


**QUESTIONNAIRE to be used for biennial reporting
on the application of the IUU Regulation**

Reporting period 2022-2023 (deadline for submission 30 April 2024)

Member State:	Latvia
Organisation:	Ministry of Agriculture, On behalf of the Latvian Single Liaison office
Date:	30 April, 2024
Name, position and contact details of responsible official:	

May the Commission provide a copy of this questionnaire to other Member States?	
Yes:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Yes except for questions (list):	No restrictions
No:	<input type="checkbox"/>
May the Commission provide a copy of this questionnaire to the European Fisheries Control Agency for a horizontal assessment¹?	
Yes:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Yes except for questions (list):	No restrictions
No:	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please check if your notified authorities under the IUU Regulation (Articles 15(2), 17(8) and 21(3)) correspond with the latest version of the Official Journal:

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52022XC0408%2802%29&gid=1701963740421>

If not, please provide the updated notification to DG MARE through the Functional mailbox: MARE-NOTIFICATIONS-IUU-1005-2008@ec.europa.eu

¹ This assessment is for internal use of the Commission. EFCA will present to Member States a summary of this assessment in the EFCA's Plenary and Steering Group meeting.

Please state your notified authorities under the IUU Regulation in accordance with Article 39(4) (nationals):

Fisheries Control Department of the State Environmental Service

Section 1. Information on legal framework²

Since the last reporting exercise covering the period 2020-2021, has your country adopted/modified national law or any administrative guides for the application of any of the provisions of Council Regulation (EC) No 1005/2008 on illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU Regulation)?

Yes No

If yes, please detail and provide copies or provide link to the official national database.

Since the last reporting exercise there are no changes in the national regulation for the application of any of the provisions of the IUU Regulation.

At the same time regular updates to the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) website section on preventing, deterring, and eliminating IUU fishing are made: <https://www.zm.gov.lv/lv/nmn-zvejas-apkarosana-un-izskausana> (available in Latvian)

- <https://www.zm.gov.lv/lv/nesadarbigas-valstis-un-potenciali-nesadarbigas-valstis> - additions were made in relation to non-cooperating countries.
- <https://www.zm.gov.lv/lv/ieteikumi-nozvejas-sertifikata-aizpildisanai> - updated with the Commission document “Frequently Asked Questions on the practical application of Council Regulation (EC) No. 1005/2008 of 29 September 2008 establishing a Union system to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (“IUU Regulation”)”, May 2023.
- <https://www.zm.gov.lv/lv/argentinas-digitalas-sistemas-izmantosana-nozvejas-sertifikatu-zivju-produktu-importam> - information on digital system of Argentina was applied.
- <https://www.zm.gov.lv/lv/japanas-nozvejas-sertifikatu-shema> - information of catch certification scheme for Japan was applied.

Section 2. Information on administrative organisation³

2.1. Please provide information on your administrative organisation for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 1005/2008 on illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU Regulation), in particular as regards:

- port inspections (Chapter II);

According to the Article 6 of the Council Regulation 1005/2008, third countries vessels inform the competent authority - SES on intention to land the products in relevant designated port of Latvia – Rīga and Ventspils (designated in National Rules of the Cabinet of 02.05.2007. No 296 “Regulations regarding Commercial Fishing in Territorial Waters and Economic Zone Waters”).

At the same time point 4.¹ of the National rules of the Cabinet of 20.02.2018. No 94 “Regulations Regarding the Control of Fish Landing and Inspection of Fish Marketing and

² This section 1 is to be filled-in by all Member States i.e. coastal and landlocked Member States.

³ This section 2 is to be filled-in by all Member States i.e. coastal and landlocked Member States.

Transport Facilities, Warehouses and Processing Premises” prescribes that the master of the fishing vessel of a third country or a representative thereof shall, at least three working days before the expected time of arrival of the vessel at the port of the Republic of Latvia, submit electronically to the State Environmental Service the information referred to in Article 6(1) of Regulation No 1005/2008 and the European Community catch certificate referred to in Annex II to Regulation No 1005/2008 (hereinafter - the catch certificate) which has been approved in conformity with Chapter III of the abovementioned Regulation.

This information is received in the SES Central office. In the port the physical verification of the landing, based on decision made by the SES Central office is performed by the local quarter of SES located in the designated port.

Based on the Article 9 of the IUU regulation Latvia ensures inspections in designated ports of at least 5 % of landing and transshipment operations by third country fishing vessels each year. (More details on inspections of third country vessels in Latvian ports are available in the response to the point 3.3. of this report).

To improve co-operation on implementation of the requirements competent authorities in 2020 started negotiations with the Ministry of Transport and the designated port`s authorities on IUU requirements on the access to the port for the third countries fishing (transport (REF)) vessels in accordance with Article 7 of the IUU Regulation. It should be noted that discussions continue, and no agreement has been reached on the actual action to improve inter-institutional coordination in practice.

- catch certification scheme (Chapter III);

Several competent authorities are involved in the catch certification scheme in Latvia.

Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) is the authority in charge for the validation of the catch certificates for the Latvian fishing vessels in case of fisheries products export. Fisheries Department of MoA also provide Latvian IUU SLO function.

State Environmental Service (SES) Fisheries Control Department (Central office) is the authority responsible for the validation of the catch certificates to allow the import into or re-export of the fisheries product via Latvia.

Food and Veterinary Service (FVS) is responsible for endorsement of the processing statements and storage documents.

State Revenue Service (SRS) National Customs Board provides import customs procedure, incl. control of documents (also catch certificates) concerning the respective consignment, performs risk management regarding customs matters etc. National Customs Board is authority which accepts product import (for the fisheries products – based on catch certificate validated by the SES)

More details on catch certification scheme please find in the further clarifications to this point (subpoint (a) and (b) and the cooperation schemes)

- nationals (Chapter VIII).

SES Fisheries Control Department is responsible under the IUU Regulation in accordance with Article 39(4).

MoA on behalf of the Latvian IUU SLO is in close cooperation with the SES and coordinates this issue.

In addition the Latvian IUU SLO cooperated with the Maritime Administration of Latvia, Register of Seamen, which is responsible for Certification of Seafarers.

More details on nationals please find in the further clarifications to the Section 12 of the report.

As well as Latvia would like to refer to the Study on the legislative frameworks and enforcement systems of Member States regarding obligations and sanctions to nationals for infringements to the rules arising from the IUU Regulation what was done by the Commission contracted company MILIEU Ltd in 2022. *When providing the above requested information, please specify if different authorities/services are involved in the implementation of the IUU Regulation for:*

- *the control of the access and use of ports, including for landings and transshipments, of third country fishing vessels in accordance with Chapter II of the IUU Regulation;*
- *checks and verifications of catch certificates for fishery products arriving on board of third country fishing vessels at designated ports;*
- *checks and verifications of catch certificates for imports of consignment with fishery products arriving by other means than fishing vessels (e.g. by containers, planes, trucks);*
- *validation of catch certificates for exports;*
- *validation and verifications of re-exports.*

In addition (if different authorities/services are involved), please explain and describe:

MoA is the authority in charge for the validation of the catch certificates for the Latvian fishing vessels in case of fisheries products export. During the validation process each catch certificate is examined for a variety of criteria - does the potential exporter or respective fishing company hold the valid licence and quota for relevant species, % of quota exhaustion, logbooks entries etc. In case where there are no problems, the catch certificate is validated.

Regarding catch certificates issued by the third countries - SES Fisheries Control Department (Central office) is the authority responsible for the validation of the catch certificates to allow the import into or re-export of the fisheries product via Latvia. The catch certificate is verified by obtaining necessary information - is the catch obtained by the vessel included in the IUU vessels list, crosschecked with the information submitted within the mutual assistance system, etc.

Internal cooperation between the Central office and local quarters of SES is needed only where physical checks for fishing vessels flying the flag of third countries is required. According to the Council Regulation 1005/2008 Article 6, third countries vessels inform the competent authority - SES on intend to land the products in relevant designated port of Latvia. This information is received in the SES Central office, verified by checking information and further permission or rejection for vessel entry into port is provided. In the port the physical verification of the landing, based on decision made by the SES Central office is performed by the local quarter of SES located in the designated port.

Food and Veterinary Service (FVS) is responsible for endorsement of the processing statements and storage documents. At the time of endorsement of the documents, FVS carry out establishments inspection and document checks, including inspection of the catch certificates in the information system LFICIS, is carried out during the inspection of the undertakings on the traceability of the products during which it is examined that the raw material of the fishery product imported under the relevant catch certificate has actually been used for processing of the exported fisheries product. If all the information is relevant, the production document is approved.

Co-operation among the structures of the SRS National Customs Board, involved in the implementation of the IUU Regulation, is described in the SRS National Customs Board internal guidance 'On changes in the IUU fishing control'.

