

# FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE LA PECHE SPORTIVE EN MER

**F.I.P.S -M**

**A.s.b.l – Association sans but lucratif**

Registre de Commerce et des Sociétés Luxembourg F7236



## **BIG GAME RULES**

(Version May 2018)

## **Table of contents:**

<b>A. General Guidelines for fishing by trolling, from anchored boat and from drifting boat.....</b>	<b>3</b>
1. Generalities.....	3
2. Guidelines for Big Game Competitions.....	3
3. Teams - Participation conditions .....	4
4. Stewards .....	5
5. Guidelines for the boats .....	5
6. Competition Duration.....	6
7. Bait.....	7
8. Drawing of the boats .....	7
9. Daily and final classification.....	8
10. Complaints.....	9
<b>B. Fishing by Trolling .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>C. Fishing from anchored boat .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>D. Fishing from drifting boat .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>E. Specific requirements for Big Game equipment.....</b>	<b>11</b>
1. The rod.....	11
2. The reel.....	11
3. Main fishing line .....	12
4. Backing line.....	12
5. Double line.....	12
6. Leader .....	12
7. Hooks .....	13
8. Safety line .....	13
9. Rod holder .....	13
10. Rod belt .....	13
11. Harness .....	14
12. Gimbals.....	14
13. Game-Chair .....	14
14. Teaser/Attractor for Big Game trolling.....	14
15. Outrigger, Center rigger and Downrigger for Big Game trolling.....	15
16. Spreader bars, kites, birds, floats, ... , and sinkers.....	15
17. Cases of disqualification (for a fish or for the scoring of the day).....	15

**The General Rules also apply to Big Game Angling**

# "Big Game" Rules

## **A. General Guidelines for fishing by trolling, from anchored boat and from drifting boat**

### **1. Generalities**

- 1.1. Big Game competitions are fished to a catch & release guidelines. No fish will be taken on board or killed.
- 1.2. Big Game Boat Angling to FIPS-M rules fishing with rod and reel for species present in local waters on both the surface and midwater.
- 1.3. Some bottom feeding species will not be considered in FIPS-M Big Game Competitions. There are separate competitions for these species which would include Conger and Rays.
- 1.4. Specifications will be prepared by the organizing nation taking into account the specific local conditions of the place where the event will take place.  
It will define the organization and running of the competition.  
The specifications must be submitted for approval to the board of FIPS-M at least 90 days before the competition. In case of dispute between FIPS-M rules and the specifications of the organizing nation, FIPS-M rules prevail.

### **2. Guidelines for Big Game Competitions**

- Fishing by trolling (Offshore trolling and Coastal trolling)
  - Fishing from anchored boat
  - Fishing from drifting boat
- 2.1. Only national teams entered by the Member Federations of the FIPS-M have the right to participate in the World or Continental Championships.
  - 2.2. To perform a catch release angling with artificial lures or natural baits, the use of no stainless steel is mandatory.
  - 2.3. The organizer of an international competition can not impose the exclusive use of a specific brand of wire, rod, reel or lures to be used in the competition. The competitors are free to choose their material according to the rules and directives.
  - 2.4. The allowed breaking strain of wire will be fixed by the host nation considering the species of fish caught in the area where the competition takes place. The breaking strain of the wire must

be mentioned in the specifications and the program of the competition. However, it may not exceed 37 kg (80lb).

- 2.5. Only one rod per angler can be taken on board. No other rod, wire, or reserve reel will be accepted on board. The skippers must remove all their own rods from the boat before departure.
- 2.6. The lures can be artificial or natural.

#### Fishing areas

1. The organizer determines the fishing areas.
2. The fishing area may change every day, and will be selected according to the conditions of the sea.
3. During the whole competition a control boat must be in the fishing area to guaranty the Vhf communication with the international jury.

