



IUU Risk Intelligence

Putting Compliance First

GLOBAL EVALUATION OF FISHERIES MONITORING CONTROL AND SURVEILLANCE IN 84 COUNTRIES

FIJI - COUNTRY REPORT

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SUMMARY

This evaluation of Fisheries Monitoring Control and Surveillance report for Fiji is one of 84 such country evaluations that covers nations landing 92% of world's fish catch. Using a wide range of interviews and in-country consultations with both military and civilian agencies, the report exemplifies the best attempt by the author(s) at evaluation of MCS compliance using 12 questions derived from international fisheries laws. The twelve questions are divided into two evaluation fields, (MCS Infrastructure and Inspections). Complete details of the methods and results of this global evaluation would be published shortly through IUU Risk Intelligence website.

Over a five-year period, this global assessment has been subjected to several cross-checks from both regional and global MCS experts familiar with compliance aspects in the country concerned. Uncertainty in assigning each score is depicted explicitly through score range. However, the author(s) are aware that gaps may remain for some aspects. The lead author remains open at any time to comments, and revisions will be made upon submission of evidence where necessary. Throughout the report, extreme precaution has been taken to maintain confidentiality of individuals who were willing to share information but expressed an inclination to remain anonymous out of concern for their job security, and information from such sources was cited as 'anonymous' throughout the report.

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FIJI – COUNTRY REPORT



FAO landings (2013): 39,985 tonnes

Fisheries contribution to GDP (2014): 1.8%

Law of the Sea (Ratification / Accession): 10th December 1982

Coastline: 1129 km

RFMO Membership: WCPFC

Patrolling Agencies: Fiji Navy

Rank	Priority for maritime security tasks
1.	Narcotics Trafficking
2.	Transnational Organised Crime
3.	Illegal Fishing

SECTION 1: MCS INFRASTRUCTURE

1. Does the country have adequate surveillance infrastructure (patrol aircraft, sea-based patrol vessels and coastal patrols) to effectively patrol fisheries resources within its EEZ?

Score: 4

Score Range: 2-4

No, largely inadequate. Fiji's Navy undertakes regular patrols, but there is severe shortage of patrol vessels for most jurisdictions (Veitayaki 2001; Jane 2011; Tarte 2010; MRAG 2009; Akroyd *et al.*, 2012; IISS 2013). Fiji's Navy conducts surveillance of coastal waters using three Pacific-class Patrol Boats donated by the Australian Government of which one patrol vessel (*RFNS Kiro*) ran aground off Cakauyawa reef and is unsalvageable (FBC 2016).

The security of our borders and the surface patrols to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing is the responsibility of the Fiji Navy. The Fiji Navy is doing all it can to safeguard Fiji's tuna resources and thereof of inadequate, it should be moderate. Fiji does not have patrol aircraft and rely heavily on Australia, France, New Zealand and the United States of America to carry out this important task for us. However, since 2007, all this assistance has been suspended due to our political status (Raiwalui, *pers. comm.*, 2012).

2. Does the country have adequate trained officers to conduct MCS operations?

Score: 5

Score Range: 4-5

Available information suggests shortage of manpower in both Fiji Navy and the Ministry of Fisheries esp., in coastal reef fisheries (ACPFish 2013; Jane 2011; Tarte 2010; Starkhouse 2009; UNEP 2004). With the recent recruitment drive there are now 25 officers working under the Monitoring Control and Surveillance and Investigation Unit of the Ministry of Fisheries (Cava 2016). There is shortage of fish wardens even in inshore reef fisheries with widespread use of illegal gear and poaching by community members (Minter 2008). Less than 25% of the detected violations are investigated (MRAG 2009).

The Offshore Fisheries Division is tasked to implement MCS initiatives at national level to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing. This Division does have its drawbacks in staffing and have sought increase in staffs, even though Government policy in zero growth, in the 2013 budget provision. This outcome will only be known after November 2012. As far as the Inshore Fisheries

Division is concerned, there is an urgent need for an overhaul by increasing staff numbers (Raiwalui, *pers. comm.*, 2012).

3. Does the country have adequate management plans to monitor their fishing vessels on the high seas?

Score: 7

Score Range: 5-7

Existing information suggests that the country has good capability through observers and VMS coverage for fishing vessels operating in the FFA vessel register (WCPFC 2011). Fiji is not a signatory to the FAO Compliance Agreement. Fiji's new Offshore Fisheries Management Decree 2012 (*came into force on January 1st, 2013*) with updates on enforcement procedures will address many of the gaps for its vessels fishing within and beyond its EEZ (Fiji Govt, 2012).

Fiji is a party to UNFSA and WCPFC and implements the provisions from the respective Agreement and Conventions and adopted management measures relating to high seas fishing on our vessels operating outside our EEZ. We do monitor these vessels through VMS, catch logs, observer placements and recently Wednesday reporting (Raiwalui, *pers. comm.*, 2012).

4. What proportion of fishing vessels is equipped with vessel monitoring system (VMS) to monitor their movements on a continuous basis?