Co-operation among the respective structures of the SRS National Customs Board when dealing with the implementation of the IUU Regulation should be mentioned as follows:

Customs Clearance Process Unit of Customs Clearance Process Management Division – develops guidance etc. for customs officials and explanations for customs clients as well, performs co-operation with other structures in Customs Department, as well as with other institutions in Latvia (MoA, SES) responsible for implementation of the IUU Regulation,

Import Custom Control Point of Riga Custom Control Points' Division – involved in drawing up import customs procedure, incl. control of documents (also catch certificates) concerning the respective consignment,

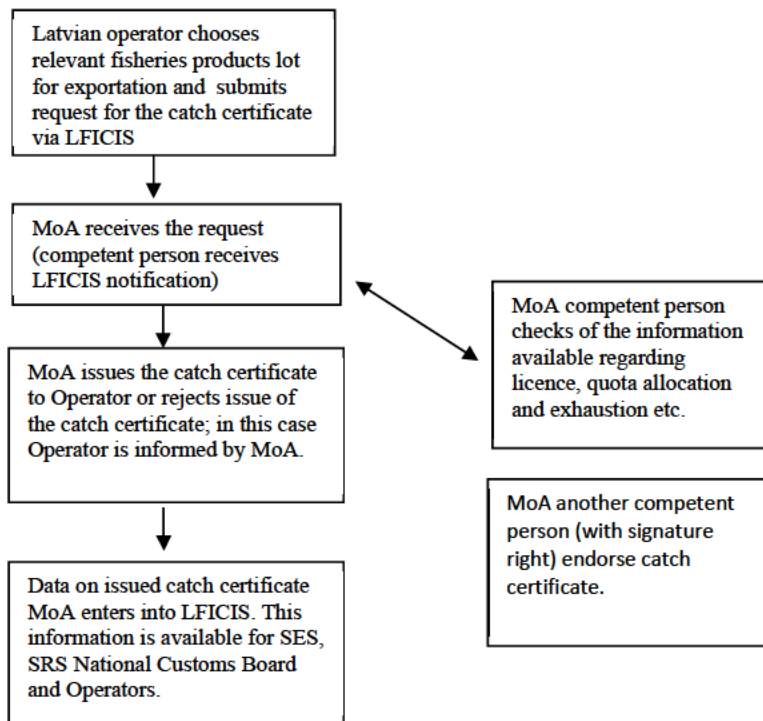
Risk Management Division – performs risk management regarding customs matters.

- a) *vertical co-operation (between local/regional authorities and their headquarters/central authorities);*
- b) *horizontal co-operation between different authorities and allocation of tasks for various authorities in the implementation of the IUU Regulation (Fisheries, Health, Customs, Coast Guard, Navy, etc.).*

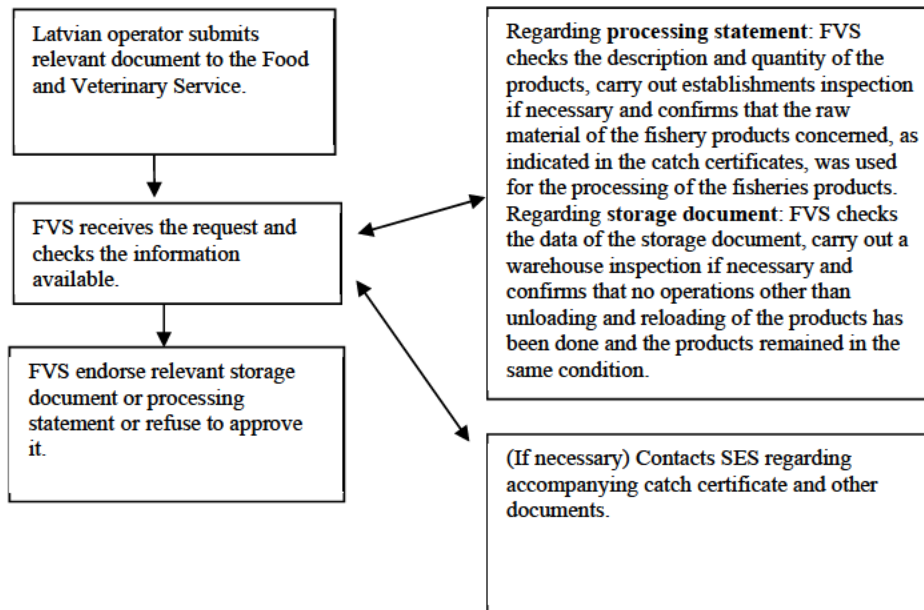
The interinstitutional cooperation has been set in the Rules of the Cabinet as well as in the trilateral agreement between the MoA, SRS National Customs Board and SES.

To improve cooperation and control efficiency the SRS National Customs Board in 2015 was granted access to MoA information system LFICIS. This allows SRS to see in the LFICIS, and check import catch certificate validated by SES.

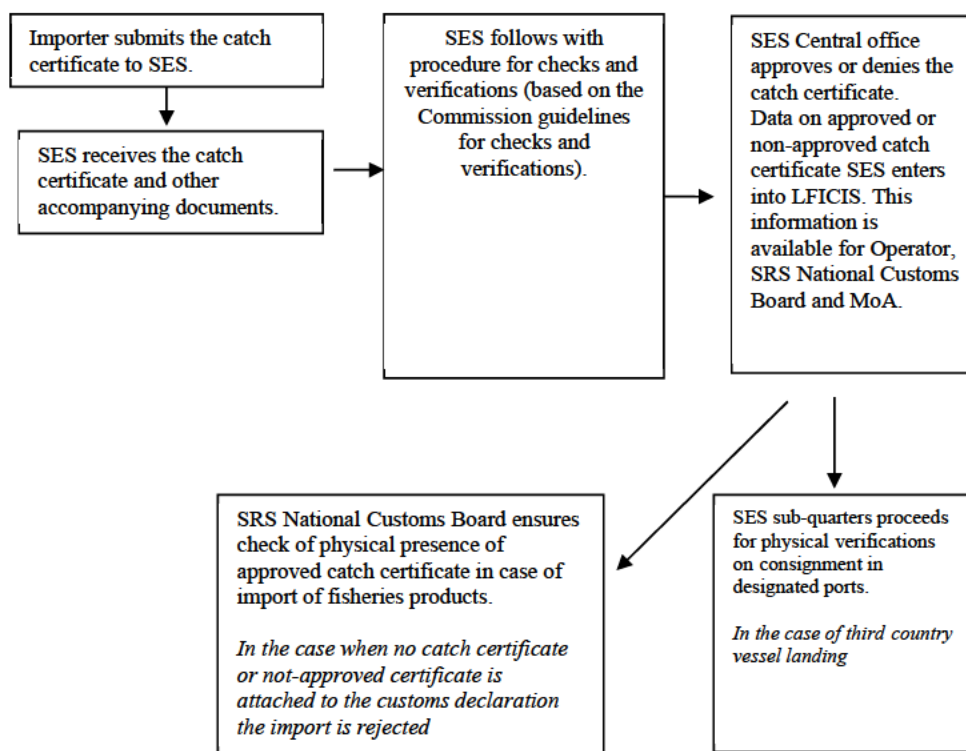
Scheme of cooperation in the case of export of fisheries products from Latvian vessels is as follows:



Scheme of cooperation in the case of products export when, based on the IUU regulation, processing statement or storage document is requested:



Scheme of cooperation in the case of import of fisheries products from third countries:



If written agreements on cooperation between different authorities/services have been concluded, please provide copies.

Trilateral agreement was already included (Agreement and the amendments are only available in Latvian) within communication with the Commission in relation to the additional request on Latvian IUU report for the previous period in March 2024. No amendments since then.

As it was mentioned previously, we have identified the need to revise the terms of the mentioned Agreement. No deadlines have been set at this time.

When providing the above requested information, if there were any changes in the administrative organisation since the previous reporting period (2020-2021), please underline those changes.

2.2. How many officials are involved in the implementation of the catch certification scheme?

Please specify the number of officials expressed in Full Time Equivalent (FTE); please specify which authority they belong to:

- *for checks and verifications in accordance with Articles 16 and 17 of the IUU Regulation;*

SES - for checks and verifications in accordance with Articles 16 and 17 of the IUU Regulation and validation of re-export certificates in accordance with Article 21(3) of the IUU Regulation two officials are involved with 0,5 FTE each (in total 1 FTE)

In case of physical inspections of third country vessel landings in designated ports 4 SES officials (inspectors) are involved. FTE cannot be calculated because it depends on the number of entries and physical controls, so the number of inspectors involved is indicated. Due to the

mentioned reasons FTE cannot be calculated also for the involved SRS National Customs Board and FVS officials.

- *for validation of catch certificates for exports and of re-export certificates in accordance with Articles 15(2) and 21(3) of the IUU Regulation.*

For validation of catch certificates in the case of export of catches made by fishing vessels flying the flag of Latvia - 0,1 MoA official (in FTE) is involved.

