



UNITED NATIONS OCEAN CONFERENCE NICE, FRANCE 2025

UNOC3 Conference Side Event

Transparency, Will, and Progress: The Pillars of Action and the IUU-AA Journey So Far

Wednesday, June 11, 5.30 – 6.45 PM, Room 1

Organized by: Fisheries and Oceans Canada as Chair of the Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing Action Alliance

Background on the event

A sustainable future for global fisheries requires urgent action to combat illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, which undermines economic stability, food security, and marine biodiversity. Transparency, political will, and international cooperation are critical pillars in this fight. This side event, hosted by Fisheries and Oceans Canada as Chair of the IUU Fishing Action Alliance (IUU-AA), and featuring remarks from Emma Hardy, United Kingdom's Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Minister for Water and Flooding), and Annette Gibbons, Deputy Minister of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, brought together government leaders and civil society to assess progress and accelerate efforts in countering IUU fishing. Discussions focused on advancing global agreements, fostering partnerships to enhance accountability, and strengthening monitoring systems.

Key Issues discussed

1. Collaboration as a Cornerstone:

- Effective IUU fishing prevention requires coordination in capacity building and knowledge sharing across governments, agencies, and non-governmental

organizations (NGOs).

- International frameworks like the Global Record of Fishing Vessels and regional fisheries management organization (RFMO) reporting standards should be utilized to align enforcement measures.
- A comprehensive addressing of local, regional, and global levels of enforcement is necessary to close jurisdictional gaps, and lessons from past success and failures should be shared (e.g. through platforms like the IUU-AA) to accelerate progress.

2. Advancing Transparency Measures

- Vessel monitoring, observer coverage, and IUU vessel lists form the foundation for evidence-based fisheries management.
- Disclosure of Ultimate Beneficial Ownership information is critical for identifying and sanctioning violators.
- Ultimate Beneficial Ownership disclosure is essential to hold operators accountable and break cycles of exploitation.
- While some nations have adopted advanced transparency frameworks, broader adoption and mandatory compliance remains a gap.

3. Political Will and Enforcement

- IUU fishing must be treated with the same seriousness as other transnational crimes in policy priorities.
- Recent progress in international agreements, including World Trade Organization (WTO) fisheries subsidies reforms, demonstrates a growing global consensus.
- Aligning domestic legislation with international standards (Agreement on Port State Measures [PSMA], Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations [FAO] Guidelines) strengthens compliance and enforcement.

Key recommendations for action / voluntary commitments

1. Mandate full transparency of vessel operations and beneficial ownership through the Global Records of Fishing Vessels with standardized reporting requirements.
2. Accelerate ratification and implementation of key agreements including the WTO Fisheries Subsidies Agreement and the PSMA.
3. Establish integrated monitoring systems combining electronic tracking, observer coverage, and satellite surveillance for industrial fleets.
4. Strengthen multi-level governance through partnerships at the national, regional, and global level for information sharing and joint enforcement actions.
5. Develop clear accountability mechanisms including financial sanctions and cross-border prosecutions protocols for IUU operators.

Voluntary Commitments

New Zealand: New Zealand recently adopted the [OECD Recommendation on eliminating government support to IUU fishing](#).

Panama: Announced the joining of the Tuna Transparency Pledge. Panamanian officials pledged to enhance transparency in vessel ownership. Panama's government introduced a new policy designed to tighten oversight of its international service fleet and enhance monitoring of transshipment activities. This initiative is part of efforts to ensure compliance with national and international regulations.