

International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT)

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RFMO Structure	<p>ICCAT</p> <p>International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT)</p> <p>Headquarters: Madrid, Spain.</p> <p>Convention: International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT Convention). Amended by the 1984 Paris Protocol (in force 1997) and the 1992 Madrid Protocol (in force 2005).</p> <p>Signed: May 14, 1966 Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.</p> <p>In Force: March 21, 1969.</p> <p>www.iccat.es</p>	<p>Area of Competence</p> <p>The Atlantic Ocean, including adjacent seas. There is no precise definition for area. The longitude of 20° E is used for scientific purposes as the border with the Indian Ocean.</p>	<p>Objectives</p> <p>To maintain populations of tuna and tuna-like fishes found in the Atlantic Ocean at levels which permit the maximum sustainable catch for food and other purposes.</p>	<p>Organizational Structure</p> <p>Commission, Council, Species Panels (4), Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS), Standing Committee on Finance and Administration (STACFAD), Compliance Committee, Permanent Working Group for the Improvement of ICCAT Statistics and Conservation Measures (PWG), and various Working Groups (WGs) (Integrated Monitoring and Control Measures, Integrated and Coordinated Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Management Strategies, to Review Statistical Monitoring Programs). Secretariat (Executive Secretary).</p>	<p>Scientific Regime</p> <p>Small permanent scientific staff. SCRS consists of scientists from Contracting Parties & Cooperating non-Contracting Parties, Entity and Fishing Entity (CPCs) mandated to: advise on conservation and management measures; address specific ICCAT requests; meet annually; produce annual report on stock status and research topics serving as scientific basis for ICCAT decisions; coordinate national research activities; and develop plans for cooperative research programs. SCRS has sub-Committees on Statistics, Bycatch and Environment; Species Groups and WGs: (e.g. Stock Assessment Methods, Joint GFCM-ICCAT on Large Pelagic Fishes in the Mediterranean; on SCRS Organization). Relies on CPCs for fishery dependent data.</p>
	The Fishery EA and PA	<p>Key Species and Gear</p> <p>About 30 key highly migratory fish stocks including: yellowfin, bigeye, albacore (North and South Atlantic, Mediterranean stocks), skipjack tuna, bonito, Atlantic bluefin tuna (East and West Atlantic stocks), swordfish (North and South Atlantic, Mediterranean), blue marlin and white marlin, shortfin mako, blue shark, porbeagle.</p> <p>Gear: Purse seine (36%), and longline (30%) major gears. The use of airplanes or helicopters supporting bluefin fishing operations in Mediterranean is prohibited. Since 1999, seasonal moratoria on FADs in Gulf of Guinea. Use of driftnets for large pelagic fisheries in mediterranean prohibited.</p>	<p>Stock Status</p> <p>Above F_{MSY} (overfishing): North Atlantic albacore, West Atlantic bluefin, blue marlin, white marlin, North Atlantic swordfish. Below or near F_{MSY}: Southern albacore, yellowfin. Above or near B_{MSY}: Yellowfin, bigeye, South Atlantic albacore North and South Atlantic blue shark. Below B_{MSY} (overfished): North Atlantic albacore, West Atlantic bluefin, blue marlin, white marlin, North Atlantic swordfish. Under Recovery Plan: Western Atlantic bluefin tuna (by 2018); North Atlantic swordfish (by 2009); blue marlin and white marlin: (by 2006). Uncertain: Skipjack, East Atlantic bluefin, sailfish, South Atlantic swordfish, Mediterranean swordfish, Mediterranean albacore (never assessed), North Atlantic shortfin mako, small tunas (never assessed).</p>	<p>Bycatch</p> <p>Seabirds, turtles, sharks, juveniles of target species. Bycatch sub-Committee meets yearly and 2005 Tropical Species Workshop planned to evaluate alternative to minimum size to reduce juvenile tuna bycatch. Minimum size and time/area closure Recommendations for several species (yellowfin, bigeye, bluefin, and swordfish). ICCAT encourages submission of bycatch and interaction statistics as well as development of NPOAs for sharks and seabirds.</p>	<p>Ecosystem Approach (EA)</p> <p>ICCAT has not specifically addressed ecosystem management. SCRS has Sub-Committees on By-catch and the Environment. Information on multi-species catch (including by-catch) and environmental conditions are incorporated into its stock assessments.</p>
