

December 19, 2016

Brief: U.S. Government's Action Plan for Building Capacity to Combat IUU Fishing (IUU Task Force, Recommendation 6)

What is Recommendation 6?

The Presidential Task Force on Combatting Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing and Seafood Fraud was established by Executive Memorandum in 2014 and directed to develop recommendations to combat IUU fishing and seafood fraud through a coordinated inter-agency effort. Recommendation 6 addresses the need for international capacity building efforts to strengthen fisheries management and combat IUU fishing “in consultation with relevant government, donor, technical, industry, and non-governmental organizations, and with appropriate public outreach”. Through the implementation of Recommendation 6, international capacity can be built to not only combat IUU fishing but also human rights and labor abuses, which are often inextricably linked.

Status

The Task Force Recommendation 6 Working Group (WG) recently released a [Strategic Action Plan for Building International Capacity to Strengthen Fisheries Management and Combat Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated \(IUU\) Fishing](#). This Plan presents a framework for building international capacity needed to achieve legal and sustainable fisheries, while recognizing that capacity building must focus on systems, organizations, and individuals in order to foster the institutions, technologies, human resources, and political will required to address these issues. It focuses on six broad strategies:

1. Enhancing industry and market incentives for self-regulation
2. Fostering greater transparency in fisheries management and supply chains
3. Strengthening fisheries governance and management
4. Building enforcement capabilities and effectiveness
5. Leveraging political will and fostering genuine constituencies
6. Promoting stronger coordination in capacity building

Additionally, the Working Group consulted with experts to develop a [conceptual model](#) of the drivers of IUU fishing, and to identify leverage points for affecting change. These leverage points, in turn, informed the strategies and short and long-term activities to be implemented.

Key strategies supporting work to combat IUU fishing

The below strategies, outlined in the Plan, have been identified by the Task Force as important short- and long-term U.S. government activities for combatting IUU fishing at an international scale. Many of the initiatives undertaken by the members and collaborators of the [Conservation Alliance for Seafood Solutions](#) align with the strategies outlined in the Action Plan.

Strategy 1: Industry and Market Incentives: Promote greater industry self-regulation of seafood legality and sustainability

- 1.1 Support the capacities needed to meet international trade requirements

Activities:

- 1.1.1 “Build the capacities of producers, particularly small-scale fishers, to meet traceability requirements “
- 1.1.2 “Pilot seafood supply chain verification technologies and systems”
- 1.2 Collaborate on investment strategies that transform fishing practices to enhance sustainability and livelihoods

Strategy 2: Transparency: Foster a transparent flow of fisheries-related information to improve management, enforcement, and business operations

- 2.1 Promote systems for identifying vessels and their fishing authorizations

Activities:

- Support the use of Unique Vessel Identifiers (UVI), national vessel registration systems, and the [Global Record of Fishing Vessels](#)
- 2.2 Promote the use of electronic, interoperable catch documentation and traceability systems for business operations and fisheries management
- 2.3 Facilitate public access to fisheries information to promote stewardship and accountability

Strategy 3: Governance and Management: Strengthen fisheries governance to enable sustainable fisheries management and address IUU fishing

- 3.1 Support and strengthen local, national, and regional governance arrangements to enable sustainable fisheries management

Activities:

- 3.1.1 Advance science-based fisheries management measures at RFMO/As
- 3.1.2 Support the incorporation of contextually-appropriate resource access arrangements into fisheries management
- 3.1.3 Promote ecosystem-based approaches to fisheries management
- 3.1.4 Strengthen systems to collect key fisheries data for management and traceability
- 3.2 Strengthen financial resources and structures for fisheries management
- 3.3 Strengthen capacities for the collection and analysis of fisheries data
- 3.4 Enhance the capacities of stakeholders engaged in fisheries management

Strategy 4: Enforcement: Strengthen Monitoring, Control, and Surveillance and legal frameworks to enhance detection and sanctioning

- 4.1 Enable effective implementation of the PSMA
- 4.2 Support the development and strengthening of legal frameworks for fisheries

Activities:

- 4.2.1 Train fisheries enforcement personnel on the foundation and understanding of the legal tools available to monitor and enforce national fisheries regulation
- 4.2.2 Assist in the development of legislation
- 4.2.3 Build the capacities of prosecutors and judges
- 4.3 Leverage MDA capacities to combat IUU fishing

4.4 Strengthen local, national, and regional enforcement efforts

Activities:

4.4.1. Leverage the Safe Ocean Network Initiative

4.4.2 Build the capacities of fisheries enforcement entities

4.5 Coordinate with international fisheries enforcement organizations

Strategy 5: Political Will: Build and leverage support for strong fisheries governance and actions to combat IUU fishing

5.1 Raise IUU fishing and sustainable fisheries as critical issues at various high-level venues and stakeholder forums

5.2 Enhance and support public-private partnerships

5.3 Leverage trade agreements and collective economic power to combat IUU fishing

5.4 Promote good fisheries governance as it relates to maritime security and socioeconomic stability

Strategy 6: Coordination: Promote information exchange and coordination among capacity building efforts

6.1 Host an [interactive online inventory of capacity building projects](#)

6.2 Enhance coordination at regional and country-level

Activities:

6.2.1 Establish ongoing processes to enhance coordination among U.S. government agencies

6.2.2 Enhance coordination among other groups

6.3 Enhance information exchange on capacity building strategies at a global level

Activities:

6.3.1 Host quarterly call of USG staff working on counter-IUU fishing and fisheries management issues globally

6.3.2 Identify a mechanism for enhancing coordination among the NOC Committee and the related Presidential Task Force on Wildlife Trafficking and the President's Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Counter Human Trafficking

6.3.3 Host periodic learning exchanges with other groups working on relevant capacity building issues