

Removing illegally-caught fish from global seafood supply chains: How governments and industry can complement each other

Date: Tuesday, 21 April 2020, 15:00-17:00 CEST

Venue: Zoom webinar

Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing is a worldwide threat to sustainable fisheries. Key industry actors, such as retailers, importers and processors, actively seek to ensure that no illegally-caught seafood enters their supply chains through exercising due diligence. To strengthen these efforts, more effective cooperation among market States and between market and producing States who may not currently share information about fisheries or exercise control themselves, is required.

Market State measures can be particularly effective and complementary to the private sector's due diligence systems. Exemplifying this are import control and catch documentation schemes that deny market access to products sourced illegally. Market States such as the European Union, Japan and the United States can play a significant role in stopping trade in IUU products due to their majority share of trade and global leverage. However, the schemes in existence today in major market States, but also in Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs), tend to differ in how they operate and which information they request. This results not only in potential loopholes which IUU operators can exploit, but also widely different systems that create a lack of clarity and additional bureaucratic burden for industry and governments.

The EU introduced its catch documentation scheme in 2010, covering all wild-caught marine fish traded by non-EU countries into the EU market. The United States followed suit with its own set of import controls, known as the Seafood Import Monitoring Program (SIMP) in 2016, which covers 13 types of seafood identified as the most vulnerable to IUU fishing and seafood fraud. As other countries begin to develop their own systems, most notably Japan, it is vital to understand the benefits and disadvantages of these diverse systems in operation today in market States and in RFMOs. In parallel, a major seafood industry initiative—the Global Dialogue on Seafood Traceability (GDST)—has now completed the drafting of new global standards for interoperable seafood systems, aimed in part at supporting harmonisation of import controls and other relevant regulations.

An in-depth analysis of import control systems has identified a set of 17 Key Data Elements (KDEs) which have been deemed essential to stop IUU fishing products from entering the global market. Compared against this set of KDEs, the EU and US systems are currently 59% aligned with each other, demonstrating a clear opportunity for greater harmonisation and information sharing between the world's two largest seafood markets.

The EU IUU Coalition is hosting an event specifically targeted at the seafood industry in the EU and beyond to demonstrate the benefits of import controls in stopping IUU fishing and, in particular, the benefits of aligning KDEs between major market States as well as consistency among the different systems in line with best practise, which would effectively help:

- fishers and supply chain actors who currently sell, process or trade catch globally reduce the cost of complying with multiple systems,
- prevent trade diversions of illegally-caught seafood,
- drive down bureaucratic burden and,
- facilitate trade.

The EU IUU Coalition strongly believes in the business-friendly virtues of both robust and aligned import controls and will for this reason present an official **statement which industry actors can support to show unity for legal, ethical and sustainable seafood production and trade, today and for future generations.**

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THEME	SESSION
Welcome & introduction	
<p>Better alignment of import control schemes and benefits to industry</p>	<p>1. The role of market States & why their joint efforts and good governance benefit industry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Why robust import control schemes of major market States should be aligned through harmonised KDEs <p style="text-align: center;"><i>> Presentation of an industry statement</i></p> <p>1.1 The view from industry on import control scheme regulations & ways forward</p>
<p>Benefits of EU's CATCH</p> <p>and</p> <p>Aligned industry KDEs</p>	<p>2. The role and benefits of digital import control schemes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Overall benefits of digitised import control schemes, particularly for cross-checking data <p>2.1 Global Dialogue on Seafood Traceability (GDST)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Better interoperability of seafood systems through agreed standards under the GDST
<p>The PAS 1550:2017 in practice – Advantages for industry</p>	<p>3. A Code of Practice to help industry mitigate IUU risks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The PAS – A supply chain due diligence tool to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - mitigate risks from IUU fishery products - meet ethical working condition standards - demonstrate full-chain traceability
Conclusions & future engagement	