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Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs)

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Fish stocks

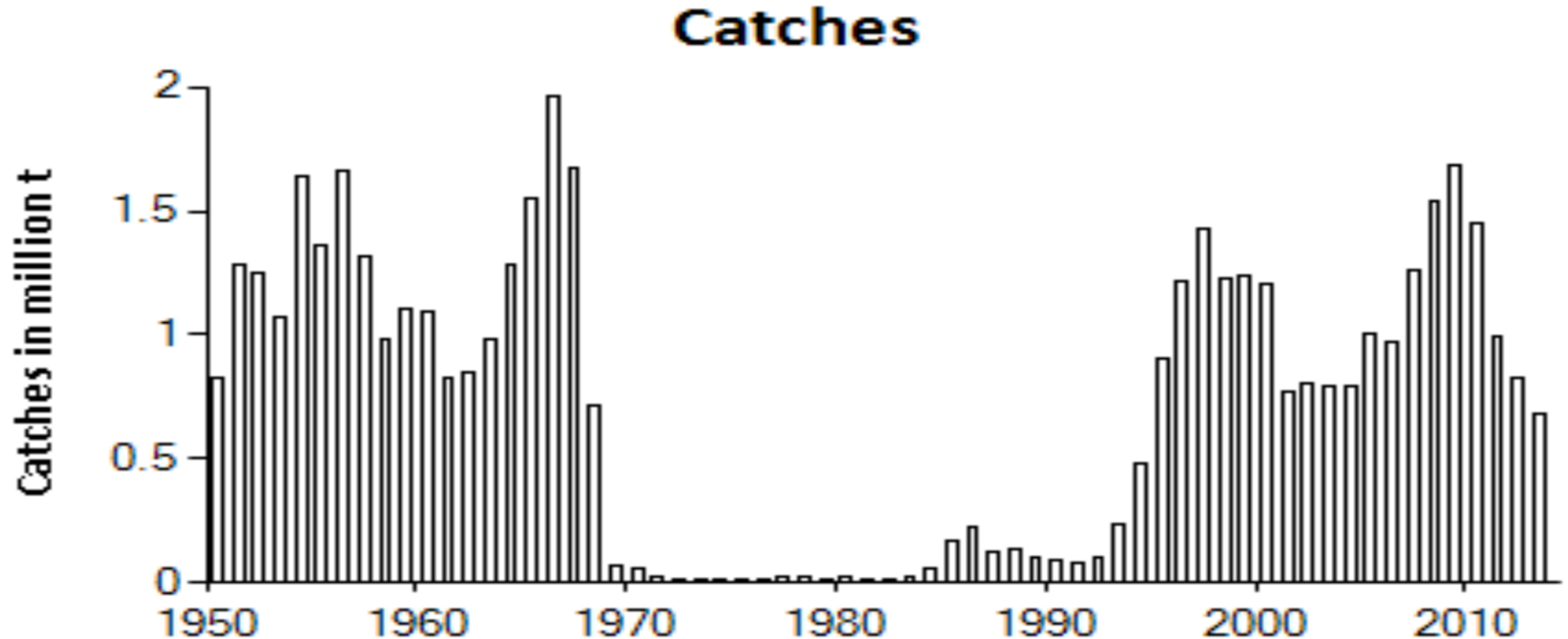
Renewable resources – can be utilized into the long-term future if fishing is managed well.

Can collapse if management fails.

Good management is essential for the users of the resources.

Catches of Norwegian Spring Spawning (Atlanto Scandian) herring from 1950

her-noss 2014 5417 2014929092041



Freedom of the High Seas

The freedom to engage in fishing on the high seas is not absolute. It is explicitly and clearly limited in international law.

Law of the Sea

The duty to cooperate in the conservation and management of living marine resources is a legal obligation for all States.

Law of the Sea

The right to fish on the high seas is subject to, inter alia:

- Duty to set conservation measures on the best scientific evidence available
- Duty to cooperate with relevant coastal States and with States utilising the same resources or different living resources in the same area

Cooperation of States in the conservation and management of living resources

UNCLOS Article 118

States shall cooperate with each other in the conservation and management of living resources in the areas of the high seas. ... They shall, as appropriate, cooperate to establish subregional or regional fisheries organizations to this end.

Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs)

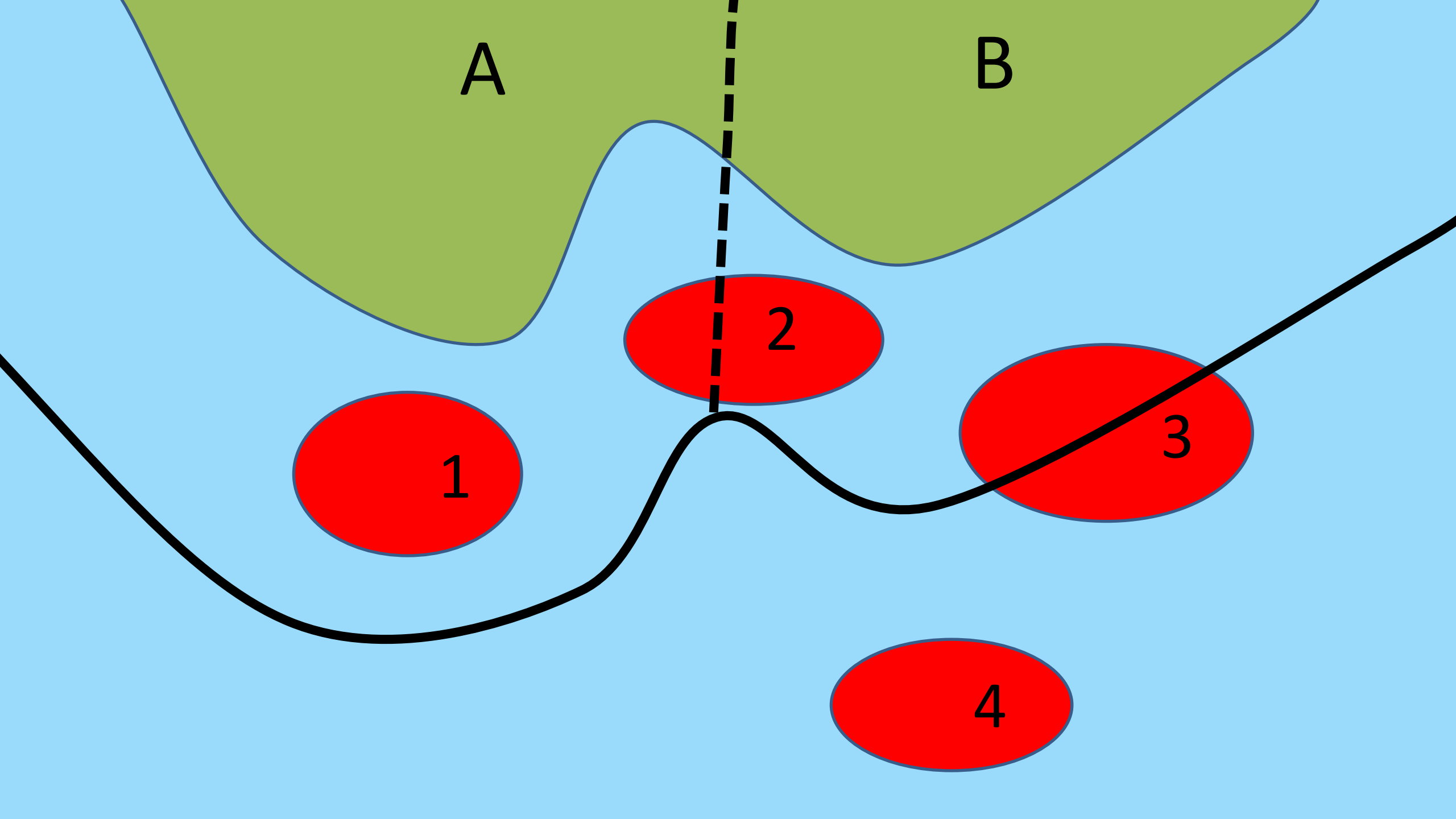
Very solid legal basis to set conservation and management measures which are directly legally binding for the RFMO's Contracting Parties and for all Parties to UNFSA, and directly legally relevant for all States.

All States have a duty to cooperate in managing fisheries.

