



Suriname

**National plan of action to prevent, deter and eliminate
Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing**



Fisheries Directorate
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Supported by:



Foreword

The ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries is pleased to present the National Plan of Action 2025-2030 to prevent, deter and eliminate Illegal Unreported and Unregulated fishing. This NPOA-IUU was drafted and validated in close collaboration with the fisheries sector and relevant authorities and partners, with the aim of significantly enhancing the collaboration on national, regional and international level in the fight against the highly detrimental Illegal Unreported and Unregulated fishing taking place in our waters and beyond. This situation is evidenced by the reported increase of copied registered vessels and ghost vessels which are exerting an unwanted and unknown excessive fishing pressure and thereby jeopardizing our efforts towards sustainable management of on the fish stocks. The fight against IUU fishing is a priority for our government.

We therefore wish to express our gratitude towards all the fisher folk organizations and associations representing the fishing communities for their active participation and valued contributions.

Additionally, our gratitude is extended to the World Wildlife Fund Guianas (WWF-Guianas) for providing support for the development of the NPOA-IUU through the regional IUU project named “Combating IUU Fishing in Guyana, Suriname, and French Guiana (the Guianas)” funded by the donor Oceans 5.

Paramaribo, 1 February 2025

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Abbreviations

ALDFG: Abandoned, Lost and Discarded Fishing Gear

CCCFP: Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy

CEVIHAS: Central Fishing Harbour of Suriname

CITES: Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species

CMOU: Caribbean MOU on Port State Controls

CNFO: Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organizations

COPESCAALC: Commission for Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture of Latin America and the Caribbean

CRFM: Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism

EC: European Commission

EEZ: Exclusive Economic Zones

EDF: European Development Fund

EU: European Union

IDB: Inter-American Development Bank

ICCAT: International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas

IPOA-IUU: International Plan of Action - Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing

IMO: International Maritime Organization

IUU: Illegal, unreported and unregulated

IWC: International Whaling Commission

FAO: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

FD: Fisheries Department

FMP: Fisheries Management Plan

GT: Gross Tonnage

MAAHF: Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries

MAS: Maritime Authority Suriname

MCS: monitoring, control and surveillance

MoU: Memorandum of Understanding

MSC: Marine Stewardship Council

NPOA-IUU: National Plan of Action - Illegal, unreported and unregulated

N.V.: Public limited company

OSPESCA: Organization for Fisheries and Aquaculture of Central America

PSMA: Port State Measures Agreement

RFID: Radio frequency identification tag

RPOA-IUU: Regional Plan of Action - Illegal, unreported and unregulated

RFMO: Regional Fisheries Management Organizations

RWG-IUU: Regional working group - Illegal, unreported and unregulated

SDGs: Sustainable Development Goals

SOPs: Standard Operating Procedures

SPS: Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

SRD: Surinamese Dollar

UN: United Nation

UNCLOS: United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

UNDP: United Nations Development Program

UNFSA: United Nation Fish Stocks Agreement

USA: United States of America

USD: United States of America Dollar

VGCDs: Voluntary Guidelines for Catch Documentation Schemes

VKI: Fish Inspection Institute

VMS: Vessel Monitoring System

WECAFC: Western Central Atlantic Fisheries Commission

WECAFC RPOA-IUU: Western Central Atlantic Fisheries Commission Regional Plan of Action -
Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing

WWF: World Wildlife Fund

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1. Introduction

1.1 The IUU problem

The concept of Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing was first presented in 1997 in Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR), which highlighted IUU fishing practices in conservation areas. A few years later, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations clearly defined what is understood by IUU fishing in their 2001 International Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter, and Eliminate IUU Fishing, describing activities that refer to Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated aspects of IUU (FAO, 2001).

IUU fishing is a persistent challenge because the impacts threaten the sustainability of fisheries and the health of marine environments, leading to undisputable impacts on global food security (Farhan et al., 2018). Further, IUU fishing negatively impacts legitimate fishers and undermines fisheries management. Its effects can be severe, particularly for developing Coastal States and Small Island Developing States whose gross domestic product (GDP) may be highly dependent on the fisheries sector (FAO, 2022). Although international resolutions and reports have been issued for decades, countries have failed to enact and enforce regulations to stop these practices due to a lack of political will, resources and capacity (Widjaja et al., 2020).

1.2 IUU in Suriname

IUU fishing has been identified as one of the biggest impediments to sustainable fisheries management in the three Guianas (Guyana, Suriname and French Guiana) and is not easily addressed. IUU fishing is detrimental to fish stocks and marine habitats in the area, while negatively affecting the livelihoods of those fishers who do abide by the rules (WWF, 2018). IUU-related activities that have been identified in the Guianas include inaccurate catch reporting, fishing outside of allowed fishing areas, landing of catch outside the country of origin, duplication of fishing licenses, the use of longer nets and smaller mesh sizes than stipulated in regulations, use of illegal gear and fishing in closed seasons and no-fishing zones (WWF 2018). IUU fishing in Suriname is both a national and a transboundary issue that needs to be addressed at the national, transboundary and regional level.

1.3 Development of the NPOA-IUU

While several policy measures with relevance to IUU are included in Suriname's National Fisheries Management Plan (2021-2025), the NPOA-IUU is meant to be a more detailed plan, specifically aimed at the fight against IUU and in line with the Western Central Atlantic Fisheries Commission Regional Plan of Action for combating IUU fishing (WECAFC RPOA-IUU), which is based on the International Plan of Action for IUU (IPOA-IUU), developed by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

The objective of the WECAFC Regional Plan of Action for IUU (RPOA-IUU) is to strengthen the prevention, deterrence and elimination of IUU fishing in the WECAFC area of competence through effective regional cooperation among the WECAFC Member States and the sub-regional organizations, namely the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) and the Organization for Fisheries and Aquaculture of Central America (OSPESCA). The RPOA-IUU helps to ensure that countries collaborate to implement their port, flag, coastal and market State responsibilities and underscores the importance of harmonizing policies, encouraging information sharing, identifying capacity development needs, and better facilitating the implementation of international instruments and tools. In this way the RPOA-IUU aims to contribute to the WECAFC's overall objective of promoting the effective conservation, management and development of the living marine resources in the WECAFC area, in accordance with the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

The RPOA-IUU is based on the principles and provisions governing the IPOA-IUU, the PSMA and related complementary international instruments and supports the effective regional cooperation against IUU fishing in line with the Castries Declaration on IUU Fishing, the Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy (CCCFP) and the OSPESCA IUU Action Plan.

The Suriname NPOA-IUU was developed between March and August 2024, by staff of the Suriname Fisheries Department using the guidance provided by the WECAFC RPOA-IUU. The NPOA includes crucial input of fisheries stakeholders which was gathered in various consultation sessions organized by the Fisheries Department (Table 1).

Table 1. Stakeholder consultations for the development of the IUU-NPOA

Location	Date	Number of participants
Boskamp, Saramacca	4 March 2024	33
Totness, Coronie	4 March 2024	15
Nieuw-Nickerie	5 March 2024	36
Paramaribo - Commewijne	28 March 2024	29
Albina, Marowijne	8 May 2024	15

The sessions were organized as open discussions around a few guiding questions with the aim at:

- 1) identification of the main IUU-related concerns from fisheries stakeholders in various sub-sectors and along the value chain (catch to processing and export);
- 2) discussion about potential solutions for the problems.

The input received during the stakeholder sessions was used in the formulation of various actions in this NPOA-IUU. The NPOA-IUU was finalized during a validation session with stakeholders, held

in Paramaribo on August 20, 2024. The official adoption of this document took place on 1 February 2025.

