

Public Law 94-70  
94th Congress

An Act

To give effect to the International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas, signed at Rio de Janeiro May 14, 1966, by the United States of America and other countries, and for other purposes.

Aug. 5, 1975

[H.R. 5522]

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That this Act may be cited as the "Atlantic Tunas Convention Act of 1975".

Atlantic Tunas  
Convention Act of  
1975.

16 USC 971 note.

DEFINITIONS

SEC. 2. For the purpose of this Act—

16 USC 971.

(1) The term "Convention" means the International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas, signed at Rio de Janeiro May 14, 1966, including any amendments or protocols which are or become effective for the United States.

20 UST 2887.

(2) The term "Commission" means the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas provided for in article III of the Convention.

(3) The term "Council" means the Council established within the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas pursuant to article V of the Convention.

(4) The term "fisheries zone" means the entire zone established by the United States under the Act of October 14, 1966 (80 Stat. 908; 16 U.S.C. 1091-1094), or similar zones established by other parties to the Convention to the extent that such zones are recognized by the United States.

(5) The term "fishing" means the catching, taking, or fishing for, or the attempted catching, taking, or fishing for any species of fish covered by the Convention, or any activities in support thereof.

(6) The term "fishing vessel" means any vessel engaged in catching fish or processing or transporting fish loaded on the high seas, or any vessel outfitted for such activities.

(7) The term "Panel" means any panel established by the Commission pursuant to article VI of the Convention.

(8) The term "person" means every individual, partnership, corporation, and association subject to the jurisdiction of the United States.

(9) The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of Commerce.

(10) The term "State" includes each of the States of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the territories and possessions of the United States.

COMMISSIONERS

SEC. 3. (a) The United States shall be represented by not more than three Commissioners who shall serve as delegates of the United States on the Commission, and who may serve on the Council and Panels of the Commission as provided for in the Convention. Such Commissioners shall be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the President.

16 USC 971a.

Not more than one such Commissioner shall be a salaried employee of any State or political subdivision thereof, or the Federal Government. The Commissioners shall be entitled to select a Chairman and to adopt such rules of procedure as they find necessary.

(b) The Secretary of State, in consultation with the Secretary, may designate from time to time and for periods of time deemed appropriate Alternate United States Commissioners to the Commission. Any Alternate United States Commissioner may exercise at any meeting of the Commission, Council, any Panel, or the advisory committee established pursuant to section 4 of this Act, all powers and duties of a United States Commissioner in the absence of any Commissioner appointed pursuant to subsection (a) of this section for whatever reason. The number of such Alternate United States Commissioners that may be designated for any such meeting shall be limited to the number of United States Commissioners appointed pursuant to subsection (a) of this section who will not be present at such meeting.

(c) The United States Commissioners or Alternate Commissioners, although officers of the United States while so serving, shall receive no compensation for their services as such Commissioners or Alternate Commissioners.

#### ADVISORY COMMITTEE

16 USC 971b.

20 UST 2887.

SEC. 4. The United States Commissioners shall appoint an advisory committee which shall be composed of not less than five nor more than twenty individuals who shall be selected from the various groups concerned with the fisheries covered by the Convention. Each member of the advisory committee shall serve for a term of two years and be eligible for reappointment. Members of the advisory committee may attend all public meetings of the Commission, Council, or any Panel and any other meetings to which they are invited by the Commission, Council, or any Panel. The advisory committee shall be invited to attend all nonexecutive meetings of the United States Commissioners and at such meetings shall be given opportunity to examine and to be heard on all proposed programs of investigation, reports, recommendations, and regulations of the Commission. Members of the advisory committee shall receive no compensation for their services as such members. On approval by the United States Commissioners—

Transportation  
expenses.

(1) if not more than three members of the advisory committee are designated by the committee to attend any meeting of the Commission, Council, or advisory committee, or of any Panel, each of such members shall be paid for his actual transportation expenses and per diem incident to his attendance; and

(2) in any case in which more than three members are designated by the advisory committee to attend any such meeting, each such member to whom paragraph (1) does not apply may be paid for his actual transportation expenses and per diem incident to his attendance.