For the re-export catch certificate verification (formalities and procedures, as well as physical control and verification) 1 SRS National Customs Board official are involved.

2.3. Does your country have freezones/freeports⁴ in which activities relevant to importation/exportation/processing of fishery products are authorised?

Yes No

If yes, please provide a list of such zones/ports.

The following special economic zones (SEZ) and freeports exist in Latvia:

1. Liepājas SEZ – <http://liepaja-sez.lv/>
2. Rēzeknes SEZ – <http://www.rsez.lv/>
3. Rīgas brīvosta – <http://www.rop.lv/lv/>
4. Ventspils brīvosta – <http://www.portofventspils.lv/lv/>
5. Latgales SEZ - <https://lpr.gov.lv/lv/lsez/>

The operation and functions of special economic zones and freeports are determined by the Law on ports, the Law on Freeport of Riga, the Law on Ventspils Freeport, the Law on Liepaja Special Economic Zone, the Law on Rezeknes Special Economic Zone, the Law on Latgale Special Economic Zone, the Law on Control of commercial activities support, the Law on taxation in free ports and Special Economic zones, the Law on taxes and fees, the Law on value added tax, the Law on Enterprise income tax, as well as the laws and regulations regulating customs matters and other regulatory enactments.

Section 3. Information on access to ports, including for landings and transshipments of fishery products, by third country fishing vessels⁵ (and information on related port inspections and confirmed infringements)⁶

3.1. Does your country have designated ports for access to port services or landings or transshipment of fishery products by third country fishing vessels (Article 5 of the IUU Regulation⁷)?

Yes No

⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/business/customs-procedures/what-is-importation/free-zones_en

⁵ Fishing vessels as defined in article 2(5) of the IUU Regulation.

⁶ This section 3 refers to Chapter II (Articles 4 to 11) of the IUU Regulation and is applicable to coastal Member States. Landlocked Member States should not fill in this section.

⁷ Please note that ports designated under Regional Fisheries Management Organisations must also be designated under the IUU Regulation with restrictions if necessary (species, etc.).

If yes, please check if your list of designated ports in accordance with Article 5(3) corresponds to the latest version of the Office Journal:

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52023XC01237>

If not, please provide the updated notification to DG MARE through the Functional mailbox: MARE-NOTIFICATIONS-IUU-1005-2008@ec.europa.eu

3.2. In years 2022 and 2023 respectively, how many times have third country fishing vessels been granted authorisation to access designated ports in your country only for repair/maintenance/supply?⁸

17 visits of 3rd country REF vessels to port of Riga have been authorised for repair:

In 2022 – 6 REF vessels;

In 2023 – 11 REF vessels.

3.3. How many landings and transshipments in designated ports by third country fishing vessels have been recorded by your country between 1 January 2022 until 31 December 2023? How many inspections did your country carry out and how many infringements have been detected?

Please fill-in the table below (2022):

Inspections of third country fishing vessels in Member States ports (2022)					
Type of operation	Vessels	Figures (2022)	Flag of the third country vessel(s)⁹		
			<i>NO</i>	<i>FO</i>	Total
Landings	Third country vessels using MS designated ports	Number of landings	1	3	4
		Number of inspections	0	1	1
		% of inspections / landings	0%	33,33%	25%
		Number of infringements	0	0	0
Transshipments	Third country vessels using MS designated ports	Number of transshipments in ports	-	-	-
		Number of inspections	-	-	-
		% of inspections / transshipments	-	-	-
		Number of infringements	-	-	-

Please fill-in the table below (2023):

⁸ It should be reminded that provisions of Chapter II apply to third country fishing vessels aiming to access EU ports for port services, even in cases where they do not carry fishery products on board and therefore no landing or transshipment operation is foreseen. Third country fishing vessels shall only access ports designated in accordance with Article 5.

⁹ ISO Alpha-2 country codes.

Inspections of third country fishing vessels in Member States ports (2023)					
Type of operation	Vessels	Figures (2023)	Flag of the third country vessel(s) ¹⁰		
			<i>NO</i>	<i>FO</i>	Total
Landings	Third country vessels using MS designated ports	Number of landings	2	2	4
		Number of inspections	0	0	0
		% of inspections / landings	0%	0%	0%
		Number of infringements	0	0	0
Transhipments	Third country vessels using MS designated ports	Number of transhipments in ports	-	-	-
		Number of inspections	-	-	-
		% of inspections / transhipments	-	-	-
		Number of infringements	-	-	-

3.4. From the figures above, in the cases where your country detected infringements concerning third country fishing vessels, please specify for each infringement the flag, the vessel's name, the type of infringement and the measures taken / sanction imposed (Article 11 of the IUU Regulation).

Please fill-in the table below (2022):

Flag of the third country vessel ¹¹	Name of the third country vessel	Type of infringements	Measures taken
FS1	-	-	-
FS2	-	-	-
...	-	-	-
FSx	-	-	-

Please fill-in the table below (2023):

Flag of the third country vessel ¹²	Name of the third country vessel	Type of infringements	Measures taken
FS1	-	-	-
FS2	-	-	-

¹⁰ ISO Alpha-2 country codes.

¹¹ ISO Alpha-2 country codes.

¹² ISO Alpha-2 country codes.

...	-	-	-
FSx	-	-	-

3.5. Please provide:

- the quantities of fish landed by third countries' fishing vessels in your designated ports in 2022 and 2023, respectively (by species and flag of the catching vessels);
- the quantities of fish transhipped from third countries' fishing donor vessels (to third countries or EU fishing receiving vessels) in your designated ports in 2022 and 2023, respectively (by species and flag of the vessels):

Please fill-in the table below (landings):

Landings in 2022		Landings in 2023	
Flag of the third country vessel that caught the fish ¹³	Landed quantities by species ¹⁴ (weight in tonnes)	Flag of the third country vessel that caught the fish ¹⁵	Landed quantities by species ¹⁴ (weight in tonnes)
FO	HER: 1193,418 MAC: 958,923	FO	HER: 1847,938 MAC: 2288,296
GL	MAC: 483,207	UK	HER: 846,720
UK	HER: 770,340 MAC: 77,080	-	-

Please fill-in the table below (transhipments):

Transhipments in 2022		Transhipments in 2023	
Flag of the third country vessel ¹⁶	Transhipped quantities by species ¹⁴ (weight in tonnes)	Flag of the third country vessel ¹⁷	Transhipped quantities by species ¹⁴ (weight in tonnes)
FS1	-	FS1	-
FS2	-	FS2	-

¹³ ISO Alpha-2 country codes.

¹⁴ Please use the FAO Alpha-3 codes (ASFIS).

¹⁵ ISO Alpha-2 country codes.

¹⁶ ISO Alpha-2 country codes.

¹⁷ ISO Alpha-2 country codes.

...	-	...	-
FSx	-	FSx	-

3.6. Has your country recorded any case of non-compliance by third country fishing vessels with the provisions of Articles 6 (prior notice) and 7 (authorisation) of the IUU Regulation?

Yes No

If yes, please detail the nature of the infringement and the measures taken / sanctions applied:

In 2022:

In 2023:

3.7. Since January 2022, has your country denied access to its ports to a fishing vessel for port services, landing or transshipment of fishery products based on the conditions of the IUU Regulation?

Yes No

If yes, please describe the case for each vessel concerned (please include the flag of the vessel and its name) and detail the reasons for the denial:

In 2022:

In 2023:

3.8. Do you have cases of third country fishing vessels landing in your ports with the landed products destined to another Member State? [Article 19(3) of the IUU Regulation]

Yes No*

If yes, please indicate the number of landings meant for transit:

In 2022:

In 2023:

** Note: Latvian competent authorities and its databases does not collect statistical data of fishing vessel landing in transit, therefore, such data for Latvia are not available.*

3.9. In order to identify the vessels to be subject to port inspection, do you use risk assessment criteria [cf. benchmarks for port inspections, Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 1010/2009]?

Yes No

Not applicable (e.g. in the absence of landings/transshipments from third countries)

If yes, please detail, in order to reach the objective of at least 5% of landing and transshipment operations as set in Article 9(1) of the IUU Regulation, which benchmarks you use and rank them:

.....

There are the risk assessment criteria elaborated by SES for the port inspections to control the Latvian vessels as well as EU Member State vessels landings. The criteria are set considering landing quantities

of species under the recovery plan, proportion of the fleet using this port etc., as well behaviour of the certain vessels (penalty points, included/not included in IUU “blacklist” etc.). This risk assessment has been included in LFICIS, therefore surveillance of the riskiest areas has become more efficient.

