



# The SSC Strategic Plan: Our Aims

1. To encourage business **commitments** to the SSC Codes of Conduct.
2. To continually review and **update** the SSC Codes of Conduct to reflect developments in sourcing and labelling practices.
3. To support members to effectively **implement** their commitments to the SSC Codes of Conduct.
4. To influence changes in **policy** relevant to seafood sustainability.



# The SSC Strategic Plan: Collaboration

“The SSC will **collaborate with other initiatives** to **avoid duplication of effort** and to **promote alignment** in the global sustainable seafood movement.”

“The SSC... will **draw on the expertise of external organisations** to minimise duplication and maximise the impact of policy reform.”

“Where the SSC finds alignment with the external organisations it will defer to external expertise and **coordinate any joint advocacy activity** accordingly.”



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# The SSC Strategic Plan: Planned Activities

## Output 4.1:

“Members are **informed** and **equipped** to engage in relevant advocacy activities.”

## Activity:

“Members are invited to a **webinar** on the **High Seas Treaty** and given the **opportunity to sign-on** to relevant advocacy interventions, in collaboration with Pew and the GTA.”



**ClientEarth**



# The GTA and the BBNJ

Dr Tom Pickerell  
Global Tuna Alliance

✉ [tom@globaltunaalliance.com](mailto:tom@globaltunaalliance.com)

🐦 @GlobalTuna

*Graphics By PresentationGO.com*



# The Global Tuna Alliance



# Scale of Global Tuna Alliance Partners



# GTA 5-Year Strategy



Work Programme	Programme Aim	Outputs	Outcomes	KPIs
Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ)	To complement and strengthen the existing high seas governance framework by filling geographic, legal and taxonomic gaps; with a particular focus on spatial management and the ecosystem-impacts of commercial fishing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GTA Partners urge policy-makers to ensure that the high-seas negotiations result in a robust global treaty which accounts for the shortcomings of the existing management system, including spatial governance gaps in the high-seas (e.g., SW Atlantic or E. Indian Oceans), as well as taxonomic gaps, in terms of assigning responsibilities for monitoring and managing global high-seas biodiversity.</li> <li>GTA Partners encourage policy-makers at the BBNJ negotiations to call for all human activities in the high-seas, in particular those extractive in nature, to be observed via human or electronic observers and monitoring systems, in order to continue filling the significant knowledge void on the distribution and impacts of human activities in the high-seas and its biodiversity.</li> </ul>	High-seas negotiations result in a robust global treaty which accounts for the shortcomings of the existing management system, including spatial governance gaps in the high-seas (e.g., SW Atlantic or E. Indian Oceans), as well as taxonomic gaps, in terms of assigning responsibilities for monitoring and managing global high-seas biodiversity.	GTA demonstrably advocates for a high-seas treaty that address the current biodiversity and climate challenges beyond national jurisdiction.



# What does this mean?



01

GTA will support advocacy efforts initiated by others

02

Hence relationship with Pew and Stockholm Resilience Centre

03

These webinars will introduce this topic to Partners

04

Subsequent webinar will explain how we can best use commercial leverage to advocate

# BBNJ Negotiations

Nichola Clark  
Officer | The Pew Charitable Trusts  
PhD Candidate | University of Wollongong



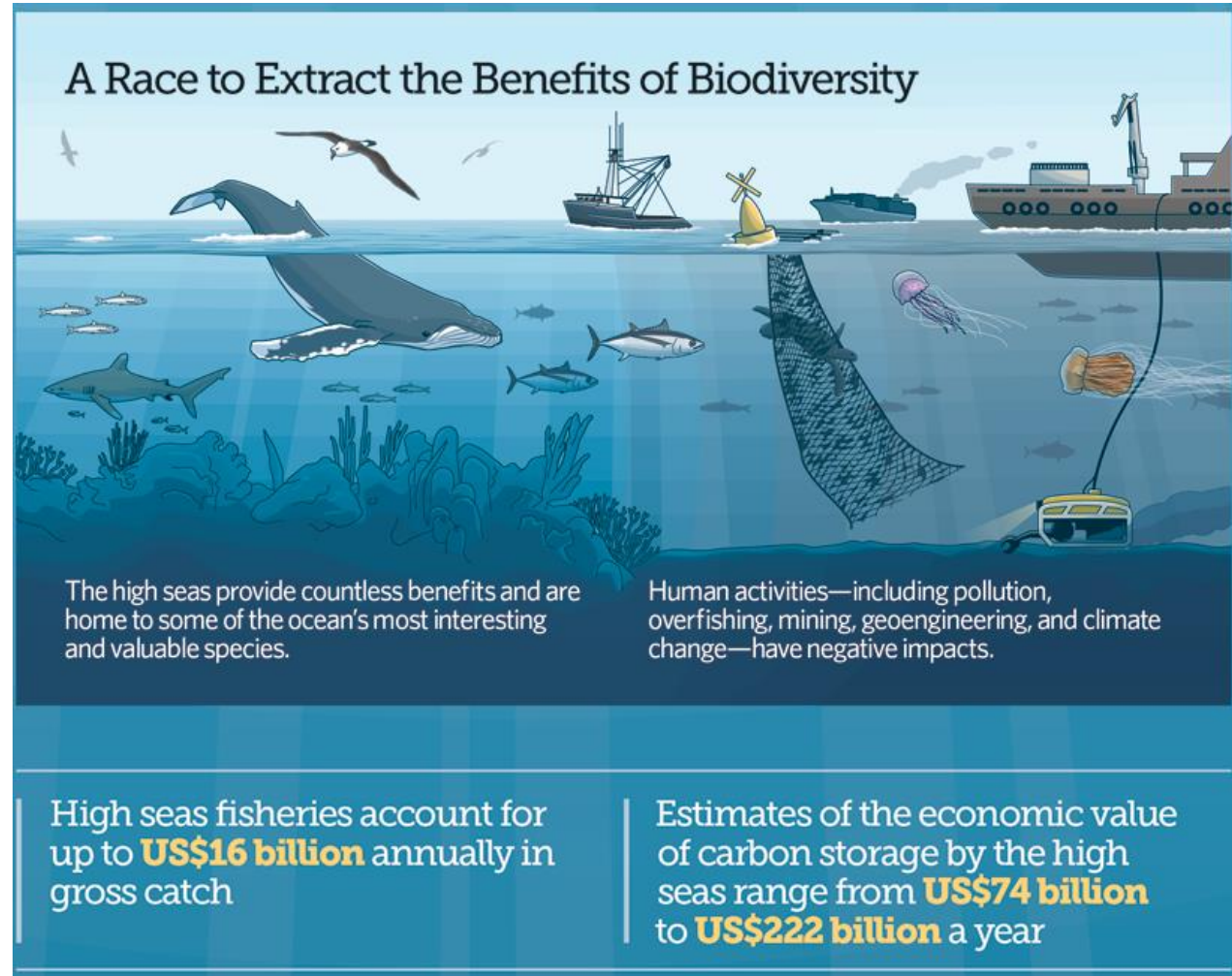
THE

Jeff Rotman/Getty Images

[pewtrusts.org](https://www.pewtrusts.org)

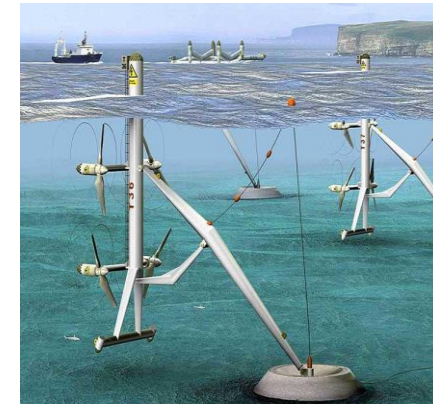
# Why do the high seas matter?

