



Pacific Islands Tuna Industry Association

Coral Triangle Fishers Forum

Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) and Traceability for
Fishing Communities and Industry June 18th – 20th 2012
Suva, Fiji

This paper addresses ways in which the Industry can become involved in the process to eliminate and deter IUU fishing. It also raises the prospect of market place controls through an effective Catch Documentation Scheme (CDS)

The general concept of an IUU vessel is one that fishes in a “pirate” capacity with no home base within its area of operation. Anecdotal Industry evidence suggests that, in practice, much of the IUU fishing in the Pacific is encroachment into EEZ’s by vessels holding some form of approval - be it an EEZ or High Seas licence. So an IUU vessel is more often one which is registered to fish in the WCPFC area but practices illegal fishing activity by fishing where it shouldn’t.

Despite all the monitoring by VMS, air, sea surveillance and in port inspections IUU fishing continues. To date there has been no formal attempt to involve the legitimate fishers in any monitoring role. On the contrary secrecy by some PIC’s as to who holds licences to fish is a disincentive to Industry involvement.

No one sector of the fishing industry is more interested in reducing IUU fishing other than legitimate fishers themselves. However, for the most part, there is no way of telling whether the vessel fishing alongside you should be there. Or – if you suspect that he shouldn’t be – no quick and precise way of informing the authorities. In National jurisdictions, where there is a tight fisheries management regime, it is a well-known fact that the majority of “offenses” reported are from Industry sources.

This is logical as the financial cost of being “legitimate” is high and where CPUE’s are under pressure there is every reason to “dob in” an illegal operator. Thus there is a willing and effective source of “at sea” monitoring which currently is not being used. It is also available at little cost!

To successfully introduce Industry at sea monitoring there needs to be;

- (a) A public record of all approved vessels showing the permits held, issued by who and for which area. Thus a “chartered” vessel could have a EEZ permit issued by the coastal state and a High Seas permit by the Flag state. This public record should be updated as it changes. The current FFA and WCPFC vessel lists are not compatible and do not provide permit area detail
- (b) An instant reporting system via Inmarsat and radio to a central control centre and the flag state of the reporting vessel.
- (c) An agreed template detailing the information to be included in the report.
- (d) All vessels to display both EEZ and High Seas approval permit numbers.
- (e) All vessels fishing within the WCPFC over 100 gt to display IMO numbers (to seek agreement within IMO to include fishing vessels to 50 gt)



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The final and ultimate control of all fishing effort is in the market place. Of all RFMO's the WCPFC has the highest export percentage of all. There is an urgent need to adopt an effective Catch Documentation Scheme (CDS)

CDS by the WCPFC.

Having established a CDS it is necessary to convince the importing nations to honour and adopt the system. The effectiveness of this has been proved within CCSBT where a "Trade Information Scheme" (TIS) was replaced with a effective CDS AND Japan – being the principle market for Southern Bluefin introduced rigid import monitoring. For CDS to work the importing nations must register their approved Seafood importers under a licence system. A condition of retaining the right to import and trade Seafood the importer must match import documents with the CDS. Customs authorities at the port of entry not to clear consignments unless the CDS documentation is supplied with and agrees with the Bill of Lading. The EU/EC, in the absence, of a WCPFC CDS now require their own CDS for all exports to the EU and the system works precisely as described .

It will be a test of the importing nation's genuine concern over IUU to see how quickly they introduce a licenced importer scheme. In fact the number of seafood importers internationally is not large and most are known within a tight circle of traders. If a WCPFC CDS were in place it would not be difficult to get individual traders to sign off on an agreement to comply with a CDS/Bill of Lading matching scheme ahead of any regulatory requirement of their government. Such Industry control mechanisms are already appearing in other sectors and under the auspices of Trade organisations.

The two proposals described previously are indicative as to how Industry – at both ends of the sustainability chain – can assist in reducing IUU activity. Obviously there are other measures of a more practical and detailed nature but they are not discussed here.

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