#### SECRETARY OF STATE TO ACT FOR THE UNITED STATES

16 USC 971c.

SEC. 5. (a) The Secretary of State is authorized to receive on behalf of the United States, reports, requests, and other communications of the Commission, and to act thereon directly or by reference to the appropriate authorities. The Secretary of State, with the concurrence of the Secretary and, for matters relating to enforcement, the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating, is authorized to take appropriate action on behalf of the United States

with regard to recommendations received from the Commission pursuant to article VIII of the Convention. The Secretary and, when appropriate, the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating, shall inform the Secretary of State as to what action he considers appropriate within five months of the date of the notification of the recommendation from the Commission, and again within forty-five days of the additional sixty-day period provided by the Convention if any objection is presented by another contracting party to the Convention, or within thirty days of the date of the notification of an objection made within the additional sixty-day period, whichever date shall be the later. After any notification from the Commission that an objection of the United States is to be considered as having no effect, the Secretary shall inform the Secretary of State as to what action he considers appropriate within forty-five days of the sixty-day period provided by the Convention for reaffirming objections. The Secretary of State shall take steps under the Convention to insure that a recommendation pursuant to article VIII of the Convention does not become effective for the United States prior to its becoming effective for all contracting parties conducting fisheries affected by such recommendation on a meaningful scale in terms of their effect upon the success of the conservation program, unless he determines, with the concurrence of the Secretary, and, for matters relating to enforcement, the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating, that the purposes of the Convention would be served by allowing a recommendation to take effect for the United States at some earlier time.

20 UST 2887.

(b) The Secretary of State, in consultation with the Secretary and the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating, is authorized to enter into agreements with any contracting party, pursuant to paragraph 3 of article IX of the Convention, relating to cooperative enforcement of the provisions of the Convention, recommendations in force for the United States and such party or parties under the Convention, and regulations adopted by the United States and such contracting party or parties pursuant to recommendations of the Commission. Such agreements may authorize personnel of the United States to enforce measures under the Convention and under regulations of another party with respect to persons under that party's jurisdiction, and may authorize personnel of another party to enforce measures under the Convention and under United States regulations with respect to persons subject to the jurisdiction of the United States. Enforcement under such an agreement may not take place within the territorial seas or fisheries zone of the United States. Such agreements shall not subject persons or vessels under the jurisdiction of the United States to prosecution or assessment of penalties by any court or tribunal of a foreign country.

Cooperative  
enforcement  
agreements.

## ADMINISTRATION

SEC. 6. (a) The Secretary is authorized and directed to administer and enforce all of the provisions of the Convention, this Act, and regulations issued pursuant thereto, except to the extent otherwise provided for in this Act. In carrying out such functions the Secretary is authorized and directed to adopt such regulations as may be necessary to carry out the purposes and objectives of the Convention and this Act, and with the concurrence of the Secretary of State, he may cooperate with the duly authorized officials of the government of any party to the Convention. In addition, the Secretary may utilize,

16 USC 971d.

Regulations.

with the concurrence of the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating insofar as such utilization involves enforcement at sea, with or without reimbursement and by agreement with any other Federal department or agency, or with any agency of any State, the personnel, services, and facilities of that agency for enforcement purposes with respect to any vessel in the fisheries zone, or wherever found, with respect to any vessel documented under the laws of the United States, and any vessel numbered or otherwise licensed under the laws of any State. When so utilized, such personnel of the States of the United States are authorized to function as Federal law enforcement agents for these purposes, but they shall not be held and considered as employees of the United States for the purposes of any laws administered by the Civil Service Commission.

(b) Enforcement activities at sea under the provisions of this Act for fishing vessels subject to the jurisdiction of the United States shall be primarily the responsibility of the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating, in cooperation with the Secretary and the United States Customs Service. The Secretary after consultation with the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating, shall adopt such regulations as may be necessary to provide for procedures and methods of enforcement pursuant to article IX of the Convention.

Regulations.

20 UST 2887.

Regulations.

(c) (1) Upon favorable action by the Secretary of State under section 5(a) of this Act on any recommendation of the Commission made pursuant to article VIII of the Convention, the Secretary shall promulgate, pursuant to this subsection, such regulations as may be necessary and appropriate to carry out such recommendation.

Publication in  
Federal Register.

(2) To promulgate regulations referred to in paragraph (1) of this subsection, the Secretary shall publish in the Federal Register a general notice of proposed rulemaking and shall afford interested persons an opportunity to participate in the rulemaking through (A) submission of written data, views, or arguments, and (B) oral presentation at a public hearing. Such regulations shall be published in the Federal Register and shall be accompanied by a statement of the considerations involved in the issuance of the regulations, and by a statement, based on inquiries and investigations, assessing the nature and effectiveness of the measures for the implementation of the Commission's recommendations which are being or will be carried out by countries whose vessels engage in fishing the species subject to such recommendations within the waters to which the Convention applies. After publication in the Federal Register, such regulations shall be applicable to all vessels and persons subject to the jurisdiction of the United States on such date as the Secretary shall prescribe. The Secretary shall suspend at any time the application of any such regulation when, after consultation with the Secretary of State and the United States Commissioners, he determines that fishing operations in the Convention area of a contracting party for whom the regulations are effective are such as to constitute a serious threat to the achievement of the Commission's recommendations.