Participation	<p>Members / Contracting Parties</p> <p>Algeria, Angola, Barbados, Brazil, Canada, Cape Verde, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Equatorial Guinea, EC, France (St. Pierre and Miquelon), Gabon, <i>Ghana</i>, Guatemala, Guinea Conakry, Honduras, Iceland, Japan, Republic of Korea, Libya, <i>Mexico, Morocco, Namibia</i>, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Philippines, Russian Federation, Senegal, Sao Tomé and Príncipe, South Africa, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, United Kingdom (Overseas Territories), USA, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela (40 members from 5 continents).</p>	<p>Cooperating Non-Members</p> <p>Created special status known as Cooperating Non-Contracting Party, Entity or Fishing Entity i.e., Non-Contracting Cooperating Party (NCC): Guyana, Netherlands Antilles, and Chinese Taipei.</p> <p>Bold: UNFA <i>Italics:</i> FAO Compliance Agreement</p>	<p>Membership</p> <p>Membership in ICCAT is open to any State which is a member of the UN, specialized UN agency and through 1984 Paris Protocol (in force 1997) includes REIOs (i.e. EC). In 1994 established Cooperating Non-Contracting Party Status: revised in 1997 to be NCC (to include Chinese Taipei). Annually, ICCAT contacts all NCPs fishing species under ICCAT competence in Area to urge them to become a new member or NCC. Since 1995, 21 new members have joined ICCAT.</p>	<p>Participation Criteria</p> <p>CPs vote and contribute to budget. The revised contribution formula in force as of March 2005 reflects economic development status of CPs and will apply to 2006 budget. Flag States to maintain vessel records, control those authorized to fish in Area and ensure compliance with ICCAT measures. CPCs are entitled to allocations under 2001 ICCAT Allocation of Fishing Possibilities using historical catch as main criterion. (Group of 16 LDCs are seeking access to tuna stocks in their EEZs based on adjacency.) ICCAT controls access and fishing capacity by: TACs: quotas; and, vessel effort limitations.</p>	<p>Transparency</p> <p>Publicly accessible website. Meeting minutes and background papers are available on line. IGOs and NGOs can attend meetings (with 50 days prior notice) unless 1/3 of members object in writing 30 days prior to meeting. NGOs may make oral statements by invitation and distribute documents through Secretariat. Atlantic coastal State NCPs in Area may attend meetings as observers. There is a participation fee for all observers.</p>
Monitoring, Control and Surveillance	<p>Data Collecting and Reporting</p> <p>Scientific data (primarily fishery -dependent) are collected by CPCs. SCRS relies on CPCs to submit current and complete data by July 31 prior to annual meeting. Data submitted to the SCRS must be separated into 2 groups: Task I (annual catch by gear, region and flag) and Task II (catch and fishing effort statistics for each species by small area). SCRS advice is based on these data. Partial, late (or no) data are often submitted (without penalty), compromising stock assessments and scientific advice. Tagging data are used for growth rate, movement and abundance estimates. 1999 Resolution calls for provision of recreational fishery data. Standardized National Reports, and therefore ICCAT Reporting Tables (used by the Compliance Committee) are to be submitted 1 month prior to annual meeting. Data in ICCAT Reporting Table (for monitoring) may differ from Task I data (scientific). Compliance Committee decisions are based on ICCAT Reporting Tables.</p>	<p>Observer Program</p> <p>No regional Observer Program. 2003 Ad Hoc Data Workshop concluded comprehensive at-sea observer data is essential. Observer Program (and associated data) coverage since 1996 has ranged from nil to 100% depending on CPC.</p>	<p>Vessel Monitoring System (VMS)</p> <p>2003 Recommendation calling for CPCs to implement VMS no later than July 1, 2005 for commercial fishing vessels > 24 m has been extended to November 1, 2005. VMS data, when available, to be transmitted to flag State and then to ICCAT.</p>	<p>Enforcement</p> <p>Convention obliges CPCs to establish high seas international enforcement system; currently, there is no at-sea boarding or inspection. PWG monitors activities of NCPs and NCCs. Compliance Committee considers non-compliance by CPs. Quota overruns subject to "payback plans" or quota-trading. Transshipment Recommendation to be further discussed in 2005. 