The Fisheries Department acknowledges the support of World Wildlife Fund Guianas (WWF-Guianas) through the regional IUU project named “Combating IUU Fishing in Guyana, Suriname, and French Guiana (the Guianas)” funded by the donor Oceans 5.

2. Overview of the marine fishing sector

The Republic of Suriname is located on the north-eastern Atlantic coast of South America and bordered by the Atlantic Ocean in the North, French Guiana in the East, Guyana in the West and Brazil in the South. Suriname has a coastline of 380 km and a continental shelf area of 54,550 km². The economy of Suriname is dominated by mining activities such as gold and oil. Other main export products include rice, bananas and fishery products. The Surinamese economy is dependent on commerce, its main trade partners are the European Union, the United States of America, Canada and Caribbean countries.

About a quarter of the population works in the agricultural sector. Within agriculture, the fisheries sector generates the majority of the country’s earnings. The main trading partners for fishery products are the European Union, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Japan and Caribbean countries (mainly Jamaica).

The fisheries sector is divided into offshore, coastal and inland fisheries. The fishing vessels operating in Surinamese waters are multi-species and multi-gear, with trawlers, snapper boats, open or decked wooden vessels and canoes. Fishing fleets are defined as combinations of boat and gear and the artisanal fleet is divided into coastal and inland fleets.

The industrial fleet, which operates beyond the 10-fathom line (18 m), can be classified into three types: bottom trawlers targeting either marine shrimp, seabob shrimp or demersal finfish (including weakfishes, croakers, grunts, snappers, etc.); vessels using demersal lines targeting red snapper and pelagic line vessels targeting tuna and tuna like species. In 2023, there were 226 industrial vessels licensed (69 bottom trawlers, 131 demersal line boats and 26 pelagic line boats). Sixteen of the bottom trawlers are operating in a fishery that has been certified by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) since 2011. These vessels can spend up to 60 days at sea. Their catches are stored on ice or frozen.

The coastal fleet, which operates in waters up to the 10-fathom line (18 m) is comprised of wooden boats of a maximum of 85m³. These boats can be either open with an outboard engine or decked with an inboard engine. This fleet mainly deploys drifting gillnets (3–8” mesh) targeting mainly weakfish species (*Sciaenidae* spp.). Average trip length varies between 1-20 days at sea and the catch is stored on ice. In 2023, there were 422 licensed boats.

The inland fisheries occur mainly in the estuaries of the large rivers. Fishing activities are carried out by small (5-10m) open wooden boats with an outboard engine. This is a multi-gear fishery, where fyke

nets, gillnets, lines, encircling nets and dragnets are used and target marine-estuarine fish and shrimp species. Boats go out for day trips and the catch is landed fresh and can be smoked and/or dried in a remote location before being sold. In 2023, there were 441 licensed vessels.

Licensing conditions are set out annually in the Ministerial License Conditions Decree, which can be changed and updated each year as needed. The Decree lists the maximum number of licenses, the license fees and the conditions which apply to the license for each license category. These conditions include conservation and management measures such as:

- Target and bycatch species;
- Fishing areas;
- Engine capacity;
- Allowable gear specifications;
- Closed areas;
- Reporting obligations;
- VMS obligations.

The Fisheries Department issues vessel specific licenses, up to the maximum number of vessels allowed to operate in each fishery. These fishing rights are non-transferable and non-divisible. The renting of licenses is also not permitted. For all fisheries, the catch must be landed and processed in Suriname.

All fishing vessels must land their catch at designated landing sites in Suriname. Data collectors register landings data for the artisanal fleet at various fishery landing sites on a sample-based system. Industrial vessels send their landing data directly to the Ministry. All information is transmitted to and processed by the Fisheries Department.

All landing sites are in one of the four estuaries of the country: from east to west these are the Marowijne estuary, the Suriname-Commewijne estuary, the Coppename-Saramacca estuary and the Corantijne- Nickerie estuary. The most important landing sites are in and around Paramaribo, where most processing plants are located.

The Central Fishing Harbour of Suriname (CEVIHAS N.V.) is the designated port for foreign fishing vessels. This is a parastatal company, in which the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries (MAAHF), as representative of the State, has a majority share. Fisheries products also arrive in Suriname in containers and are landed in the Dr. Jules Sedney Harbor container port.

Suriname's fisheries sector is predominantly export-oriented and therefore highly sensitive to developments in the international markets. Traditionally Suriname exports agricultural and fishery products to markets with high food standards such as the EU, USA and Japan. Suriname is listed in Annex II to the EU Commission Decision 2006/766/EC establishing the list of third countries and territories from which imports of fishery products for human consumption are permitted.

There are 24 processing plants approved by the Fish Inspection Institute (VKI) and eligible to export fishery products.

3 Objectives, measures and actions of the NPOA-IUU

3.1 Objectives of the Suriname NPOA

The NPOA-IUU 2025-2029, aims to significantly enhance the powers and resources for enforcement and the collaboration on national, regional and international level in the fight against Illegal Unreported and Unregulated fishing taking place in our waters and beyond.

3.2 Timeframe and review

The timeframe for the NPOA-IUU is 5 years, from 2025 to 2029, commencing in 2025. Biennial reviews will be carried out in 2027 and 2029, in line with Article 24 of the FAO Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA), to assess progress and to adapt the plan to changing circumstances.

3.3 Priority measures and actions to combat IUU fishing

The NPOA-IUU includes 21 measures and 40 actions to combat IUU fishing in our national waters and in the region to fulfill our obligations as port, flag, coastal and market state. In accordance with the WECAFC RPOA-IUU, four main aspects were considered: (1) Policy and legal framework; (2) Operations and Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS); (3) Regional cooperation and information sharing; and (4) Capacity development. With the development of this NPOA-IUU, Suriname implements the first measure (Measure 1) of the WECAFC RPOA-IUU.

3.3.1 Policy and legal framework

3.3.1.1 International instruments

The WECAFC RPOA-IUU is consistent with existing international fisheries instruments relevant to the sustainable management of marine living resources and the prevention, deterrence and elimination of IUU fishing.

Measure 2: Member States are strongly encouraged to , ratify, adopt or accede to the 2009 FAO Agreement to prevent deter and eliminate IUU Fishing (PSMA), the 1993 FAO Agreement to Promote Compliance with International Conservation and management Measures by Fishing Vessels on the High Seas (Compliance Agreement) and the Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks (UN Fish Stocks Agreement, UNFSA) and become Parties to relevant Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs), including the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT).

The following table provides a summary of status with regard to the adoption by Suriname of the major international instruments to combat IUU and membership to relevant regional and international organizations.

Table 2. List of instruments ratified by Suriname

INSTRUMENTS	STATUS
1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea UNCLOS	Ratified
1993 FAO Compliance Agreement	Not ratified
1995 UN Fish stocks Agreement	Not Ratified
2009 FAO PORT STATE MEASURES AGREEMENT	Planned (some actions taken) preparations are in process.
Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM)	Member
Commission for Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture of Latin America and the Caribbean (COPESCAALC) of CARICOM	Member
The Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy (CCCFP)	Member
International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT)	A Cooperating Non-Contracting Party since 2011.
International Whaling Commission (IWC)	Member
Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission (WECAFC).	Member
Caribbean MOU on Port State Controls (CMOU),	Signatory
The Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organizations (CNFO)	Member
CITES	Ratified
Castries Declaration	Signatory
Copenhagen Declaration	Signatory

Suriname is a party to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which was signed in 1982 and formally ratified in 1998. The obligations with regard to the conservation and

management measures to promote optimum utilization of the fishery resources of the EEZ, are provided for in the Sea Fishery Act 1980.

