
STATES OF JERSEY



PROPOSED EXTENSION TO JERSEY OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION FOR THE CONSERVATION OF ATLANTIC TUNAS

**Presented to the States on 23rd May 2025
by the Minister for the Environment**

STATES GREFFE

REPORT

Background

This Report to the States Assembly provides an update on the proposed extension to Jersey of the International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas.

Over the past decade, shoals of Atlantic bluefin tuna (ABT; *Thunnus thynnus*) have been documented in the Channel Islands, Western English Channel, Celtic Deeps, West Coast of Ireland and the Western Isles of Scotland. Since 2016, ABT have been sighted inside Jersey's territorial waters usually during late summer and autumn months and sometimes in shoals of hundreds or possibly thousands of individuals.

Since 1966, the management of ABT within the Atlantic Ocean has been coordinated by The International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tuna (ICCAT) whose membership of 53 contracting parties includes the EU and UK. The objective of the ICCAT is to create a sustainably managed fishery for tuna (and other closely related) species within the Atlantic Ocean and adjacent waters.

The Convention

During Brexit negotiations, the UK became a contracting party to the International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (1966), the treaty which enshrines the rights and obligations of ICCAT and aims to ensure sustainable fishing and population management by signatory parties. As a Crown Dependency, Jersey is not recognised as an independent state by the UN and so cannot participate in the Convention in its own right. The UK represents Jersey as a matter of international law and, with Jersey's consent, can extend the Convention to cover the Island.

Extension of the Convention allows Jersey vessels to sustainably use this resource in Jersey territorial waters. Currently, the UK authorise charter, recreational and commercial fisheries for ABT. The UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) have authorised charter fishing to take place in Jersey territorial waters in 2025 once extension is complete. These fisheries would benefit the Island's fishing communities and allow diversification to the fishing industry.

Resources

Extension of the Convention will result in the fishery being opened. This will be managed, monitored and enforced by Marine Resources and will be business as usual. Periodic reporting to the UK Government, as State Party to the Convention, may also be required.

Next Steps

In line with the current approach to treaty extensions, following this notification to the States Assembly, the Minister for the Environment plans to sign a Ministerial Decision requesting officers to formally convey the extension request to the UK by early June 2025