



The Species Survival Network (SSN) Working Group is pleased to provide to you the summer 2018 issue of SSN Sharks, a publication regarding the sharks, rays, and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).



INTRODUCTION

CITES adds sharks and rays to Appendix II at CoP17

The 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES (CoP17), which [concluded on 4 October 2016](#) where approved proposals to add silky sharks (*Carcharhinus falciformis*), thresher sharks (*Alopias* spp.) and devil rays (*Mobula* spp.) to CITES [Appendix II](#). An Appendix II listing is not an outright prohibition on trade, but export of any Appendix II specimen requires a non-detriment finding – a finding from a CITES Scientific Authority, or an introduction from the sea certificate as needed, that such export will not be detrimental to the survival of the species in the wild – and a certification from the Management Authority that the specimen was not unlawfully obtained. The Parties agreed to a [six-month delay](#) in the implementation of the *Mobula* listing (delaying its entry into force until 4 April 2017), and a twelve-month delay for the two shark listings (which will not enter into force until 4 October 2017).

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1. CITES Notifications of Interest

No. [2016/062](#) notifying the Parties of [Palau's 23 September 2016 withdrawal](#) of its reservations against the inclusion of *Carcharodon carcharias* (great white shark) and *Rhincodon typus* (whale shark) in Appendix II.

No. [2017/029](#) [denying the reservations submitted](#) by Guyana against the inclusion of silky and thresher sharks on the grounds that the reservations were submitted after the 2 January 2017 deadline and were therefore not acceptable.

No. [2017/030](#) confirming that the [inclusion of devil rays into Appendix II](#) came into effect on 4 April 2017, following the agreed-upon delay period of six months.

No. [2017/031](#) [requesting latest information](#) on shark and ray conservation and management activities, including legislation. Parties are requested to submit information by 19 May 2017 for consideration by the Animals Committee meeting, which begins 18 July 2017.

No. [2017/040](#) regarding submitting an [annual illegal trade report](#) by the 31 October 2017 deadline. [Guidelines](#) for the preparation and submission of the report are appended to the Notification.

REGULATORY NEWS

COSTA RICA

INCOPESCA given increased authority to regulate shark trade.

An [executive order was signed on 10 May 2017](#) giving the Costa Rican fisheries and Aquaculture Institute (INCOPESCA) greater authority in regulating the trade of endangered fish species. INCOPESCA will now perform the functions necessary in order to comply with CITES Appendix II permitting requirements for marine species, previously assigned to both the Costa Rica CITES Scientific and the Management Authorities. INCOPESCA will be responsible for communicating to the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock whether shark fins will be permitted into the international trade market. [Conservation groups have criticized President Solís' decree](#), asserting that it undermines the country's Council of Representatives of Scientific Authorities, the scientific council established to ensure that exports are science-based and comply with CITES requirements.

UNITED STATES

Marine species added to Endangered Species Act.

A 2 November 2016 final rule by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) [added several marine species](#), including the Nassau grouper (*Epinephelus striatus*) and three angel shark species (*Squatina aculeata*, *S. oculata*, and *S. squatina*), to the list of Endangered and Threatened Species under the U.S. Endangered Species Act.

The [Shark Fin Sales Elimination Act of 2017](#) (H.R. 1456; S. 793) was introduced in the House of Representatives on 9 March 2017 by U.S. Representative Edward Royce (R-Calif.), in an effort to prohibit the domestic trade of products containing any amount of shark fin except under certain circumstances. If the House of Representatives votes in favor of the Bill this summer, it will be passed to the Senate for debate and vote.

NATIONAL NEWS

CANADA

Canada takes steps toward shark fin import ban.

On 10 April 2017, a Canadian senator announced his intention to introduce a [senate bill to ban import of shark fin](#). On 27 April 2017 Toronto, the country's largest city, endorsed the [senator's ban](#).