### 3. Teams - Participation conditions

- 3.1. For technical reasons, the participation is limited to 2 teams per nation composed of 2 to 5 competitors (maximum of anglers/team given by the organizer) are allowed. (Fishing from drifting boat: maximum 4 anglers)
- 3.2. The captain may be a member, reserve or companion of the team. He is the official representative of the team. If he is not registered as a team member, he cannot participate in the competition.  
The captain has the right to be on the boat with his teams.
- 3.3. If two teams participate in the contest, they will both be classified.
- 3.4. Only a classification by team will be made.
- 3.5. Registered team members can not be changed during the competition. However, if for major reasons, (accident, illness, ...) one of the members has to cut short his participation, a substitute team member may be admitted. The substitute must provide an application to the International Jury. All medical certificates and other documents regarding this change should be provided to the jury. The jury's decision to accept or refuse the new member team will be definitive.
- 3.6. All participants must be a member of their own national federation, they must be inscribed according to the rules by their respective nation. The general conditions of competition rules, must be met (see box below).

*At international competitions of FIPS/M, all members of a team must have the nationality of the country for which they represent. In the case of participants with multiple nationalities, the nationality under which the competitor has taken part for the first time in a competition of FIPS/M prevails. Exception to this rule can be made by the technical commission, at the special request of the given nation introduced 6 months before the competition.*

*For a Big Game club competition, each nation may register 5 club teams. The acknowledged world champion club can participate in addition to clubs registered by that nation.*

- 3.7. "Registered Maritimes", professional fishermen can not participate in events organized by the FIPS-M.

## 4. Stewards

- 4.1. On each competition boat an independent steward must be present throughout the competition times.  
For the championships with anchored boats, the skipper can act as steward.  
At the end of each round the steward must confirm the releases. He has to note all the details, as well as any non-conformities in regard to the FIPS/M rules. At the arrival in the harbour the steward informs the competition management.  
He also has to hand over the result sheet to the competition management.  
If at the end of the official competition time, a competitor is still in fight with a fish, the steward must inform the competition management via radio.
- 4.2. Daily results will be noted on a list. This list will be signed by the steward and the competitor before the classification procedures.  
The stewards on the boats are appointed by the host nation. The registered names and national qualifications have to be submitted to the jury before the start of the competition.

## 5. Guidelines for the boats

- 5.1. All boats should have identical equipment. They should have at least 5 rod-holders, 2 outriggers, 2 game-chairs and equipment for releasing the fish.
- 5.2. All the boats should be equipped with a radio transmitter-receiver (VHF), a GPS, a yellow flag to indicate a fight with a fish, as well as a sign showing the boat identification letter.  
Boat equipment has to be in accordance with the nautical regulations. Lifesaving equipment must meet the rules of the country where the competition is held.
- 5.3. The captain may, at the request of the angler, freely maneuver the boat so as to quickly bring the fish near the boat in order to release it with a minimum of stress.
- 5.4. By trolling the boat must always be moving forward even if at very slow speed.
- 5.5. The competition management must notify the captains of the boats engaged in the competition to keep a minimum distance of 1/2 mile from the back or sides of the boat, which is in fight with a fish.  
When playing a fish this must be indicated by a special flag and must be communicated by radio to all the other boats participating in the championship.  
With the approval of the skipper and the angler fighting with a fish, the commissioners' boat or the press boat may approach with caution at a reasonable distance to allow them to take pictures or to film.
- 5.6. Each team, must immediately inform the competition management per radio (VHF) about every bite, indicating:
1. the number and name of the boat

- 2. The name of the fisherman fighting
  - 3. the time of the bite
  - 4. GPS position
- 5.7. The competition management must immediately be informed when a boat stops fishing as well as about the time of arrival at the harbour.
- 5.8. If strong winds or a storm are predicted by the national weather service, the jury alone has the right to cancel an event.  
 However, he may indicate alternative zones where fishing conditions are more favorable.  
 In special cases, for instance in cases where people's life or the safety of boats is threatened, the jury has the right to suspend the competition. Participants will be informed by radio about this decision.  
 In this cases, each skipper has to confirm the receipt of the "Radio" call and announce the number of fish registered. The jury decides about the the classification for this part of the competition.

## 6. Competition Duration

- 6.1. The start and end of the the competition will be indicated by the organizer or the organizing nation. The duration of the contest and the special indications of the competition management have to be followed scrupulously. At the beginning of the fishing, the steward-boat must be positioned at the beginning of the fishing zone and must ensure that all participating boats are present before giving the start signal.
- 6.2. Once the competition is over, the rods must be removed from the railing of the boat. Any boat found after the finish time with a rod on the railing of the boat, whether the line is in the water or not, will be disqualified. This eliminates any possibility of complaint from another competitor by considering the difficulty of judging at distance if a line is in the water or not.

