



Source: (Daniels, A., Kohonen, M., Gutman, N., & Thiam, M, 2022)

***“Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing in the Atlantic”***

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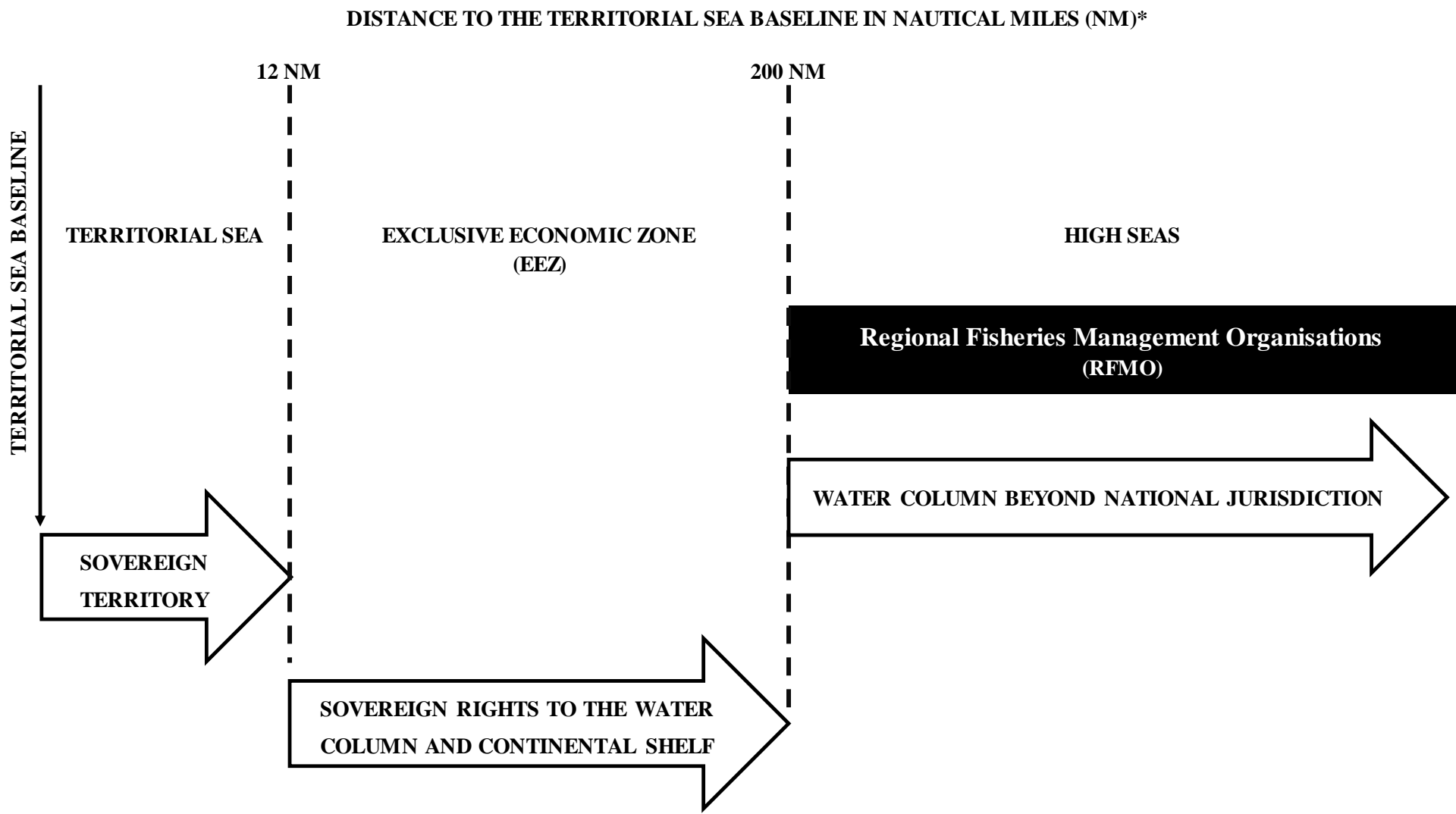
## **IUU fishing concept**

**Fishing activities are considered illegal when they are conducted without a licence or authorisation, against conservation and management measures, or against national laws / international obligations.**

**Unreported when they are not reported or misreported to the relevant authorities.**

**Unregulated when they are conducted in areas with no applicable conservation and management measures and conducted in a manner inconsistent with State responsibilities for the conservation of living marine resources, or when the fishing vessel has no nationality.**

**Source:** (European Court of Auditors, 2022)



**\* 1NM = 1852 meters**

**Source:** Adapted from (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, 1982)

Most common types of IUU fishing

	EEZ	RFMO
NATION A	Fishing without license	Fishing in RFMO without license
	Vessel with dual flags	Vessel with fake flag
	Fishing nonpermitted species	Fishing out of season
	Fishing above quota	Misreporting catches
	Fishing in prohibited area	Not reporting catches
		Fishing with illegal gear
		Failure to operate vessel monitoring system
		Transferring fish without authorization
NATION B	Unlicensed border hopping	

