



# Seafood Exporter Toolkit

Navigating Import Control Schemes for  
a Transparent Global Supply Chain

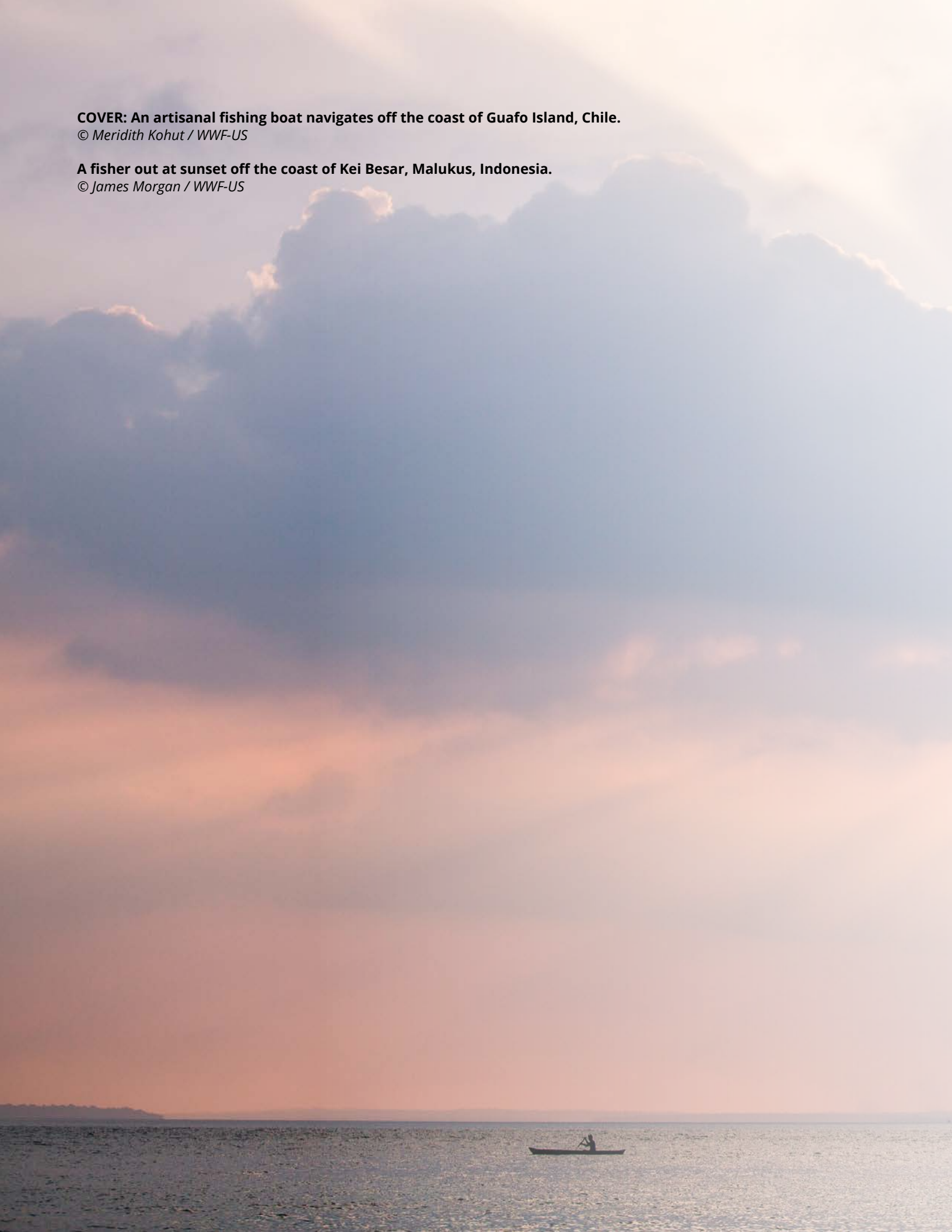


**COVER: An artisanal fishing boat navigates off the coast of Guafo Island, Chile.**

© *Meridith Kohut / WWF-US*

**A fisher out at sunset off the coast of Kei Besar, Maluku, Indonesia.**

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## ACRONYMS

ACE – US Customs and Border Protection’s Automated Commercial Environment  
AIDCP – US Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program  
AMR – US Antarctic Marine Living Resources (AMR) Program  
ASFIS – Aquatic Sciences Fishery Information System  
CBP – US Customs and Border Protection  
CC – catch certificate  
CCAMLR – Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources  
CCSBT – Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna  
CDS – catch documentation scheme  
CITES - Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora  
COO – certificate of origin  
CSDDD – EU Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive  
CTE – critical tracking event  
eBCD – ICCAT Electronic Bluefin Tuna Catch Documentation  
EC – European Commission  
EEZ – exclusive economic zone  
EM – electronic monitoring  
EMS – electronic monitoring system  
EU – European Union  
FAO – Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations  
FDA – US Food and Drug Administration  
FLETF – US Forced Labor Enforcement Task Force  
FLT – Food traceability list  
FoC – flag of convenience  
FSMA – US FDA Food Safety Modernization Act  
GDST – Global Dialogue on Seafood Traceability  
HMS – highly migratory species  
HTS code – Harmonized tariff schedule code  
IATTC – Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission  
ICCAT – International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas  
ICS – Import Control Scheme  
IFTP - International Fisheries Trade Permit  
ILO – International Labor Organization  
IMO – International Maritime Organization  
IOTC – Indian Ocean Tuna Commission  
IPOA – international plan of action  
ITDS – International Trade Data System  
IUU Fishing – Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing  
KDE – Key data element  
MMPA – US Marine Mammal Protection Act  
NFQS – Korea National Fishery Product Quality Management Service  
NOAA – US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
NPOA – national plan of action  
OECD – Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development  
PORT-MIS – Port Management Information System  
PSMA – Food and Agriculture Organization’s Agreement on Port State Measures  
RFMO – Regional Fisheries Management Organization  
SCC – simplified catch certificate  
SIMP – US Seafood Import Monitoring Program  
STS – seafood traceability system  
TTVP – US Tuna Tracking and Verification Program  
UFLPA – US Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act  
UNODC – United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime  
US – United States of America  
UVI – unique vessel identifier  
VMS – vessel monitoring system  
WRO – withhold and release order  
WTO – World Trade Organization

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## How to Use the Toolkit

This toolkit is structured to guide exporters, governments, and enforcement agencies through the various aspects of seafood import control measures and areas for advocacy. It includes:

- **Section 1: Introduction.** Critical context and background that explores why import control schemes (ICSs) matter and how ICSs can address illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing and forced labor in seafood supply chains.
- **Section 2: Country Profiles.** Detailed overviews of the main ICSs for the EU, US, Japan, and Korea, including a brief introduction to the program, key components, species or products covered, and information collected by each scheme.
- **Section 3: Additional Policies and Resources.** Information on other import control policies, where to find additional resources, compliance guides, audit guides, and more information.
- **Section 4: Advocacy.** How to advocate for stronger, harmonized import controls, resources, and specific suggestions for exporters, governments, and enforcement agencies.



SECTION 1

# INTRODUCTION

Understanding what import control schemes (ICSs) are, what they can do, and why they are important in the global context

## Learning objectives

- understand the goal of the toolkit and how to use it
- examine the importance of ICSs and how they can help combat illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing and forced labor in seafood
- review the context of the toolkit. Learn about IUU fishing and forced labor impacts on seafood

Indigenous Communities Organize the Wafo-Wapi Initiative to Protect Chile's Guafo Island.

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## Goal of the Toolkit

The highly globalized, complex nature of seafood trade flows and differing market requirements can be challenging to navigate. With new countries developing ICSs, it is more important than ever to understand the existing regulations for best practices so companies can better predict the coming changes.

This toolkit recognizes the challenges that exporters face in navigating the varying requirements of international trade programs. It also acknowledges the power that exporters have in advocating for stronger and more harmonized import controls that safeguard supply chains, promote sustainability, and improve compliance by reducing the recordkeeping burden.

The primary objectives of the toolkit are to provide exporters with the knowledge and resources necessary to navigate the landscape of seafood regulations and to identify the tools that exporters have to advocate for strengthening and harmonizing these systems. Strong advocacy involves understanding existing regulations, identifying areas for improvement, and participating in ongoing dialogue with policymakers and other stakeholders. Key benefits of utilizing this toolkit include:

- **Mitigating risk and liability.** By supporting robust seafood regulations, especially import control rules, exporters can reduce the risk of IUU products entering their supply chains, protecting their businesses from potential legal and reputational harm.
- **Enhancing traceability and transparency.** Adoption of electronic traceability systems, alignment with existing seafood traceability standards, and leveraging artificial intelligence and machine learning can support improved supply chain transparency and facilitate regulatory compliance.
- **Promoting harmonization.** Advocating for standardized data requirements across the major market states' ICSs supports more efficient, streamlined data collection and reporting.

The highly globalized, complex nature of seafood trade flows and differing market requirements can be challenging to navigate.

## Why do import control schemes (ICSs) matter?

ICSs are an important tool that market states can use to drive change within the global seafood market. Governments can push for more responsible fisheries management and governance around the world by establishing basic standards and conditions for importing seafood. While this helps drive change in countries these major market states source from, conversely, exporting states have the power to push for better, stronger, and more harmonized ICSs.

Most ICSs, in the context of fisheries, are regulatory systems that use catch documentation and traceability requirements to ensure that products entering the market are legal. This can be supplemented by technology and other tools such as electronic monitoring (EM), digitized recordkeeping, and risk-based screening. Effective ICSs also include robust enforcement, including tools such as port restrictions and trade sanctions, among other measures. ICSs should also help ensure compliance with national, regional, and international fisheries management regulations.

Robust import controls can be a vital part of deterring and preventing products linked to IUU fishing and forced labor from entering the market.

## FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS (FAO)—DEFINITION OF IUU FISHING<sup>1</sup>

### Illegal Fishing

FAO defines illegal fishing as fishing

- conducted by national or foreign vessels in waters under the jurisdiction of a State, without the permission of that State, or in contravention of its laws and regulations
- conducted by vessels flying the flag of States that are parties to a relevant regional fisheries management organization but operate in contravention of the conservation and management measures adopted by that organization and by which the States are bound, or relevant provisions of the applicable international law
- in violation of national laws or international obligations, including those undertaken by cooperating States to a relevant regional fisheries management organization

### Unreported Fishing

FAO defines unreported fishing as fishing

- that has not been reported, or has been misreported, to the relevant national authority, in contravention of national laws and regulations
- undertaken in the area of competence of a relevant regional fisheries management organization that has not been reported or has been misreported, in contravention of the reporting procedures of that organization

### Unregulated Fishing

FAO defines unregulated fishing as fishing

- in the area of application of a relevant regional fisheries management organization that is conducted by vessels without nationality, or by those flying the flag of a State not party to that organization, or by a fishing entity, in a manner that is not consistent with or contravenes the conservation and management measures of that organization
- in areas or for fish stocks to which there are no applicable conservation or management measures and where such fishing activities are conducted in a manner inconsistent with State responsibilities for the conservation of living marine resources under international law

## Import Controls and Disincentivizing IUU Fishing

IUU fishing operations benefit from opaque and complex supply chains as they allow illegal operators to avoid detection and accountability. Import controls improve transparency by recording data from harvest through transshipment, landing, and processing. Risk-based inspections and verifications of catch data promote cooperation with relevant states, and, along with other import control techniques, help identify and prevent IUU fishing operations, ensuring these products are excluded from the market. Interoperable systems or systems with built-in mutual assistance or data exchange mechanisms can also act in unison, preventing unscrupulous operators from hopping to a different market.

### IUU Facts

- IUU fishing is one of the greatest global environmental threats to ocean health. IUU fishing directly contributes to overfishing, threatening the sustainability of fisheries and marine ecosystems; undermines coastal communities and food security; destabilizes the security of maritime states; economically disadvantages fishers operating legally; and drives human trafficking and labor and other human rights abuses in the fishing industry. Left unchecked, IUU fishing will significantly exacerbate the impacts of climate change on ecosystems and communities.<sup>2,3</sup>
- It is estimated that IUU fishing represents up to 26 million tonnes of fish caught annually.<sup>4</sup>
- The devastating environmental and human consequences of IUU fishing disproportionately affect coastal communities in developing countries that rely on fisheries for their livelihood or protein, as well as vulnerable workers and migrant populations in the fisheries sector.<sup>5</sup>
- IUU fishing undermines national and regional fisheries management efforts to responsibly manage fish stocks and undercuts the competitiveness of honest fishers.<sup>6</sup>
- Practices like transshipment and flying flags of convenience help obscure IUU fishing activities and make it even more difficult to identify and track cases for enforcement agencies.<sup>2,7</sup>



## Import Controls and Combatting Forced Labor

Human and labor rights abuses are prevalent in IUU fishing, including physical violence, debt bondage, human trafficking, and forced labor. Import controls that incorporate labor-related data elements into their documentation requirements have a greater chance of detecting and deterring human and labor rights abuses. By doing so, importing countries can prevent inadvertently supporting human rights abuses while holding perpetrators accountable.