CHINA

Major Hong Kong airline bans shark fin shipments

Following the precedent-setting [May 2016 ban on shark fin cargo](#) by Hong Kong-based airline, HK Express, Air China Cargo has become the [first Chinese mainland carrier to ban the transport of shark fin](#). Air China Cargo is one of only [four](#) Chinese airlines to have recently banned shark fin shipments.

2. Dates of Interest

24-28 July 2017: [92nd meeting of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission](#) (IATTC), Mexico City, Mexico

23-28 October 2017: 12th meeting of the [Conference of the Parties](#) to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS CoP12), Manila, Philippines

13-21 November 2017: [Regular meeting of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas](#) (ICCAT), Marrakech, Morocco

3-8 December 2017: [14th Regular Session](#) of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), Philippines

INDIA

Indian Scientific Authority reverses decision; permits Appendix II trade.

The Central Marine Fisheries Research Institution (CMFRI), which is the Indian CITES Scientific Authority, [has reversed](#) an earlier decision to ban shark and ray exports by permitting the trade of five shark species and two ray species, all of which are listed under Appendix II of CITES.

SINGAPORE

Singapore listed second in shark fin trade.

A [May 2017 report by TRAFFIC](#) indicated Singapore is the world's second-leading importer and exporter of shark fins, behind Hong Kong.

SOUTH AFRICA

Study finds trouble for the great white shark.

A [six-year study](#) conducted by Stellenbosch University concluded that there were as few as 353 individuals remaining of the South African great white shark population as of July 2016. The study cited pollution, habitat encroachment, and poaching, *inter alia*, as reasons for the drastic decline.

COSTA RICA

Breakthroughs and issues for Costa Rican enforcement.

Since January 2017, a Costa Rican exporter, Smalley Development S.A., is seeking to obtain an export permit from the Costa Rican Management and Scientific Authorities in order to fill a [controversial order from an Asia-based buyer for 690 kilograms of hammerhead shark fins](#), despite a 2015 national ban on such exports.

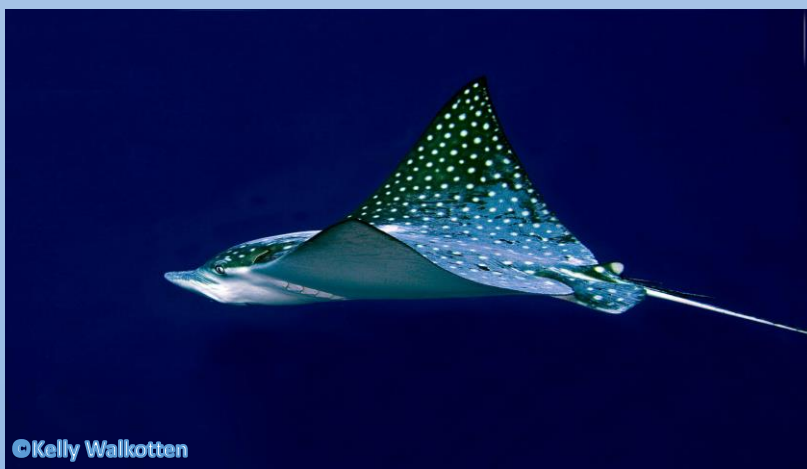
Costa Rica recorded its [first shark finning conviction](#) in February 2017 when the Puntarenas Criminal Court sentenced a Taiwanese-born businesswoman to six months in prison for a ship haul containing 652 shark fins and 151 shark spines for the purpose of international sale.

Costa Rican environmental authorities confiscated ninety-six sharks from a ship found fishing in protected areas on 20 March 2017 in what was the [biggest seizure of illegally-taken marine wildlife in Isla del Coco National Park since 2007](#). Only three of the confiscated sharks were still alive at the time of the seizure.

TURKEY

Public outrage as fishermen attempt to trade thirty giant devil rays.

According to a report dated 15 March 2017, outraged conservation groups are demanding answers after [thirty giant devil rays](#) (*Mobula mobular*) were recently landed in the Turkish port of Izmir. All nine species of devil ray were listed under Appendix II of CITES in 2016, although the listing had not yet entered into force at the time the rays were landed in Izmir. The rays are also listed on Appendices I and II of the Convention on Migratory Species. Although the fishermen did not expect to capture the rays, they did intend to export the meat to Greece in contravention of a 2012 prohibition against landing and selling the species by the General Fisheries Committee of the Mediterranean.