The Sea Fisheries Act establishes the minister of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries (AAHF) as the authority vested to regulate and manage the utilization of the fishery resources of Suriname and co-ordinate the policies in relation to them. The Sea Fisheries Act further provides for the definition of fishing zones (territorial waters and EEZ) and fishing vessels, the registration of fishing vessels and the granting of fishing licenses. Article 17 of the Act requires the minister to annually (before January 20) publish the license conditions and total number of licenses to be issued per fisheries category. Article 27 states that fishing within the fishing zone without a license, constitutes a felony. Article 25 of the Act allows for the minister to lay down further regulations for the protection and conservation of fish stocks by state decree. The Sea Fisheries Act does not address fishing on the high seas.

Although not a party to the 1993 FAO Compliance Agreement, the 1995 United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement, and the Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA), Suriname has taken major steps towards conservation and management of fish stocks on the high seas and the fight against IUU fishing through cooperation within the regional and international frameworks and instruments as indicated in table 1. These frameworks and instruments include the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM), the Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy (CCCFP), the Caribbean MOU on Port State Control, the Castries Declaration and the Copenhagen Declaration.

Suriname is also a Cooperating Non-Contracting Party of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), member of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) and the Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission (WECAFC) and signatory to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES).

Suriname is not yet a Party to the 2009 Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (PSMA), but has a very strong interest in ratifying the agreement. Suriname aims to ensure, through port State measures, the long-term conservation and sustainable use of living marine resources and marine ecosystems in the EEZ of the country, as well as elsewhere in areas beyond national jurisdiction. Furthermore, a “Strategy and Roadmap” has been developed for accession to the PSMA. The request for the accession to the PSMA has already been sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business and International Cooperation Suriname. However, it is essential to ensure the necessary follow-up of the accession process.

Measure 3: Member States are strongly encouraged to fully and effectively implement the relevant legally binding international fisheries instruments and are strongly encouraged to fully and effectively implement the voluntary international instruments referred to in Part 1 and Appendix 1 of the RPOA. Members should also ensure compliance with conservation and management measures of the RFMOs they are party to.

With regard to the full and effective implementation of the legally binding and voluntary international fisheries instruments, it is essential that these instruments and the required measures are adopted into national law. The domestic legal framework regulating fisheries in Suriname consists of the 1980 Sea Fisheries Act; the 1961 Fish Stock Protection Act and the Fish Stock Protection Decree; the 1981 Coastal Fisheries Decree (S.B. 1980, No.144); the 2008 Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) Decree (S.B. 2008 No.45) and the 2009 Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fisheries Decree (S.B. 2009 No. 192). In addition, the Minister of AAHF issues a License Conditions Decree on a yearly basis. Other legal instruments related to fisheries are the Law on Economic Offences (1986), the Fish Inspection Act (2000), the Coast Guard Act (2017), the Maritime Zones Act (2017) and the Presidential decree establishing the port of CEVIHAS N.V. (SB. 2010 No. 1582).

A new Fisheries Act has been drafted with the aim of including and addressing the regional and international flag, port, coastal and market state obligations stemming from the previously mentioned ratifications and memberships, which are not yet addressed in the current legal framework. It is important to ensure that the new fisheries act is reviewed, validated and adopted as soon as possible. Other major constraints to the full and effective implementation of the international instruments include an inadequate identification of the respective roles and responsibilities of the different agencies in relation to Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) and inadequate coordination of related activities. Although there is some level of cooperation and collaboration through the Council for the Sea Fisheries and other working groups, there is no formalized mechanism such as Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) among the agencies.

In general, there is insufficient human and financial capacity to implement all the requirements and measures as part of the NPOA-IUU. The actions with regard to these constraints will be further elaborated under measure 13 relating to MCS and measures 27 and 28 relating to training and capacity development.

3.3.1.2 National legislative framework

Effectively implementing the IPOA-IUU, the PSMA and complementary instruments require the adoption of a comprehensive legal framework at the national level to support measures of the State as a port, flag, coastal and market State.

Measure 4: Member States should review and update, as necessary, policy and legislation frameworks to facilitate the implementation of port, flag, coastal and market State responsibilities, considering the relevant binding and voluntary international instruments and their standards and principles as well as regional mechanisms (see Part 1 and Appendix 1).

The draft Fisheries Act is currently under review prior to the formal process of finalization and approval. The new Fisheries Act will include additional measures in accordance with the PSMA to address IUU fishing on the high seas, such as measures on port control and transshipment, registration and record keeping of vessels and information sharing. The aim is to have the new Act approved and

published by the end of 2025. The License Conditions Decree and other subsidiary regulations are subject to regular and ongoing review. As mentioned before the License Conditions Decree is updated and published annually.

The current Fisheries Management Plan (FMP) 2021-2025 is also presently under review in anticipation of drafting the new Fisheries Management Plan for 2025-2030. The current FMP addresses a wide range of issues including governance, control of the fishing effort, impact on the ecosystem, MCS and regional and international cooperation. The new plan will also focus on the flag, port and market state responsibilities and the necessary measures. Likewise, it is important to ensure the timely review and update of the FMP.

Measure 5: Member states should revise their laws and regulations so that they are aligned with the requirements of the PSMA.

As mentioned above, Suriname's legal framework is under review and being updated for alignment with the PSMA, so as to address the requirements on (1) designated ports, (2) advance request for port entry, (3) authorization/denial of port entry, (4) force majeure, (5) use of port, (6) conduct and priorities of vessel inspections, (7) content and information sharing of inspection reports, (8) Port State actions following inspections, and (9) flag State responsibilities. Close follow up on the review process to ensure proper alignment of the legal framework with the PSMA and timely adoption of the new fisheries act is essential.

Measure 6: Member States are encouraged to delimit their maritime boundaries if they have not yet done so.

The maritime borders of Suriname have already been delimited and established in the Maritime Zones Act 2017. No further action is necessary in this regard.

Measure 7: Member States are encouraged to align national regulations to ensure effective MCS of transshipment activities; recognizing that transshipment activities, when inadequately regulated, monitored and controlled, can contribute to IUU fishing. In-depth studies should be conducted in the region to support the development of FAO guidelines on regulation, practices, monitoring and control of transshipment.

Under the current Sea Fisheries Act and subsidiary regulations, it is prohibited to transship any of the catch from one vessel to another, except in the event of an emergency. In this case, the Fisheries Department must be informed in writing of the transshipment on the following day. However, the enforcement of this rule poses a great challenge in terms of effective MCS. Through the 2008 Vessel Monitoring System Decree, all industrial vessels are obligated to have a functioning VMS on board when fishing. In this way the interaction of vessels can be monitored. One of the objectives of the FMP is to have all the coastal artisanal vessels on the VMS as well. Although the implementation is facing some challenges, Suriname is committed to achieve this objective within 3 years. With regard to transshipment in case of emergency, it is necessary to establish rules for how the reporting of the

transshipment should take place. It is important to ensure that the new fisheries act includes regulations for the effective MCS of transshipment activities.

3.3.1.3 Regional policies and tools

Combating IUU fishing is as much a regional task as it is a national task. Regional cooperation and harmonization of MCS measures are essential to close loopholes that have allowed IUU fishing operators to continue their operations.

Measure 8: Member States are encouraged to establish a common policy with respect to registration, licensing and chartering of fishing vessels and with respect to transshipment in line with the Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy and WECAFC [Draft] Recommendations. Alignment of national policies with the regional common policy ensures more effective fisheries management, prevents flag-hopping of fishing vessels and facilitates a better identification of vessels engaged in IUU fishing and fishing related activities, including illegal and unmonitored transshipment at sea.