### Forced Labor in Fisheries

- IUU fishing is often considered a low-risk, high-reward activity that is frequently intertwined with other criminal activities like document forgery, money laundering, forced labor, and trafficking of humans, wildlife, and drugs. When vessels are already evading laws, they may be more willing to further drive down costs by exploiting workers through forced labor.<sup>8,9,10</sup>
- The International Labor Organization (ILO) defines forced labor as “all work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily.”<sup>11</sup>
- The ILO’s *2021 Global Estimates of Modern Slavery: Forced Labour and Forced Marriage* indicate that at least 128,000 people are at sea in forced labor situations worldwide. However, the isolated nature of the fisheries sector makes it difficult to adequately evaluate and contributes to the extreme vulnerability that comes with work at sea. This figure likely significantly understates the full extent of the problem.<sup>12</sup>
- Labor costs can account for up to 60% of vessel expenses, which can drive fishing operators to take advantage of cheaper labor pools from poorer countries to try and decrease costs and give them a competitive advantage. Migrant fishers are extremely vulnerable to traffickers, exploitative brokers, and abusive captains.<sup>12</sup>
- Document fraud, debt bondage, and withholding wages are also common practices associated with forced labor at sea, further exploiting the vulnerability and isolation of these workers. Furthermore, as many ships lack reliable access to regular channels of communication such as Wi-Fi, grievance mechanisms, if present, are ineffective.<sup>12</sup>
- On the high seas, workers on distant water fishing vessels often work 18 to 20 hours per day when in fishing grounds, resulting in extreme physical and mental fatigue that increases the likelihood of accidents.<sup>13</sup>
- Mental and physical abuse is common, as supervisors seek to push workers into longer hours and more intense work. Some workers are at sea for many months or even years, enabled by transshipment vessels that offload catch and resupply the fishing vessels.<sup>13</sup>
- The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) noted the severity of abuse fishers faced who were trafficked aboard fishing vessels for forced labor. Fishers can be held as de facto prisoners at sea, and there have been several reported cases of deaths, severe physical and sexual abuse, and coercion, along with a general disregard for the safety and working conditions of fishers.<sup>14,15</sup>
- Labor abuses can flourish under weak or ineffective management regimes, especially on vessels operating under a flag of convenience (FoC), registered to a country with limited capacity or interest in enforcing fishing or labor laws.<sup>2</sup>

SECTION 2

# COUNTRY PROFILES

An in-depth overview of the primary seafood ICSs for the EU, US, Japan, and Korea

## Learning objectives

- understand the different import control regulations for the four focal regions and their key elements
- examine what species are covered and what information is collected
- assess the required key data elements (KDEs) and potential risks to compliance



## COUNTRY PROFILES

## EU

**Introduction**

In 2008, the EU introduced the Regulation to prevent, deter, and eliminate IUU fishing (EU IUU Regulation), making it the first major ICS for seafood. The regulation aims to ensure that only legal marine fisheries products are imported to or exported from the EU, and that a regularly updated IUU vessel list is maintained. The EU can blacklist states failing to address IUU fishing, and impose penalties on EU operators engaged in illegal fishing to strip profits and deter such activities. The EU IUU Regulation applies to all landings and transshipments of EU and non-EU fishing vessels in EU ports, and all trade of marine fishery products to and from the EU. Flag states are required to certify the origin and legality of the fish to ensure full traceability of all marine fishery products in the EU.

- The EU is the largest seafood importer in the world by value. In 2023, EU imports amounted to 5.9 million tonnes, worth approximately US\$31.6 billion.<sup>16</sup>
- Main seafood products imported into the EU include salmon, shrimp, cod, and tuna.<sup>16</sup>
- Norway, China, the UK, and Morocco were the top seafood exporting countries to the EU.<sup>17</sup>
- According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)-FAO Outlook forecasts, in 2024, seafood consumption in the EU averaged 20.96 kg per capita.<sup>18</sup>

## What is it?

The EU IUU Regulation entered into force in 2010, establishing a system of tools for the EU to combat IUU fishing. The EU IUU Regulation has several parts that work in tandem: designated ports, port inspections, the catch certificate scheme, the EU list of IUU vessels, and the identification of non-cooperating non-EU countries.

## Key Components

### Carding Scheme

The third country carding process, also known as the EU carding scheme, allows the EU to identify non-EU member states that are not fulfilling their international duties to deter, prevent, and eliminate IUU fishing as flag, port, coastal, or market states. The scheme is meant to incentivize stronger fisheries management and prevent IUU fishing activities. There are four main steps of the carding scheme:

**Step 1, Dialogue.** When a country enters the carding scheme, the EU begins conversations with that country to try and establish a system of cooperation. Dialogues continue throughout the entire carding process. If a country cooperates during the dialogue stage, it is given a green card and carding is not deemed necessary.

**Step 2, “Pre-identification” stage or yellow card.** Yellow cards serve as a warning to countries that the EU has begun dialogues that indicate the EU has not seen progress since the dialogues began and the country is at risk of being escalated to a red card and listed as a “non-cooperating country.”

**Step 3, “Identification” stage or red card.** If a country is unable to demonstrate improvement, has not cooperated with the EU, or has seen an increase in IUU activities, the country receives a red card.

**Step 4, Non-cooperating country.** Red-carded countries are officially listed as “non-cooperating,” which results in an immediate ban on all exports from vessels flying that country’s flag. EU-flagged vessels cannot fish in the waters of red-carded countries.

Yellow or red cards can be lifted at any time if the country demonstrates that it has taken meaningful action to remedy the situation that led to the carding in the first place.

The carding scheme is primarily a tool of engagement that the EU uses to combat IUU fishing activities around the world and prevent IUU seafood and products from entering the market.

If countries can show that they have made progress in addressing the EU’s concerns, red or yellow cards can be lifted. Once a country is delisted or given a green card, the country can resume exporting to the EU market.

## IUU Vessel List

The EU maintains a list of vessels that have been found engaging in IUU fishing activities. The list is updated every three months and published in the Official Journal of the European Union with the following details for each vessel:

- name and previous names, if any
- flag and previous flags, if any
- owner and, where relevant, previous owners, including beneficial owners, if any
- operator and, where relevant, previous operators, if any
- call sign and previous call signs, if any
- Lloyd's/International Maritime Organization (IMO) number, where available
- photographs, where available
- date of first inclusion on the IUU Vessel list
- summary of activities that justify the inclusion of the vessel, together with references to all relevant documents informing of and evidencing those activities

Any vessels listed in regional fisheries management organizations (RFMO) IUU vessel lists are automatically included in the EU IUU vessel list. The list is shared with all member states, RFMOs, and FAO, as well as any civil society members who request to be notified.

## Catch Certificate Scheme

According to the EU IUU Regulation, all fisheries products must be accompanied by import documents called catch certificates, which must be validated by the flag state. These documents certify that the products were caught in compliance with all national and international fishing laws, conservation measures, and fisheries management measures. For small-scale fisheries products, there is a separate simplified catch certification scheme.

Catch documentation must be submitted at least three working days before the estimated time of arrival at port.

## CATCH IT

In May 2019, the European Commission announced the launch of its new IT system for catch certificates, called CATCH, which provides a real-time IT system for managing all procedures linked to the EU Catch Certificate Scheme. The goal of CATCH is to create a more streamlined process that enables a fully digitized, paperless workflow. This also facilitates the exchange of data, information, and documents between all parties and simplifies the process for greater speed and efficiency. As of January 10, 2026, CATCH will be mandatory for EU importers for the submission of catch certificates and related documents but will remain voluntary for non-EU countries' exporters and authorities.

## WHAT SPECIES ARE COVERED?

The catch certificate scheme applies to all unprocessed or processed catches but does not include freshwater fish, ornamental fish, aquaculture products obtained from fry or larvae, or certain mollusks.

Products excluded from the definition of "fishery products":

- freshwater fishery products
- aquaculture products obtained from fry or larvae
- ornamental fish
- oysters, live
- scallops, including queen scallops, of the genera *Pecten*, *Chlamys*, or *Placopecten*, live, fresh, or chilled
- coquilles St Jacques (*Pecten maximus*), frozen
- other scallops, fresh or chilled
- mussels
- snails, other than those obtained from the sea
- prepared and preserved mollusks



Atlantic cod.

© Gilbert Van Ryckevorsel / WWF-Canada

## What information is collected for the catch certificate scheme?

Catch Certificate Scheme	
<p><b>Box 1—Validating Authority</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name</li> <li>• Country, ISO Code, CCA, Address, UN/LOCODE</li> </ul>	<p>The purpose of this box is to select the validating authority that is controlling the activities of the fishing vessel (i.e. the flag State of the fishing vessel).</p> <p>If the country you wish to insert does not appear in the list, it means that the flag State is not a notified country or is identified/listed as non-cooperating country.</p>
<p><b>Box 8—Exporter</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name</li> <li>• Country, ISO Code, Activity Type, Activity ID, and Address</li> </ul>	<p>Complete with the information of the exporter.</p>
<p><b>Local Reference Number</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document number</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Box 2—Fishing Vessel—Fishing License</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Country, Home port, National Regional Number, IMO Number, Call Sign, Inmarsat Number, and Type of processing authorized on board</li> </ul>	<p>This box is automatically partially completed (Country, Home port, National Regional Number, IMO Number, Call Sign, Inmarsat Number and Type of processing authorized on board) after selecting the “Fishing vessel” in box 3.</p>
<p><b>Box 3—Description of Products</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Species—FAO code or name of species</li> <li>• Fishing Vessel <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Country—flag state of the vessel</li> <li>◦ Name</li> <li>◦ Type—select fishing vessel, freezing vessel, or factory vessel</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Catch Area</li> <li>• From date</li> <li>• Final date</li> <li>• Estimated weight to be landed, Estimated live weight <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Where appropriate, also complete the Verified weight landed</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>The purpose of this box is to complete, for each commodity, the mandatory sections “Species”, “Fishing Vessel”, “Catch Area”, “From date”, “Final date”, “Estimated weight to be landed” and/or “Estimated live weight”.</p>
<p><b>Box 4—References of applicable conservation and management measures</b></p>	<p>This box is a mandatory free-text box, meaning you can directly type any textual information.</p> <p>Type the conservation and management measures associated with the species for which the catch certificate was issued, present in the original catch certificate.</p>
<p><b>Box 5—Master of fishing vessel</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Country—flag state of the vessel</li> <li>• Name</li> <li>• Signature and Seal</li> </ul>	<p>The purpose of this mandatory section is to provide the name of the master(s) of the fishing vessel and to confirm the presence of signature and seal on the original catch certificate.</p>
<p><b>Box 6—Declaration of transshipment at sea</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Master of the fishing vessel, signature date, and signature</li> <li>• Estimated weight, transshipment date, and transshipment position</li> <li>• Master of receiving vessel, signature, and receiving vessel</li> </ul>	<p>This box should be completed only if applicable.</p>

<p><b>Box 7—Transshipment authorization within a port area</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Authority</li> <li>• Port of landing and date of landing</li> <li>• Name and signature</li> </ul>	This box should be completed only if applicable.
<p><b>Box 8—Exporter</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Date of signature of the exporter</li> <li>• Supporting documents</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Box 9—Flag State authority validation</b></p>	The purpose of this mandatory box is to provide the validation data from the Flag State Authority in accordance with the original catch certificate.
<p><b>Box 10—Transport details</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Country of exportation</li> <li>• Port/Airport/other place of departure</li> <li>• Means of transport—select rail, road vehicle, airplane, or ship</li> <li>• Container No./Seal No.</li> </ul>	The purpose of this mandatory box is to provide detailed transport information, in order to guarantee complete traceability of fishery products for import.

**Catch Certificate Guide**

**Simplified Catch Certificate**

The electronic version of the "European Community Catch Certificate" creation page is displayed, providing you the following information tabs:

- \* Details of Catch - where you need to enter the details of the certificate itself.
- \* List of vessels - where you need to enter the list of small fishing vessels where catches stem from.
- \* Transport details - where you need to enter the details of box 6.

<p><b>Commodities—Harmonized System code</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Details of Catch</li> <li>• List of Vessels</li> <li>• Transport Details</li> <li>• Current Status</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Validating Authority</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name</li> <li>• Country, ISO Code, CCA, Address, UN/LOCODE</li> </ul>	The purpose of this box is to select the validating authority that is controlling the activities of the fishing vessels (i.e. the flag State of the fishing vessels).
<p><b>Box 4—Exporter</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name</li> <li>• Country, ISO Code, Activity Type, Activity ID and Address</li> </ul>	Complete with the information of the exporter.
<p><b>Local Reference Number</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document number</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Box 1—Description of products</b></p>	The purpose of this box is to show the pre-selected commodity (ies).
<p><b>Box 2—References of applicable conservation and management measures</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting documents</li> </ul>	<p>Box 2 - This box is a mandatory free-text box, meaning you can directly type any textual information.</p> <p>Type the conservation and management measures associated with the species for which the catch certificate was issued, present in the original catch certificate.</p>



<b>Box 3—List of vessels and commodities</b>	By clicking on “List of Vessels” you are redirected to the “List of vessels” tab.
<b>Box 4—Exporter</b> • Date of the signature of the exporter • Signature and Seal	
<b>Box 5—Flag State authority validation</b> • List of Vessels Tab • Species • Fishing vessel • Port of Landing • Quantity • Fishing Vessels—Fishing License	The purpose of this mandatory box is to provide the validation data from the Flag State Authority in accordance with the original simplified catch certificate.
<b>Box 6—Transport details</b> • Country of exportation • Port/airport/other place of departure • Means of transport	The purpose of this mandatory box is to provide detailed transport information, in order to guarantee complete traceability of fishery products for import.