Publication in  
Federal Register.

(3) The regulations required to be promulgated under paragraph (1) of this subsection may—

- (A) select for regulation one or more of the species covered by the Convention;
- (B) divide the Convention waters into areas;
- (C) establish one or more open or closed seasons as to each such area;

(D) limit the size of the fish and quantity of the catch which may be taken from each area within any season during which fishing is allowed;

(E) limit or prohibit the incidental catch of a regulated species which may be retained, taken, possessed, or landed by vessels or persons fishing for other species of fish;

(F) require records of operations to be kept by any master or other person in charge of any fishing vessel;

(G) require such clearance certificates for vessels as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of the Convention and this Act;

20 UST 2887.

(H) require proof satisfactory to the Secretary that any fish subject to regulation pursuant to a recommendation of the Commission offered for entry into the United States has not been taken or retained contrary to the recommendations of the Commission made pursuant to article VIII of the Convention which have been adopted as regulations pursuant to this section; and

(I) impose such other requirements and provide for such other measures as the Secretary may deem necessary to implement any recommendation of the Commission.

(4) Upon the promulgation of regulations provided for in paragraph (3) of this subsection, the Secretary shall promulgate, with the concurrence of the Secretary of State and pursuant to the procedures prescribed in paragraph (2) of this subsection, additional regulations which shall become effective simultaneously with the application of the regulations provided for in paragraph (3) of this subsection, which prohibit—

Regulations.

(A) the entry into the United States of fish in any form of those species which are subject to regulation pursuant to a recommendation of the Commission and which were taken from the Convention area in such manner or in such circumstances as would tend to diminish the effectiveness of the conservation recommendations of the Commission; and

(B) the entry into the United States, from any country when the vessels of such country are being used in the conduct of fishing operations in the Convention area in such manner or in such circumstances as would tend to diminish the effectiveness of the conservation recommendations of the Commission, of fish in any form of those species which are subject to regulation pursuant to a recommendation of the Commission and which were taken from the Convention area.

(5) In the case of repeated and flagrant fishing operations in the Convention area by the vessels of any country which seriously threaten the achievement of the objectives of the Commission's recommendations, the Secretary with the concurrence of the Secretary of State, may by regulations promulgated pursuant to paragraph (2) of this subsection prohibit the entry in any form from such country of other species covered by the Convention as may be under investigation by the Commission and which were taken in the Convention area. Any such prohibition shall continue until the Secretary is satisfied that the condition warranting the prohibition no longer exists, except that all fish in any form of the species under regulation which were previously prohibited from entry shall continue to be prohibited from entry.

(d)(1) Notwithstanding section 5(a) and subsection (c) of this section, the recommendations of the Commission concerning bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus thynnus*) which were proposed at the third

regular meeting of the Council during the period beginning November 20 and ending November 26, 1974, shall apply with respect to persons and vessels subject to the jurisdiction of the United States immediately upon the taking effect of the regulations required to be promulgated under paragraph (2) of this subsection.

Regulations.

Publication in  
Federal Register.

20 UST 2887.

(2) Not later than the thirtieth day after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall promulgate such regulations as may be necessary and appropriate to carry out the purposes of paragraph (1) of this subsection, including, after consultation with the Secretary of the department in which the Coast Guard is operating, regulations providing procedures and methods of enforcement. Notwithstanding provisions of section 553 of title 5 of the United States Code, such regulations may be promulgated without general notice of proposed rulemaking, and such regulations may take effect on the date they are published in the Federal Register. Such regulations shall remain in force and effect with respect to persons and vessels subject to the jurisdiction of the United States until the last date on which the recommendations referred to in paragraph (1) can take effect under paragraph (3) of article VIII of the Convention, and if such recommendations do take effect under the Convention with respect to the United States on or before such last date, such regulations shall remain in force and effect, subject to the provisions of the Convention and this Act, for so long as such recommendations are so in effect.

#### VIOLETIONS; FINES AND FORFEITURES; APPLICATION OF RELATED LAWS

16 USC 971e.

SEC. 7. (a) It shall be unlawful—

(1) for any person in charge of a fishing vessel or any fishing vessel subject to the jurisdiction of the United States to engage in fishing in violation of any regulation adopted pursuant to section 6 of this Act; or

(2) for any person subject to the jurisdiction of the United States to ship, transport, purchase, sell, offer for sale, import, export, or have in custody, possession, or control any fish which he knows, or should have known, were taken or retained contrary to the recommendations of the Commission made pursuant to article VIII of the Convention and adopted as regulations pursuant to section 6 of this Act, without regard to the citizenship of the person or vessel which took the fish.

