** – Please provide details of your charter skipper and other marine vessel experience which you consider relevant to operating in the CHART Cymru program. | 20% |
| 2 | **Skipper Experience** – Please provide details of your experience as an angler fishing for large pelagic species, including species and geographical range/location which you consider relevant to operating in the CHART Cymru program. | 20% |
| 3 | **Skipper Experience** – Please provide details of method of fishing proposed in programme (e.g., trolling lures) and years of experience in using such methods/gears | 10% |
| 4 | **Skipper and Crew Experience** – Please describe your experience of tagging large pelagic fish | 10% |
| 5 | **Skipper and Crew Experience** – Please describe your experience in the recording of good scientific data reporting, participation in surveys/hosting observers etc? | 10% |
| 6 | **Primary Named Crew (Working arrangement)** – Please describe the established relationship of working with the crew members | 10% |
| 7 | **Primary Named Crew (Experience)** – Please describe the crew member’s experience in angling for large pelagic fish. | 10% |
| 9 | **Vessel Classification –** Please state your vessel categorisation (MCA Coding Area of Operation). Additional award of score for vessels categorised as Area 3 or above.  | 5% |
| 10 | **Vessel Availability** – Please confirm your availability across the season (indicative dates: 1st August to 10th December 2023):Satisfactory: 10 days (limited to 1-month of operation)Good: 10-25 days (over at least 8-weeks)Very Good: 25+ days (between 8 weeks and 15 weeks coverage) | 5% |

**Gear requirements**

The gear specifications associated with targeting bluefin tuna are detailed in the Gear List (contained within the Application pack). No financial recompense for items on the gear list will be made.

# Application submission

# Applications are required to be submitted via email, please send all responses to CHARTcymru@swansea.co.uk by the closing date ensuring that ‘Application: Tuna CHART Cymru Vessel’ is contained within the subject line. Please also ensure that one email is submitted per application.

Successfully selected vessels
Successful vessels selected from this Application, will enter a ‘Approval Pending’ Phase. During this phase, vessels will have a maximum of 1-week with which to comply with and supply the following documentation:

* Copy of vessel insurance certificate
* Copy of vessel registration document
* Copy of MCA or SVC certificate
* Copy of MCA mid-term inspection certificate or invoice (if appropriate)

# Failure to supply complete documentation within 1-week of Approval Pending notification will result in Welsh Government rejecting the application. You are welcome to provide documentation in advance if you wish, e.g. with your completed Application Form, or during the 2-week evaluation period.

# Queries about the Application

Clarification of the Application requirements can be given. Please contact CHARTcymru@swansea.co.uk to submit your questions.

Swansea University is committed to the responsible handling and security of personal data. Your privacy is important to us and protected in law through the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018). For details on how we will process your personal information in line with these regulations please refer to our [data protection policy](https://www.swansea.ac.uk/media/GDPR-DP-Policy-July-2022.pdf). A Privacy Notice is included in the Application Pack.