### Simplified Catch Certificate Guide

## DETAILED KDE CHART

	KDE	EU
Who	Vessel name	Required
	Unique vessel identifier (IMO number)	Required - From January 2026
	Vessel flag	Required
	International radio call sign (IRCS)	Required
	Information on exporter/re-exporter	Required
	Identity of import company	Required
What	Product type	Required
	Species name—ASFIS 3-alpha code	Required
	Estimated live weight	Required
	Processed weight	Required
	Transshipment declaration and authorization of transshipment at sea, IMO number, and vessel master information	Required
When	Event date	Required
Where	Catch area (better defined with a clear distinction between the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and the high seas)	Required - From January 2026
	Authorization to fish	Required
	Port of landing	Not Required
	Processing location	Required
How	Fishing gear type or catch method	Required - From January 2026

# COUNTRY PROFILES

# US

## Introduction

Four main import control programs for seafood are monitored by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA): Seafood Import Monitoring Program (SIMP), Tuna Tracking and Verification Program (TTVP), Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) International Trade Program, and Antarctic Marine Living Resources (AMR) Program. These programs aim to help ensure trade that supports sustainable fisheries and food security, complements other policy efforts, and prevents products that do not meet the criteria of admissibility to US markets from entering the country, including products resulting from IUU fishing. Although the four import programs cover different species and products, NOAA harmonized the reporting and recordkeeping requirements of the four trade monitoring programs under the International Fisheries Trade Permit (IFTP). Similar harvest, landing, and/or chain of custody information required under SIMP may also be necessary for the Tuna Tracking and Verification Program and/or Highly Migratory Species Trade Permit, depending on the product. The International Trade Data System business rules are written to ensure that each data element is reported only once in a given case.

As the most comprehensive of the four programs, SIMP is featured as the main seafood ICS for the US. For other US import policies, see Section 3.

- The US is the second largest importer of fisheries and aquaculture products by value, which totaled 3.5 million tonnes, worth US\$25.5 billion, in 2023.<sup>16</sup>
- The top products imported to the US included Atlantic salmon, warm-water shrimp, snow crab, tuna, and lobster.<sup>16</sup>
- Canada, Chile, India, Ecuador, and China were the top exporters to the US.<sup>16</sup>
- According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)-FAO Outlook forecasts, in 2024, per capita seafood consumption was estimated at 22.81 kg.<sup>18</sup>

Group of giant tuna.

© Shutterstock / Guido Montaldo / WWF

## The Seafood Import Monitoring Program (SIMP)

### What is it?

SIMP establishes permitting, data reporting, and recordkeeping requirements for the importation of certain fish and fish products. The program was created in 2016 by the recommendation of the Presidential Task Force on IUU Fishing and Seafood Fraud. Currently, SIMP covers 13 species and species groups (1,100 unique species) that have been identified as vulnerable to IUU fishing or seafood fraud. The goal of SIMP is to deter IUU fishing and fraudulent seafood from entering the US by requiring the importer of record to provide and report key chain of custody data from the point of harvest to the point of entry into US commerce. SIMP only applies to seafood entering the US from a third country; this includes products that were originally harvested domestically but were processed, reprocessed, and/or stored outside of the US before re-entering for sale in the US.

### Key Components

#### 1. Reporting

- Data on the import harvest and landing must be submitted through the International Trade Data System “message sets” at the time of entry to the US.
- Chain of custody records for the fish after landing should be transferred through the supply chain with the product and maintained by the importer of record.
- For small-scale harvesters, the first aggregator can collect the information to be provided further along the supply chain. The International Fisheries Trade Permit (IFTP) holder is ultimately responsible for ensuring the data is entered electronically and submitted to US Customs and Border Patrol (CBP).

#### 2. Recordkeeping

- SIMP requires the importer of record to retain records for imported fish and fish products. The importer of record is identified to CBP and must have an IFTP from NOAA Fisheries.
- These records must be held by the importer of record for two years. The owners of fishing vessels or farms may also submit harvest and landing data for SIMP directly to the IFTP holder or passed along the chain of custody with the product.

### WHAT SPECIES ARE COVERED?

- abalone
- Atlantic cod
- blue crab (Atlantic)
- dolphinfish (mahi mahi)
- grouper
- king crab (red)
- Pacific cod
- red snapper
- sea cucumber
- sharks
- shrimp
- swordfish
- tuna (albacore, bigeye, skipjack, yellowfin, bluefin)

\*Not all requirements apply to imports of certain highly processed products. This is the case if the products cannot be traced back to one species of fish or a specific harvest event(s) or identified through product labeling.



Sorting shrimp, Thailand.  
© Nicolas Axelrod-RUOM / WWF-US

## What information is collected?

### Model Catch Certificate

The model catch certificate form is used for recording harvest events, both wild-capture and aquaculture. This form consists of multiple parts: the justification for data elements and format for electronic reporting, the certificate for traceability harvest and landing receipt, the model reprocessing certificate for traceability primary or secondary processing, and the model transshipping certificate for traceability.

#### Section 1, Applicable to Both Wild-Capture and Aquaculture Operations

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Catch document identifier (conditional)</li> </ul>	<p>As the identifier format used by all of the competent authorities in their respective jurisdictions cannot be known, a free text format will be required. In certain cases, a competent authority may not assign a unique identifier to each harvest event or record the harvest event on a uniquely numbered certificate. This may be more prevalent in the case of aquaculture deliveries than in wild capture fisheries, but likely also prevalent in artisanal/small-scale fisheries. A simplified catch record may be generated by consolidating catches of several small-scale vessels landing catch at a common collection point.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wild Harvest or Farm Raised</li> </ul>	<p>A code of "HCF" (wild capture) or "HBA" (aquaculture) is used to identify the source of the product.</p>

#### Section 2, Applicable to Wild-Capture Operations

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flag state of vessel</li> </ul>	<p>Standardized data format of the two-alpha International Organization for Standardization (ISO) country codes; see <a href="#">ISO 3166 country codes</a> or the <a href="#">ACE CATAIR CBP Appendix B - Valid Codes</a>.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Name of Harvesting vessel</li> </ul>	<p>Free-form text is provided to accommodate all potential names. Vessel names must be spelled correctly to verify legality.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unique Vessel Identifier (registration, documentation, or license number) (conditional)</li> </ul>	<p>As this information is used to discern lawful acquisition under the competent authority for the area of the fishing operation, the format corresponds to the convention of the vessel registration authority. If registration is not required in the local jurisdiction, some locally meaningful description or disclaimer ("identifier not applicable") is needed. Free-form text is provided to accommodate various formats. In the event the vessel has an International Maritime Organization (IMO) Number, this should be used as the identifier. A prefix of "IMO" or "OTH" could precede the identifier.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fishing Permit or Authorization (conditional)</li> </ul>	<p>In certain cases, a competent authority may not require a permit for each vessel or facility. This may be more prevalent in the case of aquaculture facilities than with fishing vessels, but likely also prevalent in artisanal/small-scale fisheries. Free-form text is provided to accommodate varying formats for fishing authorization or aquaculture licensing. If a permit or license is not required in the local jurisdiction, some locally meaningful description or disclaimer ("license not applicable") is needed. Where a local authority requires or issues a license, certificate, permit, or other authorization, a copy of fishing authorization should be retained and provided in the event of an audit</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Geographic Location or Ocean Harvest Area</li> </ul>	<p>This data is used to discern lawful acquisition under the competent authority for the area of the fishing or aquaculture operation and should correspond to the reporting areas of the local jurisdiction or applicable regional management body. If a catch report is not required in the local jurisdiction, or the catch area is not required to be specified, a local description is needed or the use of Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) fishing area codes with an additional note regarding within or beyond the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of a Coastal State (ISO two-character country code). Free-form text is provided to accommodate various fishing areas. In some cases, the use of an RFMO list of fishing areas may be applicable.</p>

## Section 2, Applicable to Wild-Capture Operations continued

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fishing Gear</li> </ul>	As this information is used to discern lawful acquisition under the competent authority for the area of the fishing operation, codes or formats should correspond to the reporting convention for gear types of the local jurisdiction or applicable regional management body. If a catch report is not required in the local jurisdiction, or the gear type is not required to be specified, a local description is needed or the use of FAO gear codes. Free-form text is provided to accommodate all potential fishing gears. In some cases, use of an RFMO list of fishing gears may be applicable. A prefix of "FAO" or "OTH" could precede the gear text.
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**Section 3, Applicable to Aquaculture Operations Only**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State of Jurisdiction of Aquaculture Facility</li> </ul>	As this information is used to discern lawful acquisition under the competent authority for the area of the aquaculture operation, this information should correspond to the reporting areas of the local jurisdiction. Free-form text is provided to accommodate all potential licensing areas. Alternatively, ISO two-character country code could be used
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facility License or Authorization (conditional)</li> </ul>	In certain cases, a competent authority may not require a permit for each facility. This may be more prevalent in the case of small-scale aquaculture facilities. Free-form text is provided to accommodate all potential aquaculture licensing formats. If a permit or license is not required in the local jurisdiction, a local description or disclaimer ("license not applicable") is needed. Where a local authority requires or issues a license or other authorization, a copy of the authorization should be retained, and provided in the event of an audit.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Name and Address of Aquaculture Facility</li> </ul>	Free-form text is provided to accommodate for varying formats of names and addresses.

**Section 4, Applicable to Both Wild-capture and Aquaculture Operations**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Company Name of Landing Recipient, Processor, or Buying Entity and Contact Information</li> </ul>	Free-form text is provided to accommodate varying formats of company names and addresses. Phone numbers and email addresses could be constrained to prescribed formats. Note that small-scale buyers in remote coastal locations may not have formal or standardized contact information.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facility or Vessel Landed/ Delivered To</li> </ul>	Free-form text is provided to accommodate varying formats of company names and addresses. Phone numbers and email addresses could be constrained to prescribed formats. In the case of transshipment vessels, the vessel name and identifier (IMO number, flag state registration number) should be provided. Free-form text is provided to accommodate varying formats of vessel numbers used by flag states.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Harvest Date</li> </ul>	Harvest Date - This data element is constrained to a date format. The harvest date reported for wild capture fisheries is the date of landing/offloading at the end of a fishing trip or the date of transshipment at sea or in port.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Landing Port or Delivery Location</li> </ul>	Free-form text is provided to accommodate varying formats of landing ports or delivery locations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Species Name and the Aquatic Sciences Fishery Information System (ASFIS) Code</li> </ul>	The <a href="#">FAO ASFIS</a> three-alpha species code is based on the scientific name or the association with the local common name.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Total Weight of Product at Landing/ Harvest</li> </ul>	Requires both reporting a numeric value and the reporting unit. Coded as "LB" for pounds or "KG" for kilograms.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Processing Description (Product Form at Landing)</li> </ul>	In order to determine and assess the relationship between round weight at harvest and processed weight at delivery, we need to know the type of processing that has occurred on board the vessel or at the aquaculture facility. A standard set of codes have been developed (e.g., NDR – Dressed; NFL – Fillet; NGG – Gilled and gutted; NOT – Other; NRD – Round (whole); NST – Steak; NRS – Radiation sterilized; RND – Whole, shell on; HSO – Headed, shell-on; PD – Peeled).

## The Model Aggregated Catch Certificate

The model aggregated catch certificate form is used for recording harvest events, both wild-capture and aquaculture. This form consists of two parts—the justification for data elements and format for electronic reporting, and the certificate for traceability harvest and landing receipt for small-scale harvest events.

### Section 1—Applicable to Both Wild-Capture and Aquaculture Operations

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wild Harvest or Farm Raised</li> </ul>	A check box on the form will be translated into a code for Customs and Border Protection's (CBP) ACE. A code of "HCF" (wild capture) or "HBA" (aquaculture) will be used to identify the source of the product.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of Vessels or Deliveries</li> </ul>	Numerical value.

### Section 2—Applicable to Wild-Capture Operations

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flag State(s) of vessels</li> </ul>	Standardized data format of the two-alpha International Organization for Standardization (ISO) country codes; see <a href="#">ISO 3166 country codes</a> or the <a href="#">ACE CATAIR CBP Appendix B - Valid Codes</a> .
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Geographic Location or Ocean Harvest Area</li> </ul>	This data is used to discern lawful acquisition under the competent authority for the area of the fishing or aquaculture operation and should correspond to the reporting areas of the local jurisdiction or applicable regional management body. If a catch report is not required in the local jurisdiction, or the catch area is not required to be specified, a local description is needed or the use of Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) fishing area codes with an additional note regarding within or beyond the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of a Coastal State (ISO two-character country code). Free-form text is provided to accommodate various fishing areas. In some cases, the use of an RFMO list of fishing areas may be applicable.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fishing Gear</li> </ul>	As this information is used to discern lawful acquisition under the competent authority for the area of the fishing operation, codes or formats should correspond to the reporting convention for gear types of the local jurisdiction or applicable regional management body. If a catch report is not required in the local jurisdiction, or the gear type is not required to be specified, a local description is needed or the use of FAO gear codes. Free-form text is provided to accommodate all potential fishing gears. In some cases, use of an RFMO list of fishing gears may be applicable. A prefix of "FAO" or "OTH" could precede the gear text.