- **Teeming with life**
  - Represent 95% of habit
  - Home to important species
- **Critical ecosystem services**
  - Climate mitigation
  - Oxygen provision
- **Inextricably linked to coastal ecosystems**



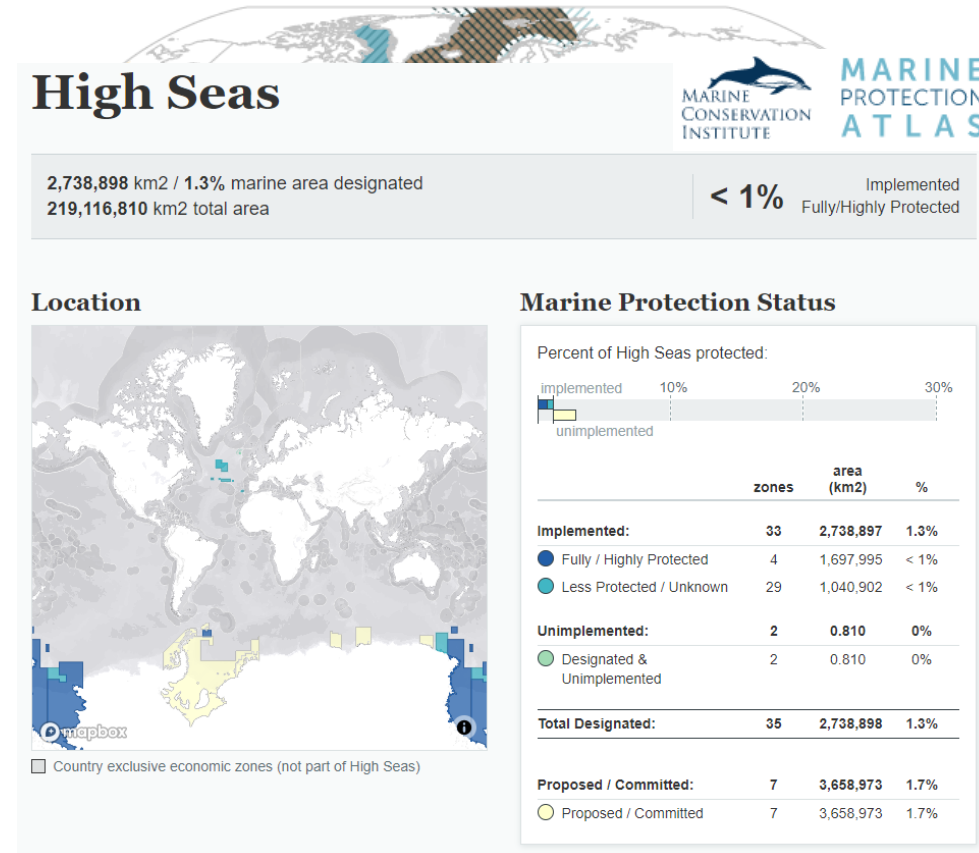


# The High Seas under Threat



# Why do we need a High Seas Treaty?

- **The problem-Governance gaps**  
No mechanism to establish HS MPAs or obligation to conduct robust EIA
- **Scale of the Problem**  
2/3rds of the ocean, almost 1/2 the planet
- **Lack of Protection:** HS are key to conserving 30% of the ocean, but currently only ~1% are protected



Source: MPAtlas <https://mpatlas.org/countries/HS>

# BBNJ Treaty: Objectives & Elements

BBNJ: Marine Biodiversity  
Beyond National Jurisdiction

**Objective:** The  
Conservation &  
Sustainable  
use of BBNJ

## ABMTS/MPAs

Area-based Management  
Tools including Marine  
Protected Areas

## EIAs

Environmental  
Impact  
Assessments

## MGRs

Marine Genetic  
Resources

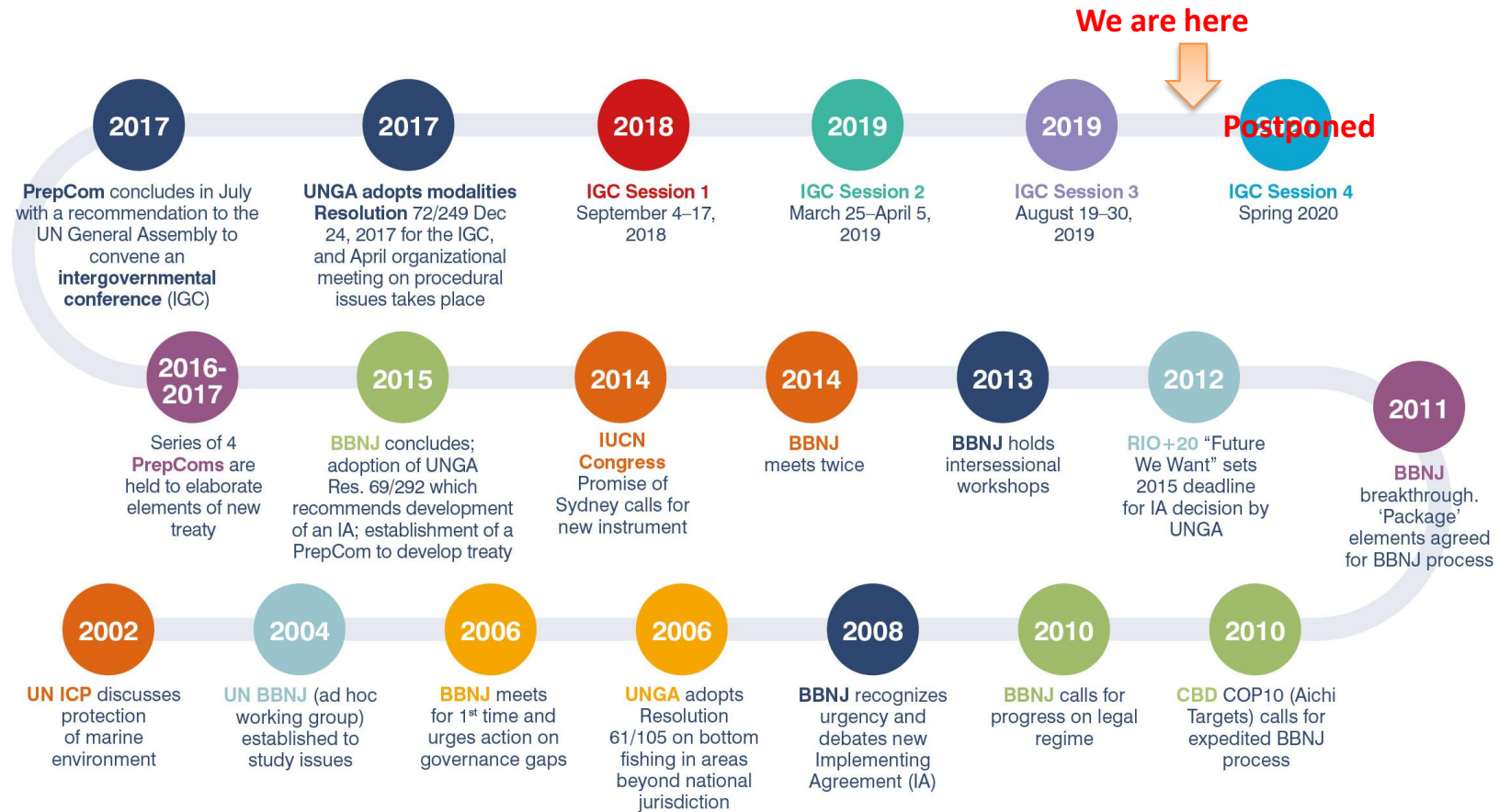
## CBTT

Capacity Building and the  
Transfer of Marine  
Technology

**Cross-cutting  
issues**



# Long & winding road to the treaty



# Area-based management tools (ABMTs)



## Key Issues

- **Definitions**
- **Cooperation & Coordination**
- **Decision-making: Management measures**

## An ambitious treaty would:

- Enable the creation of a **network of well-connected MPAs**
- Empower BBNJ to establish MPAs and a **management plan with management measures**
- Allow States to adopt **Emergency and interim measures**

# Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs)

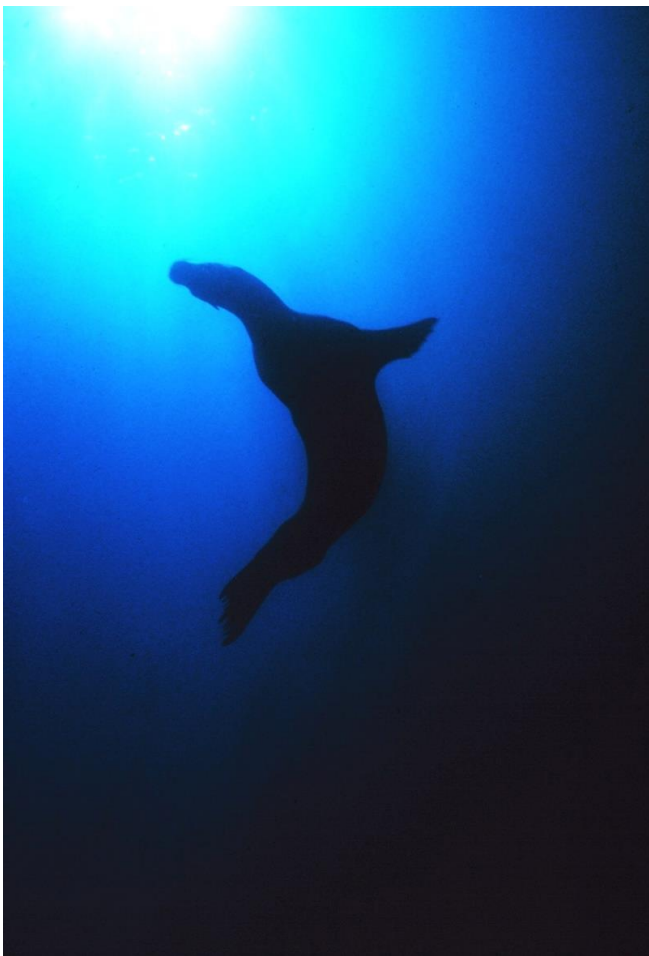


Photo credit: NOAA

## Key Issues

- Trigger/threshold
  - UNCLOS ('Significant harm')
  - Madrid Protocol (aka Tiered approach, 'More than minor or transitory')
- Decision-making ('Internationalization')
- Review

