

**ASEAN Regional Forum
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U.S. Statement on Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing

Co-Chairs, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Because the United States imports more than 90 percent of its seafood, the U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service is working to ensure that high demand for imported seafood does not create incentives for illegal fishing activity.

Working in partnership with other U.S. Government agencies, foreign governments and entities, international organizations, non-government organizations, and the private sector is crucial to effectively combating illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing.

We work with other fishing nations to strengthen enforcement and data collection programs around the world aimed at curtailing IUU fishing. We have put measures in place to restrict port entry and access to port services to vessels included on the IUU lists of international fisheries organizations with U.S. membership.

In addition, U.S. legislation allows us to take action on our own. The Magnuson-Stevens Reauthorization Act, which amends the High Seas Driftnet Fishing Moratorium Protection Act, requires the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to identify countries that have fishing vessels engaged in IUU fishing activities. Once a nation has been identified, we consult with the nation to encourage appropriate corrective action. If the identified nation does not take appropriate action and receives a negative certification, imports of fisheries products may be prohibited from that nation.

The Lacey Act also provides the United States with the authority to impose significant sanctions against individuals and companies engaged in trafficking illegally taken fish and wildlife.

Lastly, the United States Senate gave its advice and consent to ratification of the FAO Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (PSMA) on April 3, and we hope to ratify it soon. The United States was a driving force behind this Agreement, which was adopted by the FAO Conference in 2009.

The main purpose of the PSMA is to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing through the implementation of robust port State measures. The PSMA envisages that parties, in their capacities as port States, will take a series of basic steps to ensure that foreign vessels do not land or transship “IUU fish” in their ports, thus preventing such fish from entering the stream of commerce.

The PSMA will enter into force 30 days after the deposit of the 25th instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession. At present, nine countries plus the EU have ratified the PSMA.

The upcoming oceans conference being hosted by Secretary of State Kerry will present an opportunity to advance the international agenda on many issues, including issues related to sustainable fisheries. A critical element of the strategy to promote sustainable fisheries is to prevent, deter, and eliminate IUU fishing, and one of the ways the international community can work toward accomplishing that is through the entry into force of the FAO Port State Measures Agreement. We encourage all states to ratify the Agreement at the earliest possible date.