### Section 3—Applicable to Aquaculture Operations Only

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State of Jurisdiction of Aquaculture Facility</li> </ul>	State of Jurisdiction - As this information is used to discern lawful acquisition under the competent authority for the area of the aquaculture operation, this information should correspond to the reporting areas of the local jurisdiction. Free-form text is provided to accommodate all potential licensing areas. Alternatively, ISO two-character country code could be used.
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### Section 4—Applicable to Both Wild-Capture and Aquaculture Operations

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Company Name of Landing Recipient, Processor or Buying Entity, and Contact Information (Telephone, Email, Business Address)</li> </ul>	Free-form text is provided to accommodate varying formats of company names and addresses.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Receiving Facility or Vessel</li> </ul>	Free-form text is provided to accommodate varying formats of company names and addresses. Phone numbers and email addresses could be constrained to prescribed formats. Receiving Facility: Inclusion of a name of the supervisor at the receiving facility would be helpful to ensure that the transaction is properly recorded and can be verified (or refuted) by the named contact in the event of an audit. Transshipment Vessel: Inclusion of the vessel name and identifier (International Maritime Organization (IMO) number, flag state registration number) should be provided.

## Section 4—Applicable to Both Wild-Capture and Aquaculture Operations continued

• Harvest Date	This data element is constrained to a date format. Harvest date to be reported for wild capture fisheries is the date of landing/offloading at the end of a fishing trip, or the date of transshipment at sea or in port.
• Landing Port or Delivery Location	Free-form text is provided to accommodate varying formats of landing ports or delivery locations.
• Species Name and the Aquatic Sciences Fishery Information System (ASFIS) Code	The <a href="#">FAO ASFIS</a> three-alpha species code is based on the scientific name or the association with the local common name.
• Total Weight of Product at Landing/Harvest	Requires both reporting a numeric value and the reporting unit. Coded as “LB” for pounds or “KG” for kilograms.
• Product Form at Landing	In order to determine and assess the relationship between round weight at harvest and processed weight at delivery, we need to know the type of processing that has occurred on board the vessel or at the aquaculture facility. A standard set of codes have been developed (e.g., NDR – Dressed; NFL – Fillet; NGG – Gilled and gutted; NOT – Other; NRD – Round (whole); NST – Steak; NRS – Radiation sterilized; RND – Whole, shell on; HSO – Headed, shell-on; PD – Peeled).

### The Model Aggregated Catch Certificate Guide (2020)

## DETAILED KDE CHART

	KDE	US
Who	Vessel name	Required
	Unique vessel identifier (IMO number)	Conditional — Requests a UVI when available
	Vessel flag	Required
	International radio call sign (IRCS)	Not Required
	Information on exporter/re-exporter	Required
	Identity of import company	Required
What	Product type	Required
	Species name—ASFIS 3-alpha code	Required
	Estimated live weight	Not Required
	Processed weight	Required
	Transshipment declaration and authorization of transshipment at sea, IMO number, and vessel master information	Conditional — Does not request vessel master information
When	Event date	Required
Where	Catch area (better defined with a clear distinction between the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and the high seas)	Required
	Authorization to fish	Conditional - if available
	Port of landing	Required
	Processing location	Required
How	Fishing gear type or catch method	Required

## COUNTRY PROFILES

# JAPAN

### Introduction

Until 2022, Japan did not have an ICS of its own. Instead, Japan followed the guidance and requirements of the four regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) to which it is a party. These requirements covered only tuna, tuna-like species, and toothfish.

The Japanese government recognized the need for additional protections as this lack of import controls exposed Japan to an increase in IUU fishing operators and products entering the country. The government noted an increase in the number of people who do not have fishing rights, such as organized crime groups, that were poaching in Japan's waters. In response, the government created the Act on Ensuring the Proper Domestic Distribution and Importation of Specified Aquatic Animals and Plants (the Act).

- Japan is the fourth largest importer of fish and fisheries products. In 2023, Japan imported 2.3 million tonnes, worth around US\$13.4 billion.<sup>16</sup>
- The main products imported by Japan were frozen shrimps, frozen whole or gutted salmon, and frozen and prepared-preserved marine fish.<sup>16</sup>
- By volume, most of the products imported in Japan were from China, the US, Chile, Thailand, and Norway.<sup>16</sup>
- According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)-FAO Outlook forecasts, in 2024, per capita seafood consumption was estimated at 42.98 kg.<sup>18</sup>



## What is it?

The Act on Ensuring the Proper Domestic Distribution and Importation of Specified Aquatic Animals and Plants entered into force in Japan in December 2022. It aims to prevent the distribution and importation of seafood obtained through IUU fishing.

The Act applies to specific aquatic species that are particularly vulnerable to IUU fishing, by categorizing them into two groups: Class I Aquatic Animals and Plants (catch and trade regulation within Japan) and Class II Aquatic Animals and Plants (import regulation). The designated species are scheduled for review every two years.

## Key Components

### 1. Class I Aquatic Animals and Plants

- Only applies to the Japanese domestic market. This measure does not require foreign governments to take any additional procedures when importing Class I species from Japan.
- This covers a group of aquatic animals and plants designated to be particularly vulnerable to IUU fishing in Japan. This class is in need of conservation and management measures.

### 2. Class II Aquatic Animals and Plants

- Class II Aquatic Animals and Plants is defined as a group of aquatic animals and plants designated by the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries that are particularly vulnerable to IUU fishing by foreign-flagged vessels under foreign laws or international conservation and management measures. These species must be managed under import regulations.
- Class II species shall not be imported into Japan without a catch certificate issued by the competent authority of the flag state of the vessel that caught Class II species, certifying that they were caught legally. Additionally, other document(s) required by the Ordinance of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries must be provided.

## WHAT SPECIES ARE COVERED?

Class II Aquatic Animals and Plants that are currently subject to the catch documentation scheme:

- squid and cuttlefish
- Pacific saury (*Cololabis spp.*)
- mackerel (*Scomber spp.*)
- sardine (*Sardinops spp.*)

Apart from the import regulations under the Act, verification procedures are required for imports of tuna and Patagonian toothfish under the Foreign Exchange and Foreign Trade Control Act to ensure compliance with management measures set by the relevant RFMOs.

The Act also covers domestic catch of abalone, sea cucumber, and glass eel (to be added from December 2025) as Class I Aquatic Animals and Plants, which will likely be expanded after system digitization

### Squid.

© Antonio Busiello / WWF-US



## What information is collected?

### Regulation on Japanese Domestic Market—Class I

Business operators must provide notification to the Minster in advance, convey a catch number of Class I and other information specified by Order, and prepare and retain transaction records of Class I

- species name
- weight or quantity
- date(s) of trading(s)
- trading partner(s)
- catch number

#### Information Note (2021)

### Import Regulation—Class II

The catch documentation scheme was developed using the EU catch certification scheme as a model.

<p><b>A. Validating Authority</b></p> <p>a. Document Number b. Name of Validating Authority c. Name and title of official d. Address of authority e. Tel./Fax</p>	<p><b>(A) Validating Authority:</b> Name of the competent authority that validates the catch certificate and a distinctive document number to identify the certificate shall be provided. In the case of using a chartered vessel of a State or region other than the flag State, the authority of the flag State of the chartered vessel shall validate the catch certificate.</p>
<p><b>B. Fishing Vessel Information</b></p> <p>a. Fishing vessel name b. Flag—Home port and registration number c. Call Sign d. IMO/Lloyd's number/Unique Vessel Identifier (if issued) e. Fishing license no. —valid to f. Inmarsat no./Fax no./Telephone no./E-mail address (if issued)</p>	<p>(B) to (E) shall be completed by the master of the fishing vessel or the exporter who receives necessary information from the master except for the information on the verified weight landed.</p>
<p><b>C. Product information</b></p> <p>a. Description of product b. Type of processing authorized on board c. Species d. JPN Import statistical code e. Catch dates f. Estimated live weight (kg)</p>	
<p><b>D. Resource management</b></p> <p>a. Reference of applicable conservation and management measures b. Estimated weight to be landed (kg) c. Verified Weight landed (kg) where appropriate d. Catch area: Put a checkmark in the appropriate box FAO Code:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 18 (Arctic Sea)</li> <li>• 21 (Atlantic, Northwest)</li> <li>• 27 (Atlantic, Northeast)</li> <li>• 31 (Atlantic, Western Central)</li> <li>• 34 (Atlantic, Eastern Central)</li> <li>• 37 (Mediterranean and Black Sea)</li> <li>• 41 (Atlantic, Southwest)</li> <li>• 47 (Atlantic, Southeast)</li> </ul>	<p>In (D), references of applicable conservation and management measures related to the species, for which the catch certificate has been adopted by the flag State concerned and is issued, shall be provided (e.g., restrictions on the number of fishing vessels, catch limits, etc.).</p> <p>The measures shall be national or international measures that the vessels have to observe. The verified weight landed shall be filled by the validating authority etc. if catches are weighted at landing by the authority.</p> <p>Regarding catch area(s) in (C) Product information, at least one of the followings is required:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. putting a check mark on the appropriate FAO Code box; and</li> <li>2. filling the name of the applicable RFMO(s) in the lower right box.</li> </ol>

## D. Resource management continued

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 48 (Atlantic, Antarctic)</li> <li>• 51 (Indian Ocean, Western)</li> <li>• 57 (Indian Ocean, Eastern)</li> <li>• 58 (Indian Ocean, Antarctic)</li> <li>• 61 (Pacific, Northwest)</li> <li>• 67 (Pacific, Northeast)</li> <li>• 71 (Pacific, Western Central)</li> <li>• 77 (Pacific, Eastern Central)</li> <li>• 81 (Pacific, Southwest)</li> <li>• 87 (Pacific Southeast)</li> <li>• 88 (Pacific Antarctic)</li> </ul> <p>e. Applicable RFMOs, if any</p>	
<p><b>E. Master of fishing vessel</b></p> <p>a. Name of master of fishing vessel— signature—seal</p>	<p>(B) to (E) shall be completed by the master of the fishing vessel or the exporter who receives necessary information from the master except for the information on the verified weight landed.</p>
<p><b>F. Declaration of transshipment at sea</b></p> <p>a. Name of master of fishing vessel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Signature and date</li> <li>ii. Transshipment date/area/position</li> <li>iii. Estimated weight (kg)</li> </ul> <p>b. Master of receiving vessel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Signature</li> <li>ii. Vessel name</li> <li>iii. Call sign</li> <li>iv. IMO/Lloyd's number (if issued)</li> </ul>	<p>In the case that transshipment was conducted at sea, this section (F) is to be filled jointly by the masters of the fishing vessel and of the receiving vessel (or their representatives)</p>
<p><b>G. Transshipment authorization within a port area</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Name and title of official</li> <li>b. Name of authority</li> <li>c. Signature</li> <li>d. Address of authority</li> <li>e. Tel.</li> <li>f. Port of landing</li> <li>g. Date of landing</li> <li>h. Seal (stamp)</li> </ul>	
<p><b>H. Exporter</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Name and address of exporter</li> <li>b. Signature</li> <li>c. Date</li> <li>d. Seal (stamp)</li> </ul>	<p>(H) Information of the exporter and details of the transportation route from the catch of fish to the next destination of county are to be filled by the exporter</p>
<p><b>I. Flag State authority validation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Name/title</li> <li>b. Signature</li> <li>c. Date</li> <li>d. Seal (stamp)</li> </ul>	<p>It is the responsibility of the competent flag State authority to validate the catch certificate for the fishery products which are exported to Japan. The authority shall validate the certificate and fill in this section (I) when the authority does not have any doubts about the contents of the application submitted by the exporter.</p>
<p><b>J. Transport details</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Country of exportation</li> <li>b. Port/airport/other place of departure</li> <li>c. Exporter signature</li> <li>d. Vessel name and Flag State, Flight number/airway bill number, Truck nationality and registration number, railway bill number, other transport document</li> <li>e. Container number (s) (list attached)</li> <li>f. Name</li> <li>g. Address</li> <li>h. Signature</li> </ul>	

<b>K. Importer declaration</b> a. Name and address of importer b. Signature c. Date d. Seal e. JPN import statistical code f. Documents required for import via a third country	The importer in Japan shall fill in the relevant information on this section (K) before submitting the catch certificate-except for the information on the verified weight landed.
<b>L. Import control authority</b>	This section (L) is to be filled by Japan's control authority, so there is no need to fill in.

### Technical Note on Class II Aquatic Animals and Plants (2022)

## Fishery Imports to Japan Processed in a Third Country

Additional documents are required when importing Class II fishery products that were processed in a third country other than the flag state to Japan.

