



# IUU Risk Intelligence

Putting Compliance First

## GLOBAL EVALUATION OF FISHERIES MONITORING CONTROL AND SURVEILLANCE IN 84 COUNTRIES

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### GHANA - COUNTRY REPORT

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## SUMMARY

*This evaluation of Fisheries Monitoring Control and Surveillance report for **Ghana** 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.*

### Suggested citation:

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## GHANA – COUNTRY REPORT



**FAO landings (2013):** 2017,912 tonnes

**Fisheries contribution to GDP (2014):** 4.5%

**Law of the Sea (Ratification / Accession):** 7<sup>th</sup> June 1983

**Coastline:** 539 km

**RFMO Membership:** ICCAT

**Patrolling Agencies:** Ghana Navy

Rank	Priority for maritime security tasks
1.	Protection of Oil Installations
2.	Narcotics Trafficking
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: 7

Score Range: 5-7

Increasingly effective use of patrol vessels and FMC but significant gaps are reported in offshore waters; capabilities are increasing with induction of new patrol vessels and modernization plans (Maroadi 2016). Starting in 2013, the Ministry of Fisheries received substantial financial assistance through World Bank to upgrade its VMS (incl. AIS, VHF and HF radios for command centres) and two Fisheries Monitoring Centre (FMC) facilities in the Eastern and Western Region. In April 2014, the president of Ghana also inaugurated VTMS (Anon 2014), with LRIT system that can track vessels up to 1000 nautical miles enhancing the capacity of Ghana Maritime Authority to monitor entry-exit of foreign fishing vessels as well as to exercise port state control within Tema and Takoradi ports.

Ghana Navy has four new “Snake Class Ships” *GNS Blika*, *GNS Garinga*, *GNS Chemle* and *GNS Ehwor* (46.8 m) to deal with maritime security threats and control illegal fishing (Anon 2011b). Ghana navy received two Albatross-class coastal patrol vessels (*GNS Naa Gbewaa* and *GNS Yaa Asantewaa*) from Germany and two maritime surveillance aircraft, which would greatly enhance its patrolling capabilities for long duration patrols within the EEZ (Anon 2012). Ghana received one fast patrol craft “*GNS Stephen Otu*” from South Korea (Anon 2011a). Ghana Police recently started a Maritime Police Unit (*commissioned 6 patrol boats into service from Takoradi port*) to enhance patrolling in territorial waters and ports (Anon 2013c). See Anon (2009); Anon (2008b); GAIN (2011); IISS (2013) and Jane (2012) documents for more information.

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

Score: 5

Score Range: 3-5

There is shortage of trained fisheries officers to prevent illegal fishing (See EU 2011; Beyens *et al.*, 2017). The MCS Division of the Fisheries Commission has a staff of only 8 fisheries officers to conduct inspections at fishing ports, landing beaches and inspections at sea. The newly formed Fisheries Enforcement Unit (a joint Task Force) has up to 55 personnel seconded from the Ghana Navy,

Marine Police and MCS Division of MOFAD has the capacity to conduct multi-party combing operations at beach landing sites, fishing ports and conduct joint boarding operations using naval vessels at sea.

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

Score: 4.5

Score Range: 3-5

Ghana is a signatory to the FAO Compliance Agreement. However, it has very limited infrastructure to monitor fleets operating beyond its EEZ. In the past, Ghanaian flagged vessels were identified for illegal fishing and transshipments within the Liberian EEZ in 2011 and 2012.

Satellite based monitoring system on trawlers and purse seiners is used to track transshipments using digital servers at fisheries ministry. The problem is that many of the foreign owned tuna vessels in Ghana have licenses in several West African countries but the Fisheries Ministry in Tema tracks fishing activities within EEZ on most instances. The vessel owners also don't share their active foreign licenses with MOFAD regularly. Movement into neighbouring countries is not tracked actively for potential illegal behaviour on a regular basis. Tracking devices have also been installed on some trawlers since 2015. However, they too are not tracked for potential illegal fishing activities beyond EEZ limits although such catches are landed at national fishing ports after each trip (Anon, *pers.comm.*, 2017).

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

Score: 5

Score Range: 4-5

The Government is trying to regulate fishing activities using Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) for tuna vessels brought through ICCAT assistance in 2012. No data is available to check the actual percentage of vessels covered through VMS, as well as the efficacy of land-based monitoring centers to control illegal activities after detection. Since 2013, all Ghana flagged tuna seiners have 100% satellite-based VMS tracking with a polling rate every 1 hour. With the assistance of World Bank, the Fisheries Commission installed VMS transponders on 86 trawlers, while most of the 33 tuna vessels have already been fitted with such tracking devices through ICCAT assistance in the past. More than 450 semi-industrial Ghanaian fishing vessels are still not equipped with VMS devices.

