

Working to Combat IUU Fishing and Protect Marine Resources Globally



NOAA FISHERIES International Affairs



2015 Report to Congress¹

The United States will work with the six nations identified in this report to encourage them to take action to address their IUU fishing activities.

The High Seas Driftnet Fishing Moratorium Protection Act (the Act) directs the United States to strengthen international fisheries management organizations, and to address illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing and bycatch of protected living marine resources (PLMRs), and to improve the conservation of sharks.

This legislation calls on the United States to:

- promote improved monitoring, control, and surveillance for high seas fisheries and those managed by regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs);
- improve the effectiveness of RFMOs through adoption of IUU vessel lists, port state controls, market-related measures, and the adoption of measures to prohibit the removal of any shark fins and discarding of the carcasses at sea; and
- build capacity in other countries to ensure sustainable fisheries and regulatory enforcement.

The Act also requires the United States to identify nations to Congress for IUU fishing, and/or bycatch of PLMRs or shark catch on the high seas for nations that do not have regulatory measures comparable to the United States. Identification is the first step in a three step process.

Identification: Nations engaged in IUU fishing, and/or bycatch of protected resources, or shark catches on the high seas identified in the Report to Congress.



Consultation: United States works collaboratively with identified nations on actions to address the activities for which they were identified.



Certification: Certification decisions issued based on the actions of the nations.



The two-year consultation process encourages nations to take action to address the activities for which they were identified. Nations identified for having vessels engaged in IUU fishing are required to take appropriate corrective action to address the activities described in the biennial report. Nations identified for having vessels engaged in bycatch or shark catch on the high seas are required to adopt regulatory programs in the relevant fisheries comparable in effectiveness to U.S. programs, and to establish management plans for the applicable species.

Based on information provided by nations during the consultations, the United States issues a certification

decision which is published in the next Report to Congress. A positive certification is issued if the nation has provided evidence of actions that address the activities for which it was identified. If the nation cannot demonstrate sufficient action has been taken, a negative certification may be issued and could result in U.S. port restrictions for fishing vessels of that nation, and import prohibitions on certain fish or fish products.

The United States looks forward to actively working with our international partners to achieve the goals of the Act in a cooperative and transparent manner.

Past Accomplishments

The United States successfully worked with all nations identified for IUU fishing in the past three reports to Congress (2009, 2011, and 2013), and each nation received a positive certification for taking actions to address its IUU fishing activities.

Next Steps

In the February 2015 Report to Congress, six nations were identified for IUU fishing. The United States has begun consultations with the identified nations to encourage them to take action to address these activities. In January 2017, the United States will issue new identifications, as well as certification decisions for the nations identified in 2015.

For more information on our efforts to combat IUU fishing and protect marine resources globally, please visit <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/ia> or contact Kristin Rusello at kristin.rusello@noaa.gov.

¹Link to full report: http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/ia/iuu/msra_page/2015noaareptcongress.pdf