3. 2017-2018 CITES Calendar

18-22 July: 29th [meeting](#) of the Animals Committee (AC29), Geneva, Switzerland

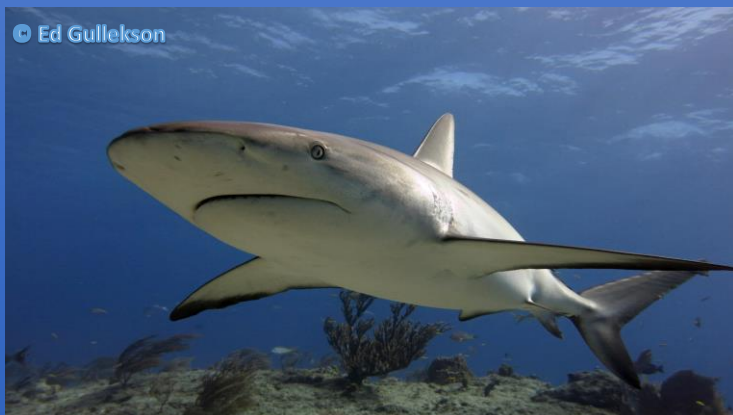
28 September 2017: Deadline for submission of documents for the 69th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC69)

27 November-1 December 2017: 69th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC69), Geneva, Switzerland

UNITED STATES

Study finds that voters support nationwide ban in shark fin trade

A [July 2016 poll](#) conducted by Oceana, a non-governmental organization dedicated to the protection of oceans and marine life, found that 81% of registered voters support a nationwide shark fin ban.



INTERNATIONAL NEWS

On 19 May 2017, The European Commission announced a contribution of 2.25 million Euros to the CITES Secretariat to help with the implementation of decisions adopted at CITES CoP17, including 900,000 Euros to support Parties in their marine species capacity building projects. This will allow the CITES Secretariat, in partnership with the FAO, to build upon previous shark and ray capacity-building work conducted from 2013-2016, also with financial support from the EC.

A July 2016 TRAFFIC report monitoring shark fin trade in East Asia suggested that, despite declines in imports, it might not be the case that such declines are necessarily indicative of a drop in trade overall. The report posits that countries neighboring China, such as Vietnam, might serve as a re-routing point for wildlife products in transit to mainland China.

Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) launched an action plan on 17 May 2017, presenting seventeen recommended actions for promoting sustainable trade in what they termed as "priority" shark species, and provided an overview of the species' conservation status. The action plan was announced at the annual meeting of the Trilateral Committee for Wildlife and Ecosystem Conservation and Management between Canada, Mexico, and the United States.



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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Trade Guidance

- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service export permit application form guidance: <https://www.fws.gov/international/permits/by-species/sharks-and-rays.html>
- CITES Secretary-General, John Scanlon, on the fisheries regulatory framework at the multilateral level: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K_UtKmHUDx4&feature=youtu.be&list=PL4m6ro9BgRm-Pe2p6N1D65m8z-JqamBLN

Shark ID Materials

- See published Shark ID Guides for [South America – Atlantic](#); [South America – Pacific](#); [Mexico, Central America and the Pacific](#); [Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean](#).
- CITES additional [identification materials on sharks](#).

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES (CONT.)