Section 4. Information on catch certification scheme for importation¹⁸

4.1. How many catch certificates¹⁹ from non-EU countries were submitted to the authorities of your country from 1 January 2022 until 31 December 2023? Please complete the following table by flag State validating the catch certificates, including cases where catch certificates are accompanied by processing statements.²⁰ Please only provide information on catch certificates accompanying the consignments to be imported in your country; for consignments meant for transit to another Member State (Article 19(1) of the IUU Regulation), please see the question 4.7. of this questionnaire.

Flag State (non-EU) ²¹	2022		2023	
	Annex II catch certificate ²²	Simplified catch certificate ²³ *	Annex II catch certificate ²²	Simplified catch certificate ²³ *
<i>US</i>	33	-	43	-
<i>AR</i>	8	-	6	-
<i>CL</i>	1	-	2	-
<i>GB</i>	101	-	90	-
<i>KR</i>	8	-	2	-
<i>EC</i>	5	-	3	-
<i>FO</i>	38	-	38	-
<i>GL</i>	-	-	1	-
<i>PH</i>	1	-	1	-
<i>ID</i>	4	-	-	-
<i>IS</i>	69	-	111	-
<i>CA</i>	3	-	2	-
<i>RU</i>	19	-	19	-
<i>CN</i>	18	-	11	-
<i>MA</i>	45	-	24	-
<i>VN</i>	38	-	21	-
<i>MU</i>	6	-	1	-
<i>NO</i>	255	-	149	-
<i>IN</i>	31	-	12	-
<i>SB</i>	3	-	-	-
<i>PE</i>	39	-	15	-
<i>SC</i>	2	-	-	-
<i>UA</i>	1	-	1	-
<i>UY</i>	-	-	1	-
<i>TW</i>	7	-	6	-
Total	735	-	559	-

* Latvian IUU SLO notes: As it was mentioned in the previous emails to the Commission in regard with the revised templates on 15th February and the 1st March, Latvian IUU SLO cannot submit such information, we do not register whether it is ordinary or simplified CC. Latvian IT system cannot distinguish it, there was no IUU Regulation requirement to create a separate database for ordinary and simplified CC. As it was mentioned by Latvia, considering the fact that using of the IT CATCH system is planned in the near future and we believe that

¹⁸ Section to be filled-in by all Member States.

¹⁹ Please provide only the number of catch certificates i.e. not the number of all transactions (imports/declarations) where the same certificates have been (re)used.

²⁰ If catch certificates are submitted only for transshipment purposes, please specify.

²¹ ISO Alpha-2 country codes.

²² Based on Annex II to the IUU Regulation

²³ Based on Annex IV to the Regulation (EC) No 1010/2009

currently not useful to make improvements to the national IT system that are not related to the mandatory requirements, however taking into account the Commission's needs on these data, we will discuss about relevant improvements in the system in order to have such a data in future. In practise implementation of such improvements will take a time. Therefore, it will be possible to start collect such data only in the second half of year 2024.

4.2. From the number above, how many recognised RFMO catch certificates (Annex V to Commission Regulation 1010/2009) accompanied consignments destined to your country? *Please detail per RFMO certificate and year.*

RFMO document	2022	2023
<i>ICCAT (electronic)-bluefin tuna catch document</i>	0	0
<i>Dissostichus spp. (CCAMLR)</i>	0	0
<i>CCSBT CDS</i>	0	0
Total	0	0

4.3. How many catch certificates from EU Member States (including from your country) were presented to the authorities of your country from 1 January 2022 until 31 December 2023?

Flag State (EU)	2022	2023
<i>IE</i>	-	1
<i>FR</i>	6	1
<i>IT</i>	1	-
<i>ES</i>	4	4
<i>DE</i>	-	1
<i>SE</i>	2	-
<i>NL</i>	-	3
<i>DK</i>	9	3
Total	22	13

4.4. From the number above, how many recognised RFMO catch certificates from EU Member States accompanied imports into your country? *Please detail per RFMO certificate and year.*

RFMO document	2022	2023
<i>ICCAT (electronic)-bluefin tuna catch document</i>	0	0
<i>Dissostichus spp. (CCAMLR)</i>	0	0
<i>CCSBT CDS</i>	0	0
Total	0	0

4.5. How many processing statements (Article 14(2) – Annex IV) were submitted to the authorities of your country from 1 January 2022 until 31 December 2023? Please provide details per year and per processing country.

Processing non-EU State²⁴	2022	2023
<i>FO</i>	16	4
<i>BY</i>	4	16
<i>CN</i>	31	44
<i>GB</i>	1	-
<i>NO</i>	48	16
<i>SC</i>	20	3
<i>TH</i>	22	21
<i>TR</i>	-	1
<i>EC</i>	-	2
Total	142	107

4.6. How many single transport documents referred to in Article 14(1)(b)(i) were submitted to the authorities of your country from 1 January 2022 until 31 December 2023? Please provide details per year and by third country concerned.

Non-EU State concerned²⁵ – single transport document	2022*	2023*
<i>S 1</i>	-	-
<i>S 2</i>	-	-
...	-	-
<i>S x</i>	-	-
<i>Total</i>	-	-

**Latvian IUU SLO notes: As it was mentioned in the previous emails to the Commission in regard with the revised templates on 15th February and the 1st March, Latvian IUU SLO cannot submit such information, we do not register such an information on single transport documents in the Latvian IT system. As it was mentioned by Latvia, considering the fact that using of the IT CATCH system is planned in the near future and we believe that currently not useful to make improvements to the national IT system that are not related to the mandatory requirements, however taking into account the Commission`s needs on these data, we will discuss about relevant improvements in the system in order to have such a data in future. In practise implementation of such improvements will take a time. Therefore, it will be possible to start collect such data only in the second half of year 2024.*

4.7. How many documents referred to in Article 14(1)(b)(ii) (the so-called non-manipulation declarations) were submitted to the authorities of your country from 1 January 2022 until 31 December 2023? Please provide details per year and per country that issued such a document.

²⁴ ISO Alpha-2 country codes.

²⁵ Country through which fishery products went when transported from the territory of the flag State and before arriving to your country.

Non-EU State issuing a document in line with Article 14.1.b.ii ²⁶	2022*	2023*
S 1	-	-
S 2	-	-
...	-	-
S x	-	-
Total	-	-

Latvian IUU SLO notes: As it was mentioned in the previous emails to the Commission in regard with the revised templates on 15th February and the 1st March, Latvian IUU SLO cannot submit such information, we do not register such an information **on non-manipulation declaration in the Latvian IT system. As it was mentioned by Latvia, considering the fact that using of the IT CATCH system is planned in the near future and we believe that currently not useful to make improvements to the national IT system that are not related to the mandatory requirements, however taking into account the Commission`s needs on these data, we will discuss about relevant improvements in the system in order to have such a data in future. In practise implementation of such improvements will take a time. Therefore, it will be possible to start collect such data only in the second half of year 2024.*

4.8. Please indicate if you retain and record the information contained in processing statements (Article 14.2 – Annex IV) referring to the corresponding catch certificates (quantity management):

Yes No

Not applicable (e.g. in the absence of processing statements received from non-EU countries in 2022-2023)

4.9. Do you have cases where third country fishery products arriving to your country (entry point) were destined to another Member State? [Article 19(1) of the IUU Regulation]

Yes No *

If yes, please indicate the number consignments meant for transit:

In 2022:

In 2023:

** Note: Latvian competent authorities and its databases does not collect statistical data of fishing vessel landing in transit, therefore, such data for Latvia are not available.*

4.10. Has your country received requests to authorise APEOs²⁷ in 2022-2023?

Yes No

If yes, how many requests has your country received and how many APEOs have been authorised?

²⁶ ISO Alpha-2 country codes.

²⁷ Approved Economic Operators – IUU Regulation, Article 16 and Implementing Regulation (EC) No 1010/2009, Chapter II

.....
4.11. Has your country adopted administrative rules referring to the management and control of APEOs in 2022-2023?

- Yes No
 Not applicable (e.g. absence of APEO request)

If yes, please provide details:
.....

4.12. Has your country validated re-export certificates for products imported from 1 January 2022 until 31 December 2023?

- Yes No

If yes, how many re-export certificates? Please detail per year and, if possible, per destination country:

Destination country (non-EU)²⁸	2022	2023
GB	48 (13)	61 (10)
NO	-	7 (7)
Total	48 (13)	68 (17)

**Note: From one catch certificate more than one Re-export declaration can be created, so in table above first number is re-export transactions, but second in brackets “()” is quantity of catch certificates.*

4.13. Does your country monitor if the catches for which your country has validated a re-export certificate actually leave the EU?

- Yes No
 Not applicable (e.g. in the absence of validation of re-export certificates in 2022-2023)

If yes, please provide details:

**Note: All Customs procedures (not catches under validated re-export certificate) are monitored under the Customs Framework.*

4.14. Has your country established any IT tools to monitor the catch certificates and processing statements accompanying imports?