## An Ambitious Treaty would:

- Establish modern **environmental assessment** and consultation requirements
- Take an 'affects-based' approach
- Have an **internationalized** approach for review and decisions on EIAs





# Marine Genetic Resources (MGRs) + Capacity-building and Transfer of Marine Technology (CBTMT)

## MGR Key Issues

- Definition?
- Intellectual Property Rights?
- Controls on access to MGRs?
- Monitory vs. non-monitory benefit-sharing?
- **Which legal regime applies?**



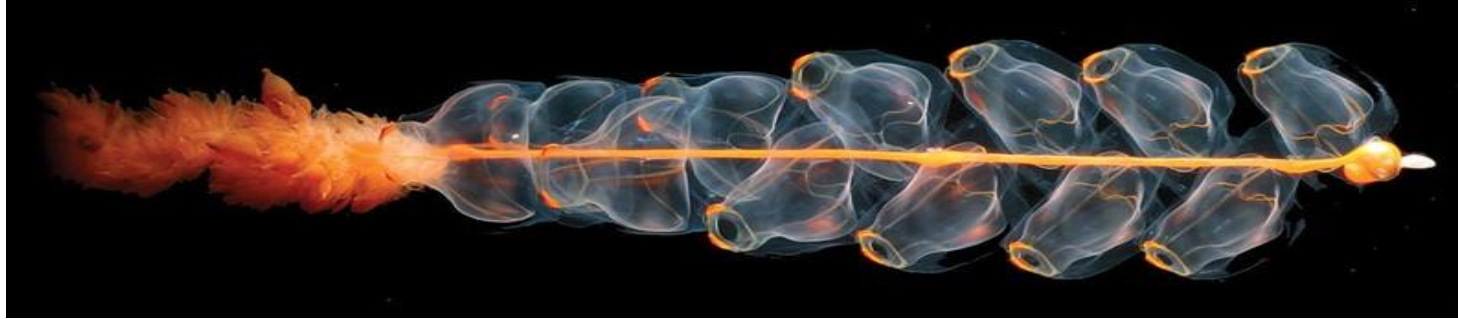
## CBTMT Key Issues

- How to ensure CBTMT offered matches needs?
- **Mandatory vs. voluntary?**

## **An ambitious treaty would:**

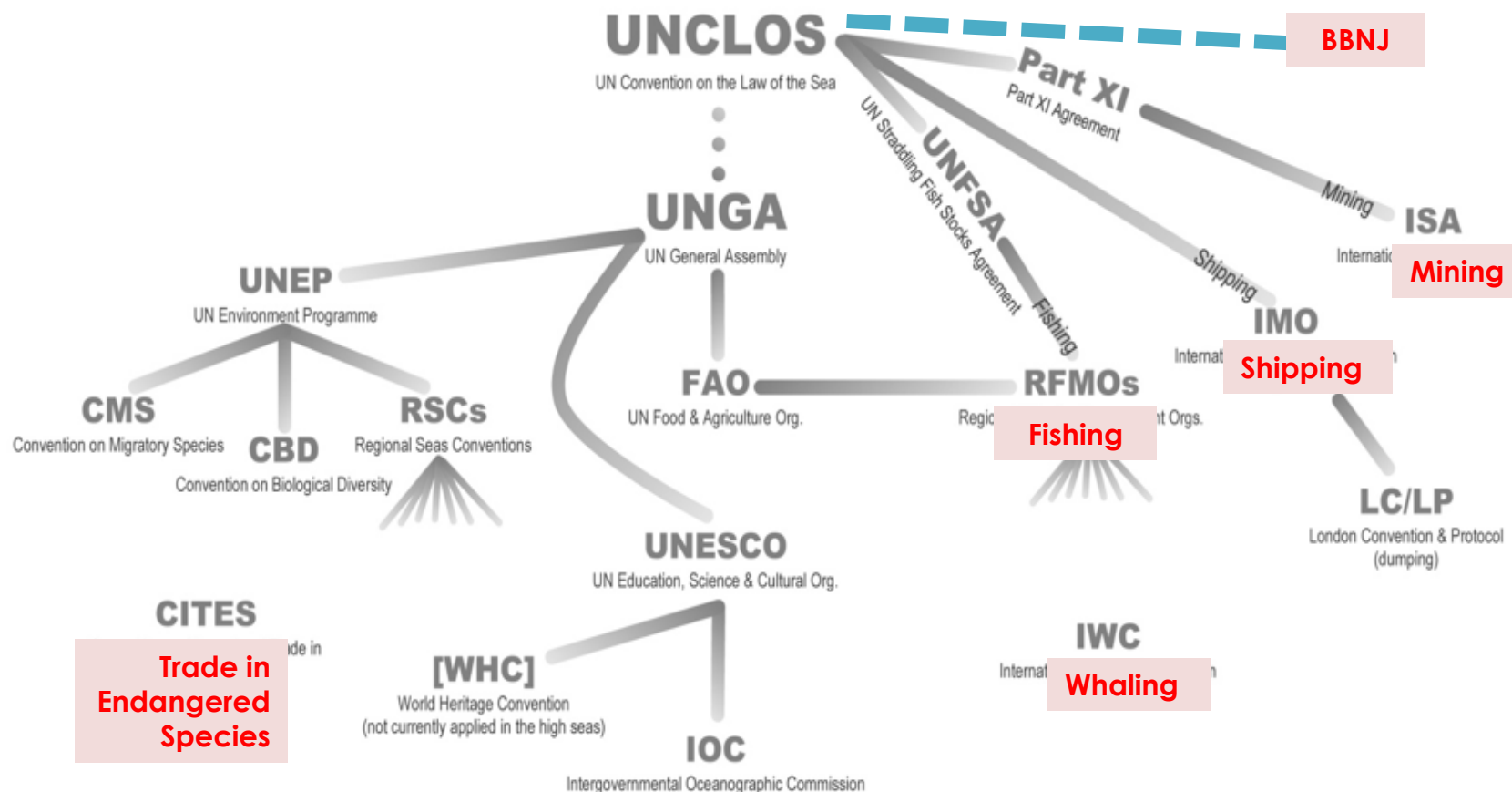
- Create a fair and equitable access and benefit sharing regime
- Create an effective funding mechanism for CBTMT

# Cross-cutting issues



- Institutional Arrangements
- Relationship with other instruments/International cooperation
  - ‘Not undermining’
- Compliance/dispute settlement
- Others (Principles, financing, entry into-force, etc.)

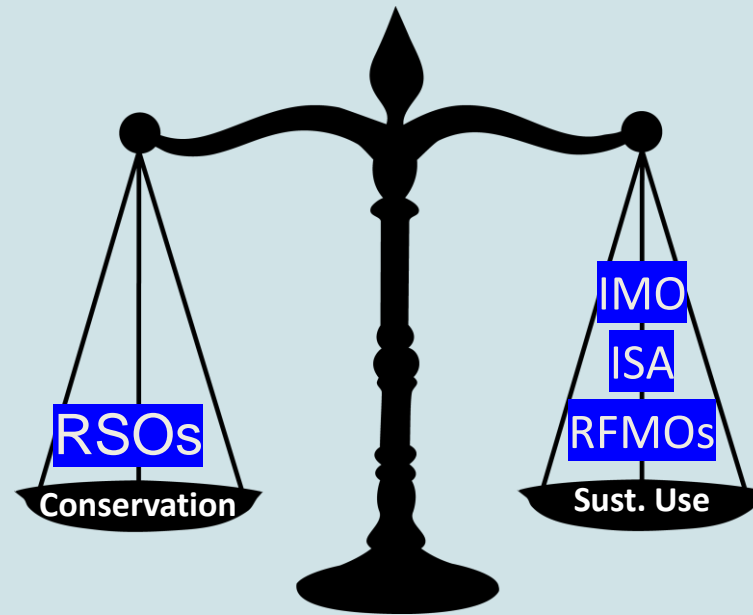
# Overview of High Seas Ocean Governance