(b) It shall be unlawful for the master or any person in charge of any fishing vessel subject to the jurisdiction of the United States to fail to make, keep, or furnish any catch returns, statistical records, or other reports as are required by regulations adopted pursuant to this Act to be made, kept, or furnished by such master or person.

(c) It shall be unlawful for the master or any person in charge of any fishing vessel subject to the jurisdiction of the United States to refuse to permit any person authorized to enforce the provisions of this Act and any regulations adopted pursuant thereto, to board such vessel and inspect its catch, equipment, books, documents, records, or other articles or question the persons onboard in accordance with the provisions of this Act, or the Convention, as the case may be, or to obstruct such officials in the execution of such duties.

(d) It shall be unlawful for any person to import, in violation of any regulation adopted pursuant to section 6(c) or (d) of this Act, from any country, any fish in any form of those species subject to regulation pursuant to a recommendation of the Commission, or any fish in any form not under regulation but under investigation by the

Commission, during the period such fish have been denied entry in accordance with the provisions of section 6 (c) or (d) of this Act. In the case of any fish as described in this subsection offered for entry in the United States, the Secretary shall require proof satisfactory to him that such fish is not ineligible for such entry under the terms of section 6 (c) or (d) of this Act.

(e) (1) Any person who—

(A) violates any provision of subsection (a) of this section shall be assessed a civil penalty of not more than \$25,000, and for any subsequent violation of such subsection (a) shall be assessed a civil penalty of not more than \$50,000;

(B) violates any provision of subsection (b) or (c) of this section shall be assessed a civil penalty of not more than \$1,000, and for any subsequent violation of such subsection (b) or (c) shall be assessed a civil penalty of not more than \$5,000; or

(C) violates any provision of subsection (d) of this section shall be assessed a civil penalty of not more than \$100,000.

(2) The Secretary is responsible for the assessment of the civil penalties provided for in paragraph (1). The Secretary may remit or mitigate any civil penalty assessed by him under this subsection for good cause shown.

(3) No penalty shall be assessed under this subsection unless the person accused of committing any violation is given notice and opportunity for a hearing with respect to such violation. Notice and hearing.

(4) Upon any failure of any person to pay a penalty assessed under this subsection, the Secretary may request the Attorney General to institute a civil action in a district court of the United States for any district in which such person is found, resides, or transacts business to collect the penalty and such court shall have jurisdiction to hear and decide any such action. Civil action.

(f) All fish taken or retained in violation of subsection (a) of this section, or the monetary value thereof, may be forfeited. Forfeiture.

(g) All provisions of law relating to the seizure, judicial forfeiture, and condemnation of a cargo for violation of the customs laws, the disposition of such cargo or the proceeds from the sale thereof, and the remission or mitigation of such forfeitures shall apply to seizures and forfeitures incurred, or alleged to have been incurred, under the provisions of this Act, insofar as such provisions of law are applicable and not inconsistent with the provisions of this Act.

#### ENFORCEMENT

SEC. 8. (a) Any person authorized in accordance with the provisions of this Act to enforce the provisions of this Act and the regulations issued thereunder may— 16 USC 971f.

(1) with or without a warrant, board any vessel subject to the jurisdiction of the United States and inspect such vessel and its catch and, if as a result of such inspection, he has reasonable cause to believe that such vessel or any person on board is engaging in operations in violation of this Act or any regulations issued thereunder, he may, with or without a warrant or other process, arrest such person;

(2) arrest, with or without a warrant, any person who violates the provisions of this Act or any regulation issued thereunder in his presence or view;

(3) execute any warrant or other process issued by an officer or court of competent jurisdiction; and

(4) seize, whenever and wherever lawfully found, all fish taken or retained by a vessel subject to the jurisdiction of the United States in violation of the provisions of this Act or any regulations issued pursuant thereto. Any fish so seized may be disposed of pursuant to an order of a court of competent jurisdiction, or, if perishable, in a manner prescribed by regulation of the Secretary.

(b) To the extent authorized under the convention or by agreements between the United States and any contracting party concluded pursuant to section 5(b) of this Act for international enforcement, the duly authorized officials of such party shall have the authority to carry out the enforcement activities specified in section 8(a) of this Act with respect to persons or vessels subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, and the officials of the United States authorized pursuant to this section shall have the authority to carry out the enforcement activities specified in section 8(a) of this Act with respect to persons or vessels subject to the jurisdiction of such party, except that where any agreement provides for arrest or seizure of persons or vessels under United States jurisdiction it shall also provide that the person or vessel arrested or seized shall be promptly handed over to a United States enforcement officer or another authorized United States official.