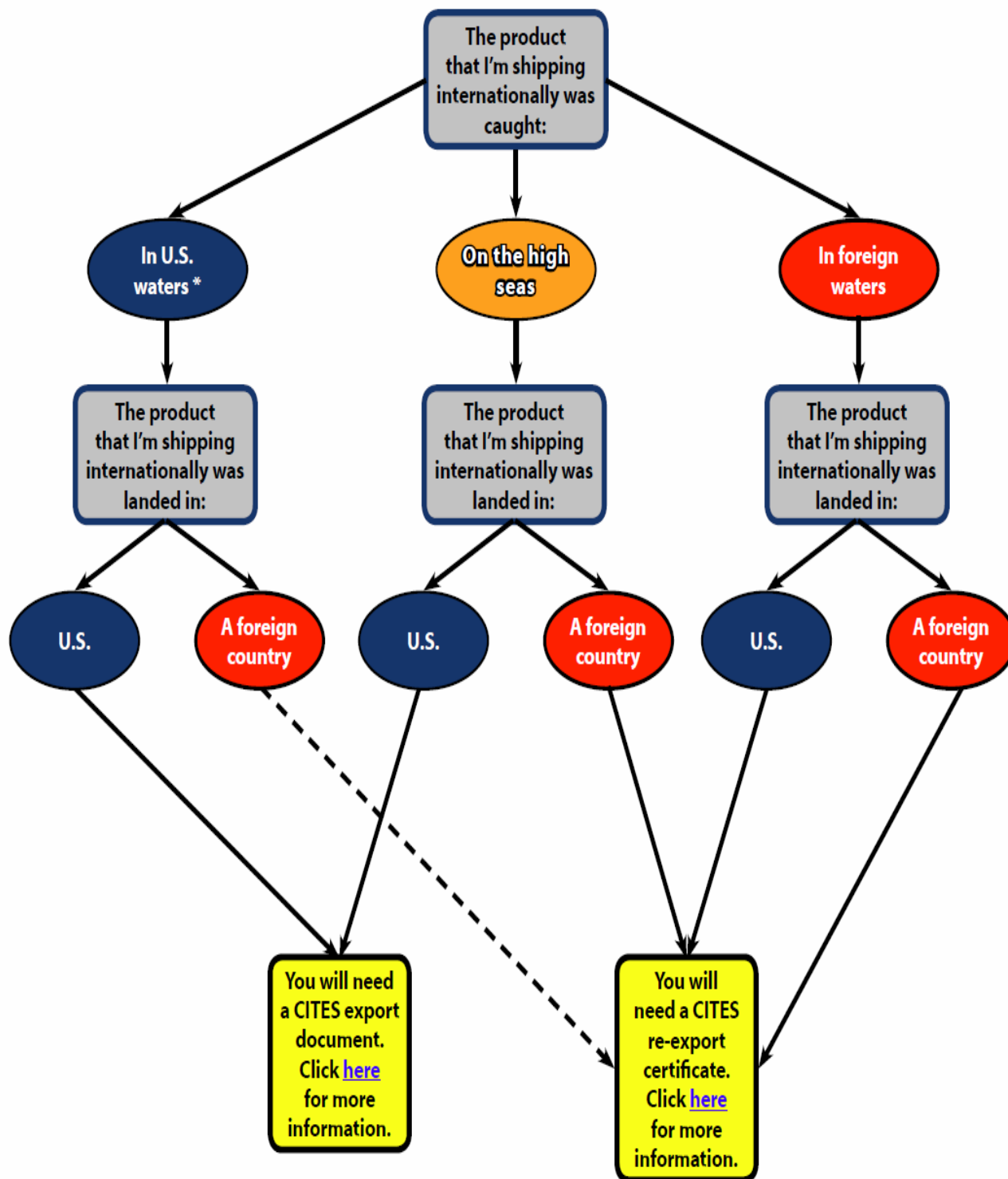


Figure 1. [Infographic](#) illustrating U.S. permitting requirements for exporters pursuant to CITES regulations. Courtesy of U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