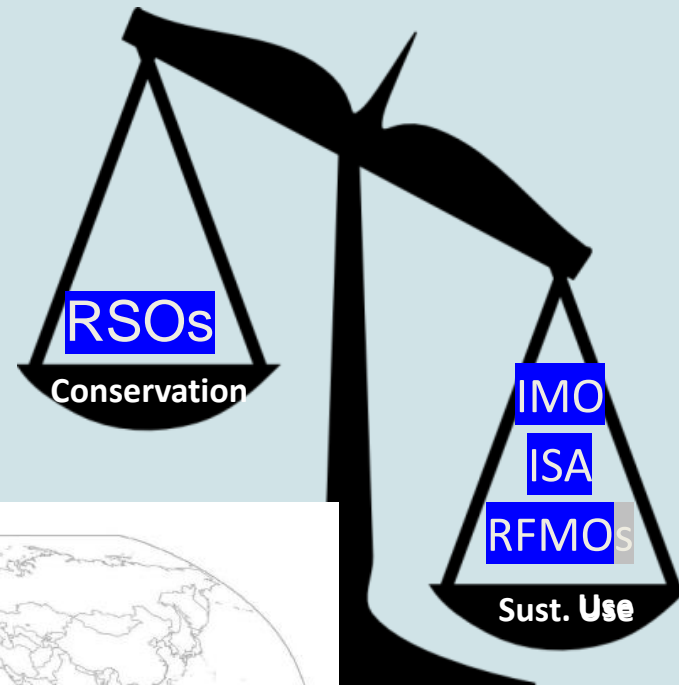
Ardron J & Warner, R. (2015) Handbook of Ocean Resources, Routledge Earthcan Book



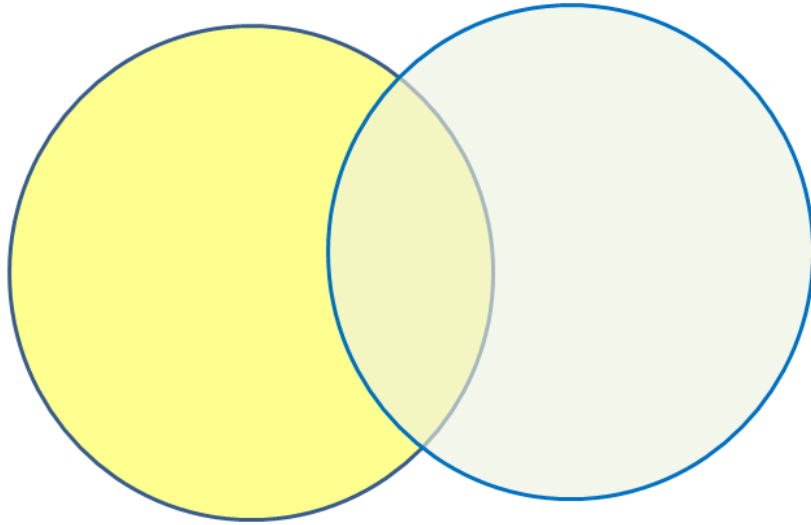
# Balancing Conservation and Sustainable Use



# Balancing Conservation and Sustainable Use



# “Not undermining”



Not undermining  
= not overlapping

- Existing orgs are enough



Not undermining  
= not weakening

- New treaty is necessary to fill gaps



# Cooperation and coordination

- Facilitate cooperation between overlapping/neighboring bodies
- Enhance science cooperation across organizations and institutions
- Establish 'complementary measures' that can amplify/support measures adopted by other bodies
- Provide a cross-sectoral, cumulative impact perspective



# Thank you! Over to Dr. Ortuño Crespo

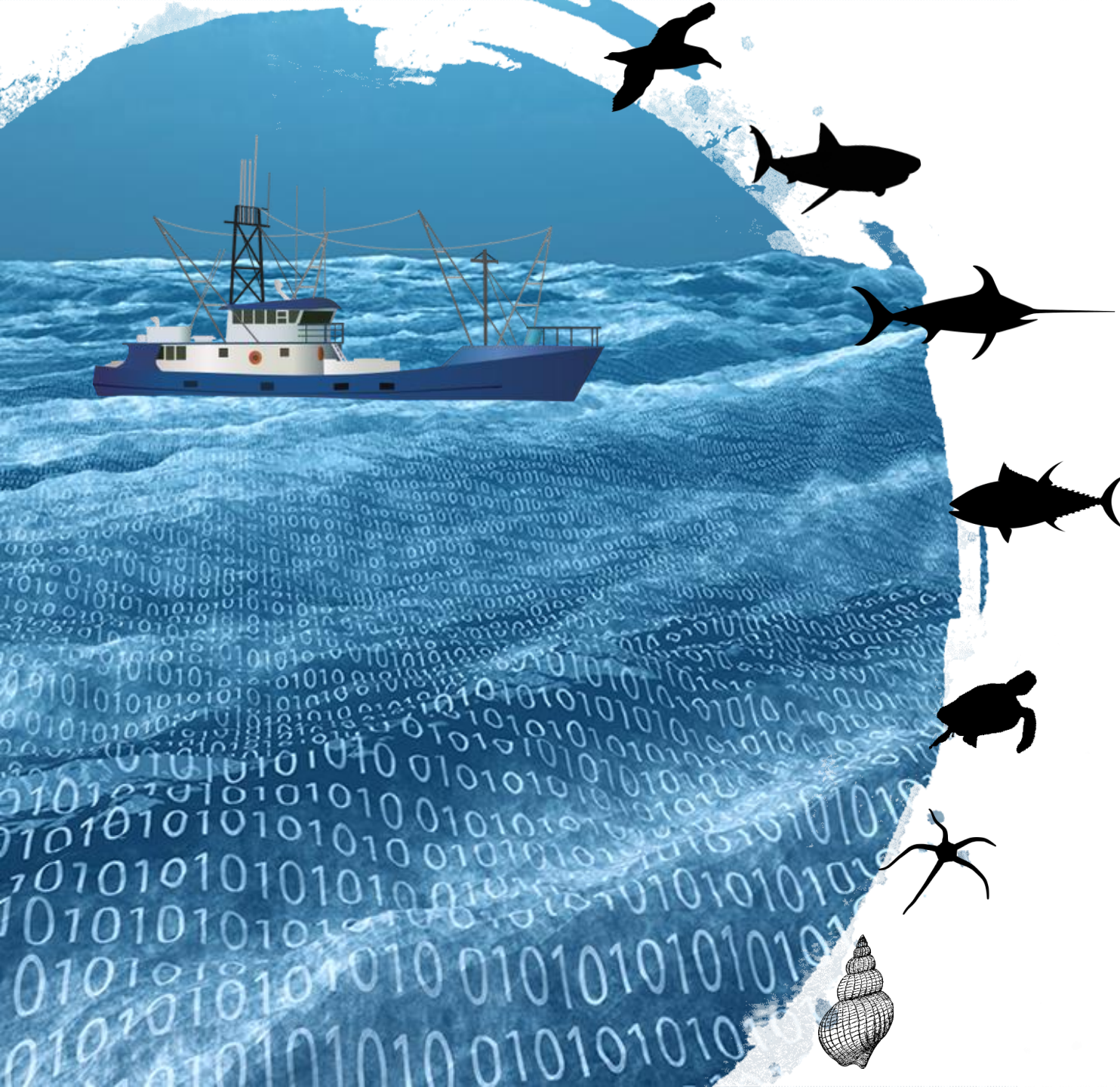


For further information, please visit:

<http://pewtrusts.org/highseas>

Nichola Clark: [nclark@pewtrusts.org](mailto:nclark@pewtrusts.org)

 [@HighSeasPolicy](https://twitter.com/HighSeasPolicy)