(c) Notwithstanding the provisions of section 2464 of title 28, United States Code, when a warrant of arrest or other process in rem is issued in any cause under this section, the marshal or other officer shall stay the execution of such process, or discharge any fish seized if the process has been levied, on receiving from the claimant of the fish a bond or stipulation for the value of the property with sufficient surety to be approved by a judge of the district court having jurisdiction of the offense, conditioned to deliver the fish seized, if condemned, without impairment in value or, in the discretion of the court, to pay its equivalent value in money or otherwise to answer the decree of the court in such cause. Such bond or stipulation shall be returned to the court and judgment thereon against both the principal and sureties may be recovered in event of any breach of the conditions thereof as determined by the court. In the discretion of the accused, and subject to the direction of the court, the fish may be sold for not less than its reasonable market value at the time of seizure and the proceeds of such sale placed in the registry of the court pending judgment in the case.

COOPERATION: COMMISSION'S FUNCTIONS NOT RESTRAINED BY THIS ACT OR STATE LAWS

16 USC 971g.

SEC. 9. (a) The United States Commissioners, through the Secretary of State and with the concurrence of the agency, institution, or organization concerned, may arrange for the cooperation of agencies of the United States Government, and of State and private institutions and organizations in carrying out the provisions of article IV of the Convention.

20 UST 2887.

(b) All agencies of the Federal Government are authorized, upon the request of the Commission, to cooperate in the conduct of scientific and other programs, and to furnish facilities and personnel for the purpose of assisting the Commission in carrying out its duties under the Convention.

20 UST 2887.

(c) None of the prohibitions deriving from this Act, or contained in the laws or regulations of any State, shall prevent the Commission from conducting or authorizing the conduct of fishing operations and biological experiments at any time for purposes of scientific investigation, or shall prevent the Commission from discharging any other duties prescribed by the Convention.

(d) (1) Except as provided in paragraph (2) of this subsection, nothing in this Act shall be construed so as to diminish or to increase the jurisdiction of any State in the territorial sea of the United States.

(2) In the event a State does not request a formal hearing and after notice by the Secretary, the regulations promulgated pursuant to this Act to implement recommendations of the Commission shall apply within the boundaries of any State bordering on any Convention area if the Secretary determines that any such State—

(A) has not, within a reasonable period of time after the promulgation of regulations pursuant to this Act, enacted laws or promulgated regulations which implement any such recommendation of the Commission within the boundaries of such State; or

(B) has enacted laws or promulgated regulations which (i) are less restrictive than the regulations promulgated pursuant to this Act, or (ii) are not effectively enforced.

If a State requests the opportunity for an agency hearing on the record, the Secretary shall not apply regulations promulgated pursuant to this Act within that State's boundaries unless the hearing record supports a determination under paragraph (A) or (B). Such regulations shall apply until the Secretary determines that the State is effectively enforcing within its boundaries measures which are not less restrictive than such regulations.

(e) To insure that the purposes of subsection (d) are carried out, the Secretary shall undertake a continuing review of the laws and regulations of all States to which subsection (d) applies or may apply and the extent to which such laws and regulations are enforced.

Laws and regulations, review.

#### APPROPRIATIONS

SEC. 10. There are authorized to be appropriated out of any moneys in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for fiscal year 1976, the period beginning July 1, 1976, and ending September 30, 1976, and fiscal year 1977 such sums as may be necessary for carrying out the purposes and provisions of this Act, including—

16 USC 971h.

(1) necessary travel expenses of the United States Commissioners, Alternate United States Commissioners, and authorized advisors in accordance with the Federal Travel Regulations and sections 5701, 5702, 5704 through 5708, and 5731 of title 5, United States Code; and

(2) the United States share of the joint expenses of the Commission as provided in article X of the convention.

SEPARABILITY

16 USC 971 note.

**SEC. 11.** If any provision of this Act or the application of such provision to any circumstance or persons shall be held invalid, the validity of the remainder of the Act and the applicability of such provision to other circumstances or persons shall not be affected thereby.

Approved August 5, 1975.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY:

- HOUSE REPORT No. 94-295 (Comm. on Merchant Marine and Fisheries).
- SENATE REPORT No. 94-269 (Comm. on Commerce).
- CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 121 (1975):
  - June 16, considered and passed House.
  - July 11, considered and passed Senate, amended.
  - July 22, House concurred in Senate amendments.