



International Affairs, Trade, and Commerce



2023 Report to Congress on Improving International Fisheries Management ¹

The biennial *Report to Congress on Improving International Fisheries Management* identifies nations and entities that the United States will work with to address IUU fishing and forced labor activities, and to support effective management of protected species and shark catch.

The United States is a global leader in the conservation of living marine resources and ensuring the health and sustainability of fisheries domestically and internationally. Using various tools, NOAA Fisheries works with nations to develop and implement effective fishery management measures and enforcement actions to combat global fisheries concerns, such as illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing; bycatch of protected living marine resources; and shark catch.

The High Seas Driftnet Fishing Moratorium Protection Act directs the United States to:

- Strengthen international fisheries management organizations, and to address IUU fishing and bycatch of protected living marine resources (PLMRs); and improve the conservation of sharks;
- Promote improved monitoring, control, and surveillance for high seas fisheries and those managed by regional fisheries management organizations;
- Improve the effectiveness of RFMOs through adoption of IUU vessel lists, port state controls, market-related measures, and the adoption of measures to prohibit the removal of any shark fins and discarding of the carcasses at sea; and
- Build capacity in other countries to ensure sustainable fisheries and regulatory enforcement.

In a biennial report to Congress, NOAA Fisheries identifies nations or entities for IUU fishing, bycatch of PLMRs and/or shark catch without regulatory measures comparable to that of the United States.

Report to Congress on Improving International Fisheries Management

Identifications

In its 2023 Report, NOAA Fisheries has identified seven nations and entities for IUU fishing; and two nations for shark catch without having a regulatory program comparable to that of the United States. Some nations or entities are identified for both IUU fishing and shark catch.

Angola, Grenada, Mexico, the People's Republic of China (PRC), Taiwan, The Gambia, and Vanuatu were identified for reported or alleged IUU fishing that occurred between 2020 and 2022. PRC and Taiwan's identifications include information related to seafood-related goods produced through forced labor.

The **PRC** and **Vanuatu** were identified for shark catch where those nations do not have a comparable regulatory program to that of the United States.



The United States actively works with our international partners to achieve the goals of the Moratorium Protection Act in a cooperative and transparent manner. After each report is issued, NOAA Fisheries works with nations and entities for two years to address the activities for which they were identified. Afterwards, NOAA Fisheries issues a certification determination.

Certification Determinations

NOAA Fisheries issues a positive certification if the nation or entity has provided evidence of actions that address the activities for which it was identified. If

sufficient action has not been taken, NOAA Fisheries issues a negative certification which results in U.S. port restrictions for fishing vessels of that nation or entity, and could result in import restrictions on certain fish or fish products.

The *2023 Report* announced certification determinations for nations identified from the *2021 Report*. **Costa Rica, Guyana, Senegal, and Taiwan** received positive certifications following IUU fishing identifications in 2021. However, **Mexico, the PRC, and the Russian Federation** received negative certifications following IUU fishing identifications in 2021.

Additionally, NOAA Fisheries issued positive certifications in the *2023 Report* to **Croatia, Egypt, the European Union (EU), Grenada, Guyana, Japan, Mauritania, Morocco, the People's Republic of China, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, and Taiwan** for taking corrective actions to address the protected living marine resources (PLMR) bycatch activities identified in 2021. However, **Algeria, Barbados, Côte d'Ivoire, Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Mexico, Namibia, Senegal, Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, and Turkey** were issued negative certifications for their PLMR bycatch activities identified in 2021.

Next Steps

NOAA Fisheries will continue working with nations and entities to address these activities by encouraging implementation of effective fisheries management and enforcement practices globally – which helps ensure that the fish and fish products the United States imports are caught sustainably and legally.

¹Link to full report: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/international/report-iuu-fishing-bycatch-and-shark-catch>.