# Exploring the nexus between BBNJ and commercial fisheries

**Guillermo Ortuño Crespo**

 **@G\_Oceans**

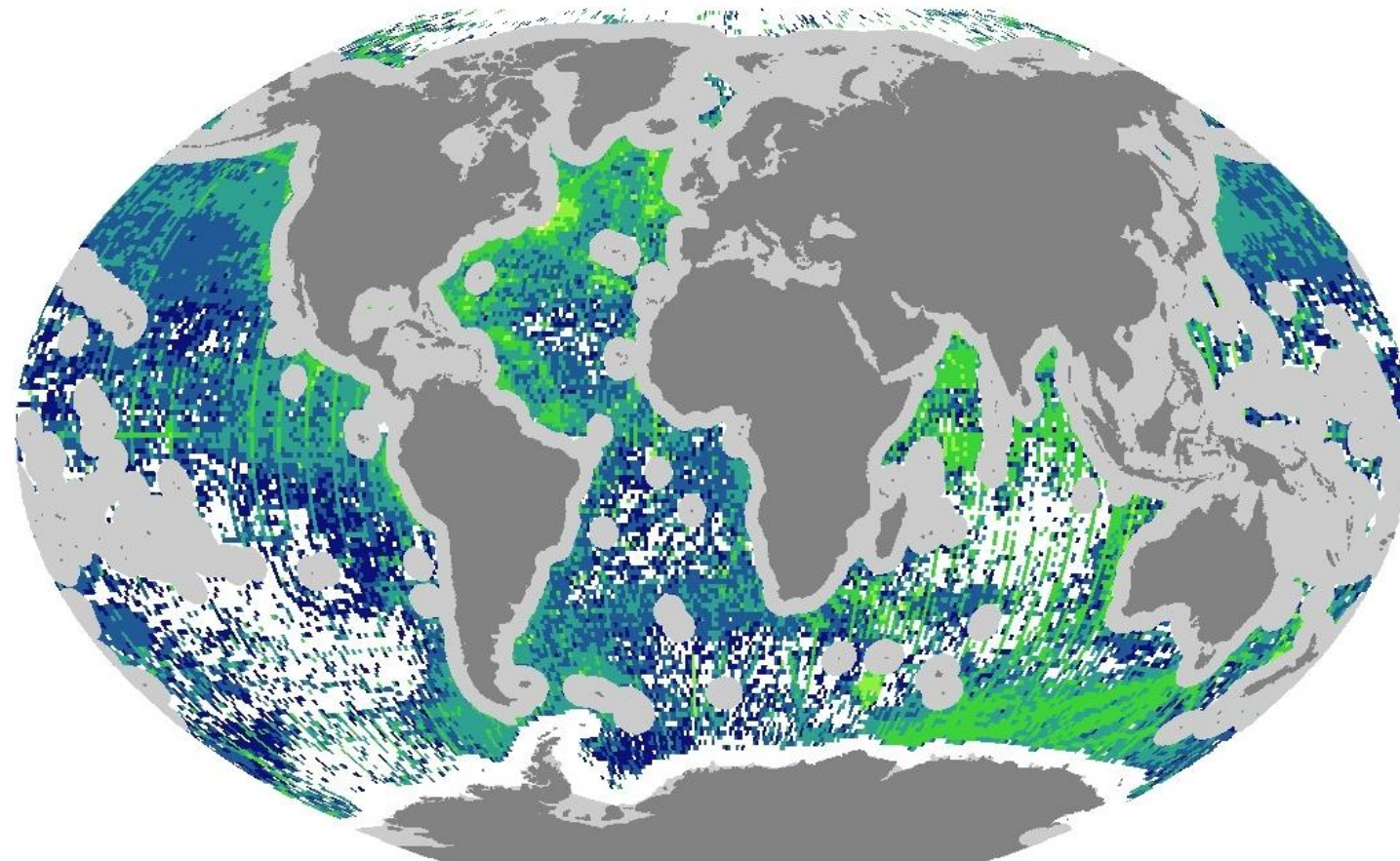
Postdoctoral researcher Stockholm Resilience Centre

**Stockholm  
Resilience Centre**





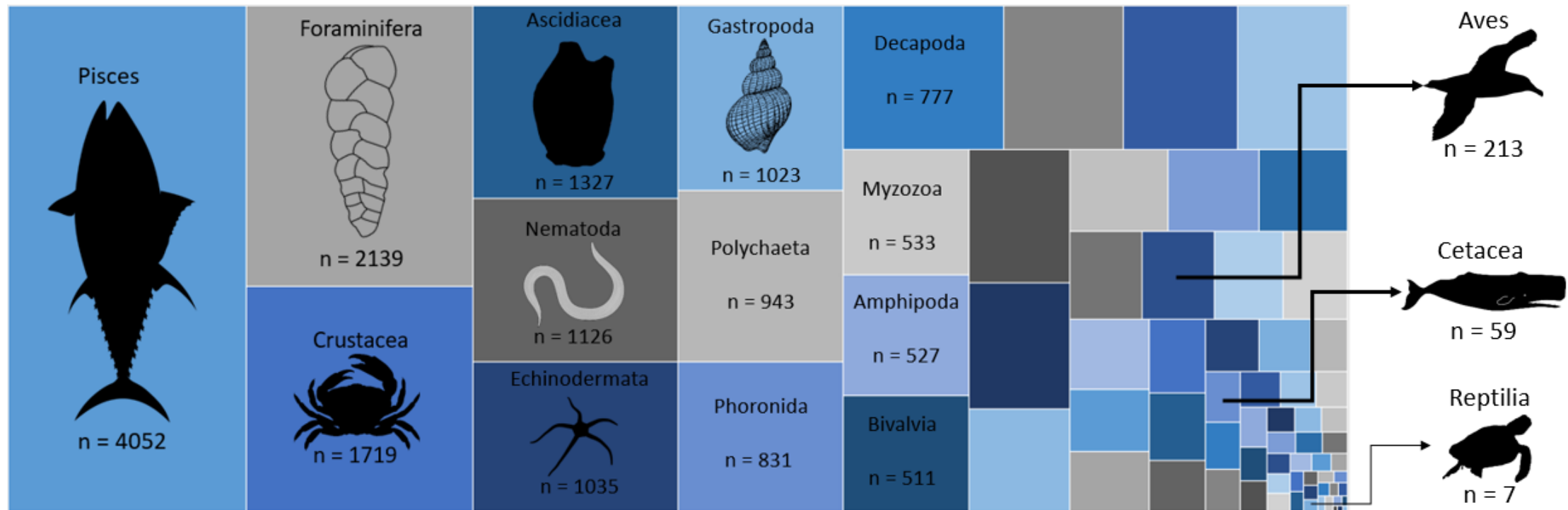
# What do we actually know about biodiversity in ABNJ?





# What do we actually know about biodiversity in ABNJ?

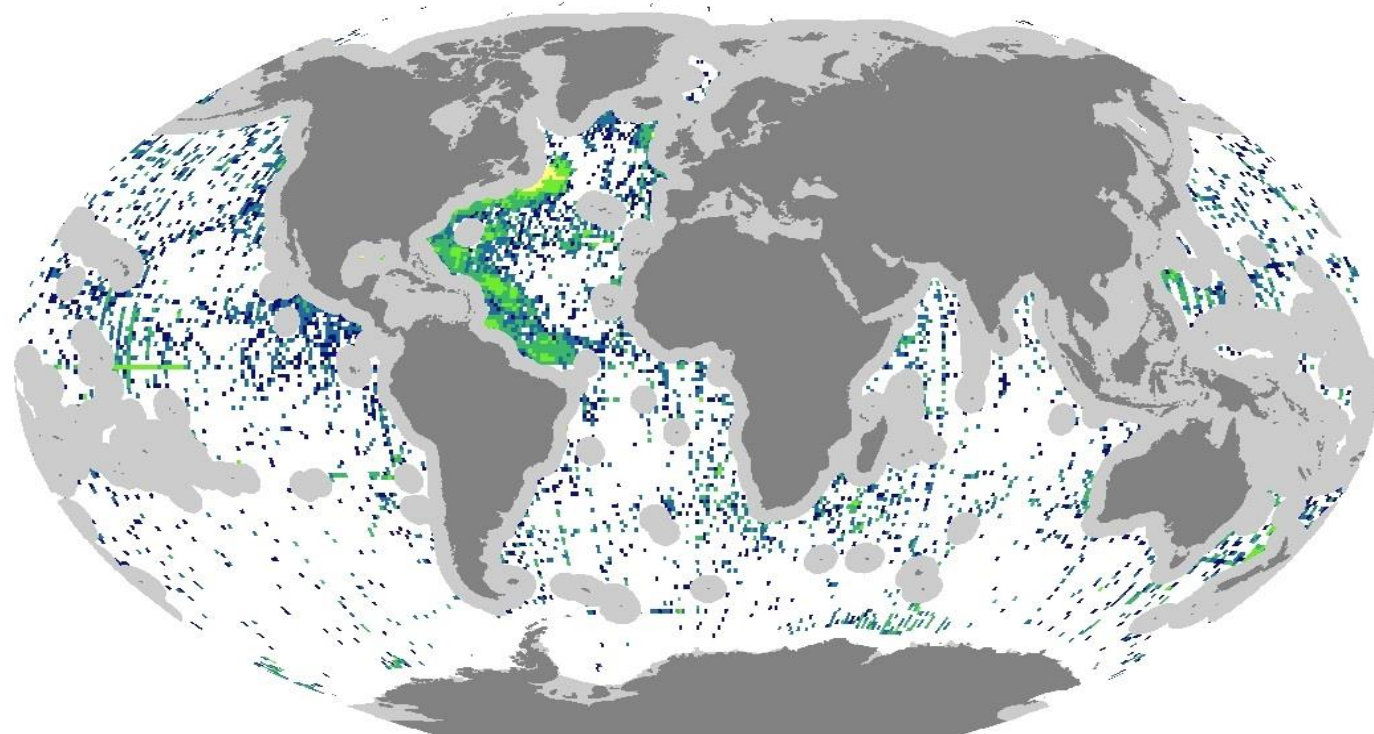
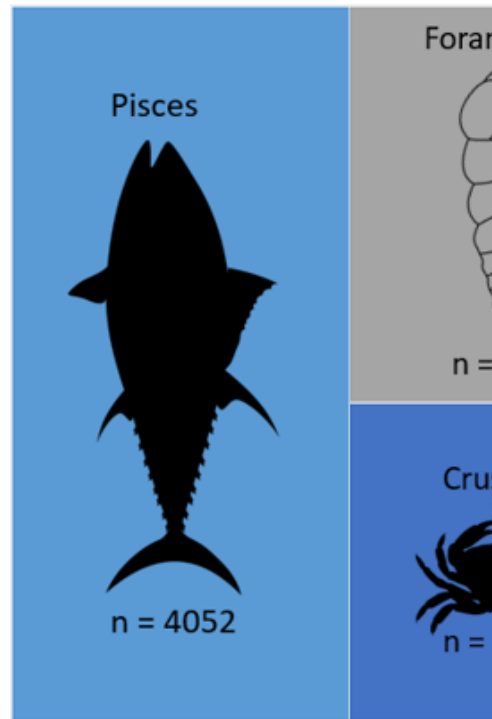
We have catalogued ~27,000 species in the High Seas  
Species with more than 10 records = ~7,000