Exception:

However, if an angler is still fighting a fish, which was hooked before the end of the competition, the continuation of the fight with the fish and the name of the angler have to be announced by radio.

All the other lines must be taken immediately out of water, and removed from the railing of the boat.

- 6.3. All boats except those provided for in the preceding article must arrive in the harbour within the time set by the competition management.  
 The time must be calculated so that the slowest boat, in the middle of the fishing area, reaches the port on time.
- 6.4. Boats arriving after the time limit will not be considered for the rankings of the day.
- 6.5. Any boat that cannot return in time, because it follows a wrong route or for any other reasons must notify the competition management by radio.  
 In case of a breakdown of a boat announced by the steward, the latter accompanied by the

captain of the team, may be transferred on board of an other boat. The boat which went for assistance will be credited for the time it lost, time certified by the stewards of the two boats. Only boats, which are unable to navigate or to move under their own power, are considered to have broken down.

- 6.6. It is not allowed to change the training date.

## 7. Bait

- 7.1. The organizer of a CIPS - FIPS/M competition must ensure that natural baits of equal quality and quantity are available to each competitor during the official training and during the competition. The baits will be given by the organizer to the stewards who will distribute them on board of the boat.

The use of baits not provided by the organizer will result in disqualification.

This does not apply to artificial lures.

- 7.2. The competition management may keep any left over bait after the competition and distribute them the following day as extra bait in equal parts.
- 7.3. Provided baits can be used to attract fish.
- 7.4. Using any parts of mammals as bait or luring with blood of mammals is prohibited in all FIPS-M disciplines.
- 7.5. A special big bait to produce a trace of smell, without hook, may be launched by the captain. It has to be near the stern without interfering with the anglers.

## 8. Drawing of the boats

At the captain's meeting the boats are drawn in the following order:

1. Draw an identification letter for every boat.
2. Draw of the teams.
3. Teams change the boat daily in the alphabetical order of identification letters according to the first drawing of the boat.

Example: 8 boats and 4 competition days

Team. 1 Venezuela will be the first day on boat "E

2<sup>nd</sup> day boat "F

3<sup>rd</sup> day boat "G"

4<sup>th</sup> day boat "H"

## 9. Daily and final classification

- 9.1. The catches must be documented on a film. To guarantee the originality of the film, a capture of a distinctive panel, indicating the competition day and the date must be part of the film. The organizer distributes every day a new panel to all the boats.
- 9.2. For a classification by length (conversion to weight / points), the organization must give a scale with three colors to all the boats. For the measure, the length of the fish should be clearly visible on the scale.
- 9.3. Only the jury will watch the videos and will make the validation decisions. In case of doubt they can ask the advice of the captain of the team.
- 9.4. Daily team classification is made according to the best score (number of points) made by each team.  
The place of the teams, that did not take fish, is calculated by taking the sum of the number of all remaining places divided by the number of teams without fish.  
For example: 20 registered teams. 14 teams caught fish.  
The 6 teams without fish will all have the following place number:  $15 + 16 + 17 + 18 + 19 + 20 = 105/6 = 17.5$ .
- 9.5. If there is a tie at the daily team classification, first will be the team with the most fish.  
If after there is still a tie, the teams get the same ranking place.
- 9.6. Final Team Ranking  
If the competition lasts several days, the final classification of the event will be calculated by adding the daily places of the teams.  
The team with the lowest sum of the daily places will be declared the winner.

If there is a tie in the final team classification, the best place obtained during the whole competition will decide the tie.