- A. In the case that the fishery products are imported into Japan after being processed in a third country, the following documents are required:
  - a. The catch certificate validated by the competent authority of the flag state that certifies that the catch is caught legitimately.
  - b. A document endorsed by the competent authority of the processing state (such as a processing statement), which gives an exact description of the unprocessed and processed products and their respective quantities and indicates that the processed products have been processed in that third country from catches accompanied by the catch certificate(s) validated by the flag state.
- B. In the case that the fishery products are imported into Japan without being processed in a third country, the following documents are required:
  - a. The catch certificate validated by the competent authority of the flag state that certifies that the catch is caught legitimately.
  - b. Either of the following documents indicating that the fishery products did not undergo any operations other than unloading, reloading, or any operations designated to preserve them in a good and genuine condition in a third country and that the products were under the supervision of the competent authority of the third country:
    - i. A document indicating the transportation route of the products from the flag state to the third country
    - ii. A document issued by the authority in the third country, which provides details of the fishery products concerned, dates of unloading and reloading, names of the vessels or other means of transport, and conditions of the products in the third country.
- C. In the case that the fishery products are processed in a third country, the processing plant shall declare that the processed fishery products originated from catches accompanied by a certificate validated by the competent authority of the flag state, and the government of the third country where the products were processed shall endorse the document (such as a processing statement).
- D. In the case that the fishery products are processed or handled in a bonded area, competent organizations other than government authorities may endorse the document as appropriate.

For a full technical overview of the program, list of statistical code numbers of items covered, sample flag state notifications, catch certificates for Class II Aquatic Animals and Plants, and other documents, please refer to this document: Technical Note on Class II Aquatic Animals and Plants (2022)

## DETAILED KDE CHART

	KDE	JP
Who	Vessel name	Required
	Unique vessel identifier (IMO number)	Conditional — The IMO number or Lloyd's Register number is only required if issued.
	Vessel flag	Required
	International radio call sign (IRCS)	Conditional — Call sign only required if issued.
	Information on exporter/re-exporter	Required
	Identity of import company	Required
What	Product type	Required
	Species name—ASFIS 3-alpha code	Conditional — Japan requires HTS code of product, not ASFIS 3-alpha code.
	Estimated live weight	Required
	Processed weight	Required
	Transshipment declaration and authorization of transshipment at sea, IMO number, and vessel master information	Required
When	Event date	Required
Where	Catch area (better defined with a clear distinction between the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and the high seas)	Required
	Authorization to fish	Required
	Port of landing	Not Required
	Processing location	Required
How	Fishing gear type or catch method	Conditional — The fishing license number and licensed fishing method are required. This is not as specific as the US, which requires the fishing gear type specifically.

## COUNTRY PROFILES

# KOREA

### Introduction

Korea is the most recent adopter of a seafood ICS. Three different systems make up Korea's ICS: the catch documentation scheme (CDS), the imported traceability system (STS), and the domestic STS. While the initial program was aimed at food security and hygiene regulation, in 2024, the Korean government expanded the scope of the program to include preventing illegally produced seafood from entering the market. The establishment of the catch documentation scheme was largely in response to the EU issuing a yellow card to Korea in 2013 for widely documented incidents of illegal operations targeting croakers in West Africa, which were then exported to Korea. The yellow card was retracted in 2015.

- In 2023, Korea imported US\$5.93 billion in seafood and seafood products.<sup>19</sup>
- The largest import categories by value in 2023 were frozen Alaska pollack, mackerel, Alaska pollack roes, large yellow croaker, croaker, cod, other Pacific salmon, roes and milt of fish other than Alaska pollack, other fish frozen, and Pacific saury.<sup>19</sup>
- The largest imports by volume were frozen Alaska pollack, mackerel, sand lance, sardines, monkfish, other frozen fish, herrings, Pacific saury, frozen anchovies (*Engraulis Spp.*), and plaice (other than *Pleuronectes platessa*).<sup>19</sup>
- Top exporting countries to Korea include China, Russia, Vietnam, Norway, Peru, the United States, Japan, Thailand, Canada, and Taiwan.<sup>19</sup>
- According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)-FAO Outlook forecasts, in 2024, seafood consumption averaged 54.61 kg per capita. Korea ranks second in the world for seafood consumption.<sup>18</sup>

Fishing gill net.

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## What is it?

Korea established traceability regulations under the Distant Water Fisheries Development Act (DWFD) and the Fishery Products Distribution Management and Support Act (FDMS). The DWFD established the CDS, and the FDMS established the imported STS. These systems are managed by different divisions in the Ministry of Fisheries and governed by different laws.

## Key Components

### 1. Catch Documentation Scheme

- a. The CDS procedure begins when the captain or shipping agent of an incoming vessel carrying any CDS species submits a catch certificate or a simplified catch certificate to the authorities through an electronic system called the Port Management Information System (PORT-MIS).
- b. The South Korean government agency, the National Fishery Product Quality Management Service (NFQS), then verifies the catch certificate or the simplified catch certificate issued by the exporting country. If a regular or simplified catch certificate is not attached, the NFQS prohibits entry or landing.

### 2. Imported Seafood Traceability System. Applies to marine capture by foreign-flagged vessels and farmed fish.

- a. Importers must submit records into the electronic reporting system of the same name, including the identity of the domestic buyers.

### 3. Domestic Seafood Traceability System. Applies to marine capture by Korean-flagged vessels and farmed fish.

- a. This program aims to reduce seafood mislabeling and ensure food safety by providing customers with basic information on the name, origin (ship name, captain, and date of delivery), distributor, and processing factories through barcodes and QR codes on product packaging.

## WHAT SPECIES ARE COVERED?

### Catch Documentation Scheme

Catch Certificate (CC):

- bobo croakers

Simplified Catch Certificate (SCC):

- longneck croakers
- Pacific saury

### International STS

- glass eels/live eels (*Anguilla*)
- frozen corvina (yellow croaker)
- live Israel carp
- live poulp squid
- loaches
- fresh or chilled Alaska pollock
- scallops
- frozen scallops
- sea bream
- frozen saury
- edible sea salt
- frozen swimming crab
- salted opossum shrimp
- fresh or chilled hairtail
- live sea squirts
- fresh skates
- live hagfish
- live yellowtail
- frozen anchovy
- chilled mackerel
- chilled cod
- frozen Southern bluefin tuna

### Domestic STS

Voluntary for most products but required for dried yellow croaker and raw oyster.

## What information is collected?

### Catch Certificate

1. Issuance number
2. Validating Authority (name, address, contact details)
3. Name of Fishing Vessel
4. Nationality of Fishing Vessel
5. IMO Number
6. IRCS
7. Master of Fishing Vessel
8. Signature
9. Operator of fishing vessel and contact details
10. Fishing authorization number
11. Issuing authority of fishing authorization
12. Area of fishing operation
13. Type of fishing gear
14. Species
15. Weight/processed weight (kg)
16. Type of products
17. Name of landing port
18. Place of processing
19. Transshipment at sea
  - a. Transshipment date/Position
  - b. Weight of catches
  - c. Master of receiving vessel
  - d. Signature and seal
  - e. Name of receiving vessel
  - f. Flag of receiving vessel
  - g. IMO number
  - h. IRCS
20. Landing in a foreign port
  - a. Officer's name
  - b. Authority
  - c. Signature
  - d. Address
  - e. Telephone
  - f. Name of landing port
  - g. Landing date
  - h. Seal (stamp)
21. Exporter name/signature/contact details
22. Importer name/Contact details
23. Validation by the competent authority
  - a. Officer's name/Position
  - b. Signature
  - c. Date
  - d. Seal (stamp)
  - e. Transport details
    - i. Vessel name and flag
    - ii. Container numbers—List attached

### Sample Catch Certificate

### Simplified Catch Certificate

1. Issuance number
2. Validating authority (name, address, contact details)
3. Species
4. Weights (kg)
5. List of vessels that provide catches and weight of catches by each vessel (name, registration number)
  - a. Vessel name
  - b. Registration number
  - c. Weight (kg) of catches
  - d. Area of fishing
  - e. Transshipment position
6. Exporter name/signature/contact details
7. Importer name and contact details
8. Validation by the competent authority
  - a. Officer's name/Position
  - b. Signature
  - c. Date of Validation
  - d. Seal (stamp)
  - e. Transport details
    - i. Vessel name and flag
    - ii. Container numbers—list attached

### Sample Simplified Catch Certificate

### International STS

1. Name
2. Origin
3. Date and number of import report
4. Trading details (e.g., statement of transaction)
5. Identity of the domestic buyer



## DETAILED KDE CHART

Korea's Catch Documentation Scheme covers three species: bobo croaker, longneck croakers, and Pacific saury. However, only bobo croakers are covered by the full catch certificate. The other two species, longneck croaker and Pacific saury, are covered by the simplified catch certificate, which is weaker.

	KDE	Catch Certificate	Simplified Catch Certificate
Who	Vessel name	Required	Required
	Unique vessel identifier (IMO number)	Required	Not Required
	Vessel flag	Required	Required
	International radio call sign (IRCS)	Required	N/A
	Information on exporter/re-exporter	Required	Conditional
	Identity of import company	Required	Conditional
What	Product type	Required	Not Required
	Species name—ASFIS 3-alpha code	Required	ASFIS 3 alpha code not required
	Estimated live weight	Required	Not specified between live or processed
	Processed weight	Required	Not specified between live or processed
	Transshipment declaration and authorization of transshipment at sea, IMO number, and vessel master information	Required	Not Required
When	Event date	Required	Not Required
Where	Catch area (better defined with a clear distinction between the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and the high seas)	Required	Required
	Authorization to fish	Required	Not Required
	Port of landing	Required	Not Required
	Processing location	Required	Not Required
How	Fishing gear type or catch method	Required	Not Required

SECTION 3

# ADDITIONAL POLICIES AND RESOURCES

Resources on additional import policies, where to find more information, compliance guides, audit guides, government websites, permit portals, and other resources

**This section includes**

- US Tuna Tracking and Verification Program
- US Atlantic Highly Migratory Species International Trade Program
- US Antarctic Marine Living Resources Program
- US Marine Mammal Protection Act
- US FDA Food Traceability Final Rule (Rule 204)
- other US policies
- List of other resources for EU, US, Japan, and Korea

## US Tuna Tracking and Verification Program (TTVP)

### What is it?

The Tuna Tracking and Verification Program (TTVP) monitors all canned, frozen, and processed tuna products imported into the US to ensure that they comply with dolphin-safe certifications and regulations. The program also monitors domestic cannery production of tuna products. The goal of the program is to ensure that all tuna sold in the US that is labeled as “dolphin-safe” meets the standards and measures laid out by the Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program (AIDCP).

### Key Components

1. Dolphin-safe declaration
  - a. US regulation requires a written statement from the captain of the vessel to certify that no purse seine net or other fishing gear was intentionally used to capture dolphins during the trip and that no dolphins were killed or seriously injured in the nets or other gear deployments in which the tuna were caught. Captains must also certify that they have completed the Dolphin-Safe Captain’s training course to qualify for the “dolphin-safe” label.
2. The certificate of origin (COO)
  - a. Brokers submit the COO as a scanned PDF to NOAA through Customs and Border Protection’s Automated Commercial Environment (ACE).
  - b. Importers must also provide seafood harvest data with information on the species, location of harvest, and type of fishing gear used.
3. AIDCP-approved observer records made on board large purse seine vessels are a key part of both the international and US tracking programs for tuna products caught in the eastern Pacific Ocean.
4. US-based tuna canneries must also submit reports on the tuna processed in their facilities each calendar month. This includes KDEs on dolphin-safe status, species, condition, ocean area of capture, catcher vessel, gear type, trip dates, and quantity.

### WHAT SPECIES ARE COVERED?

All frozen, processed, or canned tuna products labeled as dolphin-safe:

- albacore (*Thunnus alalunga*)
- bigeye (*Thunnus obesus*)
- blackfin (*Thunnus atlanticus*)
- bluefin, Atlantic (*Thunnus thynnus*)
- bluefin, Pacific (*Thunnus orientalis*)  
(also known as *Thunnus thynnus orientalis*)
- bluefin, Southern (*Thunnus maccoyii*)
- longtail (*Thunnus tonggol*)
- skipjack (*Katsuwonus pelamis*)  
(also known as *Euthynnus pelamis*)
- yellowfin (*Thunnus albacares*)



## US Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) International Trade Program

### What is it?

The Atlantic HMS International Trade Program sets requirements for trade, including import, export, and re-export, of highly migratory species products. This includes Atlantic, Pacific, and Southern bluefin tuna, swordfish, Atlantic and Pacific bigeye tuna, and shark fins. The US is a member of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) and the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC)—two of the 17 regulatory bodies governing the management of tuna and highly migratory species.

### Key Components

1. All entities importing or exporting the covered species are required to submit all trade documentation via the ACE.
2. For Atlantic bluefin tuna, catch and trade information for export, re-export, and import must be entered into the ICCAT Electronic Bluefin Tuna Catch Documentation (eBCD) system.
3. Importers are required to provide limited data on the species harvested, location of harvest, and fishing vessels as part of the entry filing process.