Score: 8

Score Range: 7-8

99 Fiji vessels send their signals to the regional FFA while fishing in the waters of Fiji and the high seas (WCPFC 2011; Amoe 2011). MRAG (2009) estimates suggest vessel monitoring system is moderately effective in Fiji. From 2017 onwards, the Dept. of Fisheries will monitor activities of 50 longline tuna vessels using on-board cameras utilizing a new Electronic Monitoring System (FBC 2017).

All Fiji flagged vessels targeting highly migratory fish stocks in-zone and beyond our EEZ are to be fitted with approved ALC/MTU. These vessels either use FFA (fishing in Fiji's EEZ and other FFA member EEZ), WCPFC (only high seas) and national (vessels fishing solely in territorial seas and archipelagic waters) (Raiwalui, *pers. comm.*, 2012).



5. What percentage of fishing vessels (>20 m OAL) is monitored through onboard observers at sea (for major commercial fish stocks)?

Score: 5

Score Range: 3-5

In 2016, Fiji's national tuna fleet had 23% observer coverage (WCPFC 2017). In the year 2014 observer coverage was 16.7% for FTBOA vessels and ~10% for other vessels (WCPFC 2015a) with 100% coverage for all at-sea transshipments within its waters (Tavaga 2012). Available information suggests that foreign fishing vessels licensed to fish in Fiji's EEZ are covered through WCPFC regional observer program. 58 observer trips were documented in 2010, with a coverage level of 7.8% for port inspections and 3.2% observer coverage (Fisheries Department 2011).

In 2011, there was 100% observer coverage for purse seiners and only 5% coverage for longliners through the ROP observer program (WCPFC 2011b). There is no information on whether domestic vessels have adequate coverage through this program.

SECTION 2: INSPECTIONS

6. How often fishing vessels are inspected at sea (Identification by sight and boarding for inspections)?

Score: 3.5

Score Range: 2-4

Fiji Navy conducts routine inspections at sea. Data on frequency of inspections is scarce for recent years. Existing information suggests existence of modest patrols in both coastal and offshore waters (Minter 2008; Demers and Kahui 2012). MCS experts suggest that at least 300 sea days of patrolling is required to provide a credible IUU deterrence in Fiji's EEZs; however only 28 days of sea patrols were undertaken within Fiji's EEZ in 2009. In 2017, as part of bilateral assistance mission the New Zealand Navy patrol vessel "*Hawea*" boarded 250 vessels Fiji's EEZ detected 45 infringements including misreporting and non-reporting of catch (NZDF 2017).

Fisheries enforcement had been revamped since last year and a more proactive approach is being used to detect illegal fishing offences through VMS servers and bilateral assistance from New Zealand & Australia to patrol the EEZ more

effectively. But, real-time presence at sea still needs improvement (Anon, *pers.comm.*, 2016).

7. How often fishing vessels are scrutinized through aerial patrols?

Score: 5

Score Range: 3-5

Minimal domestic capability (IISS 2013). Fiji is heavily reliant on regional assistance for aerial surveillance requirements. Since October 2014, the French Armed Forces based in Noumea have provided aerial surveillance assistance to Fiji Navy for upto 15 hours each month (Moceiwai 2015). In 2015, Royal New Zealand Air Force P-3K2 Orion aircraft have also resumed aerial surveillance to Fiji that were suspended since 2006 (NZDF 2015).

44 hours of aerial surveillance was provided through regional aerial surveillance program in 2009, while the suggested minimal requirement is around 200 hours/year.

As stated in Q.1 above, no aerial surveillance was conducted since 2007 due to our political status (Raiwalui, *pers. comm.*, 2012).

8. How often are fishing vessels inspected at landing centers and docks for foreign and domestic vessels (Dockside monitoring)?

Score: 5

Score Range: 3-5

Dockside monitoring is relatively good in recent years with the introduction of Port Monitoring Program initiative and 100% observer coverage for all at-sea transshipments (Tavaga 2012). Transshipments at two designated ports of Suva and Levuka appear to be adequate (ACPFish 2013; Anon 2004). Fiji is not a signatory to the FAO Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate IUU Fishing. Brown (2006); MRAG (2009); MRAG (2016) documents suggest that a significant number of transshipments are checked for vessels using its ports before offloading cargo to reefers. See (Minter 2008; Starkhouse 2009; WWF 2011) documents for more information.

Vessels, irrespective of flag, coming from outside Fiji waters are boarded 100% whilst vessels fishing entirely within Fiji's fisheries waters are only boarded 50% of the time. Trained boarding officers are located at Fiji's fishing ports of Suva, Levuka and Lautoka. Transshipment for foreign fishing vessels can only be undertaken in Port and supervised by Fisheries Officers. Fiji does allow its

flagged vessels to tranship its fresh and chilled catch at sea for the fresh sashimi market with 100% observer coverage (Raiwalui, *pers. comm.*, 2012).