If afterwards there is still a tie, we consider for the classification:

1. the sum of points for all days of the competition
2. the largest number of fish caught during all the days
3. captured the biggest (point value) during the championship



## 10.Complaints

For Big Game Championships are valid the following general rules

1. An amount of 100. € or an equivalent amount in another currency in the money of the country is due for every written protest presented to the international jury.
2. The jury meets at the latest one hour after the announcement of the results and takes a decision after one hour of deliberations. The decision is binding for each one.
3. The decision must be recorded in writing, and shall be sent to the general secretary of FIPS/M.
4. The jury must listen attention to the person, who presented the protest, the persons concerned and the competition manager if possible.
5. The decision of the jury shall be in accordance to the statutes of FIPS/M, to the FIPS/M competition rules, and with the agreements made for the event, and in this indicated order.
6. If the jury gives its agreement to the protest, a member of the jury returns immediately the protest fee to the plaintiff. The management of the competition takes the necessary measures to correct the situation, or eventually makes the necessary corrections.
7. If the protest is judged negatively the jury shall transfer the amount of the protest fee to the account of FIPS/M in the CIPS.
8. The decision of the jury has to be proclaimed.
9. In exceptional circumstances when a dispute cannot be resolved by the jury, it will be up to the FIPS-M Board to decide on a sentence, which may go as far as disqualifying a team or even a nation. The pecuniary consequences of such a decision may not be at the charge of FIPS-M.
10. It is the same when a team leaves the competition without having issued protest in good and due form to the Jury, the pecuniary consequences will be charged to the team or the nation it represents.
11. In that case the concerned federation cannot claim with the participation of a team the next year in the concerned discipline

## **B. Fishing by Trolling**

1. Two categories:
  - a. Offshore trolling beyond 12 miles from the coast
  - b. Coastal trolling maximum 12 miles from the coast
2. National teams can participate.
3. The minimum age of the competitors is 18 years

## **C. Fishing from anchored boat**

1. Definition of Anchoring  
Specifications of an anchor:
  - a. The anchor must be adapted to the weight of the boat and having an appropriated chain .
  - b. A rope made of natural or synthetic material measuring at least twice the length of the sensor line.
  - c. A marker buoy (with boat name and home port with the possibility to attach a brightly colored flag).
2. As soon as the anchor is dropped, the skipper must immediatly announce per radio to the competition management:
  - a. The time of dropping the anchor
  - b. It's GPS position
3. The distance of 1/2 mile is required between each fishing boat
4. During the competition it is not allowed to change the anchorage place, unless it interferes with another competitor and only upon request of the latter. If the anchor drags and the boat is drifting unintentionally, it must return to its initial anchoring place announced to the competition management.
5. The anchor will be lifted at the end of each fishing day.
6. Fish caught after the lifting of the anchorage will not be counted.
7. Only 4 rods may be used during the fishing.

## **D. Fishing from drifting boat**

1. For a Big Game competition on drifting boats 2 national teams are allowed with 4 participants each.
2. As soon as the boat is stopped, fishing will start. The skipper has to transmit following information to the competition management:
  - a. The time and the beginning of the fishing
  - b. The GPS position
3. Trolling or anchoring is forbidden during a drifting competition.  
If a boat during the fishing gets closer to another boat than ½ mile, the boat that arrived last on the fishing zone has to change position.

At the request of the embarrassed team, this maneuver has to be immediately executed.

That does not apply if the boat is in fight with a fish.

4. Each boat must imperatively announce the end of the fishing, the lift up of the rods and the lines and its arrival at the harbour to the competition management.

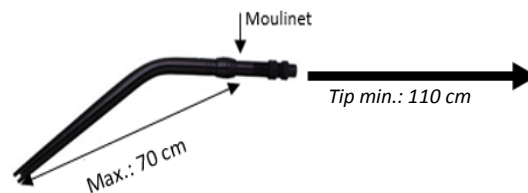
## **E. Specific requirements for Big Game equipment**

### **1. The rod**

- 1.1. Big Game rods, having the following requirements, may be used at FIPS-M competitions.
- 1.2. The minimum length of the tip of a big game fishing rod is 110 cm and the grip no longer than 70 cm (measured from the centre of the mounted reel to the end of the tip, as well as towards the end of the grip).  
The use of rods not complying with the measurements as stated will disqualify the catch of that team, for the daily scoring.

Remark:

Curved butts have to be measured straight from the end to the point of the reel center at the



reel holder.