- Yes No

If yes, does it include a module for re-exportation of imported catches?

²⁸ ISO Alpha-2 country codes.

Yes

No

4.15. Does your country implement the provisions regarding transit under Article 19(2) at the point of entry or the place of destination?

At the point of entry

At the place of destination

Not implemented because no consignments were placed under transit procedure as laid down in Article 19(2)

Section 5. Information on catch certification scheme for exportation²⁹

5.1. Have you established a procedure for validation of catch certificates for exportation of catches from own vessels in accordance with Article 15?

Yes *No*

Not applicable (e.g. in the absence of validation of catch certificates for exportation in 2022-2023)

If yes, please explain briefly the established procedure and answer questions 5.2 to 5.5.

Procedure for validation of catch certificate for the export of catches obtained by Latvian fishing vessels is the following.

The catch certificate is drawn up, submitted and validated on the basis of IUU Regulation, taking into account Cabinet Regulation No 94 “Regulations for the Control of landing of caught fish and inspection of fish Trade and Transport facilities, warehouses and production facilities”, as well as the State information system “Latvian Fisheries Integrated Control and information system” (LFICIS) functionality.

The exporter shall submit a catch certificate for validation to the Ministry of Agriculture via information system LFICIS three working days before the expected export of fish products from Latvia.

Considering that since 2018 there is electronical traceability system is in force for Latvian vessels catches, to request a catch certificate, the operator shall register an export transaction for the relevant lots in the LFICIS. After entering the necessary information in the export transaction, the transaction is saved. Then catch certificate generates. The operator prints it, signs it, scans it, adds it to the LFICIS and requests a certificate. The responsible person of the Fisheries Department of the Ministry of Agriculture receives a request for validation of the certificate, perform the necessary checks and submits to another person, which has signature rights, to validate the catch certificate. There should be pointed out, that there are two different persons involved in the validation process – expert, which checks and verifies data and another person with signature rights, which signs certificate. The operator shall then receive in his e-mail an information notice from the LFICIS system regarding the validation of the catch certificate by the Ministry. At the end of the process, the operator may find and download the certificate signed by the Ministry in the export transactions section.

The basic information of the lots to be exported, including the name of the fishing vessel, fishing dates and fishing areas, the period of validity of the fishing licence, etc., shall be automatically read on the catch certificate from the data existing in the information system.

In case when exported lots were previously combined, an Annex containing information on all fishing vessels and catches will be prepared for the catch certificate. The operator shall enter information which is not related to the lot of fishery products, e.g. the exporter data, as well as provide appropriate signatures.

²⁹ Section to be filled-in by flag Member States.

5.2. Have you validated catch certificates for exportation in 2022-2023 in accordance with Article 15?

Yes

No

If yes, how many catch certificates did you validate from 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2023? Please provide details per requesting third country/country of destination in the following table:

Destination State ^{30, 31}	Year	
	2022*	2023*
Anguilla	3	0
Australia	1	3
Belarus	2	0
Benin	1	0
Ghana	76	24
Great Britain	75	155
Iceland	3	7
Israel	0	2
Japan	3	1
Moldova	1	3
Norway	4	0
Panama	2	0
Republic of Korea	0	1
Serbia	3	2
South Africa	1	0
Ukraine	224	334
United States of America	1	10
Total	400	542

**Note: In the 5.2. table only third countries are mentioned. Latvia validated catch certificates also for the products export to the EU countries. Many of operators request such a catch certificate for the exportation catches to the EU countries. There are various reasons for that, for example: entering the new markets. As well there were situations, when catch certificates were validated for exportation to the EU (Poland, Portugal, France etc.) with subsequent exports to third countries. Considering mentioned the total amount of catch certificates validated in 2022 – 520, in 2023- 855.*

³⁰ ISO Alpha-2 country codes.

³¹ It is recommended that the validation of a catch certificate for exportation takes place when the country of destination is known.

5.3. Have you established any IT tool to monitor the catch certificates you have validated for fish caught by your own vessels?

Yes No

National information system LFICIS is used for validation if the catch certificates for fisheries products caught by Latvian vessels.

Fishing company submits to the MoA the catch certificate via LFICIS with necessary data entered and signed by the master of the vessel. Considering that all data regarding fishing licences, fishing vessels, catch data etc are registered in the LFICIS, mostly all data requested in the catch certificate are selected from the database, only the relevant lot of products must be marked and the weight of the exported products, description of product, product code and species should be indicated. In this way, the data contained in the certificate for the fisherman, vessel, licence, exporter is validated automatically.

Detailed information on validation scheme is available in point 5.1. of this report.

5.4. Do you monitor that the catches for which you have validated catch certificates actually leave the EU?

Yes No*

Not applicable (e.g. in the absence of validation of catch certificates for exportation in 2022-2023)

**Note: All Customs procedures (not catches under validated catch certificate) are monitored under the Customs Framework*

5.5. Has your country refused the validation of a catch certificate between 1 January 2022 and 31 December 2023?

Yes No

Not applicable (e.g. in the absence of request for validation of catch certificates for exportation in 2022-2023)

If yes, please provide details on:

Number (per year):

Reason:

Follow-up:

Section 6. Information on checks and verifications of catch certificates and related documents according to Articles 16(1) and 17(1)-(5) of IUU Regulation³²

Please note: points 6.1 to 6.3 in this Section refer to checks of catch certificates in accordance with Article 16(1) whereas points 6.4 to 6.11 refer to verifications of catch certificates in accordance with Article 17.

The clear separation between checks and verifications in this Section thus reflects the provisions of the mentioned Articles of the IUU Regulation.

It is therefore important to provide the requested information in line with this separation.

³² Section to be filled-in by all Member States

6.1. Has your country established a procedure for checks of catch certificates in accordance with Article 16(1)?

Yes *No*

If yes, please provide relevant instruction manuals/ guidance documents.

IUU regulation, EFCA guidelines and COM checks and verifications common approach documents are used.

6.2. Do you check all catch certificates in light of the information provided in the notifications received from the flag States in accordance with Article 20 (i.e. (i) if all required data are provided in a catch certificate and (ii) if these data correspond to the notification from the flag State in question³³)?

Yes *No*

If you do not check all catch certificates as indicated above (i.e. for data completeness and correspondence with information from the flag State notification) and instead you apply risk management for checks, please provide the following:

- risks identified in 2022 and 2023 on the basis of risk management used to check catch certificates, and
- number of catch certificates checked:

Please fill-in the table below:

Flag State (EU or non-EU) ³⁴	2022		2023	
	Overall number of catch certificates received	Number of catch certificates <u>checked</u>	Overall number of catch certificates received	Number of catch certificates <u>checked</u>
<i>Country 1</i>	-	-	-	-
<i>Country 2</i>	-	-	-	-
...	-	-	-	-
<i>Country x</i>	-	-	-	-
Total	-	-	-	-

Note: considering that all catch certificates are checked by the Latvian authority for the number of catch certificates received and checked please look at the point 4.1. of this report.

6.3. What exactly do you check in catch certificates in accordance with Article 16(1)? Please describe the precise scope and the procedure used in detail³⁵:

When SES officials receives catch certificate, first thing to check is if all documents are present – catch certificate, invoice, packing lists, bill of lading, waybill, processing statements (if

³³ Based on comparison of the information in the catch certificate with the information provided in the flag State notification available to Member States authorities on the Commission website (in CIRCABC database).

³⁴ ISO Alpha-2 country codes.

³⁵ Please provide a complete description (not only examples of what and how is checked).

processed fish), non-manipulation documents etc., and also deadline of submission of documents. Then each certificate is checked for compliance with third country notification in CIRCABC – whether correct certificate template is used, if stamps and signatures (if provided) match and also if all other information in certificate is filled in. Then, if we have information of third country IT system, certificate has been checked in it. Of course, also third country status is checked if country is not listed as non-cooperating country. Further we check already specific information like fishing vessels information in blacklists and RFMO websites, if dates in certificate are consistent (catch, landing/transshipment, exporters and validation dates), then all product and quantity information is checked – TARIC codes for product, if landed weight corresponds to all other documents. Also, information on transport details is checked if container numbers and all other information provided match with other support documents. If processing statement is provided then also DG-Sante list for processing plants is checked if processing plants name, address and approval number match. Then information of catch certificate is entered into LFICIS system where automated alerts starts to do their job – they check if certificate with the following number is not already registered in the database (duplicate management), if certificate with this number is not registered in LFICIS as cancelled from third country (we make our own list for such certificates when we receive MA notifications). If there is processing statement also information of that document is entered into system. One more alert in LFICIS is quantity management – check if processing statements do not overshoot certificate quantity for each species, and if invoice do not overshoot processing statement or certificate quantity for each species.

6.4. Has your country established a procedure for verification of catch certificates for importation in accordance with Article 17?