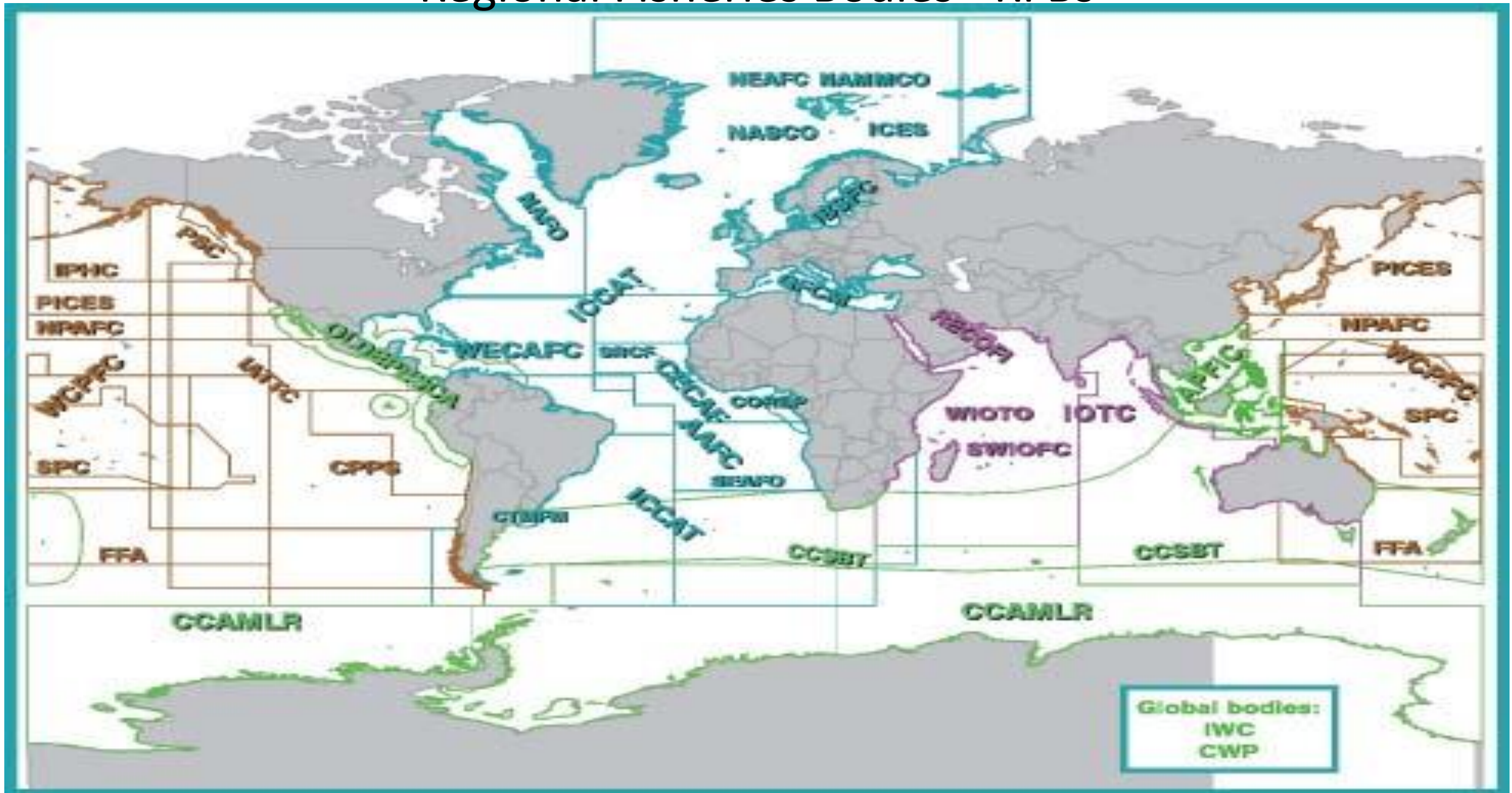
Exclusive Economic Zone – 200 nm from baselines

In its EEZ, the coastal State has:
sovereign rights for the purpose of exploring and
exploiting, conserving and managing the natural resources,
whether living or non-living

Membership of an RFMO does not affect this exclusive right of the coastal State. Others have no right to access waters under the coastal State's jurisdiction without explicit permission, which only the coastal State can issue.