1997 Port Inspection Scheme provides for inspections of flag and non-flag State vessels during off-loading and in-port transshipment. Not all CPCs implement Scheme. In 1999, established list of vessels believed to be IUU. Established in 2002 "positive" List of authorized fishing vessels building on 1998 and 2000 Recommendations. Vessels not recorded are deemed not authorized to fish, transship or land tuna or tuna-like species.</p> <p>CPCs are to enforce compliance through domestic measures prohibiting landing or transshipment from unauthorized vessels. In cases of violation, report sent to flag State for follow-up action. Flag States failing to comply with ICCAT measures may be subject to trade restrictions and/or having vessel registrations revoked.</p>	<p>Catch and Trade Documentation</p> <p>ICCAT was first RFMO to introduce Statistical Documentation Program (SDP) in 1994 for Atlantic bluefin, then extended to swordfish and bigeye. ICCAT now implements multi-lateral, transparent trade measures against parties undermining effectiveness of conservation measures. 2003 Resolution Concerning Trade Measures replaced 1994 Bluefin Tuna Action Plan, 1995 Swordfish Action Plan and 1998 UU Catches Resolution to include CPCs and NCPs.</p>
Other Governance Efforts and Challenges	<p>Decision Making</p> <p>Many decisions are made by consensus. Resolutions are non-binding. Binding Recommendations are adopted by a simple majority vote with a quorum of 2/3 of CPs, and enter into force 6 months later. Each CP has 1 vote. Voting rights may be suspended if CP is in arrears for 2 years or more (voting rights have never been suspended, though many are in arrears). In 2004, requested CPs in arrears to present payment plan before 2005 annual meeting. There is a detailed objection procedure. CPs are not bound by Recommendations to which they have registered an objection. Recommendations adopted by ICCAT apply throughout Area (implemented domestically by CPCs for fishing inside and outside their EEZs).</p>	<p>Dispute Settlement Mechanism</p> <p>No mechanism exists at this time.</p>	<p>Cooperative Efforts</p> <p>Consistent with Article XI of Convention, ICCAT cooperates with FAO (e.g., partner in FIRMS, endorsed IPOAs & Compliance Agreement, and is a member of CWP); and, coordinates and exchanges data with other organizations (e.g., Joint GFCM-ICCAT Ad Hoc Working Group on Large Pelagic Fishes in the Mediterranean; SBT management with CCSBT; seabird bycatch with CCAMLR, shark data collection and assessment with ICES). Secretariat : works closely and meets annually with other tuna RFMOs; participates in RFB biennial meetings; is leading efforts to establish global vessel register for tuna RFMOs; is meeting with NEAFC, CCAMLR and NAFO to develop common VMS messaging (NAF); hosts workshops (e.g. 2004 Bigeye tuna review, and in 2005 Reduced Mortality of Juvenile Tuna);and, assists CPCs meet data collection, quality assurance and reporting obligations.</p>	<p>Efforts to Strengthen RFMO</p> <p>Amended Convention to include REIOs. Created CPC Status to include Chinese Taipei and other NCPs. Increased ICCAT membership of many former NCPs fishing in Area. Adopted in 2001 Criteria for Allocation of Fishing Possibilities (first RFMO) to address new entrants and limit capacity. Pioneered use of SDP and continual refinement of trade measures to address non-compliance of vessels undermining conservation regime. Established List of vessels permitted to fish; and List of IUU fishing vessels. Implemented time-area closures throughout Area. Established rebuilding plans for key species (e.g. North Atlantic swordfish, West Atlantic bluefin, and marlin). Strengthened CPC data reporting requirements. Increased transparency at Commission meetings. Reformed budget contribution formula with Madrid Protocol. Established special fund to provide capacity building as needed.</p>	<p>Challenges</p> <p>Avoiding overfishing and preventing further decline of target species. Rebuilding overfished and depleted stocks. Controlling IUU fishing. Strengthening data quality and collection. Reducing bycatch. Managing access and allocation expectations of large membership. Setting PA limits, given data inadequacies, IUU fishing and status of many key stocks. Addressing allocation and redistribution issues of Group of 16. Amending objection procedure. Increasing MCS by Atlantic coastal States within EEZs. Increasing NCP coastal State participation in ICCAT. Controlling transshipments. Addressing gear issues. Strengthening port State inspection scheme. Increasing and standardizing observer coverage throughout Area. Standardizing and integrating catch and trade measures with other RMFOs, port States and CPCs. Ensuring payment of budget contributions.</p>