Yes *No*

If yes, please provide relevant instruction manuals/ guidance documents.

IUU regulation, EFCA guidelines and COM checks and verifications common approach documents are used.

6.5. Do you verify all catch certificates linked to consignments of fishery products intended for importation into the EU or do you verify only part of the catch certificates by applying (or not) risk management?

All *Only part by applying risk management*
 Only part without applying risk management *No verifications*

6.6. If you apply risk management to verifications (Article 17(3)), do you use Union (Article 31 of Commission Regulation (EC) No 1010/2009) or national criteria for identification of risks on which verifications shall focus?

Union criteria *National criteria*

If you apply Union criteria, please detail the methodology used (and which criteria are used always/regularly, often, occasionally, never):

.....

If you apply national criteria, please detail them and the methodology used³⁶:

³⁶ Please provide a complete description (not only examples of national criteria and of their use).

.....

6.7. If you apply risk management to verifications, please provide information on the risks identified in 2022 and 2023 respectively (Article 32 of Commission Regulation (EC) 1010/2009) on the basis of the criteria used. Please also provide information on whether all consignments identified as risky have been covered by verifications. If this is not the case, please specify the percentage of consignments identified as risky that have been covered by verifications and the reasons of such situation.

.....

6.8. If you do not apply risk management to verifications, please describe the procedure used³⁷:

For SES all verification procedures start with “checks” as described in point 6.3. of this questionnaire, it means, that “checks” are first steps to understand if in catch certificate or other supporting documents have inconsistencies, loss of data, if certificate is bad copy (in case where processing statement is provided or not all weight is imported in one consignment), if checks showed that vessel cannot be found in registers or if signatures or validating authority stamp don’t match with notification etc. In checks we try to understand overview of catch certificate and if in these first steps we can confirm that everything is correct, certificate is signed and through LFICIS system forwarded further to operator and customs to make their processes for release of product in free circulation.

If in “checks” SES finds out, that there are doubts of information provided or inconsistencies has been found, first the importer is warned that verification of catch certificate will be done and this can take longer time to approve or deny catch certificate.

In further verification steps almost always all possible information about fishing vessels is verified - EFCA IMS is used to look for fishing vessel details and VMS and AIS data (track), to approve that vessel was fishing in specified area and also, if there is possibility, information about fishing licences is verified. If transhipments have taken place, all above mentioned information also about receiving vessel is verified. If we can’t get all information, assistance to flag state is sent.

As we have stated before, our primary “checks” of catch certificates already include things like checking all information in RFMO website, LFICIS crosschecks (CC numbering against duplicates, cancelled certificates, quantity management), CIRCABC database, DG-SANTE list and vessel blacklists, so some of verifications from “Checks and verifications – common approach” are done for all catch certificates.

6.9. How many catch certificates have been verified by your administration from 1 January 2022 until 31 December 2023? Please specify, separately for each year:

Flag State (EU or non-EU) ³⁸	2022		2023	
	Overall number of catch certificates received	Number of catch certificates <u>verified</u>	Overall number of catch certificates received	Number of catch certificates <u>verified</u>
<i>Country 1</i>	-	-	-	-

³⁷ Please provide a complete and accurate description

³⁸ ISO Alpha-2 country codes.

Flag State (EU or non-EU) ³⁸	2022		2023	
	Overall number of catch certificates received	Number of catch certificates <u>verified</u>	Overall number of catch certificates received	Number of catch certificates <u>verified</u>
Country 2	-	-	-	-
...	-	-	-	-
Country x	-	-	-	-
Total	-	-	-	-

Note: Verifications are done for **all** CC in accordance with Section 2: “Verifications” of the document: “COMMON APPROACH CHECKS AND VERIFICATIONS”.

At the same time Latvia would like to refer to the Commission e-mail dated on 29 February 2024 to the Latvian IUU SLO, where was stated: ‘ *In principle, controls that are carried out in all received CCs are considered as checks. Verifications are done as second-level controls i.e. after checks, and are carried out as necessary i.e. not in all CCs. It is also important to mention that if a Member State decides to cover an element (or more) from Section 2 of the Commission guidance document in all CCs received, this is not a verification – such element(s) are then part of checks which are systematically done in all CCs.* ’

Considering the Commission interpretation on verification, that verifications systematically done are considered as checks, we would like to point out that such an interpretation rises a concern from our side, we stress that it is misleading, because the aim for common approach for the document “COMMON APPROACH CHECKS AND VERIFICATIONS” was to divide checks from verifications procedure. There are clearly stated actions for both checks and verification procedure.

Note: considering that all catch certificates are verified by the Latvian authority for the number of catch certificates received and verified please look at the point 4.1. of this report.

6.10. Please reply to the following questions:

- a) How many catch certificates have you verified in the context of the application of Article 17(4)? Latvian authorities verify all CC.
- b) How many catch certificates have you verified on the basis of risk identified in accordance with Article 17(3)? **0 – Latvian authorities verify all CC without applying risk management.**
- c) How many catch certificates have been verified at random (Article 17(5))? Latvian authorities verify all CC.

6.11. Does your country also physically examine the consignments in the context of verifications? *Please note that under this point you are asked to provide information on physical examinations based only on IUU-related grounds.*

Yes No

If yes, please provide details on:

- a) *Number of physically examined consignments (per year) and percentage in relation to all verifications made:*
- b) *Method of selection of consignments:*

Section 7. Assistance requests to third countries³⁹

7.1. Have you sent assistance requests for verifications under Article 17(6) of the IUU Regulation to flag States' authorities in 2022-2023⁴⁰? VVD

- Yes* *No*

If yes, how many assistance requests for verifications? *Note: please provide separate data for 2022 and 2023:*

Flag States⁴¹	Number of assistance requests for verifications 2022	Justification (please provide a brief description)	Number of assistance requests for verifications 2023	Justification (please provide a brief description)
<i>NO</i>	1	Norway made a mistake in their electronic system and issued a duplicate CC. Part of fishery products was already released in free circulation in LV. New CC was issued, but old was not "cancelled" in Norway electronic system. After our communication, old CC was cancelled and imports were transferred to new one to ensure that in system there is only one unique CC.		
<i>RU</i>			1	Asked assistance to Severomorskoe Territorial Department regarding signature in CC and notification to COM. Answer with notification (including signature samples) received together

³⁹ Section to be filled-in by all Member States

⁴⁰ Please note that assistance requests for verifications sent to countries other than flag States should be listed under point 7.4.

⁴¹ ISO Alpha-2 country codes.

Flag States⁴¹	Number of assistance requests for verifications 2022	Justification (please provide a brief description)	Number of assistance requests for verifications 2023	Justification (please provide a brief description)
				with explanation, that these signatures were sent also to COM already few months ago. Import released and after few months also notification appeared in CIRCABC.
Total	1		1	

7.2. How many assistance requests for verifications were not replied to by the other flag States' authorities within the deadline provided in Article 17(6) of the IUU Regulation? In these cases, do you send a reminder to the authorities of the country in question? Could you please specify when the assistance request, despite reminder(s), remained unanswered? What measures have you taken in that case (i.e. have you denied the importation)? [Please provide separate data for 2022 and 2023]

2022 - 0

2023 - 0

7.3. Was the quality of the answers provided overall sufficient to satisfy the assistance request? If no, please explain why the quality was not sufficient, and the measures you have taken in such case(s).

Yes.

7.4. Have you sent assistance requests for verifications to other countries than the flag State? If yes, please specify the number, the reasons and the countries concerned, and the quality of the feedback provided.

Third countries - No.

EU countries: Lithuania – year 2023 - one request concerning REF vessel landing quantities from Greenland catch certificate and PNO data. Netherlands – year 2023 - one request concerning RU catch certificate verification when landed in Netherlands.

7.5. If you have been using IT systems developed by third countries allowing for a full or partial verification⁴² of catch certificates, please indicate these countries and the number of verifications that were made through their systems (at least approximately)?

In Latvia we use third countries IT systems on daily bases already as part of “checks” of catch certificate. Catch certificates have been verified through following IT systems:

1. Norway
2. Russia (only in year 2022 until we were banned)
3. China

⁴² Please indicate if you use these IT systems already as part of your checks (not verifications) of catch certificates.

4. Canada
5. USA
6. Greenland
7. India
8. Ecuador
9. Great Britain

For above mentioned countries ALL received catch certificates, which are mentioned in point 4.1 of this report, were checked in their IT systems in years 2022. – 2023.