As a member of the Caribbean Community, Suriname adheres to the recommendations under section 13 of the Caribbean Community Common Fisheries Policy (CCCFP) with regard to licensing and registration of fishing vessels. The generally endorsed Fisheries Management Plan (FMP) 2021-2025 is based on the Precautionary Principle as part of an Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries. Within the FMP, maximum numbers of licenses have been established for all the various categories of fisheries, alongside a stop on the issuance of new licenses. Article 23 in Chapter V establishes that a foreign fishing vessel may only obtain a permit if an agreement exists between Suriname and the State of registration.

The ongoing deliberations on the numbers of licenses to be issued or extended annually, take place within the Sea Fisheries Advisory Council, among the representatives of the fishing sector and the relevant authorities. In keeping with the CCCFP, Suriname will review the effectiveness of this policy in creating a balance between the fishing capacity, the actual fishing pressure and the fisheries resources.

The Sea Fisheries Act defines three categories of fishing vessels for purposes of registration: "Suriname fishing vessel"; "foreign fishing vessel allowed in Suriname"; and "alien fishing vessel". According to article 4, to obtain the status of "allowed foreign fishing vessel", a foreign vessel must regularly moor in Suriname, its operator is required to have registered offices in Suriname and the operator must ensure that the catch is processed in Suriname. Chapter II provides for the registration of fishing vessels (articles 6 to 13) and designates the Harbor Master (Maritime Authority Suriname abbreviated MAS) as the authority to maintain the registry of all fishing vessels. This is an open registry which can be accessed by the public. Chapter III makes provision for the granting of licenses for all three categories of fishing vessels (articles 14 to 20). A fishing license is only valid for 1 year and therefore needs to be renewed annually. The administration and recordkeeping of licenses for fisheries

in the wild as well as for aquaculture falls within the competency and responsibility of the Fisheries Department. The Fisheries Department also maintains a separate database containing detailed information on vessels for the sake of combating IUU fishing. Likewise, Suriname will assess and consider the best practices within the region in relation to registration and licensing of vessels in collaboration with CRFM and WECAFC.

The data on the number of fishing vessels per fishing category is being shared with the CRFM, the WECAFC as well as with the FAO through annual surveys and questionnaires. Details on the identity of specific vessels can be shared upon request. Suriname will further cooperate, through these organizations and within ICCAT, with other port States in the Caribbean region, to agree on mechanisms and information exchange to combat IUU fishing. Suriname aims to implement Resolution WECAFC/15/2014/9^[1] on the implementation of the Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA) and the FAO Voluntary guidelines on Flag State Performance in the region and other relevant conservation and management measures adopted by RFBs/RFMOs for all foreign fishing vessels, such as Recommendation 18-09 by ICCAT on Port State Measures to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. At present this recommendation is only implemented for the foreign tuna vessels that are allowed to land their fish caught in international waters with a valid fishing license from their flag state in Suriname. However, it is necessary to ensure that port state measures are also implemented on other foreign flagged vessels.

Fishing authorization procedures

After consultations with the stakeholders as well as the Fisheries Advisory Board, each year the number of licenses to be issued is determined in the Ministerial Decree regarding fish license conditions. In Suriname it is mandatory to fish with a valid license in Surinamese waters. The license is valid for one calendar year. In case of violations of the license conditions, the license can be temporarily or permanently withdrawn by the MAAHF after having issued a warning. Withdrawal of the license also depends on the type of violation.

Vessel registration procedures

Fishing vessels can only be registered at the MAS after obtaining written permission from the MAAHF. This permission is given after approval of the technical inspection of the vessel and its fishing gear by the Fisheries Inspection Division of the FD. The technical inspections include verifying that the measurements of the vessels correspond with the measurements on the Certificate of Seaworthiness, which is issued by the MAS.

A permission letter of the MAAHF is also required when the vessel is replaced or the vessel is repaired and changes are made to the vessel. The permission letter is required to prevent a higher number of fishing vessels being registered than the number of licenses to be issued. This measure was taken by the MAAHF in cooperation with the MAS and other relevant authorities after detecting that some registered vessels were fishing without a valid license. Suriname will facilitate and continuous and close collaboration between the MAAHF, the MAS and other relevant authorities to improve the licensing

and registration procedures in order to prevent illegal vessels from conducting IUU fishing using a copied identity of a registered vessel or falsified documents of registered vessels.

Measure 9: Member States are strongly encouraged to establish and maintain a WECAFC Regional Record of Fishing Vessels, ensuring compatibility with the FAO Global Record of Fishing Vessels, Refrigerated Transport Vessels and Supply Vessels (Global Record). Minimum data requirements should be in line with Article VI (paragraphs 1 and 2) of the 1993 Compliance Agreement.

As previously mentioned, the data on vessels is shared with the CRFM, the WECAFC and the FAO. Concerning the WECAFC regional fishing fleet register however, there is a need to improve the sharing of information on foreign flagged vessels. In Suriname there are no registered refrigerated transport vessels and supply vessels.

The central fisheries registration is kept by the MAS. This register is open to the public and upon payment of a fee; anyone can obtain information from the register. Suriname has seventeen longline Tuna vessels that have permission to fish in the High Seas under its flag. These vessels are also registered on the ICCAT vessel record list. In addition to the MAS registry, the MAAHF has its own database which has information of the fishing vessels (including photos) and licenses that have been issued. Suriname will improve the sharing of information on foreign flagged vessels with WECAFC for addition into the WECAFC fleet register.

Measure 10: Member States are strongly encouraged to establish and maintain a list of vessels confirmed to have carried out IUU fishing in the WECAFC area and ensure due process for the listing of vessels in a fair, transparent, non-discriminatory manner.

Currently there is no established list for vessels confirmed to have carried out IUU fishing. There is recordkeeping of vessels which have engaged in IUU fishing but there is no official list. Suriname will take measures to establish and maintain an official list of vessels confirmed to have carried out IUU fishing.

Measure 11: Member States are encouraged to use harmonized codes for the classification of fish and fishery products to facilitate a greater understanding and control of trade as well as identification of product and in line with Article 18 of the CCCFP.

As a member of the CARICOM, Suriname takes part in the initiatives of the 11th EDF SPS Measures project which aims to increase compliance by CARIFORUM States with international sanitary and phytosanitary measures, standards and procedures to increase international and regional market access. Suriname applies the Harmonized System codes for fish and fishery products, which are widely and internationally used, including by the major export markets for fish products from Suriname, such as the EU, the United States, China, Japan and Jamaica. On the national level, Suriname will strengthen the collaboration with VKI and the Customs department to improve the traceability of fisheries products.

Measure 12: Member States should develop a harmonized catch documentation scheme consistent with the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Catch Documentation Schemes (VGCDS).

The current catch documentation scheme is compatible with the EU regulation 1005/2008 ("the IUU Regulation"), which has been adopted into the national legislation through the 2009 IUU Decree. This decree establishes the Fisheries Department as the Competent Authority responsible for the verification and certification of catch as a requirement for export to the EU. The verification of catches is carried out by officials of the Fisheries Department based on information from the License Department, catch data collectors and data from fishing companies. Further improvement of the verification method and procedures is necessary for catches from the artisanal vessels which are registered on a sample-based data collection system. According to the recommendation 01-21 by ICCAT concerning the ICCAT bigeye tuna statistical document program, the Fisheries Department of the ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries also validates the bigeye tuna statistical document when exporting or re-exporting bigeye tuna.

When exporting elasmobranchii and other aquatic species (sharks) that are listed on CITES appendices, the Fisheries Department of the ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries validates an export document which proves that the catch is legally caught.

