



EU IUU FISHING COALITION

Illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing poses a significant threat to our ocean. It destroys marine ecosystems, undermines sustainable fisheries management, jeopardises efforts to ensure global food security and endangers the livelihoods of coastal communities and responsible fishers. IUU fishing includes practices such as misreporting or underreporting catch, targeting protected species, fishing without a licence or in protected areas, and using illegal fishing gear or fraudulent vessel identification. Over 20% of the world's seafood catch is linked to IUU fishing, generating up to €30 billion per year in illegal profits globally.

Those who benefit most from IUU fishing exploit the opaque nature of the global fishing industry, allowing them to operate in the shadows and evade sanctions. This lack of transparency also enables other serious crimes, including human trafficking, corruption, fraud, and money laundering.

The European Union (EU) is the world's largest seafood market and the fourth-largest consumer of fish globally, with an extensive fishing fleet that operates worldwide. Over the past decade, the EU has led the fight against IUU fishing through its pioneering IUU Regulation, which entered into force in 2010 and, more recently with the Sustainable Management of External Fishing Fleets (SMEFF) Regulation and the amendment of its Control Regulation. These legislations give the EU significant influence, responsibility and tools to address IUU fishing and promote greater fisheries transparency and good governance domestically and globally.

About us

The EU IUU Fishing Coalition — the Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF), Oceana, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), The Pew Charitable Trusts and WWF — has been working since 2014 to fight IUU fishing practices in the EU and around the world.

Our mission

The EU IUU Fishing Coalition aims to combat IUU fishing by promoting transparency, accountability and advocating for measures to detect and prevent IUU fishing. We do this by conducting research and by providing evidence-based recommendations in relation to policies, technology and tools for decision-makers. We work closely with EU institutions to help leverage the EU's diplomatic and market power to halt the trade in products stemming from IUU fishing and promote fisheries reforms globally, while ensuring that EU Member States adhere to their own rules.

Our vision

We want to see a world where global collaboration and improved fisheries management practices protect marine ecosystems and sustain global fisheries. By reducing the impact of IUU fishing, and its associated crimes, we aim to support biodiversity, food security, and the livelihoods of fishers and coastal communities for the benefit of present and future generations.



Key objectives

Ensure measures to detect, deter and prevent IUU fishing and forced labour in the seafood industry and within associated supply chains are introduced and fully implemented by the EU and Member States:



Introduce and enforce transparency measures to expose, prosecute, and effectively sanction those profiting from IUU fishing.



Encourage proactive and thorough verification and inspection of seafood imports by Member States, with particular focus on improving import controls in countries with poor performance records.



Urge seafood companies to implement robust due diligence processes to better identify and eliminate products associated with IUU fishing and forced labour from their supply chains.

Encourage EU leadership and collaboration with other key market States, such as Japan and the US, to improve transparency and to tackle IUU fishing globally:



Expand and support the EU carding system which promotes bilateral dialogues with third countries on tackling IUU fishing and enforces trade bans on non-cooperating nations.



Facilitate discussions to harmonise traceability systems in major seafood markets to ensure comprehensive documentation of seafood trade, preventing products associated with IUU fishing and forced labour from reaching consumers.



Champion transparency in fisheries governance through on-the-water monitoring, including via electronic monitoring and human observers.

Alliance building:



Promote responsible and transparent fisheries management and governance to protect marine ecosystems and sustain global fisheries, including by engaging with initiatives such as the Global Charter for Fisheries Transparency, the Fisheries Transparency Initiative, and the IUU Action Alliance.



Enhance collaboration among governments, NGOs, industry stakeholders, regional fisheries bodies, and international organisations to strengthen collective efforts against IUU fishing.