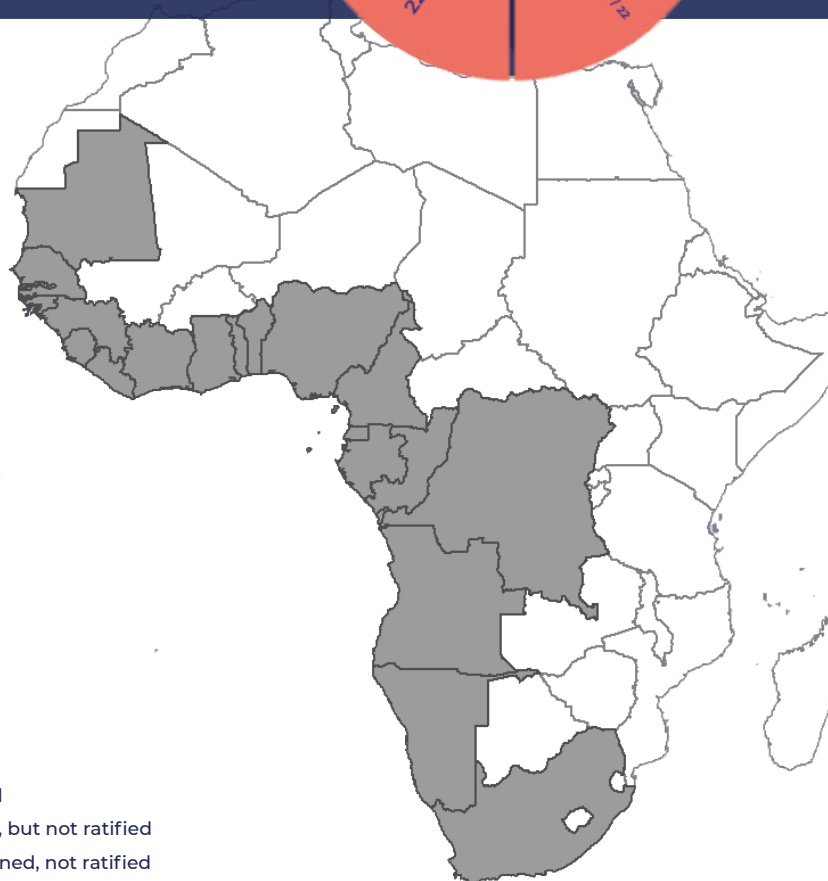
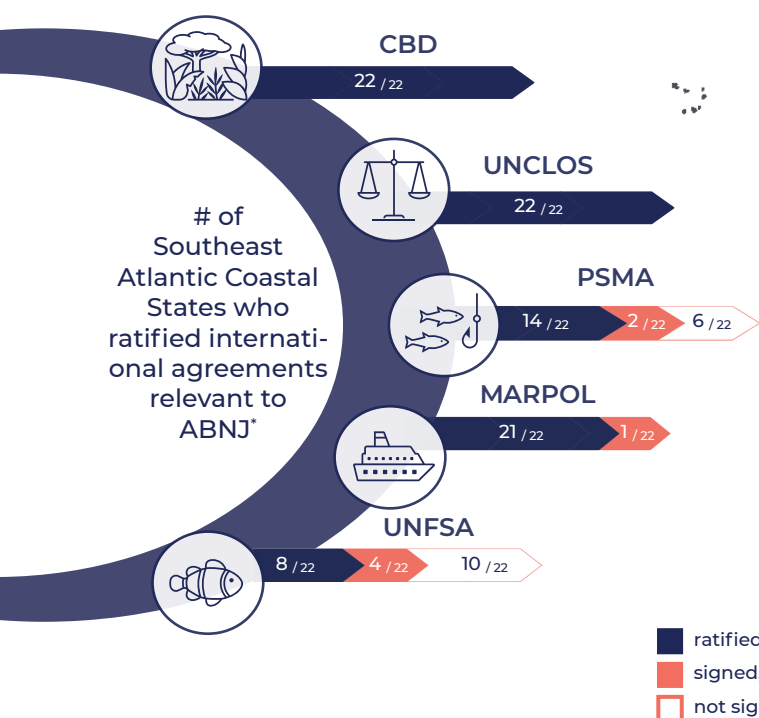
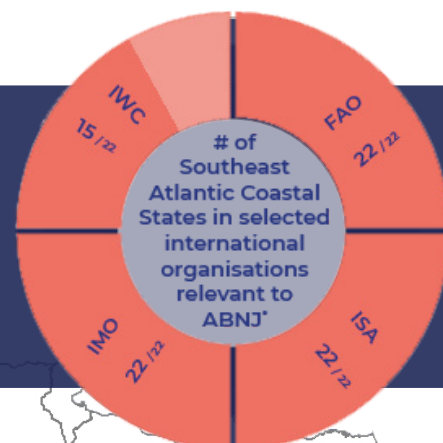


## Ocean Governance in the Southeast Atlantic

The Southeast Atlantic region is loosely defined here as the Eastern side of the South Atlantic ocean adjacent to 22 African States from Mauritania to South Africa.

Coastal States in this region are members to different regional and global organisations, have ratified different international and regional agreements, and have different interests and needs related to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ).