### WHAT SPECIES ARE COVERED?

#### Billfish

- blue marlin
- white marlin
- roundscale spearfish
- sailfish

#### Tuna

- bigeye
- albacore
- yellowfin
- skipjack
- bluefin

#### Sharks

- Atlantic angel shark\*
- Atlantic sharpnose shark
- basking shark\*
- bigeye sand tiger shark\*
- bigeye sixgill shark\*
- bigeye thresher shark\*
- bignose shark\*

- blacknose shark
- blacktip shark
- blue shark
- bonnethead shark
- bull shark
- Caribbean reef shark\*
- Caribbean sharpnose shark\*
- Carolina hammerhead shark
- common thresher shark
- dusky shark\*
- finetooth shark
- Florida smoothhound
- Galapagos shark\*
- great hammerhead shark
- Gulf smoothhound
- lemon shark
- longfin mako shark\*
- narrowtooth shark\*
- night shark\*
- nurse shark

- oceanic whitetip shark\*
- porbeagle shark
- sand tiger shark\*
- sandbar shark
- scalloped hammerhead shark
- sevengill shark\*
- shortfin mako shark
- silky shark
- sixgill shark\*
- smalltail shark\*
- smooth dogfish
- smooth hammerhead shark
- spinner shark
- tiger shark
- whale shark\*
- white shark\*

#### Swordfish

\* Prohibited species

## US Antarctic Marine Living Resources (AMR) Program

### What is it?

The AMR Program was created as a result of the US's membership in the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR), which applies an ecosystem approach to conserving marine living resources and sets standards for the conservation of individual populations and species and the marine ecosystem in the Antarctic. Patagonian and Antarctic toothfish are harvested outside of CCAMLR's jurisdiction, prompting CCAMLR to implement a catch documentation scheme (CDS) to reduce IUU fishing-produced toothfish.

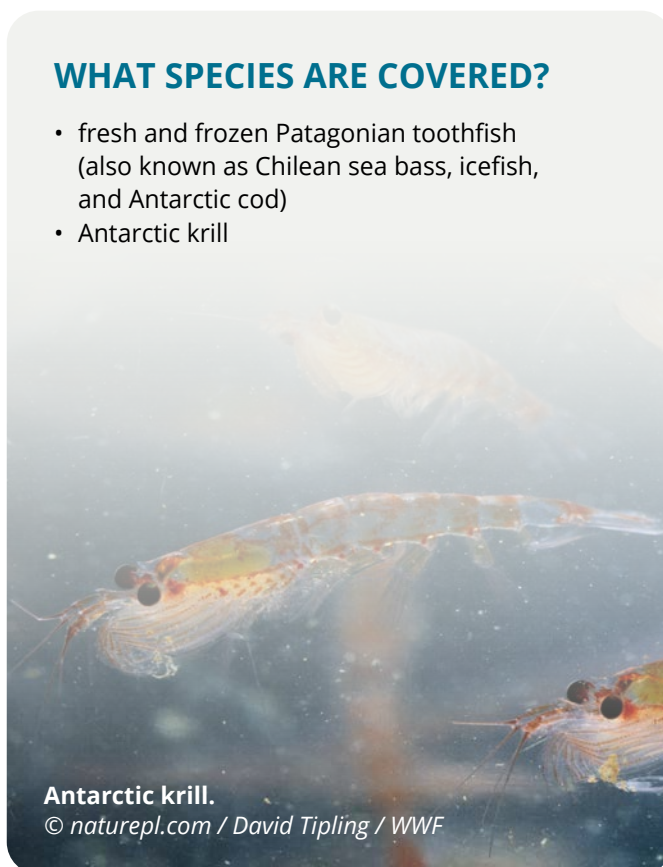
In 2000, CCAMLR implemented a CDS for toothfish to reduce the trade of illegally harvested toothfish. The CDS monitors the international trade of toothfish by tracking the origins of imports and determining if imports caught in the CCAMLR Convention Area follow CCAMLR conservation measures.

### Key Components

1. The AMR Program requires US importers to submit documents to CBP at the time of import that contain harvest and chain of custody information; however, the entry filing requirements are minimal, as the program relies largely on the submission of scanned documents. Scanned CDS records include information also required by NOAA's other import monitoring programs including fishing dates and locations, vessel information, and harvested weight by species.
2. Dealers must apply for pre-approval of each frozen toothfish import so that NOAA Fisheries can review their catch documentation in advance. Dealers must submit the pre-approval paperwork to NOAA Fisheries 10 working days before the shipment arrives. A separate application is required for any re-export of toothfish. Dealers must report fresh toothfish within 24 hours of importing it. For all other Antarctic species, such as Antarctic krill, dealers must submit an import ticket within 24 hours of importing the resource.

### WHAT SPECIES ARE COVERED?

- fresh and frozen Patagonian toothfish (also known as Chilean sea bass, icefish, and Antarctic cod)
- Antarctic krill



**Antarctic krill.**

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## US Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA)—Import Provisions

### What is it?

The goal of this program is to reduce marine mammal bycatch in foreign commercial fishing operations that export to the US, in accordance with the MMPA. The MMPA import provisions require exporting nations to meet the same standards as US fishing operations and establish criteria to determine whether a harvesting nation has a comparable program to that of the US.

### Key Components

#### 1. List of Foreign Fisheries

- Classifies foreign commercial fisheries as either “export” or “exempt” based on the frequency or likelihood of incidental marine mammal mortality or serious injury.
- Provides insight into marine mammal bycatch levels, commercially relevant fisheries, improves understanding of bycatch impacts, and helps refine mitigation tools and scientific approaches.
- Updated every four years.

#### 2. Comparability Finding

- NOAA must determine whether a harvesting nation’s export or exempt fishery meets the conditions specified in the MMPA to export fish and fish products to the US.
- If a foreign nation does not have a comparable program to reduce marine mammal bycatch, the MMPA grants a five-year exemption period to allow time to develop a comparable regulatory program development.

#### 3. Progress Report

- Nations granted a five-year exemption must submit a progress two years before the end of the exemption period expires and every four years thereafter.
- Reports must detail actions taken, data collection methods, and include certification of accuracy from the harvesting nation.

#### 4. Certificate of Admissibility

- If NOAA imposes prohibitions on certain fish or fish products from a harvesting nation, products from that nation’s exempt or export fisheries that remain eligible for import may require a Certificate of Admissibility.
- NOAA will publish harvesting nations requiring certification in the Federal Register.

### WHAT FISHERIES ARE LISTED?

#### Mexico

NOAA revoked comparability findings for the following Mexican fisheries within the range of the vaquita in the Upper Gulf of California

- shrimp trawl fishery, for both small and large vessels
- shrimp suripera fishery
- Sierra purse seine fishery
- Sierra hook and line fishery
- Chano trawl fishery, for small vessels
- Curvina purse seine fishery
- sardine/curvina purse seine fishery, for both small and large vessels
- anchovy
- herring
- mackerel
- croaker
- pilchard

Shrimp, curvina, sierra, chano, anchovy, herrings, sardines, mackerels, croaker, and pilchard fish and fish products imported under [certain harmonized tariff schedule codes](#) from Mexico as the country of origin, must be accompanied on arrival to the United States by a [Certification of Admissibility form](#) to document that they did not originate from Upper Gulf of California gillnet fisheries, or from the other fisheries in the Upper Gulf for which the comparability findings were revoked. The form requires the signature of an authorized [Mexican government official](#).

## US FDA Food Traceability Final Rule (Rule 204)

### What is it?

The Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Final Traceability Rule, also known as Rule 204, is a significant regulation that aims to improve food safety in the United States. Rule 204 is part of the FDA's Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) and was finalized to enhance the traceability of certain foods. The rule requires the tracking of foods on the FDA's Food Traceability List as they move through the supply chain, from production to consumption. With this improved traceability, products can be rapidly and effectively tracked to prevent and mitigate foodborne illness outbreaks, protect public health, and minimize the scope of recalls.

### Key Components

#### 1. Food Traceability List (FTL)

- a. The FTL includes foods that are deemed high risk for contamination, such as leafy greens, certain fruits, and seafood. Businesses handling these foods must adhere to the rule.

#### 2. Traceability Plan

- a. Entities must have a written traceability plan outlining how they will maintain the required records, including the critical tracking events (CTEs) and KDEs that must be documented.

#### 3. CTEs

- a. CTEs refer to specific points in the supply chain where food is grown, received, transformed, or shipped. At each of these events, certain data must be recorded.

#### 4. KDEs

- a. KDEs are the specific pieces of information that must be recorded at each CTE. Examples include the location of the event, date, and details of the food item (e.g., lot numbers).

#### 5. Recordkeeping Requirements

- a. Records must be maintained in a way that allows the FDA to access them quickly. Businesses must provide electronic or hard copies upon request within 24 hours during an investigation.

### WHAT SPECIES ARE COVERED?

The FDA presents the FTL with certain products subject to the rule. In addition to other food commodities, there are select seafood products, including

- fresh and frozen finfish including smoked finfish (*Siluriformes* fish, catfish, are excluded)
- fresh and frozen crustaceans
- fresh and frozen molluscan shellfish and bivalves



Unloading fishing boats.  
© Alyssa Bistonath / WWF-Canada

## Other US Policies

- NOAA Biennial Report to Congress. Negative certification of countries can lead to denial of port privileges and trade sanctions. Identifications and certifications are determined by NOAA with evidence and input submitted by third parties.
- Pelly Amendment. Created for the conservation of Atlantic salmon, the amendment grants the President the ability to prohibit the import of wildlife products that originate from a country that is determined by the Secretary of the Interior or Commerce, or is sanctioned by the World Trade Organization (WTO), as diminishing the effectiveness of conservation measures that the US is party to.
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). Prohibits the import of shrimp from countries that fail to meet comparable standards for shrimp-harvesting practices to those of the US.
- 1981 Lacey Act. Prohibits the importation, exportation, transportation, sale, receipt, acquisition, or purchase of any fish or wildlife or plant taken, possessed, transported, or sold in violation of any law, treaty, or regulation of the United States or any Indian tribal law, or foreign law.
- Endangered Species Act. Provides a framework to conserve and protect endangered and threatened species and their habitats both domestically and abroad.
- Magnusen Stevens Fisheries Conservation and Management Act. The primary law that governs marine fisheries management in US federal waters.

## International Fisheries Trade Permit (IFTP)

IFTPs are required for the import, export, or re-export of fishery products subject to the NOAA Fisheries trade monitoring programs. The new consolidated permit replaces the previous HMS international Trade Permit and the AMR Dealer Permit and transitions from the paper-based trade documentation program. The new permit is compatible with the electronic reporting system, ACE, which is operated by CBP.

The IFTP replaces both:

- Highly Migratory Species International Trade Permit
- Antarctic Marine Living Resources Dealer Permit

Additionally, new regulations made the IFTP a requirement for:

- Tuna Tracking and Verification Program or 370 Program
- Seafood Import Monitoring Program

For importers and exporters only one permit is required to trade in any species included under any of the four trade monitoring programs.

To apply for an IFTP permit, you must be a US resident importer, an exporter, or US resident agent. The permit must be renewed annually. The permit number must be transmitted electronically when filing an entry or export declaration for any fish products that are subject to monitoring.

The application fee is processed on the pay.gov secure website of the US Department of the Treasury, not the permit site. Applicants must return to the NOAA Fisheries permit system website after payment.