# Which seas first had biodiversity? biodiversity in ABNJ?

n=1,063 >10 records & n=1,992 = 1 record

n = 4,052 species



Aves  
n = 213

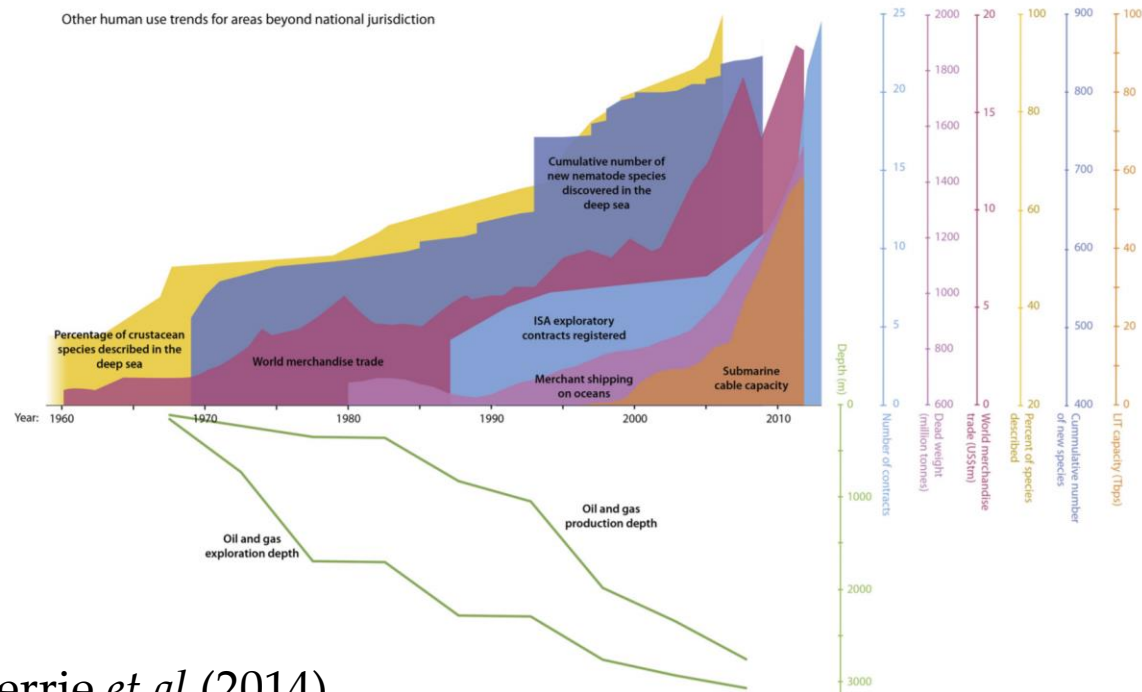
Cetacea  
n = 59

Reptilia  
n = 7

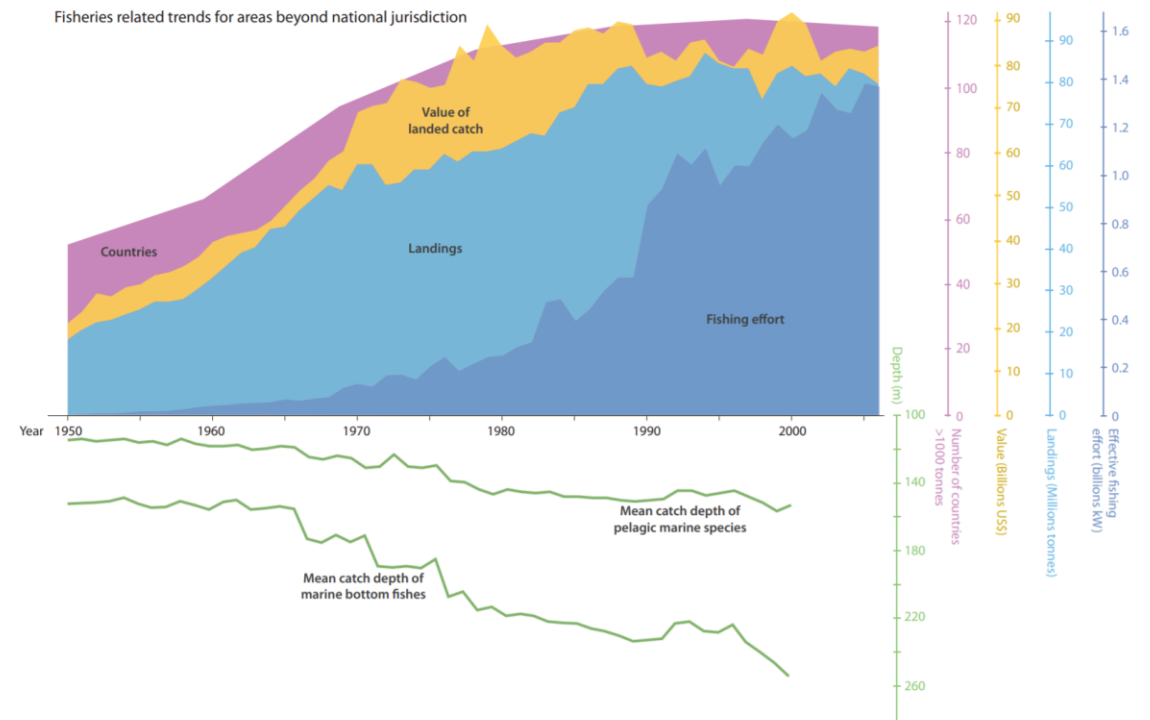
# HUMANS ARE BECOMING AN OPEN-OCEAN SPECIES