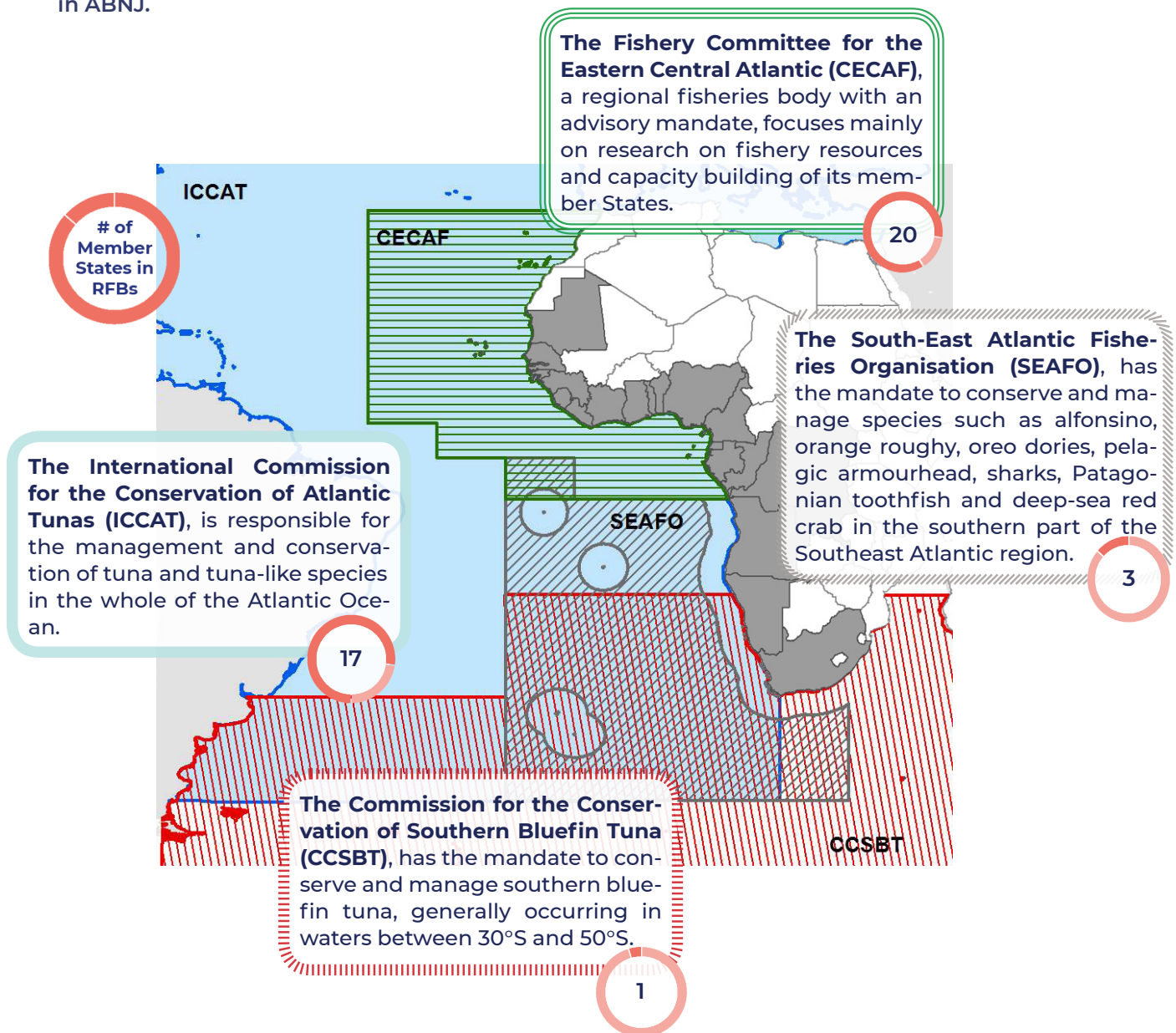


**Marine areas** that fall outside of the national jurisdiction of countries (ABNJ) cover roughly half of the Earth's surface. These areas offer habitats for a highly diverse range of marine species and provide key ecosystem services, including the regulation of our planet's climate. While there is a growing economic and political interest in exploitation of marine resources in ABNJ, there is to date no comprehensive legal framework in place for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in these areas. Governance of ABNJ is instead pursued through a fragmented legal and institutional framework, failing to ensure the long-term sustainability of marine resources.

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\* ABNJ = Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction, CBD = Convention on Biological Diversity, FAO = Food and Agriculture Organization, IMO = International Maritime Organisation, ISA = International Seabed Authority, IWC = International Whaling Commission, MARPOL = International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (Annex I-V), PSMA = Port State Measures Agreement, UNCLOS = United States Convention on the Law of the Seas, UNFSA = United Nations Fish Stock Agreement - data retrieved from organisations in 11/2021

In addition to the global organisations and regulatory bodies, there are four regional fisheries bodies (RFBs) that have a mandate to work in ABNJ of the Southeast Atlantic, three of which are regional fisheries management organisations (RFMOs) with a management mandate. Cooperation between organisations is critically important to support conservation and management efforts in ABNJ.



**The Abidjan Convention**, is a regional seas programme with a mandate to work in marine areas within national jurisdiction of the Southeast Atlantic. The focus of the Convention is on the prevention, reduction and combatting of marine pollution and the establishment of protected areas for fragile ecosystems and endangered species. It was adopted in 1981 and, to date, 19 of the 22 coastal States of the Southeast Atlantic region are member States to the Convention (participating non-parties are Equatorial Guinea, Cape Verde and São Tomé and Príncipe). Although the Abidjan Convention has no mandate to work in ABNJ, it could, for instance, work to bring conservation issues of concern to the attention of RFBs, provide scientific data, and strengthen ties between the different countries of the region, as well as build States' capacities.

The **STRONG High Seas** project, coordinated by the Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS) and implemented together with six partners based in Europe, South America, and Africa, and its regional partners the Secretariat of the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (CPPS) and the Abidjan Convention Secretariat, is a five-year project that aims to strengthen regional ocean governance for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction.

For more information visit: [www.prog-ocean.org/our-work/strong-high-seas/](http://www.prog-ocean.org/our-work/strong-high-seas/)

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