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

Score: 2

Score Range: 1-2

Two fisheries observers were deployed on industrial purse seiners targeting tuna in the Ghanaian EEZ (ICCAT 2012). See Hutchful (2008); Pramod and Pitcher (2006) documents for more information on this aspect.

One or two dedicated fisheries observers have been deployed for monitoring tuna transshipments at anchorage near Tema port (transfer of tuna catches from catchers to reefer vessels as per ICCAT requirements). Although all transshipments are monitored at anchorage during the ICCAT ban period, during the rest of the year there is no observer coverage for tuna vessels. Electronic monitoring (EMS) has also been introduced on five tuna purse seiners on a trial basis through industry government collaboration. MFRD also deploys part-time observers on tuna vessels but they are only engaged for scientific data collection and do not have any enforcement role (Anon, *pers.comm.*, 2017).

## SECTION 2: INSPECTIONS

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

Score: 4.5

Score Range: 3-5

Adequate surveillance infrastructure, but rarely used for fisheries patrols. The number of exclusive fisheries patrols has gone down after World Bank funding shrank last year. For the year 2014, Ghana Navy conducted 20 patrols (approx. 440 hours equivalent to 110 sea patrol days) and boarded 65 fishing vessels (Anon, *pers.comm.*, 2015).

The 2017 statistics from WB funded fisheries program disclosed that 120 semi-industrial fishing boats are operating without a license; 34 patrols at sea and 28 land patrols are reported during the current year (Anon, *pers.comm.*, 2017). See World Bank (2017) report for more information.

Hutchful (2008); EU (2011) documents suggest that very few fisheries patrols are undertaken due to lack of operational funds. Ghana navy apprehends few fishing vessels for illegal fishing in its EEZ every year. See Jane (2012); Kwadjosse (2009) for some details on related aspects. MOFA (2012) suggests that for the January–June 2011 period, 37 vessels were arrested for fisheries violations during naval patrols (1 tuna vessel, 4 trawlers, 16 canoes and 16 inshore boats were detained for offences such as fishing with light, unlicensed fishing and fishing in the IEZ). There were around 119 industrial fishing vessels at the start of 2012.

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

Score: 0

Score Range: 0-0

None reported. IRIN (2012) suggests that the lone aerial patrol aircraft has been under repair for more than 2 years.

Currently, there is no dedicated aerial surveillance in the fisheries sector. Three Diamond DA-40 aircraft have been procured and technical monitoring equipment is being installed on them; they would be ready for test patrols in 2017 (Anon, *pers.comm.*, 2017).

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

Score: 4

Score Range: 2-4

Available information suggests that land-based monitoring is limited to a few dockside inspections every month for Ghanaian flagged vessels calling at Tema and Takoradi ports. Information from MOFA (2012) suggests that 154 vessels were inspected at Tema port for the January – June 2011 period. See Pramod and Pitcher (2006); Anon (2013a); Hutchful (2008) documents for more information.

Ghana has a poor inspection record for both local and foreign vessels that operate from its ports. Chinese owned (Ghanaian flagged) trawlers openly break rules with legal impunity due to political interference when such transgressions are identified by navy at sea. There is rampant use of illegal fishing gear on both trawlers and purse seiners, but such gears are rarely seized during inspections at sea. Tuna vessels blatantly flout ICCAT regulations by using FADs during closed season. Foreign reefers use Tema port and land catches caught from other African countries with very poor landing controls

and documentation of such infringements. Very few foreign or Ghanaian flagged fishing vessels have been sufficiently penalized for violations of national fisheries laws and ICCAT regulations. Temporary observers are mostly deployed for transshipments at Tema anchorage a couple of months each year and are not utilized for observer missions during the remaining 10 months. MOFAD observers conduct very limited at-sea observer missions on tuna purse seiners. Illegal fishing gears are used on trawlers, and purse seiners but gear confiscations are rare even during inspections at ports (Anon, *pers.comm.*, 2017).

According to Pew (2009) there were 10 reported visits by 2 IUU vessels to Ghanaian ports during 2006 and 2007 ([www.portstateperformance.org/](http://www.portstateperformance.org/)).

**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: 5

Score Range: 3-5

No, only to a very limited extent. In the past, Ghana Navy with the assistance of Ghana Air Force undertook limited anti-pair trawling activities (“*Operation Stock Control*”) to monitor illegal pair trawling activities within territorial waters; however there have been very few such patrols for the past four years. Starting in 2014, a few inspections have been conducted in coastal waters (using Ghana navy patrol boats) and Marine police at landing beaches in Western Region utilizing funds from the World Bank project.

For the year 2014, Ghana Navy and Marine Police conducted 400 hours of shore patrols at landing beaches and fishing ports seizing 93 generators and 1165 monofilament gillnets. Number of coastal fisheries patrols is likely to go down once World Bank funding ends (Anon, *pers.comm.*, 2016).