Section 8. Information on refusal of importations (Article 18 of the IUU Regulation)⁴³

8.1. Has your country refused any imports from 1 January 2022 until 31 December 2023? *Note: please only consider refusals based on the IUU Regulation, not for other reasons e.g. Food Safety legislation, Customs legislation, etc.*

Yes No

If yes, please provide details in the table below:

Reason for refusal of importation	2022		2023	
	Flag State ⁴⁴	Number	Flag State ⁴⁵	Number
Non-submission of a catch certificate for products to be imported.				
The products intended for importation are not the same as those mentioned in the catch certificate.				
The catch certificate is not validated by the notified public authority of the flag State.				
The catch certificate does not indicate all the required information.				
The importer is not in a position to prove that the fishery products comply with the conditions of Article 14.1 or 2.				
A fishing vessel figuring on the catch certificate as vessel of origin of the catches is included in the EU IUU vessel list or in the IUU vessel lists referred to in Article 30.				
The catch certificate has been validated by the authorities of a flag State identified as a non-cooperating State in accordance with Article 31.				
Further to the request for verification (Article 18.2).				

8.2. If the answer to point 8.1 is yes, what measures were taken by your authorities in relation to the consignments refused (Article 18.3)? Please also quote the national legal basis for the measures taken.

⁴³ Section to be filled-in by all Member States

⁴⁴ ISO Alpha-2 country codes.

⁴⁵ ISO Alpha-2 country codes.

.....
.....

8.3. In case of refusal of importation, did any operator contest the decision of the authorities of your country?

Yes No

Not applicable (absence of refusals in 2022-2023)

If yes, please provide details:

Section 9. Information on trade flows⁴⁶

Please provide information and relevant import figures, based on your statistical data, concerning any important change of trade patterns in imports of fishery products into your country since the last reporting period covering 2020-2021:

There was not any important change of trade patterns in imports of fishery products.

Majority of the Latvia's fish production – both frozen fish products and canned or processed fish are exported. Therefore, major part of imported fish is used as raw material for diversification of production range in fish processing.

Total volume of imported fish products from third countries and EU (excluding canned fish) in 2022 compared to 2021 decreased by 15,4 %, while in 2023, compared to 2022, it decreased by 1,6 %.

The proportion of EU countries accounted for 76 % of Latvia's total imports of fish products in 2023. The proportion of the third countries accounted for 24 % of Latvia's total imports of fish products in 2023.

From the third countries the biggest share of the total import of fish products for the last year has been United Kingdom 7,2 % (5,4 thousand tons), Norway 4,1 % (3,1 thousand tons), Faroe Islands 4,1 % (3,1 thousand tons), Iceland 3,7 % (2,8 thousand tons) and Morocco 0,8 % (0,6 thousand tons).

The imported volumes from other third countries can be considered as not very significant.

Section 10. Information on mutual assistance⁴⁷

10.1. Since the last reporting exercise covering the period 2020-2021, how many mutual assistance messages of the Commission (DG MARE B4) has your country replied to?⁴⁸
Please provide separate data for 2022 and 2023 (if any)

2022 – all replies are uploaded in FISHNET

⁴⁶ Section to be filled-in by all Member States

⁴⁷ Section to be filled-in by all Member States

⁴⁸ Please provide the number of all replies, regardless of their content i.e. including replies which, for example, only confirmed that the request was not relevant for your country.

2023 - all replies are uploaded in FISHNET

From the numbers above, please specify in how many cases you took action and describe the actions taken.

10.2. Since the last reporting exercise covering the period 2020-2021, has your country sent any mutual assistance message to the Commission/other Member States?

Please provide separate data for 2022 and 2023 (if any)

2022- 0

2023-0

Section 11. Information on cooperation with third countries⁴⁹

Apart from assistance requests in the context of verifications of catch certificates and accompanying documents foreseen under the catch certification scheme (Article 17(6)), has your country had other exchanges with third countries on issues related to the implementation of the IUU Regulation, such as follow-up of cases concerning nationals, trade flows, operators, private fishing licencing, re-flagging operations, investigations of cases of IUU fishing (Article 42) and investigations of criminal activities associated to IUU fishing?

Yes *No*

If yes, please provide details (please provide separate data for 2022 and 2023, if any).

2023 (June) - Mutual Assistance Request on behalf of the United Kingdom (The Marine Management Organisation; Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing) to support a compliance investigation data of birth of UK crew members believed to be Latvian citizens were asked.

2023 (June) – UK request for the Check Latvian Storage Document 08/2023

2023 (December) UK Verification Request on Latvian Competent Authority Stamp and Signature

Section 12. Information on nationals⁵⁰

12.1. Since the last reporting exercise covering the period 2020-2021, has your country implemented or modified existing measures to ensure that your country can take appropriate action with regards to nationals involved in IUU fishing in accordance with Article 39 of the IUU Regulation?

Yes *No*

If yes, please provide details:

The Latvian authorities have introduced some improvements since 2022 to ensure Article 39 requirements of the IUU Regulation.

⁴⁹ Section to be filled-in by all Member States

⁵⁰ Section to be filled-in by all Member States

The text of the **fishing rights lease agreement** is updated with the reference to the Fisheries law, which prescribes that, **in accordance with Article 14 of the Fisheries Law to inform the State Environmental service regarding the following** – if the company owns a fishing vessel registered in a third country or if the company owns such parts of a commercial company that owns a fishing vessel registered in a third country, as well as to inform on Latvians employed on the Lessee's vessels under the flag of a third country. This information flow opportunity as another additional option for the companies and fishing vessels owners was used. At the same time, it is recognized as a serious tool how to manage compliance with the IUU Regulation within legally grounded and allowable company operations which are held outside the fishing rights allocated from the MoA and managed in the framework of the fishing rights lease agreement. Like any civil act, the fishing rights lease agreement also provides sanctions for non-compliance, including termination of the agreement, which will lead to the cessation of fishing activities for the company.

In addition the Latvian IUU SLO cooperated with the Maritime Administration of Latvia, Register of Seamen, which is responsible for Certification of Seafarers in regard with potential nationals engagement in the activities on the fishing vessels of Cameroon and Trinidad and Tobago after these countries were recognized as non-cooperating countries in 2023. This type of initiative allows to gather information on seafarers' engagement in fishing operations on board third country vessels.

12.2. Have there been any cases of nationals of your country engaging in or supporting IUU fishing, including by engagement on board or as operators or beneficial owners of fishing vessels included in the EU IUU vessel list?

Yes *No*

If yes, please provide details:

12.3. Since the last reporting exercise covering the period 2020-2021, has your country taken any action with regard to its nationals who have been identified as supporting or engaged in IUU fishing?

Yes *No*

If yes, please provide details:

12.4. What measures has your country taken to encourage nationals to notify any information on interests in third country fishing vessels (Article 40(1))?

The Ministry of Agriculture, when concluding a lease agreement for fishing rights with an company who owns fishing vessels which operate in the waters of the third countries, provides in agreement the following obligations for the company: "not to engage in or support IUU fishing and do their best to deter fishermen working on board fishing vessels from engaging in such activities". The Agreement was also updated with an obligation to inform the MoA about IUU infringements by chartered vessels or fishermen; and in the event of a change of flag of companies fishing vessel, to inform about under which flag the fishing vessel will be registered operated in the future.

12.5. Has your country endeavoured to obtain information on arrangements between nationals and third countries allowing reflagging of their fishing vessels in accordance with Article 40(4)?

Yes *No*

If yes, please provide details:

12.6. Has your country put in place procedures to ensure that nationals do not sell or export any fishing vessels to operators involved in the operation, management or ownership of fishing vessels included in the EU IUU vessel list (Article 40(2))?

Yes *No*

If yes, please provide details:

The MoA, when concluding a lease agreement for fishing rights with an company who owns fishing vessels which operate in the waters of the third countries, provides in agreement the following obligations for the company: “not to sell or export fishing vessels to operators involved in the operation, management or ownership of fishing vessels included in the EU IUU vessel list”.

12.7. Has your country made use of Article 40(3) and removed public aid under national aid regimes or under EU funds to operators involved in the operation, management or ownership of fishing vessels included in the EU IUU vessel list?

Yes *No*

If yes, please provide details:

Article 10 of the EMFF Regulation is applicable with reflection in national law.

Regulations No 598 on the Granting, Administration and Monitoring of State and European Union Support for Rural and Fisheries Development in the 2014–2020 Planning Period, as well as During the Transition in 2021 and 2022 provides that together with the project application, the support applicant submits a support applicant's declaration (Annex 1), which confirms the observance of the conditions (Art.5). One of the points of support applicant's declaration indicates that applicant has not committed a serious infringement or a criminal offense or have been involved in the cases referred to in Regulation (EU) No 508/2014 on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund.

Also Annex 6 “Application of financial corrections to non-compliances and irregularities in supported projects” of the Regulations No 598 (point 2.1 of the table) provides that in a case when infringements mentioned in the Article 10 of Regulation (EU) No 508/2014 or in Regulation No 2015/288 detected, then the applicant is excluded from the beneficiaries and 100% of the support received is reimbursed in accordance with Regulation No 2015/288.