Although monitoring of transhipments at ports has improved, there are still complications with respect to monitoring of tuna transhipments in Fiji waters. Progress has been slow with agencies experiencing problems such as false declaration of catches, lack of supply chain information and among others mixing of legal and illegal catches leading to a convoluted catch reporting system. Catches originating from PNG and transhipped through Fiji ports also have monitoring problems that have not been addressed completely (Anon, *pers.comm.*, 2016).

9. Are there adequate plans to monitor catches in coastal areas through coastal patrols (beach patrols, small-scale fishing gear and catch inspections) on a regular basis?

Score: 2.5

Score Range: 2-4

Available information suggests poor compliance in coastal fisheries (Rohe *et al.*, 2017; Silaitoga 2015; Sloan and Chand 2015; Anon 2012c; Jupiter *et al.*, 2010; Hunt 1999; Tawake 2007; Turner *et al.*, (2007); FAO 2009; Starkhouse 2009; Anon 2012a,b; WWF 2011; Valemei 2013; Malo 2013; Nasiko 2014). Information from Gillett (2007); Veitayaki (1990, 2001); Veitayaki *et al.*, (1995) documents suggests that there is partial enforcement in artisanal fishery, but not enough monitoring in the subsistence and recreational fisheries. Use of destructive fishing practices such as use of fish poisons, dynamite fishing, and catches of undersized fish & crustaceans is reportedly a common occurrence (ADB 2010; Qiolevu 2016). Illegal fishing of sea cucumbers is also reported using scuba and free diving (Pakoa *et al.*, 2013; Carleton *et al.*, 2013).

The coastal waters of Fiji are vital to the food security and economic development of our coastal communities and therefore we view the area as very important. Fisheries MCS operations are conducted in these areas but not enough. With the new laws, being drawn up will surely exert on the existing coastal fisheries officials. The Department is seriously looking at addressing this vital area to make the new laws effective (Raiwalui, *pers. comm.*, 2012).

10. Are all the catches that are caught in this jurisdiction at sea accounted for (i.e., unreported Trans-shipments at sea)?

Score: 7

Score Range: 5-7

At-sea presence is very limited; Heavily reliant on VMS signals for monitoring fisheries activities in its EEZ. Fiji is signatory to the UN Fish Stocks Agreement. Brown (2006) suggests that a significant number of transshipments are checked for vessels using its ports before offloading to reefers. However, the country does not have adequate surface and aerial surveillance resources to detect illegal transshipments in offshore waters throughout the year. See NZDF (2017); ACPFish (2013); McCoy (2012); MRAG (2016) reports for more information.

Fiji does not allow its flagged vessels, which are longliners, to carry out transshipment at sea. We do allow them to transship within our national jurisdiction on the condition that the transshipped catch is fresh and chilled and that an observer is onboard the carrier vessel. In-port transshipments are 100% supervised by Fisheries Officers (Raiwalui, *pers. comm.*, 2012).

11. Are vessels required to undergo inspection of equipment and fishing gear for every fishing trip?

Score: 4

Score Range: 2-4

The country has a limited mandate for fishing gear inspections in its industrial fisheries sector. See Starhouse (2009); Gillett (2007); WWF (2011) and Q.9 for more information on small-scale fisheries violations for this aspect.

Fishing vessels do get inspected prior to departure to ensure that vessel markings are consistent with its certifications and in compliance with the required marking schedule and that its authorizations are in order with the appropriate authorized gear on board (Raiwalui, *pers. comm.*, 2012).

12. Has the country taken adequate measures to revise and implement national fisheries laws to curtail illegal fishing practices; and does it comply with national and international laws signed?

Score: 5

Score Range: 3-5

Offshore Fisheries Management (Amendment) Decree (No. 4 of 2014) dated 5 February 2014 is the main national legislation for fisheries management in Fiji



waters. The new legislation replaced Chapter 158 (Fisheries Act) of 15 May 1997. In 2014, Fiji also adopted a NPOA on IUU Fishing. Fiji is not a party to the UN Port State Measures Agreement and FAO Compliance Agreement. The country ratified the UN Fish Stocks Agreement on 12 December 1996. Fiji has very limited resources to achieve compliance with national and RFMO laws within its EEZ for tuna and coastal fleet; hence, a moderate score is given here.

See Minter (2008); Jupiter *et al.*, (2010); Tarte (2010); Clarke and Jupiter (2010); Mills *et al.*, (2011); Hastings *et al.*, (2015); Silaitoga (2015); Rohe *et al.*, (2017) documents for more information.

Flag of Convenience	No
Vessels on the RFMO - IUU vessel list	Yes (IATTC)

RFMO	Year of the assessment	Compliant	Partially Compliant	Not Compliant	Source
WCPFC	2016	Yes			WCPFC (2018)

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Note:

Bibliography and other notes relevant to this country report including methods, results and discussion for the global evaluation of 84 countries would be released shortly through IUU Risk Intelligence website (<https://iuriskintelligence.com/>). (The author can be contacted at pramod.raju@gmail.com to provide any feedback).

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