As indicated under measure 11, Suriname will strengthen the collaboration and exchange of information among the competent authorities which are responsible for certification and inspection of consignments to improve the traceability.

Table 3. The actions with regard to policies and legal frameworks in relation to international instruments, national legislative framework and regional policies and tools.

Ref. nr.	ACTION ITEMS	RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES	2025	2026	2027	2028
	<i>International Instruments</i>					
1	Follow up process and ensure accession to the PSMA.		√			

2	Ensure that the new fisheries act will provide for full and effective implementation of the PSMA.		√	√		
3	Ensure that the new fisheries act is reviewed, validated and adopted as soon as possible in order to implement the flag, port, coastal and market state obligations.		√	√		
4	Continue execution of the Roadmap and Strategy for implementing port state measures.		√	√	√	√
	<i>National legislative framework</i>					
5	Thorough review and update of the legal and policy frameworks to ensure that the new fisheries act and subsidiary regulations and the new Fisheries Management Plan sufficiently facilitate the implementation of flag, port, coastal and market state obligations.		√			
6	Close follow up on the review process to ensure proper alignment of the legal framework with the PSMA and timely adoption of the new fisheries act.		√			

7	Establish rules for how the reporting of the transshipment should take place and ensure that the new fisheries act includes regulations for the effective MCS of transshipment activities.		√			
8	Review the effectiveness of the licensing policy in creating a balance between the fishing capacity, the actual fishing pressure and the fisheries resources.		√	√		
9	Assess and consider the best practices within the region in relation to registration and licensing of vessels in collaboration with CRFM and WECAFC.		√			
10	Further cooperate, through CRFM, WECAFC and within ICCAT, with other port States in the Caribbean region, to agree on mechanisms and information exchange to combat IUU fishing.		√	√		
11	Implement port state measures and improve information sharing for all foreign flagged vessels		√	√		
12	Continue collaboration between MAAF and MAS to improve procedures on licensing and registration.		√	√	√	√

13	Improve data collection and data sharing to facilitate the WECAFC Regional Record of Fishing Vessels.		√			
14	Establish a list and record keeping for vessels confirmed to have engaged in IUU fishing.		√			
15	Strengthen collaboration and information sharing with VKI and the Customs department to improve the traceability of fisheries products.		√	√		
16	Improve the method for verification of catch from the artisanal vessels.		√			

3.3.2 Operations and MCS related actions

A strong system for MCS and enforcement with clear procedures is the key to effectively identifying IUU fishing operators, take action against them, and supporting compliance with relevant laws and regulations.

Measure 13: Member States are encouraged to develop national strategies and procedures for combating IUU fishing with due regard to port, flag, coastal and market State obligations. Member States are further encouraged to implement their MCS strategies. This includes the development of procedures for implementation of the PSMA on (1) designated ports, (2) advance request for port entry, (3) authorization/denial of port entry, (4) force majeure, (5) use of port, (6) conduct and priorities of vessel inspections, (7) content and information sharing of inspection reports, (8) Port State actions following inspections, and (9) Flag State responsibilities with regards to the PSMA.

At the request of the Fisheries Department of the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries of Suriname (2019), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), with funding provided by the FAO/Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), supported Suriname under its Global Program to support the implementation of the FAO Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA) and complementary international instruments. Activities done under this program

included:

- 1) The execution of a needs assessment of Suriname's capacity (in 2020) to implement the PSMA, complementary international instruments and regional mechanisms to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing;
- 2) The development of a National Strategy and Roadmap (in 2021), that aims to identify the necessary steps to fulfill these international requirements to combat IUU fishing;
- 3) The drafting of an interagency MoU (in 2021) to formalize coordination and joint action between the various national authorities engaged in the fight against IUU fishing;
- 4) An in-country fisheries port inspection training course (in 2022) for participants of all national authorities involved in the fight against IUU fishing.

The developed National Strategy and Roadmap, allows Suriname to adopt and effectively implement the provisions of the PSMA and complementary international instruments and mechanisms. It provides a description of Suriname's existing related policies, legislation and institutional set up. It considers the monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) systems and operations in place. It reviews Suriname's engagement in global and regional processes concerning fisheries management, and their current initiatives and projects with partners related to IUU fishing and PSMA implementation. Finally, it identifies a possible course of action for Suriname to introduce provisions and procedures coherent with international standards for Port State Measures to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing and for building capacity for their effective implementation. Suriname will continue the execution of the National Strategy and Roadmap with regard to the development of procedures for implementation of port state measures in the following areas:

(1) Designated ports

Under the current regulation, all foreign fishing vessels must land their entire catches at the designated port which is called the port of CEVIHAS N.V., located at Paramaribo the capital of Suriname. Besides the port of CEVIHAS N.V., the port of Kuldipsingh N.V. functions as a back-up port for foreign vessels when CEVIHAS N.V. is unable to accommodate a vessel.

Imported fish or fish products are also formally landed in Suriname in containers at the Dr. Jules Sedney Harbor container port. At present the importers are required to submit documentation beforehand to the Fisheries Department providing proof that the fish was caught legally. This documentation is shared with VKI and the Customs department.

Currently, there is also a need to establish designated ports and port control measures for the national fishing fleet, in particular for the artisanal fishing vessels, which are allowed to moor at privately owned mooring jetties. Some of these jetties are in remote areas and not always readily accessible by the inspectors, making it difficult to detect landings by illegal vessels. An evaluation and update of the regulations and procedures for the granting of permission to construct private jetties for accommodation of fishing vessels is necessary to ensure that the relevant authorities can always have

quick and easy access to the vessels. This will allow for improved MCS at the ports in order to detect illegal vessels operating under the copied (stolen) identification of licensed vessels and vessels without identification. The draft Fisheries Act provides for rules regarding the designation of ports and port control measures in alignment with the PSMA.

(2) Advance request for port entry

At present the masters of the foreign tuna vessels that are seeking access to our port should send at least 48 hours in advance a request for entry into the port, with all information according to Annex A of the PSMA, to the Fisheries Department of the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries.

(3) Authorization/denial of port entry

All foreign fishing vessels that wish to enter Surinamese waters are required to inform the designated port and submit to the Maritime Authorities Suriname (MAS) at least 48 hours ship pre-arrival information. A letter of no objection from the Director of the Fisheries Department should be included in the pre-arrival information. Failing to submit this information will result in denial of entry to the port. Suriname will ensure that legal requirements providing for denial of use of ports will be addressed under the New Fisheries Law.

(4) Force Majeure

In conformity with international law and Article 10 of the PSMA, Suriname provides port access to foreign flagged vessels for reasons of force majeure or distress or for rendering assistance to persons, ships or aircrafts in danger or distress.

(5) Use of port

Suriname provides port access to foreign fishing vessels who wish to land their catch from international waters in Suriname after providing all the relevant information and documents to the Fisheries Department of the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries such as, a valid fishing license and a permission letter from their flag state to land their catch in Suriname.

(6) Conduct and priorities of vessel inspections

A robust inspection and control regime for ports is necessary to prevent landing of fish products obtained from IUU fishing and fishing-related activities. Improving port control and inspection will also put Suriname in a better position for the envisaged ratification of the PSMA. This requires capacity building and close cooperation of the authorities responsible for Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) in fisheries and fisheries-related activities.