Regulations No 598 (available in Latvian) <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/269553-noteikumi-par-valsts-un-eiropas-savienibas-atbalsta-pieskirsanu-administresanu-un-uzraudzibu-lauku-un-zivsaimniecibas-attistibai>

Section 13. Serious infringements (Chapter IX of the IUU Regulation)⁵¹

13.1. Has your country detected serious infringements as defined in Article 42 of the IUU Regulation from 1 January 2022 until 31 December 2023?

Yes *No*

⁵¹ Section to be filled-in by all Member States

If yes, please detail separately for each year the number of serious infringements, nature and sanctions applied:

Flag State of the fishing vessel or nationality of the operator (EU and non-EU) ⁵²	Serious infringements detected in 2022:			Serious infringements detected in 2023:		
	Number	Nature	Sanctions applied	Number	Nature	Sanctions applied
<i>LV</i>	1	Fishing in prohibited area	303010 EUR fine. 6 penalty points applied	-	-	-
<i>LV</i>	1	Fishing in prohibited area	61010 EUR fine. 6 penalty points applied	-	-	-
<i>LV</i>	1	Fishing activities without operational VMS.	1000 EUR fine. 3 penalty points applied	-	-	
<i>LV</i>	-	-		1	Fishing in prohibited area	5000 EUR fine. 3 penalty points applied
<i>Total</i>		3			1	

13.2. Has your country applied its levels of administrative sanctions in accordance with Article 44?

Yes

No

If yes, please provide details: In practice, SES directly applies Art.44 IUU Regulation which prescribes that in case of serious infringements the MS shall impose a maximum sanction of at least five times the value of the fishery products obtained by committing the serious infringement.

In 2020, the Administrative Violations Code was replaced by the Law on Administrative Liability, which now regulates the administrative process, leaving the type and level of sanctioning for the sectoral legislation, that is, the Fisheries Law in the case of IUU fishing. The administrative liability system was reformed, but it did not change the approach to sanctioning in terms of substance.

On the basis of the Fisheries Law in case of infringement of the rules of fishing in the territorial waters, the economic zone waters or in international waters physical persons can be fined from

⁵² ISO Alpha-2 country codes.

30 EUR up to 350 EUR, and legal persons can be fined from 140 EUR up to 4300 EUR. Also confiscation of fishing gear and suspension of the fishing license up to one year can be applied. In case of repeated violation of fishing regulations during the year, the natural persons can be fined from 140 EUR up to 700 EUR and legal persons can be fined from 700 EUR up to 14000 EUR. Also, confiscation of fishing gear and suspension of the fishing license up to three year can be applied. For fishing without authorization, in prohibited place, or with prohibited gear, physical persons can be fined from 280 EUR up to 700 EUR and legal persons can be fined from 1400 EUR up to 14000 EUR. Also, confiscation of fishing gear and suspension of the fishing license up to three year can be applied.

In 2017 SES has established criteria for determining the serious nature of an infringement. These criteria are: amount of undeclared fish (if more than 15 % difference between amount recorded in logbook and landed amount), value of undeclared fish (if more than 500 EUR in value is taken outside the coastal zone waters and 250 EUR - in coastal waters), difference of mesh size grater that 5 mm and if the number of fishing gear used in fishing exceeds permitted fishing gear limit more than 20%.

Sanctions are calculated on the value of the fisheries products obtained by committing a serious infringement. Article 16 (6) of the Law on Administrative Liability sets that the maximum amount of fine for natural and legal persons in the sanction of administrative penalty prescribed by law may be exceeded if the need for a larger fine has been determined in international law binding on the Republic of Latvia. This Article allows imposing administrative sanctions accordance with Article 44 of IUU regulation.

Have you used criminal sanctions? If yes, please specify if in addition to or in replacement of administrative sanctions:

In addition to the legislation providing for administrative liability (based on the Fishery Law and Law on Administrative Liability), also criminal liability may apply pursuant to the Criminal Law (in particular, Article 110 on Arbitrary Fishing and Acquisition of Aquatic Animals). Mentioned Article provides the following criminal sanctions:

For a person who commits catching or other acquisition of fish or aquatic animals without appropriate authorisation, during conservation period, or in restricted areas, or with prohibited gear or methods (arbitrary acquisition) if substantial harm has been caused thereby, the applicable punishment is the deprivation of liberty for a period of up to two years or temporary deprivation of liberty, or probationary supervision, or community service, or fine.

For the criminal offence provided for in Paragraph two of this Section, if it has been committed by a group of persons according to a prior agreement or in a specially protected nature territory, the applicable punishment is the deprivation of liberty for a period of up to three years or temporary deprivation of liberty, or probationary supervision, or community service, or fine.

For a person who commits arbitrary acquisition of fish or aquatic animals by using electrical currents, explosive substances, poisonous substances or other generally dangerous means or methods, the applicable punishment is the deprivation of liberty for a period of up to four years or temporary deprivation of liberty, or probationary supervision, or community service, or fine.

The main criteria for application of the Criminal Law is - if substantial harm has been caused thereby. Liability for a criminal offence provided for in the Criminal Law causing substantial harm shall apply if due to the criminal offence any of the following consequences have set in: 1) property loss has been suffered which at the time of committing the criminal offence has not been less than the total of five minimum monthly wages specified in the Republic of Latvia at that time, and also other interests protected by law have been threatened; 2) property loss has

been suffered which at the time of committing the criminal offence has not been less than the total of ten minimum monthly wages specified in the Republic of Latvia at that time; 3) other interests protected by law have been significantly threatened.

Section 14. Sightings (Chapter X of the IUU Regulation)⁵³

14.1. Has your country issued sighting reports from 1 January 2022 until 31 December 2023?

Yes No

If yes, how many sighting reports were issued by your country from 1 January 2022 until 31 December 2023?

Flag State of the sighted fishing vessel (EU and non-EU) ⁵⁴	Number of sighting reports issued in 2022	Number of sighting reports issued in 2023
<i>Country 1</i>	-	-
<i>Country 2</i>	-	-
...	-	-
<i>Country x</i>	-	-
<i>Total</i>	-	-

14.2. Since the last reporting exercise covering the period 2020-2021, has your country received any sighting reports for fishing vessels flying its own flag from other competent authorities?

Yes No

If yes, please provide details on follow-up (in accordance with Article 50 of the IUU Regulation).

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Section 15. General

15.1. During the reporting period 2022-2023, what have been the main difficulties that your country has encountered in implementing the IUU Regulation, including the catch certification scheme?

1) The main problem, as it was mentioned also in the previous report, still is in relation with the multiple importations. There is possible to make multiple importations of notified amount of fishery products using the same catch certificate several times, it is not possible to communicate every catch certificate with colleagues and control authorities in other Member States. We hope that IT CATCH will solve this problem in future.

2) Latvian authorities faced difficulties with CC checks when endorsing processing statements (when fish processed in Latvia), where CC was checked and product released in free circulation in other EU MS and there are no authorisation (stamps, signatures and date) on CC. If there are no signatures, stamps and dates from EU MS, where CC was released for free circulation, it

⁵³ Section to be filled-in by all Member States

⁵⁴ ISO Alpha-2 country codes.

means that Latvian authorities have to double check CC even if it was released in free circulation in other MS. We would be grateful if other MS could follow the legislation and to sign, stamp and put the dates on CC when products are released in free circulation. We hope that IT CATCH will solve this problem in future.

3) Very difficult or impossible practical implementation of some provisions of the IUU regulation The main difficulties faced by the national competent authorities are related to the identification of the nationals which potential can be engaged in IUU fishing on board of a listed vessel or in other way supported the activities of such vessels. Also, the case of insurance provided to a vessel participating in IUU activities outside the territory of MS, the identification of this incident by the competent authority is impossible.

Section 16. Any other comment

1) In the context with IT CATCH Latvian IUU SLO would like to point out again that implementation of Customs Single Window as soon as possible is important. This tool, in Latvian view, could help to ensure the necessary data exchange between competent authorities, thus allowing to use IT CATCH system also in Latvia. In this regard Latvia still has concerns on the provisions on implementation of the IT CATCH, which provides that Customs Single Window will enter in force 2 years later than IT CATCH.

2) In addition, we can mention difficulties with notification data of third countries in CIRCABC. We can give an example - information of RU notifications appeared in the CIRCABC almost 2 months after the date specified in the RU notification itself (LV asked COM about the data of the notice available in the database). We urge COM to update the data as quickly as possible in the future.

3) In our point of view the Commission interpretation on number of verifications (e-mail on 29 February 2024), that verifications systematically done are considered as checks, rises a concern. From our side it is misleading. Taking into account that the aim for common approach for the document “COMMON APPROACH CHECKS AND VERIFICATIONS” was to divide checks from verifications procedure, we stress that there are clearly stated actions for both checks and verification procedure in this document. Thus, common approach for the numbers of verified catch certificates in point 6.9. of this report still is needed.

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