Destructive practices such as use of poison, explosives, high-watt light bulbs, light fishing (Snyder 2010) and monofilament nets are widespread in Ghana’s artisanal and semi-industrial fisheries (IPS 2012; Anon 2013). In the small-scale fisheries, an informal conflict resolution mechanism exists at the village level, like necessity of a permission from Chief Fishermen of the village to fish off a beach (Bennett *et al.* 2001). These mechanisms compensate for regulating and resolving fisheries conflicts in the absence of enforcement by state-based agencies. See Q.1 for more information. Ghana Navy has recently been equipped with three speedboats for patrolling inshore waters (Anon 2008a). Refer Pramod and Pitcher (2006); Akpalu (2008, 2011a,b); Anon (2009);

Kwadjosse (2009); Bannerman and Quartey (2005); Nunoo *et al.*, (2015) for more information on this aspect.

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

Score: 5

Score Range: 3-5

Under the new management system since October 2012 tuna vessels are tracked (through VMS signals) within the Ghanaian EEZ. During the annual ICCAT ban period (for two months), tuna vessels are only allowed to land catches in Tema and Takoradi ports, while reefers are only allowed to conduct transshipments at Tema anchorage in the presence of an observer from Fisheries Commission. Transshipments at sea are banned for trawlers and all catches have to be landed in Tema and Takoradi ports but trawlers openly continue transshipments to canoes at sea often as close as 1 nm from the shoreline. Tuna vessels are allowed to tranship at sea and are monitored through onboard observers at sea for only 2-3 months each year; the observer coverage at sea is poor for the rest of the year (Anon, *pers. comm.*, 2017).

Under Act 625, of the new Fisheries Law 2002, transshipment of catches has to be supervised and illegal trading of catches at sea is liable to punishment. However, the application of the fisheries law is constrained by shortage of inspectors. Transshipments at sea are allowed at anchorage for purse seiners during ICCAT closed period. Liberian Government sources have also alleged that three Ghanaian flagged vessels incl. Two Ghanaian refrigerated transport vessels engaged in illegal transshipments in 2011 and 2012 within Liberian EEZ in contravention of ICCAT Recommendation 06-11.

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

Score: 4.5

Score Range: 3-5

No, such inspections are rare in Ghanaian fisheries. Use of destructive gears and illegal nets is widespread in Ghanaian fisheries (Pramod *et al.* 2008; Anon 2009; Akpalu 2008, 2011a,b; Anon 2013b; Anon 2015).

Illegal cod-end mesh nets are used by both trawlers and purse seiners, but the Fisheries Commission has seized very few trawl nets either at ports or during inspections at sea. Recently, Marine Police and FC officers started beach combing to seize illegal monofilament gillnets from canoes at small-scale

landing beaches but even these operations pose very little deterrent due to easy availability of illegal fishing nets and equipment. 93 generators and 1165 monofilament gillnets were seized in the year 2014 itself (Anon, *pers.comm.*, 2016).

**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

Ghana Fisheries Act, 2002 (*Act No. 625 of 2002*) of 16 January 2002 is the main national legislation for fisheries management in Ghanaian waters. Fisheries Amendment Act 2014 (*Act 880*) has appended four new sections with a broader definition of illegal fishing and improved penalty structure with hefty fines. Ghana has adopted a NPOA on IUU Fishing in May 2014 to prevent and eliminate illegal fishing practices. Ghana is not a party to the UN Fish Stocks Agreement. Ghana ratified FAO Compliance Agreement on 12 May 2003 and the UN Port State Measures Agreement on 29 November 2016. See World Bank (2017); Ricci (2015) reports for more updates on the current situation.

Ghana has demonstrated partial compliance with national and international laws as witnessed by drastic decline in catches and regular reports of illegal fishing by Ghanaian trawlers within EEZ and neighbouring countries. Steep drop in catches is due to rampant illegal fishing by both canoes and trawlers in coastal waters. Use of chemicals, dynamite and light fishing are widespread throughout the Western Region, but very few offenders have been effectively prosecuted through courts. Low penalties and slow court hearings have led to high incidence of illegal fishing in both industrial and small-scale fisheries. Lack of pre-emptive surveillance by Navy and Marine Police is also partly responsible for this situation. Sea based patrols are also likely to go down in future due to budgetary cuts for navy (Anon, *pers. comm.*, 2017).

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

RFMO	Year of the assessment	Compliant	Partially Compliant	Not Compliant	Source
ICCAT	2013		Yes		ICCAT (2014 a,b)

*Last Updated: 3 April 2018*



## 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 (<http://iuriskintelligence.com/>). (The author can be contacted at [pramod.raju@gmail.com](mailto:pramod.raju@gmail.com) to provide any feedback).

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