

This [Common Language Group](#) bite-size meeting provided a review of IUU fishing and its impacts at global, regional and national (UK) levels, and looked at the development of UK national IUU measures and what the UK is doing to tackle fisheries crime and IUU fishing.

- **Illegal:** Fishing without permission from that State or in contravention of the State's regulations
- **Unreported:** Fishing that has not been reported, or has been reported incorrectly, to the State
- **(Unregulated:** Operationalising "unregulated" can be a bit tricky in an EEZ context)

[Illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing impacts: A systematic review of evidence and proposed future agenda](#). Andrew Temple, MPAG.

This is global phenomenon with wide-reaching impacts. **Key figures:**

Illegal estimates Northeast Atlantic (2009)

- ~ 364–842 thousand tonnes
- ~ US\$328-758 million

National estimates on unreported (2015)

- ~ 27 thousand tonnes by UK fleet
- ~ US\$72 million (approx. £55 million)

At least 10 other States believed to conduct unreported fishing in UK waters

- ~ 75 thousand tonnes
- ~ US\$197 million

Estimates exist for IUU from UK vessels

- 27 thousand tonnes
- US\$72,000,000

Foreign vessels committing IUU offences in UK waters

- ~ 75 thousand tonnes
- ~ US\$197 million

Discussion

- **Q. The numbers are astonishing for the Northeast Atlantic. We would like to understand a bit more about the numbers and the difference between illegal and unreported. It is illegal activity. For foreign fleets only tonnage is included. This does not give a real flavour. There is also talk of high-risk fisheries. We need more granularity around these figures. The other thing to perhaps explore is whether the focus of the IUU impact is on conservation objectives (e.g., incursions to MPAs) or sustainability of stocks either here in UK or overseas.**
A. We are now trying to break this down by species and fleets. This is a first step (a review) and more work is underway.
- **Q. Regarding UK vessel IUU - do we have an estimate of IUU outside of UK waters?**
A. We could derive this estimate, but it was not our aim at the time.
- **Q. Does the study include UK's OT?**
A. No the study only considers the main UK EEZ, no OT at this stage. Obviously, an important area to consider though.

For further information

- [Illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing impacts: A systematic review of evidence and proposed future agenda](#)

Current UK IUU policy. Jake Kingsley, Senior Policy Advisor IUU, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)/Jacob Flaherty, Marine Management Organisation.

- The UK developed the Fish Export Service (FES) to provide validated catch certificates for UK fish. The UK will continue to engage with bilateral partners and multilateral organisations

who require catch documents to make the exporting process as smooth as possible, minimising burdens. Where possible and beneficial to UK industry, the UK will integrate or align the FES with other countries' schemes.

- The UK is in the process of developing its policy on the implementation of the identification of non-cooperating countries. As an independent coastal state, the listing process is an important tool for the UK to tackle IUU fishing. If a vessel is included on the UK's IUU vessel list, several restrictions will apply. The UK maintains an IUU Fishing vessel list that is aligned with all RFMOs, regardless of the UK's membership status.
- The Single Liaison Officer (SLO) is the UK point of contact for any matter relating to IUU fishing. A catch certificate is produced by exporters in order to export fish and validated by their flag state's competent authority. The catch certificate is forwarded to the country of import and is then verified by that country's authorities. A Catch Certificate provides an audit trail of all fishing activities and provides assurance that consignments have been sourced in a responsible way by actors who are authorised to do so.

Discussion

- **Q. You mentioned 'UK IUU Vessel List' Could this list be any different than the NEAFC IUU Confirmed B List?**
A. We want to maintain alignment with all RFMO IUU Vessel lists so vessels in the NEAFC B List will be included.
 - **Q. Doesn't the latest research (from Notts Uni?) highlight abuses to migrant workers in UK vessels - irrespective of IUU but related to migrant visas etc?**
A. Yes that's correct, Defra are working with Home Office on this with it being related to fishing industry. The IUU teams focus will be more on the specific link between the IUU/Modern Slavery. IUU vessels are more likely to be involved in labour abuses. But that does not mean there are also non IUU vessels that will also have labour abuses if the circumstances are right - such as the migratory labour issue highlighted by reports in UK/EU
 - **Q. Does the UK's retention of the IUU regulation enable the SLO to continue to receive intelligence from the Commission and EU Member States on IUU risks e.g., when a high-risk trade flow is identified?**
A. It does indeed. The EU's reg as well as the UK's retained reg contain provisions for information sharing which are distinct from the old mutual assistance provisions which only were applicable to the UK when it was still a Member State to the EU, this has been a tricky area since leaving the EU but there have been quite a few examples of info sharing since we left the EU under art 51 1010/2009 and we're hoping to keep these lines of communication open
 - **Q. Do you get many landings from countries/flag States that would fall under the FAO PSMA?**
A. The numbers of direct landings into English ports since we left the EU have been surprisingly low and from only a handful of countries (almost exclusively Ireland but a couple of other EU countries too). Our colleagues in Scotland administer direct landings for their own ports and I believe they have much higher numbers of direct landings from a wider range of third country flagged vessels which I could ask them for if you wanted such info.
 - **Q. Are Remote Electronic Monitoring (REM) and Blockchain being considered for the UK fleet. This is something that the UK supply chain would be very interested in.**
A. Technological solutions will definitely be considered going forward. This has been highlighted before and will be looking at technology solutions.
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Seafood Business for Ocean Stewardship (SeaBOS) approach to addressing IUU fishing and forced labour. Robert Blasiak, SeaBOS Task Force.

This focused on efforts by SeaBOS (ten of the world's largest seafood companies working towards leadership in ocean sustainability) in four key areas:

- Improve transparency and traceability in our own operations; Engage in concerted efforts to help reduce IUU fishing and ensure endangered species are not present in supply chains; Engage in science-based efforts to improve fisheries and aquaculture management and productivity; Engage in concerted efforts to eliminate any form of modern slavery
- Their aim is to 'Eliminate IUU fishing and forced, bonded and child labour in our operations— and implement measures to address those issues in their supply chains – with public reporting on progress in 2022 and 2025.
- A key study in 2022 tried to identify areas of risk.
- Voluntary Procurement Actions. 45 practical tools / measures were identified across seven main action categories.

Discussion

- **Q. You mentioned a commitment to report in 2022 and 2025. Will this be individual businesses on their own websites, and will those reports be third party validated or the businesses themselves reporting. Will there be a group report?**
A. It is a combination, and we will be developing this reporting framework in a systematic way. We are not reporting as a group at the moment, but it is an aspiration.
- **Q. There was mention of the risk of IUU and human right abuses, but the risk maps were slightly different. Why do you think there is a discrepancy between those two maps?**
A. It is maybe to do with the stickiness of a bad reputation. This is about opinion.
- **Q. In UK (and elsewhere) the supermarkets have also played a key role in the IUU story, in turn influencing their suppliers. Parts of the voluntary code are very aspirational for vessels; do you think much of the industry will be able to make progress by 2025?**
A. We need to be aspirational. There needs to be vigilance and there needs to be action to address this. We need to identify credible tools and a credible response.
- **Q. The presentations so appear to have focussed on licenced fishing operations. Not unexpected, but is there also a focus on unlicensed activities?**
A. These rogue vessels which are not tracked and not attached to a Flag State. It is a focus, and we want to discuss more within international forums, and this has been raised within the insurance industry.