Regional Fisheries Bodies - RFBs



RFMOs

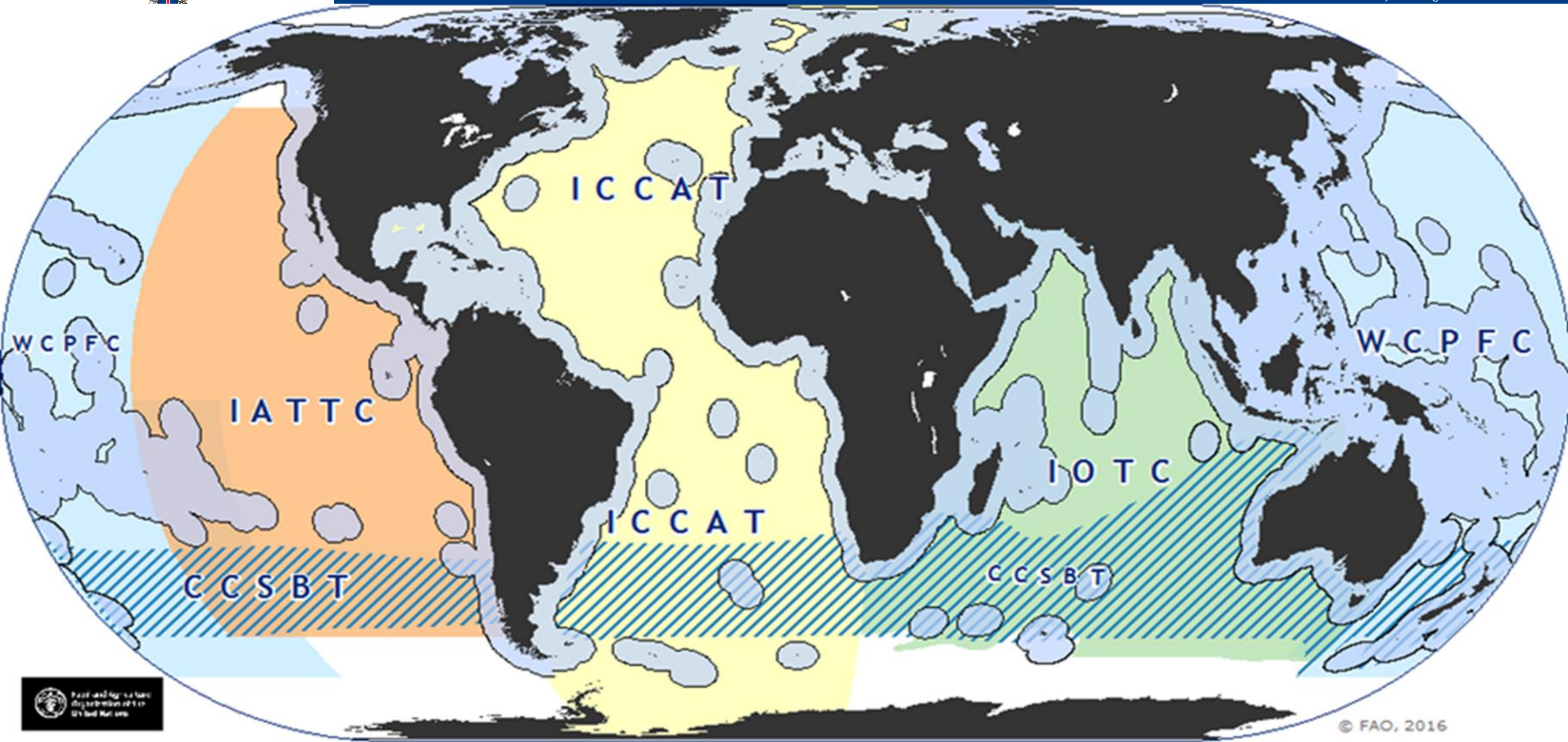
Three different types:

- Generic RFMOs
- Tuna RFMOs
- Specialised RFMOs



Tuna RFMOs

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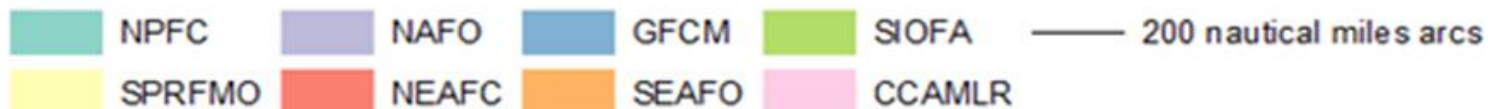
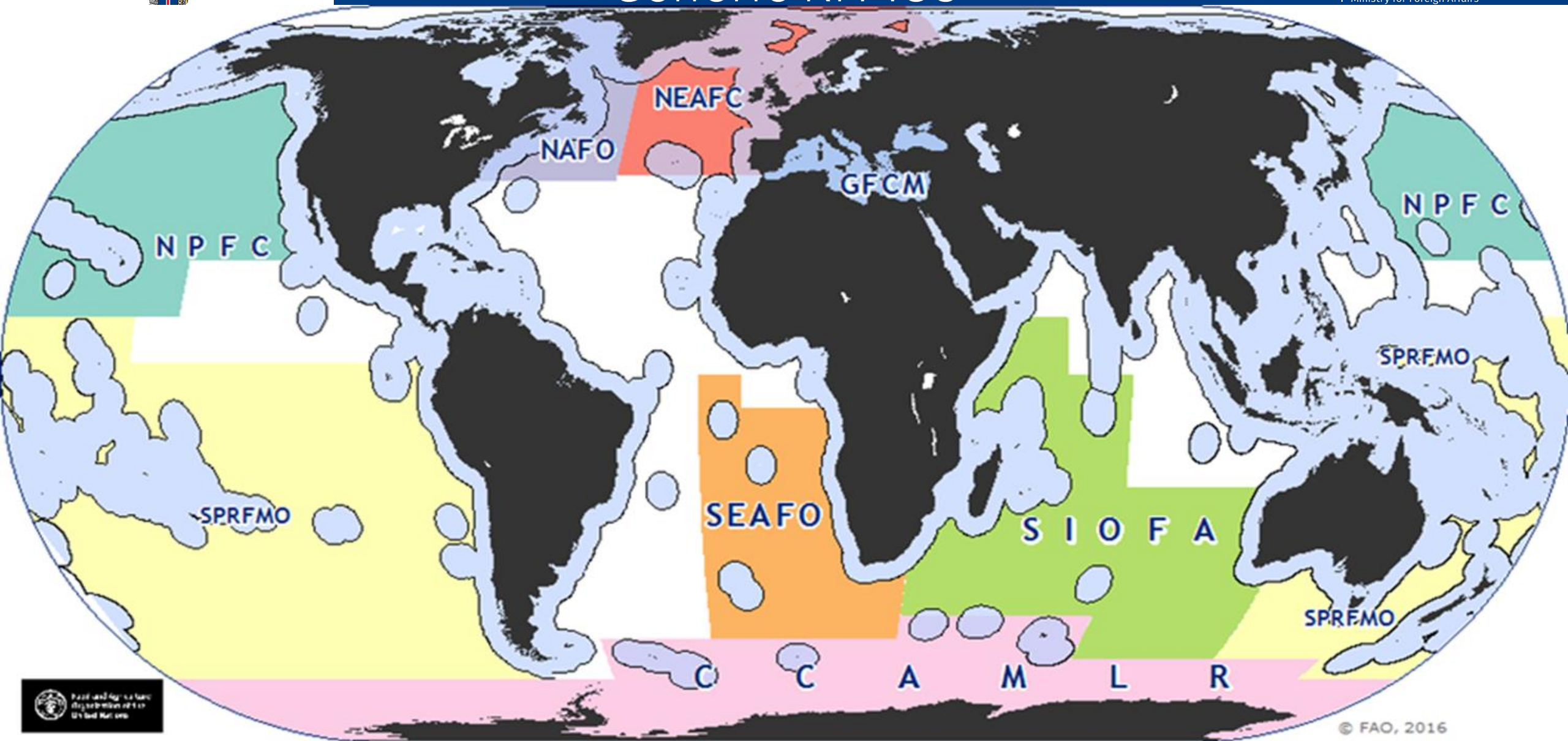
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CCSBT ICCAT WCPFC 200 nautical miles arcs
IOTC IATTC