## RESOURCES

### EU

#### EU IUU Regulation

- About the program
  - [Council Regulation \(EC\) No 1005/2008 of 29 September 2008 establishing a Community system to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing](#)
  - [Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2024/2413 of 13 September 2024 amending Regulation \(EU\) No 468/2010 establishing the EU list of vessels engaged in illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing](#)
  - [Program overview landing page](#)
- [Information note—IUU Regulation](#)
- [April 2025 FAQ—What Is New in the EU Catch Certification Scheme After the Amendment of the EU IUU Regulation](#)
- [Factsheet: Tackling illegal, unreported and unregulated \(IUU\) fishing](#)
- [Frequently asked questions](#)
- Reporting
  - [Catch certificate creation instructions](#)
  - [EC Webinars](#)

### US

#### US Seafood Import Monitoring Program

- About the program:
  - [NOAA landing page – SIMP](#)
  - [2016 Federal Register Final Rule](#)
  - [2021 Report to Congress on the implementation of SIMP](#)
  - [2024 SIMP Comprehensive Review Summary](#)
  - [2024 Action Plan](#)
- Reporting resources and documents:
  - [SIMP Essential Forms and Documents](#)
  - [Harmonized Tariff Codes for SIMP](#)
  - [Three Alpha Codes for SIMP](#)
  - [Model Catch Certificate](#)
  - [NOAA International Fisheries Trade Permit](#)
- Recordkeeping and audits:
  - [SIMP Audit Guide](#)
- [Captain’s Statement Templates](#)
- [Fisheries Certificate of Origin](#) (NOAA Form 370)

#### US Atlantic Highly Migratory Species International Trade Program

- About the program
  - [NOAA landing page – Atlantic HMS Trade Program](#)
  - [2016 Federal Register Final Rule](#)
  - [Code of Federal Regulations](#)
- Reporting resources and documents
  - [International Fisheries Trade Permit Application](#)
  - [International Fisheries Trade Permit User Guide](#)
  - [Dealer Compliance Guide](#)
  - [Reporting and Trade Forms](#)

#### US Antarctic Marine Living Resources Program

- About the program
  - [About AMR Permits](#)
  - [About CCAMLR](#)
- Reporting resources and documents
  - [International Fisheries Trade Permit Application](#)
  - [International Fisheries Trade Permit User Guide](#)
  - [Application for Pre-Approval Certificate to Import Frozen Toothfish](#)
  - [Application for Re-Export of Toothfish](#)
  - [Reporting Form for Shipments of Fresh Toothfish](#)
  - [Antarctic Marine Living Resource Import Ticket](#) (not required for trading toothfish)

#### US Tuna Tracking and Verification Program

- About the program
  - [NOAA landing page – TTVP](#)
  - [Frequent Questions About the Dolphin-Safe Program](#)
  - [Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program \(AIDCP\)](#)
- Reporting resources and documents
  - [Example Tuna Tracking Form](#)
  - [Dolphin-Safe Certification](#)
  - [Verification Components](#)

**US** *continued***US Marine Mammal Protection Act Import Provisions**

- Examples
  - [Import Restrictions: Certification of Admissibility for Certain Fish Products from New Zealand](#)
  - Mexico
    - [HTS Codes Prohibited Entry into the United States From Mexico Unless Accompanied by a US Importer of Record Certification](#)
    - [Certification of Admissibility and Instructions for Certification of Admissibility Form](#)
    - [Officials Designated by the Government of Mexico to Validate the US Certification of Admissibility](#)
    - [Federal Register Notice: NOAA Fisheries Revokes Comparability Findings—Expands Import Restrictions](#)
    - [Federal Register Notice: Court-Ordered Implementation of Import Restrictions; Certification of Admissibility for Certain Fish Products From Mexico](#)
- About the program
  - [NOAA Page: International Marine Mammal Bycatch Criteria for U.S. Imports](#)
  - [Fish and Fish Product Import Provisions of the Marine Mammal Protection Act](#)
  - [Compliance Guide—Marine Mammal Protection Act Import Provisions](#)
  - [Federal Register PART 216—REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE TAKING AND IMPORTING OF MARINE MAMMALS](#)
- Additional info
  - [Fish and Fish Product Import Provisions of the Marine Mammal Protection Act 2020 List of Foreign Fisheries](#)
  - [List of Foreign Fisheries](#)
  - [Seafood Import Restrictions](#)
  - [MMPA Import Final Rule Compliance Guide](#)
  - [Fact Sheet: Seafood Import Provisions Under the MMPA](#)
  - [Petition To Ban Imports of Swordfish from Countries Failing to Submit Proof of The Effects of Fishing Technology on Marine Mammals Pursuant To Marine Mammal Protection Act Section 101](#)
  - [Final Environmental Assessment, Regulatory Impact Review, and Final Regulatory Flexibility Analysis for a Proposed Rule to Implement Provisions of Section 101\(a\)\(2\)\(a\) of the Marine Mammal Protection Act for Imports of Fish and Fish Products](#)
  - [International Protected Species and Bycatch Mitigation](#)

**US FDA Food Traceability Final Rule (Rule 204)**

- [FDA Landing Page - FMSA](#)
- [Seafood Industry Resources \(NFI\)](#)

**Japan****Japan Import Program**

- About the program
  - [Act on Ensuring the Proper Domestic Distribution and Importation of Specified Aquatic Animals and Plants](#)
  - [Information Note](#)
  - [Frequently asked questions](#)
- Reporting resources and documents
  - [Technical Note on Class II Aquatic Animals and Plants](#)

**Korea****Korea Catch Documentation Scheme**

- About the program
  - [2024 ODIA Amendment \(Korean\)](#)
- Reporting
  - [Sample catch certificate](#)
  - [\(Draft Law\) Partial Amendment Decree of the Enforcement Regulations of the Ocean Industry Development Act](#)

SECTION 4

# ADVOCACY

Understanding how these systems can be improved and what you can do to help advocate for those changes

### Learning objectives

- understanding the benefits and drawbacks of the different kinds of the different ICSs highlighted in this toolkit
- examining how the different ICSs compare with KDE collection
- knowing where to find resources on advocacy actions, updates on developing ICSs, and additional information/research
- exploring why it's beneficial for you to advocate for improved import control schemes and what your advocacy tools look like

## Comparing ICSs

The import control schemes of the EU, US, Japan, and Korea all differ in the structure of the programs, reporting requirements, data tracking systems, KDEs, and CTEs collected. While some differences in program structure can complement one another, there are still benefits and drawbacks to each type of ICS. These differences can also create loopholes that allow IUU and forced labor-produced products to enter the market.

With more governments considering adopting unilateral import controls or expanding existing ones, there is a real risk of a patchwork of non-harmonized import controls being established. Allowing gaps in coverage or weaker systems could create opportunities for illicit actors to redirect catches to points of less resistance or to slip through loopholes. This creates problems for legitimate operators and responsible businesses, as it undercuts profits.

Additionally, inconsistent ICS requirements create a greater administrative burden for businesses trying to comply with multiple market-state ICS requirements. This can create unfair competition between states with differing standards, create challenges with international coordination and collaboration, and make enforcement even more challenging in this opaque supply chain.

Steps such as harmonizing and strengthening the KDEs and CTEs collected, digitizing and standardizing reporting, and bolstering international cooperation among government and enforcement agencies are key to preventing IUU fishing and forced labor-produced products from entering the global market.



Tuna fishing boat, Ecuador.  
© Antonio Busiello / WWF-US

## KDE COMPARISON CHART

	KDE	EU	US	JP	SK*
Who	Vessel name	Required	Required	Required	Required
	Unique vessel identifier (IMO number)	Required	Conditional	Conditional	Required
	Vessel flag	Required	Required	Required	Required
	International radio call sign (IRCS)	Required	Not Required	Conditional	Required
	Information on exporter/re-exporter	Required	Required	Required	Required
	Identity of import company	Required	Required	Required	Required
What	Product type	Required	Required	Required	Required
	Species name—ASFIS 3-alpha code	Required	Required	Conditional	Required
	Estimated live weight	Required	Not Required	Required	Required
	Processed weight	Required	Required	Required	Required
	Transshipment declaration and authorization of transshipment at sea, IMO number, and vessel master information	Required	Conditional	Required	Required
When	Event date	Required	Required	Required	Required
Where	Catch area (better defined with a clear distinction between the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and the high seas)	Required	Required	Required	Required
	Authorization to fish	Required	Conditional	Required	Required
	Port of landing	Not Required	Required	Not Required	Required
	Processing location	Required	Required	Required	Required
How	Fishing gear type or catch method	Required	Required	Conditional	Required

\*KDEs for the catch certificate only

## DEVELOPING ICSS

Australia—poised to create their own ICS soon

- [IUU Fishing Import Measures Draft Report](#)
- [IUU Fishing Import Measures Discussion Paper](#)

UK—currently uses the same system as the EU, but it has not been updated since Brexit (specifically for

carding status)—discussion have begun about how to proceed.

- [Illegal, unreported, and unregulated \(IUU\) fishing documents](#)
- [FAQ on the practical application of the UK IUU Regulation and the EU IUU regulation](#)

## RFMOs

	KDE	ICCAT	CCSBT	CCAMLR	IOTC* (Statistical Document)
Who	Vessel name	Required	Required	Required	Required
	Unique vessel identifier (IMO number)	Not Required	Not Required	Conditional	Not Required
	Vessel flag	Required	Required	Required	Required
	International radio call sign (IRCS)	Not Required	Not Required	Required	Not Required
	Information on exporter/re-exporter	Conditional	Required	Required	Required
	Identity of import company	Required	Required	Required	Required
What	Product type	Required	Required	Required	Not Required
	Species name—ASFIS 3-alpha code	Required	Required	Required	Required
	Estimated live weight	Conditional	Conditional	Required	Conditional
	Processed weight	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required
	Transshipment declaration and authorization of transshipment at sea, IMO number, and vessel master information	Required	Conditional	Required	Not Required
When	Event date	Required	Required	Required	Required
Where	Catch area (better defined with a clear distinction between the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and the high seas)	Not Required	Not Required	Required	Not Required
	Authorization to fish	Not Required	Not Required	Required	Not Required
	Port of landing	Not Required	Not Required	Required	Not Required
	Processing location	Not Required	Not Required	Required	Not Required
How	Fishing gear type or catch method	Required	Required	Not Required	Required

## Tools for Advocacy

### Strengthen and increase overall transparency and management

- establish catch documentation and traceability requirements for domestic fisheries as advised in the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) [Voluntary Guidelines for Catch Documentation Schemes](#)
- establish and/or update and implement a national plan of action (NPOA) to combat IUU fishing in accordance with the FAO [IPOA - International Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing](#)
- fully implement responsible fisheries management as outlined in the FAO [Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries](#)
- endorse the principles of the [Global Charter for Fisheries Transparency](#)
- adopt and implement the [Fisheries Transparency Initiative \(FITI\) Standard](#)
- join the [Global Dialogue on Seafood Traceability \(GDST\)](#) to leverage its core, standardized KDE and interoperability standards for the industry
- establish [electronic fisheries information systems](#) such as a vessel monitoring system (VMS), electronic reporting systems (e-logbooks), electronic monitoring system (EMS), and electronic traceability systems
- strengthen domestic legislation to address crimes in the fisheries sector through the legislative framework provided by the Organized Crime Convention in the [UNODC Combating Crimes in the Fisheries Sector: A Guide to Good Legislative Practices](#)

### Strengthen compliance with international instruments to combat IUU fishing

- sign, ratify, and implement the FAO [Port State Measures Agreement \(PSMA\)](#)
- sign, ratify, and implement International Labour Organization (ILO) [Work in Fishing Convention C188](#) 2007
- sign, ratify, and implement the World Trade Organization (WTO) [Fishing Subsidies Agreement](#), and [Ministerial Decision of 17 June 2022](#)
- sign, ratify, and implement the [IMO 2012 Cape Town Agreement](#)
- fully engage with the [FAO Global Record of Fishing Vessels](#)
- register vessels with a unique vessel identifier (UVI)
- join the [IUU Action Alliance](#)

### Upcoming changes to ICSs

- **Updates to SIMP**—In 2023, NOAA announced a broad review of SIMP, exploring ways to enhance and strengthen its overall impact. The agency aimed to address feedback from diverse stakeholders, including major buyers, and align SIMP more closely with stakeholder expectations. As a result of this review, NOAA shared an [action plan](#) in 2024, which outlined the four goals that the agency has for the program, the actions needed to achieve those goals, and plans for NOAA's next steps. The action plan includes possible proposed rules that would modify traceability, entry, permitting, and reporting requirements; enhance data sharing; and strengthen interagency cooperation and coordination, among other suggested changes to SIMP. Formal comment periods will accompany both the notice of proposed rulemaking and the release of a proposed rule. During these comment periods, it will be crucial for companies to participate and advocate to ensure the seafood industry's voice is heard.
  - [Stimson Workshop 1 Report](#)
  - [Stimson Workshop 2 Report](#)
  - [SIMP Review Summary](#)
  - [2024 SIMP Action Plan](#)
- **Updates to Japan**—The 2024 update was conducted (but not yet published); this information is updated every two years.


## Human Rights Due Diligence

While the ICSs of the EU, US, Japan, and Korea have a primary focus on preventing and deterring IUU fishing, effective ICSs have the potential to help identify issues of forced labor and other human rights abuses at sea as well.

ICS can require importers to maintain records and ideally report labor-specific information as a condition of import. For example, KDEs detailing vessel owner, vessel captain, and time spent at sea can be used as labor-focused data to assess vessel-related risks and support targeted enforcement and accountability of vessel activity. Other technology such as EM, which is often already present on vessels for fisheries management purposes, can provide additional protection against labor abuses at sea.

The US SIMP action plan plans to incorporate the addition of two KDEs on fishing vessel trip dates and details on transshipment activities as a condition of entry to help better inform forced labor investigations. Labor-specific KDEs can also be used in the context of labor rights investigations by other government agencies, such as those for labor, customs, and justice/law enforcement.

Outside the import control schemes themselves, other policies can include conditions of import. For the US, Section 307 of the Tariff Act of 1930 and the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act are two policies that aim to prevent products produced by forced labor from entering the US market. The EU's Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD) entered into force in 2024, with mandatory compliance by 2027.



**Trawler in stormy seas.**

© Canon / Brutus Östling / WWF-Sweden



## US Tariff Act of 1930 Section 307

### What is it?

Section 307 of the Tariff Act of 1930 specifically prohibits the import to the US of all goods, wares, articles, and merchandise mined, produced, or manufactured either completely or in part with forced labor. This includes products made with convict labor, forced labor, indentured labor, and child labor. To achieve this, CBP has the power to lead investigations that can result in Withhold and Release Orders (WROs) that block goods from entering the US. WROs allow CBP to seize detained imports. Third parties are also able to submit petitions for CBP WRO investigations.