## EXPANSION OF SECTORS IN ABNJ

### Maritime shipping, oil and gas exploration...



### Largest stressor is commercial fishing

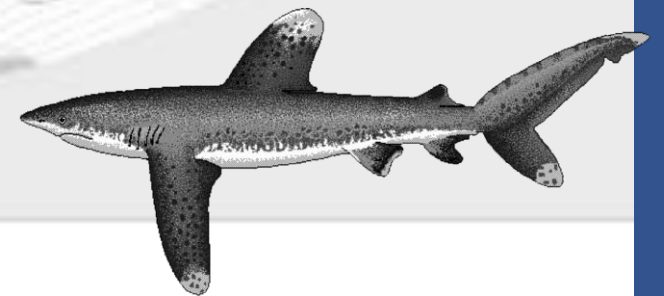
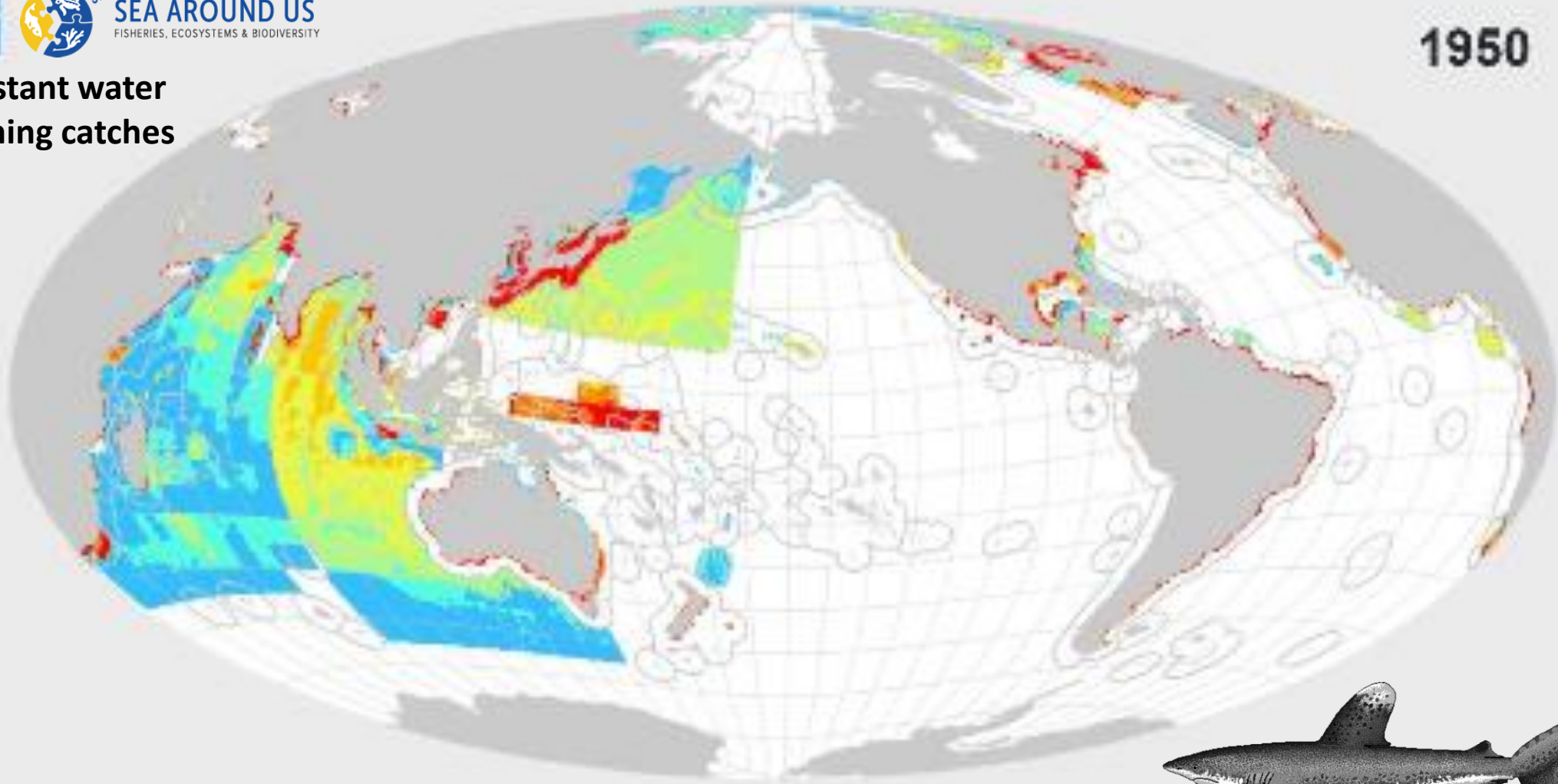




SEA AROUND US  
FISHERIES, ECOSYSTEMS & BIODIVERSITY

## Distant water fishing catches

1950



Global fishing of sharks & rays in 1950 (Total: 608 x 10<sup>3</sup> t)



# FISHERIES IMPACTS ON BBNJ: TARGET & NON-TARGET

**Commercial fisheries are the main driver of depletion for migratory populations:**

- **Straddling stocks are overfished or experiencing overfishing** at twice the rate than stocks within national jurisdiction (**64% vs 28.8%**) (FAO, 2009; FAO, 2014).
- All 22 species of albatross & 19 of 21 oceanic elasmobranchs are listed as at least Near Threatened by the IUCN with bycatch cited as the main threat.

**Contraction in species' ranges leads to change in community structure (Worm and Tittensor, 2011)**

- 9 of the 13 species of tuna and billfish assessed exhibited reduced range with reduced abundances.

**Changes in body mass (Ward and Myers, 2005)**

- Reductions in body mass contributed 66% of the decline in the index of community biomass.

**Reduction in fecundity & the potential growth rate of populations: removal of largest individuals (Hutchings & Reynolds, 2004)**

**Trophic cascades (Cox et al., 2002 ;Olson and Watters, 2003)**

Abundance of predatory species was reduced by a factor of 10 → abundance of lower TL species increased.

The biodiversity of open-ocean predators has declined between 10-50% in all ocean basins; these trends coincide with increases in fishing. No trend was found between changes in diversity and major climate or oceanographic patterns processes (Worm et al., 2005).

# UNITED NATIONS STRADDLING FISH STOCKS AGREEMENT (UNFSA, 1995)

UNFSA was the second implementing agreement under UNCLOS

It recognized the inter-dependence between target and non-target species & promoted an ecosystem-approach to monitoring and managing fisheries impacts.

UNFSA calls for the use of biological & ecological data, e.g.:

Geographic (horizontal) connectivity: “...*take into account the biological unity of the stocks*” [Article 7.2 (d)] across jurisdictional boundaries.

Trophic/ecological data: “...*assess the impact of fishing on non-target and associated or dependent species or species belonging to the same ecosystem*” [Article 10 (d)]



Composition – Abundance - Associations - Distribution  
(target & non-target)

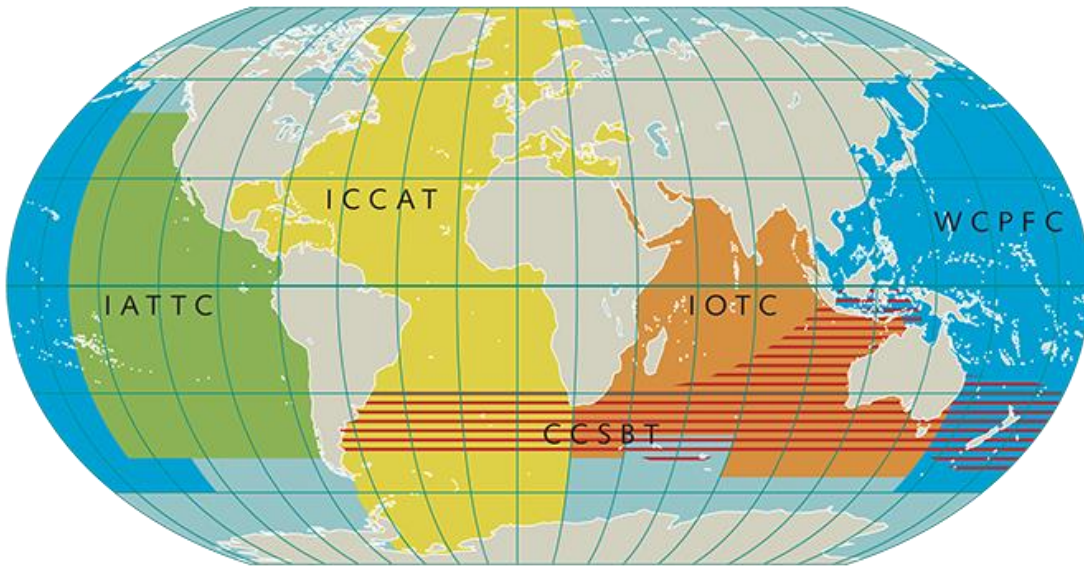
# RFMOs as vehicles for biodiversity conservation (?)

*States have committed to "not undermine" relevant existing legal instruments, bodies, and frameworks in their negotiations over a new, legally binding instrument concerning biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ).*

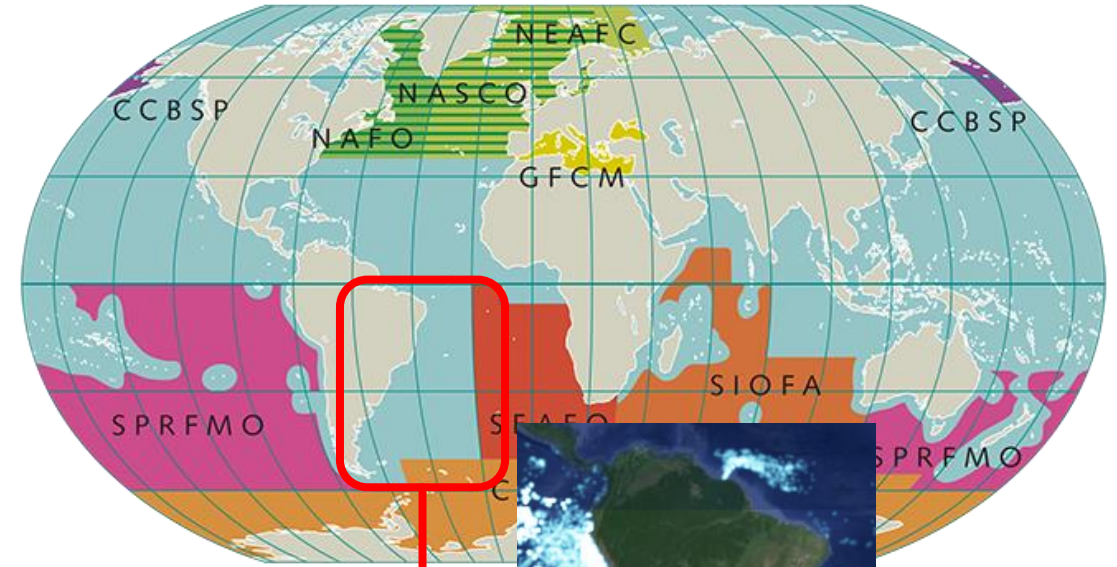
- RFMOs overlap extensively, but do not undermine one another. Why?
  - Tuna and non-tuna RFMOs have a clear division of fisheries and taxonomic mandates.
- RFMOs should have unique competence for establishing catch limits for target species and **could** be the main vehicles for monitoring '*non-target and associated or dependent species or species belonging to the same ecosystem*', however, these remain poorly defined in most RFMOs.
- Some Parties at the BBNJ negotiations have suggested that "fish" should be left out of the agreement

