

Presentation Abstract

Title:

Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS)

*A review of tactics utilized by various Regional Fishery Management Organizations to Combat IUU fishing.*

Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) are multi-national organizations formed by treaties signed by member nations for the purpose of regulating fish stocks on the High Seas that have particular interest to their country. RFMO's legal basis is found in Article 63 of UNCLOS, with additional guidance from subsequent binding and non-binding U.N. agreements such as the U.N. Fish Stocks Agreement of 1995 and the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

RFMOs manage fisheries through various regulations and are also responsible for enforcement of these regulations. With IUU fishing being a significant global problem with threats to fish stocks and food security, RFMOs are currently adopting various measures for Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) to reduce IUU fishing. However, due to large geographic management areas (sometimes entire oceans), international loopholes including Flags of Convenience, and high profitability of Highly Migratory Species, weak programs with few MCS measures do little to stop IUU fishing. Luckily, some RFMOs have conducted performance reviews to identify weaknesses and areas for improvement particularly with MCS. New technology including VMS and electronic catch reporting, combined with observers, boarding schemes, and catch documentation schemes can be used in tandem (integrated MCS) to drastically reduce IUU fishing with some RFMO's reporting IUU fishing at almost negligible levels.

The goal of this presentation is to identify useful and cost effective MCS tactics, with an emphasis on integrated MCS to get maximum results combating IUU fishing with minimal costs. Future research could potentially include developing a MCS model for new RFMOs or developing countries that could get results with minimal resources.