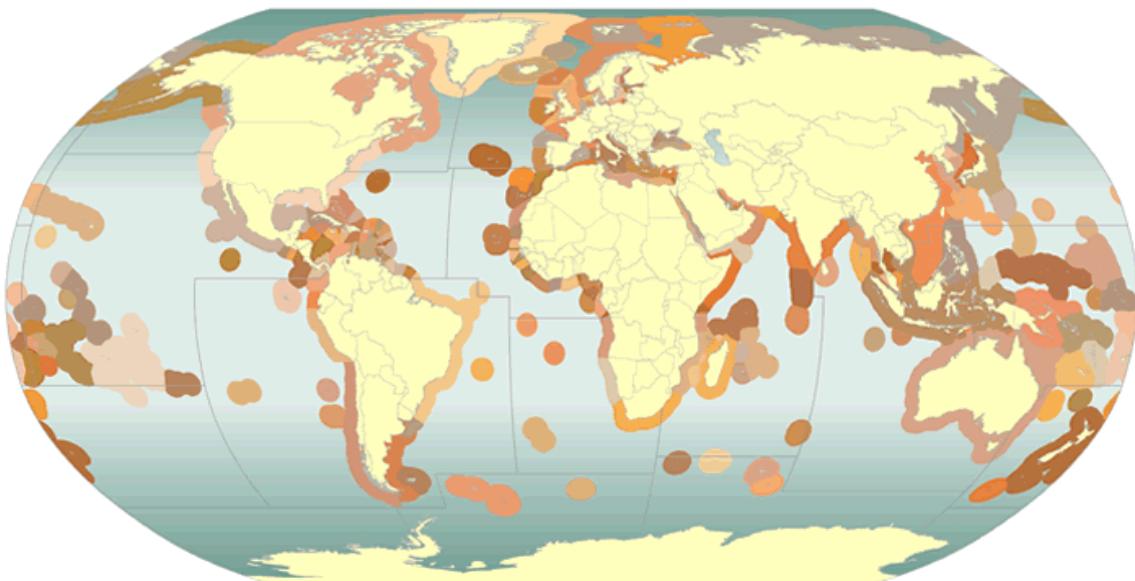


# Fishery Basics – Where do we fish?

## International Waters



Map of the world's EEZs, the blue areas are international waters where high seas fisheries occur. Source: Sea Around Us Project (<http://www.searroundus.org/eez/>).

International or **high seas fisheries** are the **fisheries** that occur either exclusively or partially in waters outside of any nation's **Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)**. There are three main groups of high seas resources: 1) **highly migratory species**, such as **species** of **Tuna**, Sharks, and Billfish, 2) **straddling stocks**, which are species that spend some part of their life cycle in the high seas, and 3) **demersal** species. Although the majority of high seas fishing occur in **pelagic** waters, there are **deep-sea fisheries** operating in international waters. These deep-sea fisheries focus their efforts near underwater mountains called **seamounts** (See Biology & Ecology) or along the **abyssal plain**.

The resources of the high seas are open to all nations; however, vessels operating in the high seas are under the jurisdiction of the country whose flag is flown from that vessel. Regulations for fishing on the high seas were first created in 1966 under the Convention on Fishing and Conservation of Living Resources of the High Seas, as part of the **United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)**. In addition to such international laws, **regional fishery management organizations (RFMOs)** were developed to manage and conserve high seas resources. RFMOs are international organizations made up of various countries that are sharing resources, which may focus on the management and conservation of a single species or a particular geographical area. For a list of Pacific RFMOs and their primary U.S. objectives as well as other Pacific region organizations and arrangements [click here to download \(pdf\)](#).

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## Additional Resources

### [Deep Sea Conservation Coalition](#)

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) – [Area Fishing Maps](#)

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) – [FAO Newsroom – Illegal Fishing and High-Seas Fisheries](#)

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) – [Marine Protected Areas in the High Seas](#)

Global Education Project – [Fishing and Aquaculture Data](#)

Sea Around Us Project – [Fisheries, Ecosystems and Biodiversity](#)



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United Nations – [1997 Update on the Agreement on High Seas Fishing](#)