

Atlantic Tunas Convention Act of 1975

Agencies: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Department of State, and U.S. Coast Guard

Citation: [16 U.S.C. §§ 971 et seq.](#)

Enacted as: the “Atlantic Tunas Convention Act of 1975”, on August 5, 1975

Summary:

The [Atlantic Tunas Convention Act of 1975 \(ATCA\)](#) authorizes the Secretary of Commerce to administer and enforce all provisions of the [International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas](#) (ICCAT) to which the U.S. is a Party. Every year, the scientific body of ICCAT conducts stock assessments on different species of Atlantic tunas, swordfish, and billfish. Based on the results of the stock assessments, member nations negotiate quotas and other management recommendations for these species. Ideally, the management recommendations rebuild overfished stocks and allow for sustainable fishing of these species across the Atlantic Ocean, including the Mediterranean Sea, the Caribbean Sea, and the Gulf of Mexico.

If ICCAT adopts the recommendations, the United States must implement them under the Atlantic Tunas Convention Act. The Secretary of Commerce is authorized to issue regulations deemed necessary to implement the Convention. However, regulations promulgated under this act are, to the extent practicable, to be consistent with fishery management plans prepared and implemented under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act , as amended.

The Secretary of Commerce cooperates with the duly authorized officials of the government of any party to ICCAT, as well as any other federal department or agency or any state. The Act authorizes the Secretary to use the personnel, services, and facilities of any agency of any party to the convention, any other federal department or agency, or any agency of any state.

In addition, the Secretary is authorized to prohibit the entry into the U.S. of any species subject to regulations recommended by ICCAT and taken from the convention area in a manner that would diminish the effectiveness of ICCAT's conservation efforts. The Secretary may also prohibit the importation of any fish regulated by the convention from a country whose fishing vessels are harvesting in the convention area in a manner that would diminish the effectiveness of ICCAT's recommendations.

Source: http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/intro_HMS.htm and <http://www.cnire.org/nle/crsreports/legislative/leg-11a.cfm>

Information last updated: September 20, 2012