A fisheries port inspection training course in the fight against IUU fishing has been carried out in 2022 with the support from FAO. The objectives of this training were as follows:

- Ensure that participants are familiar with the national legal framework as well as PSMA and complementary international instruments and regional mechanisms to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing – in particular with regards to inspection procedures (Article 13-19 and Annexes A-E of the PSMA);
- Enable inspectors to plan and prepare for inspection activities, including verification and cross checking of information, risk assessment and pre-inspection procedures;
- Review inspection activities, including protocols, information gathering and develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). Reinforce this learning with practical exercises including in the port;
- Present participants with the actions to be taken post-inspection including reporting, case building and information sharing (interagency, regionally and internationally).

Suriname will enhance interagency cooperation and coordination through formal arrangements to clearly define relevant roles, responsibilities and mandate of different actors in relation to port access and port inspection.

Suriname aims to have a proper inspection procedure for all foreign vessels in place by the end of 2025. Inspectors shall then be fully capable of carrying out their work according to Annex B of the PSMA. The inspectors will use the reporting format on the results of the inspection, as presented in Annex C of the PSMA.

(7) Content and information sharing of inspection reports

Generally, there is a lack of reporting denial of access to the vessel's flag state. This needs improvement.

(8) Port State actions following inspections

If Suriname suspects any foreign fishing vessel or has sufficient proof that a vessel seeking entry into its port has engaged in IUU fishing or has violated rules and procedures of relevant regional fisheries organizations, Suriname will deny that vessel entry into its port.

If a vessel is already in port and there is clear evidence that it has been involved in IUU fishing, legal action can be initiated in cooperation with the flag state of the vessel. In accordance with paragraph 6 of article 9 of the PSMA, Suriname shall “deny such vessel the use of its ports for landing, transshipping, packaging, and processing of fish and for other port services including, inter alia, refueling and resupplying, maintenance and dry docking. Denial of such use of ports shall be in conformity with international law”. In case of a stateless vessel, Suriname will apply sanctions according to the national Criminal Act with a maximum fine of SRD 5 million, or 6 years of imprisonment. Ultimately, it is the prosecution or the judge who decides on the level of the fine to be applied. In general, the applied fines are not considered to be sufficiently deterrent. The fisheries Department has taken steps to engage the prosecution to evaluate the level of deterrence or

proportionality of the applied sanctions. This engagement will be continued and expanded to raise awareness among the judiciary on the need to combat IUU fishing effectively.

(9) Flag State responsibilities with regards to the PSMA

Currently, Suriname cooperates within the rules of ICCAT to investigate any report of IUU activities by its national vessels received from other states and to take appropriate measures against those vessels if they are found to have engaged in IUU fishing. In this regard, Suriname will continue the collaboration and information sharing with the neighboring countries French Guiana and Guyana to deter and eliminate possible IUU activities of Surinamese vessels in their waters. Suriname will ensure that the responsibilities of the flag state with regard to the PSMA are included in the new Fisheries Act.

Measure 14: Member States should develop and utilize a regional MCS toolbox, based on international guidelines and using regional best practices. This includes procedures and tools for effective information sharing and risk assessment to effectively direct MCS capacities at vessels with a high risk of being engaged in IUU fishing and related activities.

Presently, Suriname implements the following measures and tools in terms of Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS):

- marking of vessels
- regular inspection of vessels and fishing gear
- interagency cooperation
- joint patrol missions
- cooperation with local fishing communities
- vessel monitoring system
- regional MCS initiatives
- sanctions

Suriname commits to further improvement of these measures and tools, including the development of procedures for IUU risk assessment to effectively target high risk vessels. Suriname will also use these tools and measures to improve the information sharing on vessels having engaged in IUU fishing on the national and regional level.

Measure 15: The WECAFC Members are encouraged to collaborate with the FAO Global Record Information System by exchanging information with the Global Record, ensuring consistency, transparency and harmonization, through the use of international standardized reference lists and data types defined in the Global Record.

Generally, there is insufficient sharing of vital information with port, flag, coastal States, as well as other relevant organizations. Once the PSMA is ratified and access to the global record is granted, Suriname will collaborate with the FAO Global Record Information System according to article 16 of the PSMA.

Measure 16: Member States are encouraged to adopt and implement measures on the marking and identification of fishing vessels in the WECAFC area in order to improve transparency

and allow a better identification of noncompliant vessels. Such measures should require inter alia that WECAFC Member States ensure that their flagged motorized fishing vessels, refrigerated transport vessels and supply vessels of 100 GT or above, or greater than 12 meters LOA and authorized to operate outside waters under national jurisdiction and other eligible vessels, obtain an IMO number and use it as mark for identification.

Due to the emergence and increase of illegal vessels fishing without identity or using the copied identity of registered vessels, there has been an intensification of the efforts to improve on the marking of vessels, recordkeeping of vessel characteristics and sharing of information on vessels. As explained before, the fishing vessels are required to be marked by indentation of the name and registration number on the vessel as prescribed in the License Conditions Decree. Coastal vessels are also required to have a special number plate placed on the vessel by the inspectors of the Fisheries Department. All Surinamese tuna vessels have an IMO number and are marked with an International Radio Call Sign number for identification. The Fisheries Department aims to further improve the marking of vessels and other fishing gear by using an RFID tag. This measure will be implemented after approval by the minister, following the necessary consultations of the stakeholders. In addition, the Fisheries Department will continue to update and populate the Fisheries Information System with data on vessels and fishing gear.

Measure 17: Member States should develop national inspection plans, harmonizing these across the region in line with Article 14 of the CCCFP, as well as standard operating procedures (SOPs) with regards to Port State Measures in line with the minimum standards as laid out in the PSMA.

The responsibility for enforcement and the power to investigate offenses is established under article 36 of the Sea Fisheries Act and imparted to designated officers from the Fisheries Department and the Coast Guard. The Fisheries inspectors conduct annual and regular inspection of vessels and fishing gear at various landing sites. These inspectors have been trained and sworn in as Special Agents of Police with power to write the police report for initiation of a case when IUU fishing has been detected. In addition, the Police including the Maritime Police possesses general investigative power. The Coast Guard is tasked with enforcement within the complete EEZ and may conduct further investigation to take cases to the Attorney General's office or hand it over to the Police under the Coast Guard Act (2017). In addition, support is given by the ministry of Defense through the Navy. The sharing of information and expertise among these agencies is of great importance for effective MCS against IUU fishing and other related crimes.

At present there is inadequate identification of the respective roles and responsibilities of each agency in relation to port access controls and port inspections relating to fisheries and fisheries related activities. Therefore, Suriname aims to ensure the increased collaboration among these MCS authorities by developing a formal mechanism (MoU) laying out the roles and responsibilities of all relevant agencies involved in effective fisheries governance, including management, MCS and enforcement.

Measure 19: *Member States are strongly encouraged to comply with international standards on gear marking to address the issue of abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear in line with the FAO Voluntary Guidelines on the Marking of Fishing Gear.*

In the Fish License conditions Decree it is mandatory that the fishing gear is marked by the license holder with the registration number of the fishing vessel. This will help with the identification and recovery of the fishing gear as well as improve the state of the marine environment by combatting, minimizing and eliminating abandoned, lost or discarded fishing gear. This will also contribute to improving safety at sea by reducing the danger to navigation caused by abandoned, lost or discarded fishing gear and help to identify IUU fishing activities. Unmarked or insufficiently marked fishing gear that cannot be linked to its ownership or permission to fish in a specific area, may indicate IUU fishing operations and should be referred to the relevant authorities for appropriate action. Presently, the registration and inspection of fishing gear marking poses a challenge. Suriname will continue to develop guidelines and standards for the marking of fishing gear and build capacity to carry out the necessary registration and inspections.