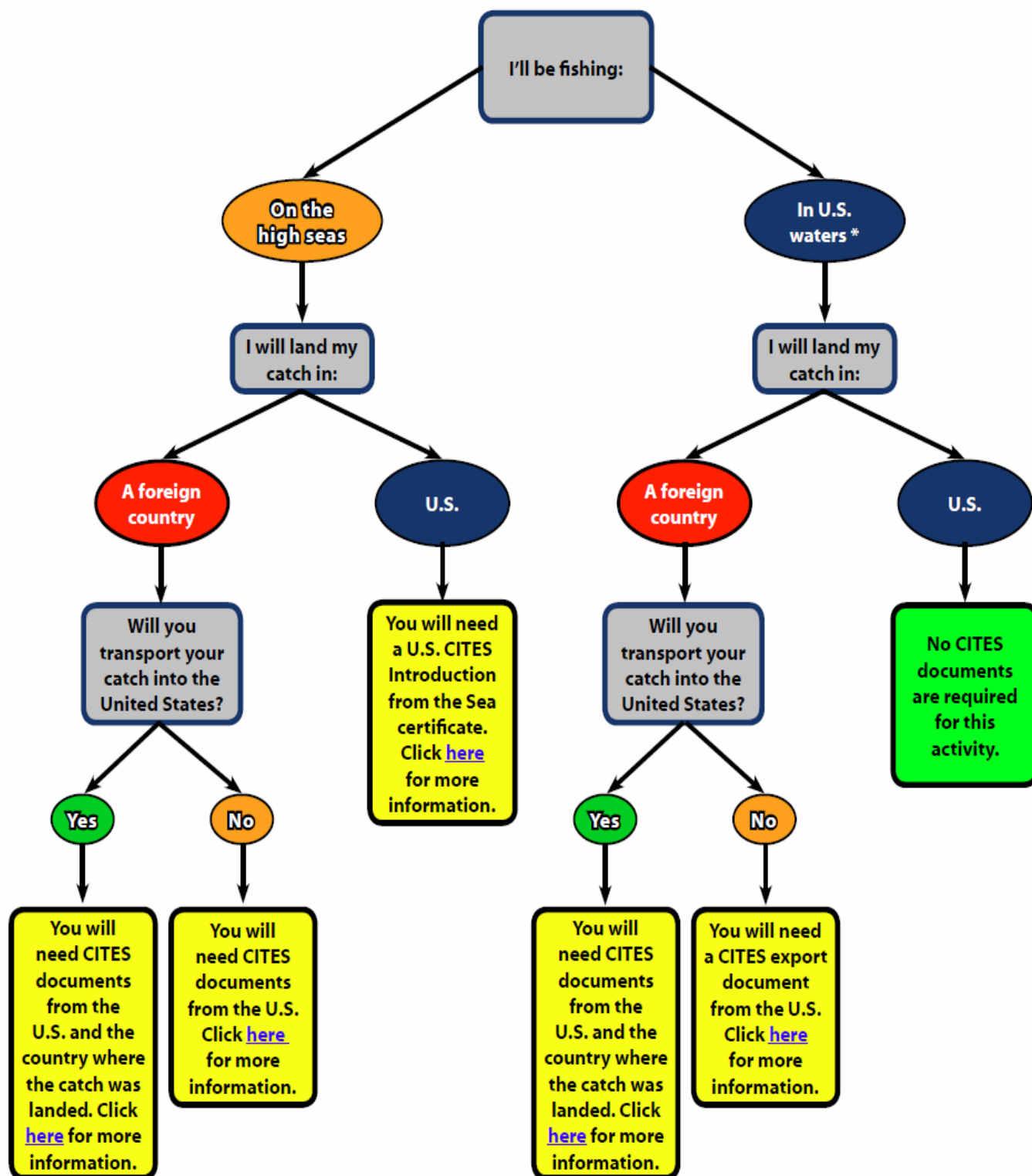


Figure 2. Infographic illustrating U.S. fisher permitting pursuant to CITES regulations. Courtesy of U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.



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USEFUL WEBSITES

[Species Survival Network](#)

[CITES](#)

[CITES Sharks & Manta Rays](#)

[IUCN Red List](#)

[Convention on Migratory Species \(CMS\)](#)

[International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas \(ICCAT\)](#)

[Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission \(IATTC\)](#)

[Indian Ocean Tuna Commission \(IOTC\)](#)

[Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission \(WCPFC\)](#)

[Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna \(CCSBT\)](#)