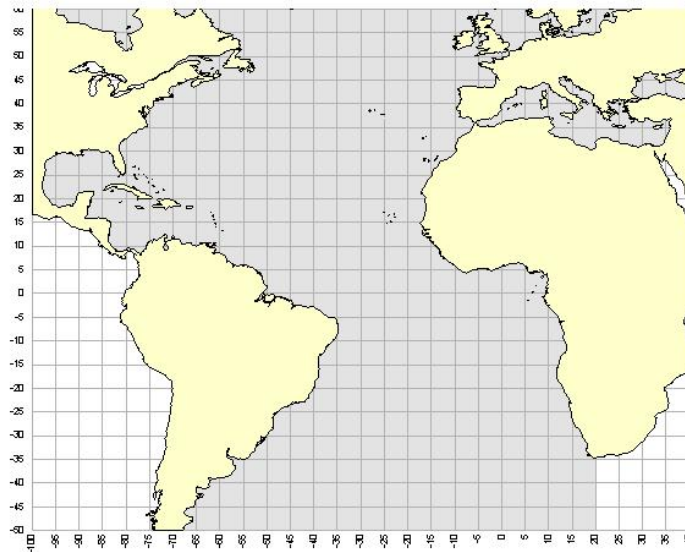


The International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas

The International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) was established in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1966, and entered into force in 1969.

ICCAT is an inter-governmental fishery organization responsible for the conservation of highly migratory species including tuna and tuna-like species (billfish, mackerels, etc.) as well as species caught as bycatch in tuna fisheries such as sharks and sea turtles. ICCAT's jurisdiction is over the Atlantic Ocean and adjacent waters such as the Gulf of Mexico and Mediterranean Sea.

ICCAT Convention Area¹



Since its introduction, ICCAT has grown to 48 member states. Any country that is a member of the United Nations can become a party to the Commission, but generally members are countries that fish in ICCAT waters.

International management of highly migratory species is vital because overfishing in one location can have detrimental effects on stocks globally. It is ICCAT's responsibility to ensure Atlantic highly migratory fish species are fished at sustainable levels. However, ICCAT has come under scrutiny in recent years based on claims that the Commission has ignored scientific advice and has not properly managed the species under its competencies.

¹ICCAT webpage. <http://www.iccat.int/en/convarea.htm>. Retrieved 10/26/2010.