Measure 20: *Member States are encouraged to establish fisheries enforcement units in their fisheries agencies and to formalize an inter-agency information sharing and coordination mechanism at the national level for relevant agencies to combat IUU fishing.*

During the consultations in 2022 towards the development of the Strategy and Roadmap for accession and implementation of the PSMA, the low level of cooperation and information sharing among the relevant MCS authorities was identified as a major weakness. The agencies agreed that there should be a formal MOU, elaborating the different powers, responsibilities and tasks, complemented by a working group which should further develop protocols and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for enhanced cooperation. The Fisheries Department will follow up on drafting of the interagency MoU.

Depending on the available financial resources and facilities, joint patrol missions are carried out, involving officers from the agencies mentioned above. Given that these patrols are expensive, the authorities have decided to focus the actions on strategic locations (hot spots). This strategy has proven to be more effective and will be continued. Regarding combatting the concentrated IUU fishing activities at the eastern border and in French waters, there is intensified cooperation with the French authorities, including coordinated patrols on both sides of the border and regular exchange of information on sighted illegal vessels. Suriname will continue coordination and information sharing with the French authorities to improve the MCS in this area.

In the consultations with the local fishing communities involved in artisanal inland and coastal fisheries, information was shared on the occurrence of IUU fishing and how the local fisher folk can contribute to improving MCS in their fishing area. The consultations provided useful information on the nature and source of IUU fishing occurrences. Within the inland fisheries it was reported that IUU fishing is being carried out by licensed as well as unlicensed fishers. IUU fishing activities by unlicensed

fishers often take place with consent and in cooperation with licensed fishers for the sake of mutual benefits. Some of the fishers are annoyed about the fact that the illegal fishers can operate freely without having to pay any license fees or taxes. This creates an unfair situation. However, the legal fishers are not easily inclined to share information on the identity of illegal fishers for fear of being targeted.

Other pressing issues include the frequent intrusion of coastal legal and illegal SK vessels into their fishing area, often using drift nets of smaller mesh size than allowed and often causing damage to their fixed Chinese seine traps. The stakeholders of the Marowijne area, predominantly from the indigenous communities of Galibi and surrounding villages, close to the border with French Guiana are especially concerned about Coastal vessels with very long nets intruding into their designated fishing area and violation of the Galibi no-fishing zone, which is very important for the conservation of sea turtles. They have also asked the attention of the authorities for the dangerous situation regarding the sand bank named Tijgerbank that grew into an island, which is close to Galibi and is being used as an operations base by illegal fishers and other criminals. The issues raised at the wider meeting in Paramaribo with coastal and industrial fishers included the transshipment activities from illegal vessels to licensed vessels taking place in remote areas and even at some well-known jetties at night.

In general, the fishing communities are asking for more presence of the MCS authorities in the fishing areas, more cooperation from the local Police and more severe fines for illegal activities. The stakeholders agree that there should be more awareness concerning the negative impact and the danger of IUU fishing for the sustainability of their livelihood and more collaborative and concerted action against the perpetrators. They acknowledge the need to support their local FFO's and requested support for capacity building. The Fisheries Department has committed to continuing the collaboration with the fishing communities through the FFO's and providing support for capacity building.

On the matter of illegal intrusion of designated fishing zones, it is worth mentioning that the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) was introduced in 2011 for the industrial fleet and made mandatory the VMS decree as license condition. From 2020, the VMS is also required as a license condition for the coastal fleet. The VMS has proven to be an important tool for ensuring that vessels fish within their designated zones and that the catch of licensed vessels is landed in Suriname. The VMS also functions as a tool for identification of vessels and helps with the verification of the number of days at sea for trawlers. The VMS can further help to identify the guilty parties in cases of intrusion and damage to assets belonging to inland fishers and transshipment of illegal catch. The VMS is also useful in helping to identify the owners of Abandoned, Lost and Discarded Fishing Gear (ALDFG). Suriname is committed to the full implementation of the VMS for the coastal and industrial fleet.

With regard to the call for more severe punishment of IUU fishing perpetrators, there has been an update of the penalties. Violations of the Sea Fisheries Act or the related decrees are considered as economic offenses and therefore prosecuted under the Economic Delict Act 1986. Offenders are

liable to imprisonment not exceeding six years or a fine amounting to a maximum of SRD 5 million (articles 27 and 28 under Chapter VII). These penalties can be considered as sufficiently deterrent but are not always applied to the full extent by the judge. The Sea Fisheries Act also allows for the minister of Fisheries to apply an administrative sanction by revoking the license of a fishing vessel which is involved in illegal fishing. As mentioned before under measure 13, the proportionality and effectiveness of the applied sanctions need to be evaluated.

Table 4. The actions related to operations and monitoring control and surveillance.

Ref. nr.	ACTION ITEMS	RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES	2025	2026	2027	2028
17	Continue the execution of the National Strategy and Roadmap with regard to the development of procedures for implementation of port state measures.		√	√	√	√
18	Establish designated ports and port control measures for the national fishing fleet.		√			
19	Evaluate and update the regulations and procedures for the granting of permission to construct private jetties for accommodation of fishing vessels		√			
20	Ensure that legal requirements providing for denial of use of ports will be addressed under the new fisheries act.		√			
21	Enhance interagency cooperation and coordination through formal arrangements to clearly define relevant roles, responsibilities and mandate of different actors in		√	√	√	√

	relation to port access and port inspection.					
22	Establish a proper inspection procedure for all foreign vessels by the end of 2025.		√			
23	Continue and expand engagement with the prosecution and judiciary to raise awareness on the need to apply sanctions that are sufficiently deterrent to combat IUU fishing effectively.		√			
24	Ensure that the responsibilities of the flag state with regard to the PSMA are included in the new Fisheries Act.		√			
25	Further improve measures and tools, including the development of procedures for IUU risk assessment in order to effectively target high risk vessels. Use these tools and measures to improve the information sharing on vessels having engaged in IUU fishing on the national and regional level.		√	√		
26	Collaborate with the FAO Global Record Information System according to article 16 of the PSMA.		√	√		

27	Further improve the marking of vessels and other fishing gear by using an RFID tag.		√			
28	Update and populate the Fisheries Information System with data on vessels and fishing gear.		√	√		
29	Ensure the increased collaboration among these MCS authorities by developing a formal mechanism (MoU) laying out the roles and responsibilities of all relevant agencies involved in effective fisheries governance, including management, MCS and enforcement.		√	√		
30	Continue to develop guidelines and standards for the marking of fishing gear and build capacity to carry out the necessary registration and inspections		√	√	√	√
31	Follow up on drafting of the interagency MOU.		√			
32	Suriname will continue coordination and information sharing with the French authorities to improve the MCS in the eastern border area.		√	√	√	√
33	Continue the collaboration with the fishing communities through the FFO's and provide support for capacity building.		√	√	√	√

34	Ensure the full implementation of the VMS for the coastal and industrial fleet.		√	√		
35	Evaluate the proportionality and effectiveness of the applied sanctions.		√			

3.3.3 Information exchange and cooperation at the regional level.

Effective and efficient information sharing and cooperation among agencies on the national and regional levels and increasing the transparency with regards to fisheries operations are fundamental for the effective implementation of the PSMA and complementary instruments to combat IUU fishing.

Measure 22: Member States should develop a regional mechanism for effective information sharing and cooperation to combat IUU fishing, including for the purpose of risk assessment and verification of vessel information. Member States should: - Establish and keep updated a regional database (or databases) of MCS related information, fishing vessel registration and licensing information; - Establish and keep updated an overview of relevant contact points for MCS, registration and licensing information as well as of relevant contact points in regional organizations (e.g. WECAFC, CRFM, OSPESCA, ICCAT) and international organizations; - Develop and keep updated a regional database with a record of (1) relevant histories and offences by foreign fishing, refrigerated transport and supply vessels and of (2) port state actions; - Develop and implement protocols, procedures and supporting tools for reporting and sharing of information on the national and regional levels and for accessing timely, updated and relevant information for MCS purposes, particularly for verifying vessel information of foreign fishing vessels provided by vessel operators; - Share relevant information at the regional level to facilitate enforcement of transshipment regulations as reflected in the work plan of the RWG-IUU.