Generic RFMOs

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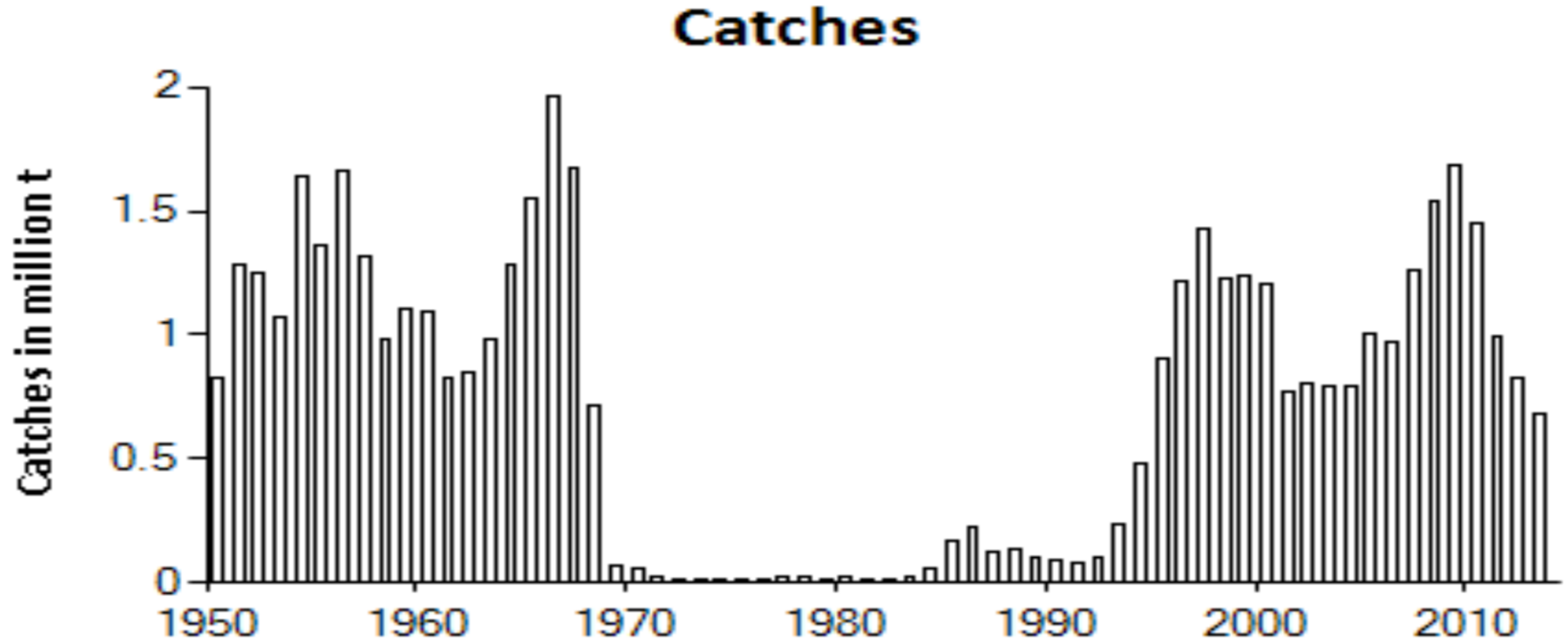
Why RFMOs?

To fulfil legal obligations

- The duty to cooperate in the conservation and management of living marine resources is a legal obligation for all States
- Condition for participating in high seas fisheries
- Freedom to fish in the high seas is limited

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Core function of RFMOs

Providing a forum for States to fulfil their legal obligation regarding issues such as the duty to cooperate and the duty to conserve the living marine resources:

- Sustainable utilisation – conservation to ensure continued fishing
- Compatibility of measures between areas under national jurisdiction and the high seas
- Coastal States maintain control over areas under their national jurisdiction – including control over access

Core activities of RFMOs

Managing fisheries:

- Establishment of conservation and management measures
- Monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) and enforcement – including the fight against IUU fishing
- Scientific work
- Minimising negative impact of fisheries on other parts of the marine ecosystem

How RFMOs function

No two RFMOs function exactly the same.

No RFMO is perfect.

Great variability in size, level of activity, decision making processes, etc.

However, no other type of organisation has the legal basis or substantive expertise to address the issues RFMOs handle – the international legal and institutional framework is set up for RFMOs. Other organisations trying to step into some of the roles of RFMOs would likely cause many problems, without resolving any.

Development of RFMOs

Since the 1990 – an increase in the number of RFMOs.

Existing RFMOs have been strengthened.