*Perhaps fisheries impacts should only be 'excluded' from the treaty if existing authorities already monitor and manage fisheries impacts on all impacted biodiversity.*

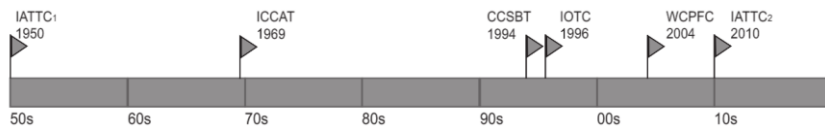
# GEOGRAPHIC GAPS IN RFMOS



*Tuna RFMOs*



Non

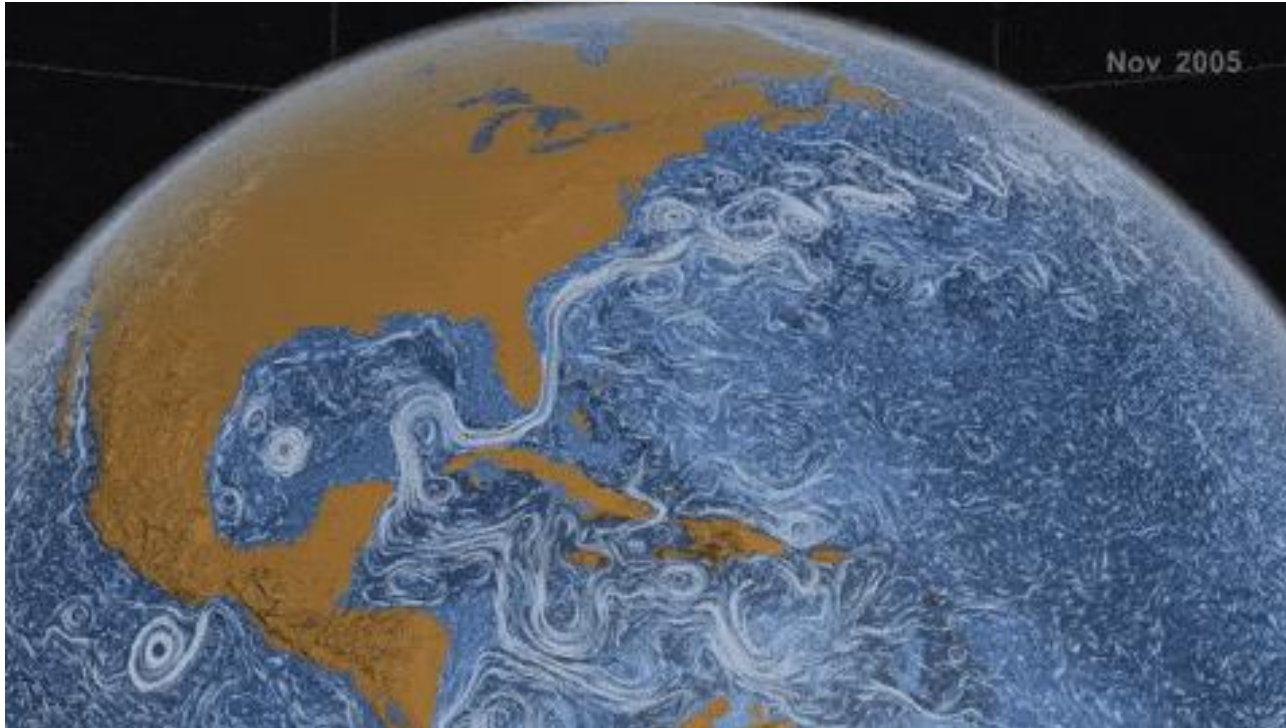




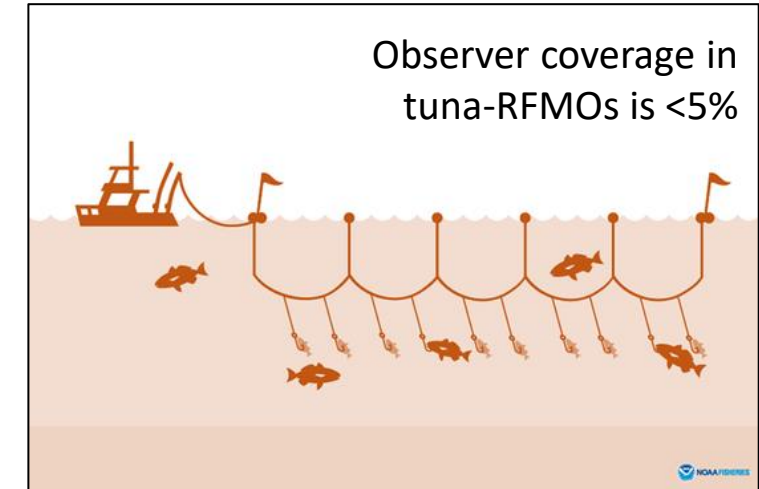
# AREA-BASED MANAGEMENT TOOLS IN HIGH SEAS FISHERIES

Existing **pelagic** fisheries spatial closures in high seas

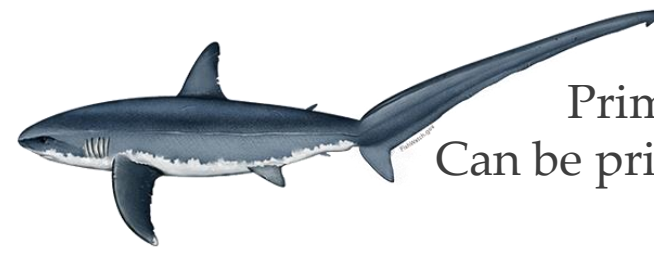
Target species - Informal/Voluntary - Poorly enforced - **Static**



## *Monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS)*



# Taxonomic gaps in RFMOs



Primary bycatch species  
Can be primary target species

- “...assess the impact of fishing on non-target and associated or dependent species or species belonging to the same ecosystem” [Article 10 (d)]
- Tuna RFMOs have the most responsibility in the sustainable management of oceanic sharks.
- A recent study in the journal Nature estimated an alarming 71% decline in the abundance of oceanic sharks in just 50 years.



- Just in the Atlantic waters of the United States alone, there are 43 species of shark.
- ICCAT was created 51 years ago
- ICCAT has stock assessments for 3 species of shark



- 55 species of shark are caught in IOTC waters
- IOTC was created 24 years ago
- IOTC has stock assessments for 1 species of shark
- IOTC, like most other RFMOs, do not have catch limits

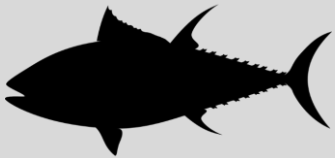
# Mapping the status of High Seas fish biodiversity



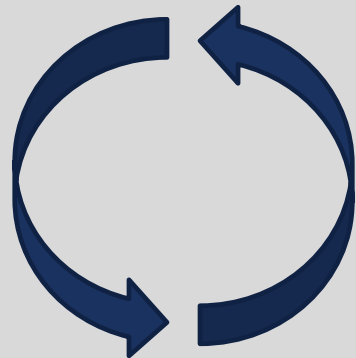
nature  
ecology & evolution



OCEAN BIOGEOGRAPHIC  
INFORMATION SYSTEM



4,052 species



RAM Legacy Stock  
Assessment Database

- biomass
- recruitment
- landing

$$\frac{193}{4,018} = 4.8\%$$

# *Harmonizing BBNJ & UNFSA+RFMOs*

- **Few** RFMOs are engaging with the BBNJ process.
  - Many nations are still arguing for 'fish' not to be included in the scope of the treaty.
  - The implementation of BBNJ in areas with no RFMO remains unresolved.
  - RFMOs are not monitoring or managing much of the biodiversity impacted by commercial fisheries.
  - This is a question of global and inter-generational equity that needs addressing
- 
- The seafood retail sector has significant leverage on the level of management, transparency, enforcement ambition and standards.  
This is a unique opportunity for the retail sector to influence the most transcendental treaty for the Ocean in 40 years.