### **2. The reel**

- 2.1. Saltwater big game reels, constructed and designed for trolling and spinning, as long as complying with sportive and ethic conditions and fulfilling the following requirements may be used at FIPS-M championships and tournaments
- 2.2. Only hand-operated reels are permitted, electronic motorised driven devices or hydraulic assisted reels or devices are not allowed for FIPS-M competitions.
- 2.3. Reels designed to be driven with ratchets are forbidden.
- 2.4. The handle to wind the angling line of a trolling or spinning reel, have to be operated by just one hand.

### **3. Main fishing line**

- 3.1. Materials such as monofilament or multifilament are accepted for main fishing lines.
- 3.2. The main angling lines for light tackle competitions require a breaking strength of less than 10 kg.
- 3.3. The main angling lines for heavy tackle competitions require a breaking strength between 10 kg and 37 kg.
- 3.4. The use of metal main line is not allowed, if use it would result in the team being disqualified on that day.

### **4. Backing line**

- 4.1. There are no restrictions to the size, the breaking strength and the material of the backing line, if this line is not attached to the main fishing line.
- 4.2. However, if the main fishing line is attached to the backing line, the catch will be counted to be made with the line of the highest breaking strength of both lines
  - a) To avoid a disqualification at a light tackle competition, the breaking strength of the backing line has to be not higher than 10 kg.
  - b) To avoid a disqualification at a light tackle competition, the breaking strength of the backing line has to be not higher than 37 kg.

### **5. Double line**

- 5.1. A double line with following specifications is required.
- 5.2. Double lines must be part of the main fishing line and must have the same characteristics.
- 5.3. Any double line has to be measured from the knot or any attachment system with the main line to the farthest attachment point of the leader to the lure, the swivel, the hook or to another other device.
- 5.4. For light tackle competitions, the double lines must not exceed 4,5 meters.
- 5.5. For light tackle competitions, the total length of the double line and the leader, the lure and the hook with bait must not exceed 6 meters.
- 5.6. For heavy tackle competitions, the double lines must not exceed 9 meters.
- 5.7. For heavy tackle competitions, the total length of the double line and the leader, the lure and the hook with bait must not exceed 12 meters.

### **6. Leader**

- 6.1. A leader with following specifications is required.

- 6.2. The length of the leader is a total length. It includes the length of the knots, the attached lure, the hook and the bait.
- 6.3. The leader has to be measured from the bend of the furthest hook, to the double line.
- 6.4. For all categories, the length of the leader must not exceed 9 meters.

## **7. Hooks**

- 7.1. Only 1 hook is allowed for Big Game .
- 7.2. The single hook is attached at the main line or at the leader for fishing with baits.
- 7.3. The single hook can be used in combination with colorful skirts when fishing with bait.
- 7.4. For fishing with artificial lures, 1 simple, straight hook (stanless) is permitted.  
For fishing with natural bait the use of circular hooks is mandatory.
- 7.5. The length of a single hook is limited to 10 cm for big game fishing. It is measured from the upper part of the eye bow to the bend of the hook.
- 7.6. Any hooks used during a FIPS-M big game fishing competition must be made of corrodng material (no inox).

## **8. Safety line**

- 8.1. Safety lines may be used to secure complete rod. They can be attached to the reel or to the rod, as long as they give no advantage to the angler to fight a fish.

## **9. Rod holder**

- 9.1. Big game boats must have enough rod holders at the stern and at both sides of the boat. The rod holders may be used to position fishing rods, downriggers and other tackle.
- 9.2. There should be enough rod holders available, to position rods which are not in use away from the stern and fishing area.

## **10. Rod belt**

- 10.1. Rod belts, with or without gimbals or in order to put the rod to the body are allowed to be used. They may be fixed while fighting with a fish by the angler himself or by any crew or team member.  
It allows to use the strenght of the body to catch a fish.

## **11. Harness**

- 11.1. A harness connected with the reel and rod can be used additionally to the belt.
- 11.2. A harness may be attached and adjusted by the angler himself or any member of the team or boat crew. This may be done while the angler winds already the line in to bring a fish to the boat.  
It allows to use the strength of the body to catch a fish.
- 11.3. It is not allowed to fasten the harness to the chair of the boat.