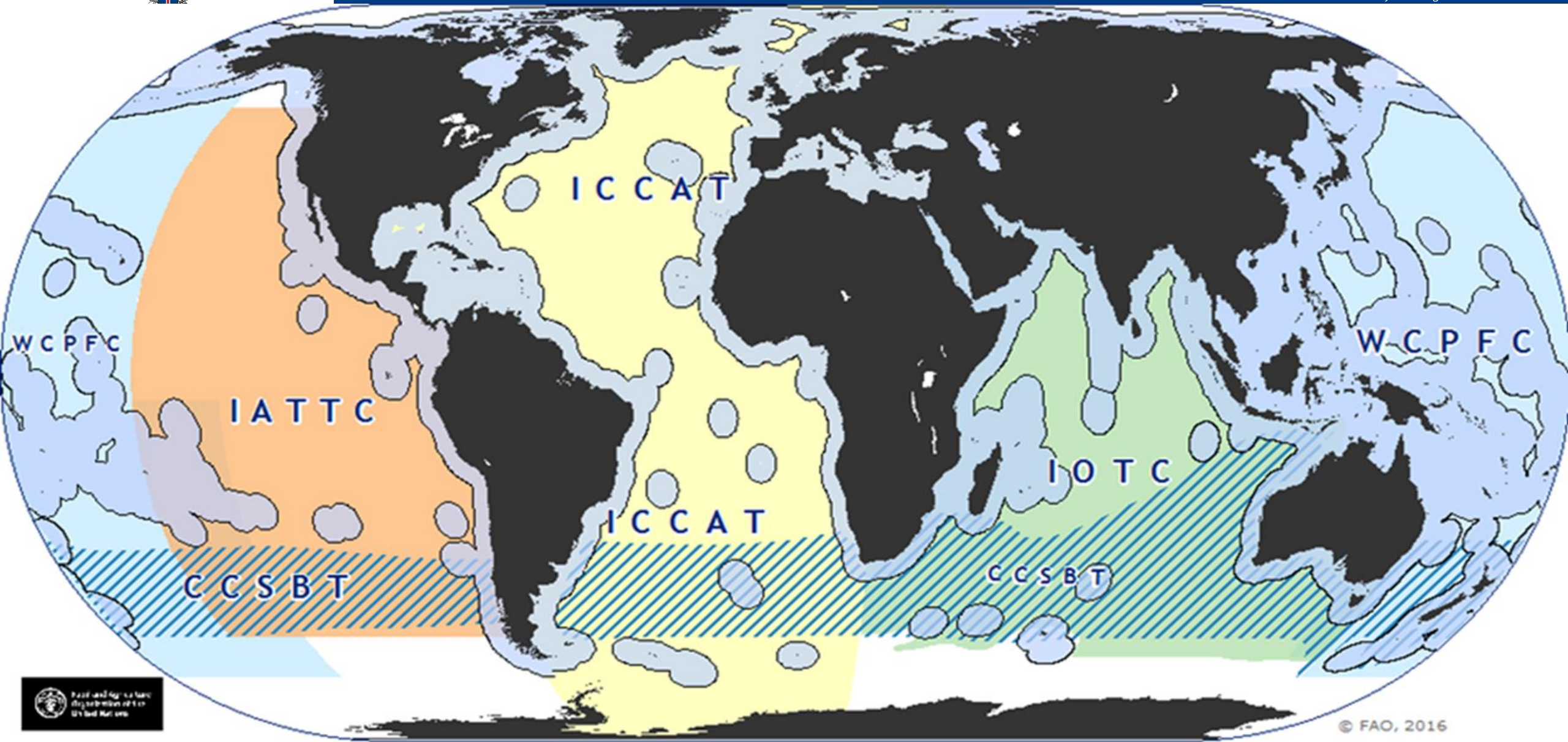
RFMOs are dealing with a number of issues they did not address very actively before, such as biodiversity and vulnerable marine ecosystems.

RFMOs remain focused on ensuring that fisheries continue in a sustainable manner – ensuring continuing benefits for fishing communities.



Tuna RFMOs

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CCSBT ICCAT WCPFC — 200 nautical miles arcs
IOTC IATTC



NPFC NAFO GFCM SIOFA — 200 nautical miles arcs
SPRFMO NEAFC SEAFO CCAMLR