Generally, there is a lack of formal cooperation with other flag, coastal and port State, in port State measures, in particular with respect to information sharing. Suriname aims to create a national platform to enhance information sharing among the national agencies in order to facilitate regional information sharing.

Suriname will cooperate, through relevant regional organizations (such as CRFM, WECAFC, ICCAT) with other port States in the Caribbean region, to agree on mechanisms and information exchange to combat IUU fishing. Suriname aims to implement Resolution WECAFC/15/2014/9[1] on the implementation of the Port State Measures Agreement and the FAO Voluntary guidelines on Flag

State Performance in the region and other relevant conservation and management measures adopted by RFBs/RFMOs for all foreign fishing vessels, such as Recommendation 18-09 by ICCAT on Port State Measures to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. At present this recommendation is only implemented for the foreign tuna vessels that are allowed to land their catch caught in international waters with a valid fishing license from their flag state in Suriname.

In this regard, reference is made to Suriname signing onto the Copenhagen Declaration on Transnational Organized Crime in the Global Fishing Industry in 2022 and collaboration with the Blue Justice Community, which is part of a broader regional effort, exemplified by the establishment of the Blue Justice Caribbean Hub. This hub, supported by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), provides a platform (Blue Justice Community) for regional cooperation, enabling the sharing of information and resources to combat fisheries crime more effectively. Activities under the Blue Justice Initiative and Caribbean Hub include training and capacity building, technical assistance to improve information sharing and collaboration, technological advancement, research and data analyses. Suriname will continue to collaborate within the Blue Justice Community to improve MCS at the regional level.

Measure 23: Member States should improve data collection, data management and analysis for an estimation of fish taken through IUU fishing in the WECAFC region guided by relevant guidelines on methodologies and indicators for the estimation of the magnitude and impact of IUU fishing.

In recent years, the Suriname FD has been working towards improved fisheries data collection and monitoring. Key milestones include a vessel count (frame survey) conducted in 2020, improved methodologies and forms for industrial and artisanal data collection and the introduction of a modern Fisheries Management and Information System (FISMIS): FAO's Calipseo platform. Calipseo includes an active registry of licensed vessels, including vessel description, details and pictures. Vessels observed in the field (e.g., by the fishery data enumerators) can now be easily cross-checked in Calipseo to ensure they are operating on a legitimate basis. Actions to improve estimation on the impact of IUU include:

- a new and extended frame survey (recommended at least every 5 years)
- further improvements on artisanal fishery data collection
- regional collaboration and data sharing: active participation in WECAFC Working Group on Fisheries Data and Statistics and Working Group on IUU.

Table 5. The actions relating to information exchange and cooperation at the regional level

Ref. nr.	ACTION ITEMS	RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES	2025	2026	2027	2028
36	Cooperate, through relevant regional organizations (such as CRFM, WECAFC, ICCAT, with other port States in the Caribbean region, to agree on mechanisms and information exchange to combat IUU fishing.		√	√		
37	Continue to collaborate within the Blue Justice Community to improve MCS at the regional level.		√	√	√	√
38	Continue implementation and improvement of the FISMIS and use of FAO's CALIPSEO platform for improved assessment of the IUU fishing impact.		√	√	√	√

3.3.4 Capacity development.

Article 21 of the PSMA recognizes the need of developing countries to build capacity for the effective implementation of the Agreement and requires Parties to provide assistance to developing State Parties in this regard. The special requirements of developing countries are also addressed in Part V of the IPOA-IUU and other international instruments such as the UN Fish Stocks Agreement, the FAO Compliance Agreement and the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries equally recognize this need of developing countries to build capacity. It is important that all countries are supported to increase their capacities as only a broad and effective implementation of the PSMA and complementary instrument will eventually close all ports to IUU fishing operators and contribute to the aim of preventing, deterring, and eliminating IUU fishing. Based on the weaknesses identified in the WECAFC region, technical assistance and training is needed to develop a legal basis, to strengthen

the operational framework and to increase the capacity for regional cooperation and information sharing related to MCS and enforcement.

Measure 24: Member States should ensure adequate training of personnel to enhance the capacity to strengthen the implementation of the PSMA and relevant international instruments, particularly with regard to the analytical capacity to provide timely and relevant information for MCS and enforcement: - Port State inspections and related reporting requirements to relevant flag, port and coastal States as well as to relevant regional and international organizations; - Operational procedures related to fisheries MCS and enforcement, including the effective tracking of vessel movements and activities; - Fisheries laws and regulations; - Investigations and prosecution of IUU fishing offences; - At-sea observer programs; - Use of e-logbooks; - Assessment of standards and procedures for the collection, analysis, storage, sharing and strategic use of information to facilitate and strengthen information-sharing at the regional level; 25 - Set-up and use of databases, particularly the Regional Record of Vessels and the record of port State actions and IUU-related offenses by operators of foreign flagged vessels; - Integration of databases into information-sharing systems; - Other relevant tools and technology to strengthen national and regional MCS.

Suriname will continue to promote national interagency cooperation and coordination through formal arrangements to clearly define relevant roles, responsibilities and mandate of different actors. Within these arrangements, the agencies will be asked to indicate their specific needs for development of capacity. These needs will firstly be addressed through the exchange of expertise and secondly in partnership with relevant training institutes and organizations. As part of the Strategy and Roadmap for implementation of port state measures, a port inspection training course was carried out in 2022 with the support from FAO. The objectives of this training were as follows:

- Ensure that participants are familiar with the national legal framework as well as PSMA and complementary international instruments and regional mechanisms to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing – in particular with regards to inspection procedures (Article 13-19 and Annexes A-E of the PSMA);
- Enable inspectors to plan and prepare for inspection activities, including verification and cross checking of information, risk assessment and pre-inspection procedures;
- Review inspection activities, including protocols, information gathering and develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). Reinforce this learning with practical exercises including in the port;
- Present participants with the actions to be taken post-inspection including reporting, case building and information sharing (interagency, regionally and internationally).

The training was attended by 30 officers from the various MCS authorities including the Fisheries Department, the Coast Guard, the Maritime Police, the Navy, the Customs Department and the Labor Inspection Department. The following needs have been identified as priorities to build more capacity for improved MCS:

- Training/workshop for exchange of information and expertise for the various MCS authorities
- Training in at-sea fisheries inspection procedures for relevant authorities (FD, Coast Guard, Maritime Police, Navy)
- Training (awareness building) for prosecution and judiciary
- Case packaging preparation
- Training of fisheries data collectors: at-port and seagoing observers (refresher training + training of new staff), including species identification (notably sharks).
- Training in the use of Calipseo database to maintain vessel registry and enter catch data (refresher trainings + training of new staff).

Suriname will conduct an in depth needs assessment for capacity building within the interagency collaboration, including identification of the resources for realization of the necessary training.

Table 6. The actions relating to capacity development.

Ref. nr.	ACTION ITEMS	RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES	2025	2026	2027	2028
39	Build capacity through exchange of expertise and in partnership with relevant training institutes and organizations.		√	√	√	√
40	Conduct an in depth needs assessment for capacity building within the interagency collaboration, including identification of the resources for realization of the necessary training.		√			