## **12. Gimbals**

- 12.1. Gimbals can be parts of rod belts or boat chairs.
- 12.2. Gimbals should be free in their vertical movements.
- 12.3. Gimbals will not be used to reduce stress or give respite to the fisherman while working with the strength of his body to bring the fish to the boat.

## **13. Game-Chair**

- 13.1. The Big Game boats must be equipped with at least 1 game-chair.  
No game-chair is needed for standup competitions with anchored boats.
- 13.2. The angler has to strike a fish himself and has to take his rod out of the rod holder, to get the rod grip into one of the gimbals, either from his rod belt or into the gimbals mounted on the game-chair. Only he is allowed to take his rod to the boat chair.
- 13.3. While an angler is retrieving the line, the game-chair may be turned and positioned by any team or crew member.
- 13.4. Game-chairs must not have a back.

## **14. Teaser/Attractor for Big Game trolling**

- 14.1. The use of 1 teaser/attractor per fishing line is allowed. This teaser/attractor has to be located between the leader/attractor and double line or the main line. (The total lengths cf. paragraphe E5 and E6 must be met)
- 14.2. The allowed teaser/attractor may not be advantageous to wind the fishing line with the fish.
- 14.3. Apart authorized fishing lines, two simple lines with teasers/attractors may be used by each team during fishing competitions by trolling.
- 14.4. It is forbidden to use teasers/attractors with hooks.

## **15. Outrigger, Center rigger and Downrigger for Big Game trolling**

- 15.1. A downrigger is a device used while fishing by trolling to place a bait or lure at different depths. If available, they may be used if they are equipped with a release clip.
- 15.2. If an outrigger, centerrigger or downrigger is used, the fishing line has to be connected in a manner that a snap, a clip or an other release devise, will immediately open if a fish pulls on that line.
- 15.3. Outriggers and center rigger belonging to the standard equipment of game fishing boats. They may be used to get the trolled lines apart from each other.

## **16. Spreader bars, kites, birds, floats, ... , and sinkers**

- 16.1. Spreader bars are allowed for trolling, as long as they are equipped with an attachment and release devise for main fishing lines.
- 16.2. Kites are allowed, as long as they are equipped with an attachment and release devise for main fishing lines.
- 16.3. «Birds» are allowed for trolling.
- 16.4. Floats, balloons or similar devises are forbidden for fishing from anchored or drifting boats, with the exception of when used to keep the bait at a specific depth and as long as they do not influence the swimming and fighting of a hooked fish.
- 16.5. For fishing from an anchored or drifting boat, sinkers may be used to keep the bait in a specific depth as long as they do not influence the swimming and fighting of a hooked fish.

## **17. Cases of disqualification (for a fish or for the scoring of the day)**

- 17.1. If a crew or a team member does not comply with rules or instructions or specifications, the catch on this day of the competition day will not be taken into consideration for the ranking.
- 17.2. If a crew or a team member or another person on the boat touches the rod, the reel, the main line or double line of a angler, while playing the fish it will not count for the classification.
- 17.3. If the main line is touched, before the leader has been was touched with both hands by a team or crew member, this fish will not count for the classification.
- 17.4. The angler is not allowed to take the line in his hand with the purpose to hold the fish in position or to pull the fish to the surface. In that case the fish will be disqualified.
- 17.5. It is not allowed to put the rod in a rod holder before the fish will be validated by another member of the team. In that case the fish will be disqualified.
- 17.6. The capatain of the boat is not allowed to chase or follow a fish with his boat, or to go in shallow waters. An such action which reduces the fishes fighting ability will be considered unfair and will lead to the team being diqualified from the daily classication.

- 17.7. It is forbidden to change the rod, to extend or reduce the length of a line while fighting a fish. In that case the team will be disqualified for that day.
- 17.8. The fish must be played with the main line to the boat. The main line must pass through the tip ring of the rod and any rigger clip. Fishes caught with the leader and double line, or just with the leader, will not count for scoring.
- 17.9. It is forbidden to go out on the platform at the back of the boat to catch or validate a fish. In that case the fish will be disqualified.
- 17.10. To reoxygenate the fish, it can be held with the hands, but under no circumstances it can be totally taken out of the water. In that case the fish will be disqualified.