### Key Components

1. WRO
  - a. CBP has the power to issue a WRO in cases where there is “reasonable but not conclusive” evidence that forced labor was used in the production of goods. WROs prevent these imports from entering the US market and the imports will be detained at all ports.

### What information is collected in WRO petitions?

CBP does not require a particular format for petitions but does have several requirements for content. Specifically, a petition shall contain, or be accompanied by

1. a full statement of the reasons for the belief that the goods are made with forced labor
2. a detailed description or sample of the goods/merchandise
3. all pertinent facts that can be obtained as to the production of the merchandise abroad as well as evidence of the goods entering US markets

### WHAT ENTITIES ARE COVERED?

Tariff Act of 1930 Section 307 applies to any goods and covers all stages of the supply chain. Since 2019, the CBP has published six WROs on seafood harvested using forced labor on Chinese-owned fishing vessels.

1. Fishing Vessel: Yu Long No. 2
  - a. Issued May 11, 2020
  - b. Status: Inactive
2. Fishing Vessel: Da Wang
  - a. Issued August 18, 2020
  - b. Status: Finding
3. Fishing Vessel: Lien Yi Hsing No. 12
  - a. Issued December 31, 2020
  - b. Status: Active
4. Fishing Vessels owned by Dalian Ocean Fishing Co., Ltd.
  - a. Issued May 26, 2021
  - b. Status: Active
5. Fishing Vessel: Hangton No. 112
  - a. Issued August 4, 2021
  - b. Status: Active

## US Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act (UFLPA)

### What is it?

The UFLPA, signed into law on December 23, 2021, reinforces the US's policy to strengthen the prohibition against the importation of goods made with forced labor. This act was the US response to the systemic use of forced labor against Uyghurs and other ethnic minorities in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR). The UFLPA ensures support for enforcement of Section 307 of the Tariff Act of 1930 by establishing a rebuttable presumption that goods, wares, articles, and merchandise produced wholly or in part with forced labor, especially from the XUAR, are not entitled to entry to the United States. The act requires the interagency Forced Labor Enforcement Task Force (FLETF), led by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), to create and carry out a strategy to support the Tariff Act Section 307 enforcement.

### Key Components

1. Rebuttable presumption
  - a. UFLPA requires that CBP applies a presumption that all imports of goods, wares, articles, and merchandise mined, produced, or manufactured wholly or in part in the XUAR (Xinjiang) of the People's Republic of China (PRC), or by entities identified by the US government on the UFLPA Entity List, are presumed to be made with forced labor and are prohibited from entry into the United States. The presumption also applies to goods made in, or shipped through, the PRC and other countries that include inputs made in Xinjiang.
2. Due diligence
  - a. UFLPA requires that importers demonstrate due diligence, effective supply chain tracing, and supply chain management measures to ensure that they do not import any goods made, in whole or in part, by forced labor, especially from the Xinjiang region, and is applied to the entire supply chain. This includes products and goods that originate from other areas in China as well as products and goods sent to third countries for further processing.

### WHAT SEAFOOD COMPANIES ARE COVERED?

In 2024, DHS released an update to UFLPA that listed seafood as a high-priority sector, particularly products processed in Shandong Province. This was a result of reporting in 2023 that uncovered Uyghur labor connections to fish processing facilities along the east coast of China.

Seafood companies on the UFLPA Entity List

- Shandong Meijia Group Co., Ltd., also known as Rizhao Meijia Group, as well as its subsidiaries Rizhao Meijia Aquatic Foodstuff and Rizhao Meijia Keyuan Food Co., a company that processes, sells, and exports frozen seafood products
- the XPCC, which has invested significantly in seafood and fisheries development in recent years

Additionally, other potential downstream products impact the seafood supply chain from harvest to packaging. For example, PVC and aluminum are both high-priority sectors that comprise many components of fishing vessels and gear that could end up in the US market. According to DHS, "With the identification of these sectors, importers will be on notice to more closely review each tier in their supply chains to enhance transparency and focus due diligence efforts on the supply chain nodes involving these sectors."

## EU Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD)

### What is it?

On July 25, 2024, the directive on corporate sustainability due diligence (Directive 2024/1760) entered into force. The CSDDD will require companies to identify and address potential and actual adverse impacts to both human rights and the environment in the company's operations, their subsidiaries, and where related, their business partners that are related to their value chains. Larger companies must also create a transition plan for climate change mitigation that is aligned with the 2050 climate neutrality objective of the Paris Agreement and other intermediary targets under the European Climate Law. These rules will ensure that companies are addressing their actions inside and outside Europe that impact human rights and the environment.

### Key Components

- Corporate due diligence
  - Corporations must integrate due diligence into all corporate policies and risk management systems after identifying adverse human rights and environmental impacts in the company's operations. Companies must work to address these negative impacts, or at least minimize them if the impacts cannot be eliminated fully. If this is not possible, as a measure of "last resort," companies are required to suspend or terminate the business relationship. This also requires stakeholder engagement, establishing a complaints and notification procedure, and continued monitoring of the effectiveness of the due diligence measures.
- Practical measures to prevent, mitigate, and bring an end to adverse impacts
  - The directive outlines the measures companies are required to undertake, including developing corrective action plans, seeking contractual assurances from direct business partners, making necessary financial investments, providing financial support, adapting business plans, and collaborating among other actions where relevant.
- Climate change mitigation transition plan
  - Companies must adopt and implement a transition plan for climate change mitigation, with time-bound targets.

### WHAT COMPANIES DOES CSDDD APPLY TO?

- Large EU limited liability companies and partnerships
  - +/- **6,000 companies** >1,000 employees and >EUR 450 million turnover (net) worldwide
- Large non-EU companies
  - +/- **900 companies** > EUR 450 million turnover (net) in EU
  - The directive contains provisions to facilitate compliance and limit the burden on companies, both in scope and in the value chain.
- Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)
  - Micro companies and SMEs are not covered by the proposed rules. However, the directive provides supporting and protective measures for SMEs, which could be indirectly affected as business partners in value chains.



Lobster boat.  
© Alyssa Bistonath / WWF-Canada

## RESOURCES

### US Tariff Act of 1930 Section 307

- [Tariff Act of 1930 19 U.S.C. § 307](#)
- [Section 307 and Imports Produced by Forced Labor](#)
- [List of WROs by Country](#)

### US Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act

- About the program
  - [Strategy to Prevent the Importation of Goods Mined, Produced, or Manufactured with Forced Labor in the People's Republic of China](#)
  - [UFLPA Entity List](#)
  - [Federal Register Notices for the UFLPA Entity List](#)
  - [Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act Statistics](#) - Dashboard
  - [FAQs: Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act \(UFLPA\) Enforcement](#)
- Reporting and documentation
  - [Guidance on Executive Summaries and Sample Tables of Contents](#)
  - [Best Practices for Applicability Reviews: Importer Responsibilities](#)
  - [UFLPA Operational Guidance for Importers](#)

### EU Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive

- [EU CSDDD landing page with documents](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Register of Commission Documents](#)

### Research and Reports on human rights in Korea

- EJF report [The Broken Barrier: How illegal fishing and human rights abuses in Korea's fisheries imports go undetected](#)
- [Government-NGOs-Industry Unite to Improve Working Conditions for Migrant Fishers on Distant Water Fishing Vessels](#)
- EJF press release: [Korea's new plan to protect migrant crew is a step forward, but systematic solutions are still needed](#)
- [2022 EJF and APIL Submission](#) to include South Korea on ILAB's List of Goods
- [2021 EJF and APIL Submission](#) to include South Korea on ILAB's List of Goods
- [2020 EJF briefing](#) on illegal fishing and human rights abuses in the Korean fishing fleet

## Advocacy: Exporters

Exporters know better than most how complicated import control schemes can be. Navigating this regulatory landscape requires all supply chain actors, and particularly exporters, to manage volumes of documentation and data requests, verify the legality of their sources, and ensure products meet sustainability criteria where applicable. However, disparities such as redundant data collection or differing data formats can create confusion and challenges for exporters working to ensure proper compliance with these import control schemes.

To promote traceable and legal supply chains, effective advocacy from supply chain actors can include a host of topics including but not limited to standardized global regulations, greater transparency from governments, or the use of technology to verify legality and enhance traceability from harvest to final point of sale. Supply chain actors have significant influence to use their voice to push for better systems at the local, national, regional, and international levels.

### How to Advocate

- Support the establishment and enforcement of robust seafood import control rules, ensuring that imported seafood meets the same high standards as US-caught seafood.
- Advocate for standardized data requirements across seafood import and regulatory frameworks to streamline data collection and reporting for the industry.
- Engage with the [Global Dialogue for Seafood Traceability \(GDST\)](#) and use its resources to encourage supply chain partners to report IUU-related information in a common digital format.
- Support industry advocacy for a well-resourced, effectively enforced import control scheme, highlighting its real-world benefits. Advocacy efforts may include company letters, joint industry statements, meetings with government officials, roundtable discussions, public comments, and opinion pieces.
- Collaborate with other supply chain actors in urging the EU, US, Japan, and Korea to expand species coverage, enhance program transparency, clarify guidance for businesses, update stakeholders on enforcement efforts, and adopt a whole-of-government approach.
- Proactively implement best practices to ensure compliance with import control scheme reporting requirements.



Longline fishing vessels anchored in Fiji.  
© WWF-Pacific/Tom Vierus

## Advocacy: Governments

Government agencies juggle many responsibilities, often with limited resources and capacity. Navigating the complex and ever-evolving import control regulatory landscape is challenging. Harmonizing major market import control schemes would reduce the burden on flag states responsible for verifying catch information, enhance efficiency by minimizing paperwork and administrative tasks, and create opportunities to align national reporting and recordkeeping requirements, ultimately improving transparency and traceability in the seafood supply chain.

Import restrictions can have significant consequences for exporting countries. To avoid sanctions, restrictions, and other negative impacts, governments can take proactive steps to ensure compliance with all import control schemes. Government-to-government advocacy is also a valuable tool for promoting greater regional and international cooperation.

### How to Advocate

Governments should promote transparency in fisheries governance; on-the-water monitoring (including via EM and/or human observers with worker safeguards); seafood traceability systems that track products from boat to plate; strong enforcement capabilities; and mechanisms for regional cooperation among port, coastal, and flag states, including capacity-building where needed.

- Endorse the [Global Charter for Fisheries Transparency](#) and implement the [Fisheries Transparency Initiative Standards](#).
- Apply effective port state measures and inspections at landing points to deter illicit activities and incentivize the adoption of best practices globally. Fully implementing the [Food and Agriculture Organization's Agreement on Port State Measures \(PSMA\)](#)—the first binding international agreement to specifically target IUU fishing—is particularly crucial.
- Ensure effective verification of reported data.
  - Flag, coastal, and port states should validate information where operations occurred, with confirmation from enforcement officials in the market state.
  - For fishing conducted under an RFMO's jurisdiction, data should be verified for compliance with RFMO obligations.
- Align national and local seafood reporting requirements with international standards to ease compliance with import control schemes, reduce the burden on exporters, and streamline internal certifications.
- Increase government transparency in regulatory design, implementation, and enforcement to improve understanding of different programs' effectiveness and provide clearer sourcing guidance. This could include
  - regular reporting back to industry and the public
  - announcing updates to guidance materials
  - sharing aggregated trends or analyses to support responsible procurement
  - engaging industry stakeholders, including end buyers, in regulatory design or amendments to ensure policies are ambitious yet achievable while reflecting real-world supply chain conditions
- Exporters rely on data exchanges and communications within their supply chains. Governments can enhance compliance capacity through
  - providing supply chain training, multilingual resources, and updated guidance materials
  - encouraging global adoption of electronic traceability systems
  - leveling the playing field for all imported species and reducing the risk of IUU product sourcing

## Advocacy: Enforcement Agencies

Import controls are only as effective as their associated industry compliance and agency enforcement. Greater intergovernmental cooperation and communication can ease enforcement burdens, reduce redundancies, and close loopholes that allow IUU seafood to shift between markets due to enforcement gaps.

Import control rules can serve as powerful tools for interagency data exchange, as they regularly collect large volumes of information for recordkeeping, permitting, and reporting. Beyond ensuring compliance with the import control schemes, this data can help combat forced labor and human rights abuses at sea. Additionally, tools such as real-time grievance mechanisms with reliable communication methods, like Wi-Fi access, can significantly improve the identification, enforcement, and prevention of forced labor issues.

### How to Advocate

- Promote data harmonization and sharing across import regulations to enhance interagency communication, eliminate redundant data collection, and strengthen efforts to combat IUU fishing, seafood fraud, and labor rights abuses through a whole-of-government approach.
- Stay informed about legislative developments, including new import control schemes and evolving human rights due diligence requirements.
- Engage in regional and international coordination efforts to support a global enforcement strategy.
- Advocate for advanced reporting over retroactive audits, leveraging technology such as digital reporting systems and predictive analytic software to improve efficiency and enforcement.



**Fishing boats, Paracas Peru.**  
© Nicolas Villaume / WWF-US



**Fish catch for the day - China.**  
© Staffan Widstrand / Wild Wonders of China / WWF



**ENDONTES**

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