Source: Adapted from (US National Intelligence Council, 2016)

## **Relevance of IUU fishing**

**The world's fisheries are at risk due to rising global demand for fish, declining ocean health and continued IUU fishing.**

**IUU fishing is a major threat to marine biodiversity, sustainability and the balance of marine ecosystems around the world.**

**Some regions in the Atlantic are among the most relevant regarding this issue. Estimates put illegal catch at 40 per cent on the West Coast of Africa. But also, the South Coast of America is severely affected by IUU fishing.**

## **IUU fishing as a threat to maritime security**

**Jeopardises food and economic security of coastal communities, since the industrial fishing fleets involved in these illegal activities disrupt the economic model of coastal fishing.**

**Facilitates conflicts between countries, especially those that depend on it as a vital source of income.**

**Undermines government institutions, not only because it is lucrative for criminals, but also since it is often linked to other transnational crimes that take place at sea – such as drugs, arms or human trafficking.**

**Increases the risk of piracy and / or armed robbery at sea.**

## **2024 Atlantic Centre research project**

**The aim of this research project was to analyse IUU fishing in the Atlantic, exploring its links to other issues (such as the smuggling of drugs, weapons and people, piracy and armed robbery at sea, and maritime terrorism), and to identify innovative and tangible ways forward, with particular emphasis on the role of technology, capacity building and international cooperation, to reach concrete measures to tackle the problem.**

## **Main objectives of this research**

**Mapping IUU fishing in the Atlantic.**

**Analyse the potential links between IUU fishing and other illicit activities within the framework of transnational organized crime.**

**Propose concrete measures to combat the phenomenon of IUU fishing in the regions studied, bearing in mind the role of technology, regional capacity building and international cooperation.**



## **2024 Atlantic Centre research project**

**This project involved six specific areas of research on both shores of the Atlantic: the Northwest Atlantic, the Caribbean Sea, the Southwest Atlantic, the Northeast Atlantic, the Northern Gulf of Guinea, and the Gulf of Guinea.**

**Different approaches were considered, from the legal perspective to the threat that IUU fishing poses to marine ecosystems and the sustainable management of fish stocks, as well as to the integrity and security of coastal States.**

**Researchers**

Researcher	Country	Organisation	Paper title
Rafael Zelesco	Brazil	Brazilian Naval War College & Inter-American Defense College	Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing in the Southwest Atlantic: State Approaches and the International Law Toolbox
Andrés Trujillo & Jorge Torres	Colombia	Colombian Navy	Criminal Convergence in the Caribbean Sea: An Approach from Colombia
Juliet Obeng & Alberta Sagoe	Ghana	Gulf of Guinea Maritime Institute	Is the fight against IUU Fishing in the Gulf of Guinea a futile endeavor? A study to assess the effectiveness of IUU fishing interventions within the Gulf of Guinea
Jamal Machrouh & Abdessalam Jaldi	Morocco	Policy Center for the New South	Illegal Fishing in the Northern Gulf of Guinea: A Case Study of Senegal and Liberia
Tiago Marquês	Portugal	Autonomous University of Lisbon	Portugal's role in the EU's Security Policy for Addressing IUU Fishing Threats in the Northeast Atlantic
Jacob Aloisi	USA	United States Coast Guard	Regulatory Development and the Role of Emerging Technologies in Countering IUU Fishing: The Case of the Northwestern Atlantic

## **Conclusions**

**IUU fishing is not a specific threat to maritime security in a single region of the Atlantic. The West Coast of Africa, especially the Gulf of Guinea, is the region most affected and where the link between IUU fishing and other activities connected to transnational organised crime is more evident.**

**The capacities of States and regional organisations in the Atlantic are also very different. The region most affected (Gulf of Guinea) also has the fewest human, material and financial resources. Several actions have been identified that can be used to combat IUU fishing.**

	Regions					
IUU fishing mitigation measures	Northwest Atlantic	Caribbean Sea	Southwest Atlantic	Northeast Atlantic	Northern Gulf of Guinea	Gulf of Guinea
Increasing international cooperation	✓	✓	✓			✓
Implementation of RFMOs			✓			
Increasing coordination among States			✓			
Strengthening legal frameworks for combating IUU fishing				✓	✓	✓
Better governance		✓				✓
Identification of specific ports of entry for compliance with inspection standards					✓	
Increasing capacity building						✓
Agreements and partnerships in the field of sustainable fishing					✓	
Creation of a resource-sharing model among States					✓	
Involvement of NGOs and other non-profit organisations				✓		
Improving socio-economic conditions of the populations				✓		
Observers on board vessels	✓					
Improving electronic monitoring systems	✓	✓		✓		✓
Increasing operational effectiveness of the authorities (including military power)		✓				✓
Improving information sharing between countries affected by IUU fishing		✓				