



IUU Risk Intelligence

Putting Compliance First

GLOBAL EVALUATION OF FISHERIES MONITORING CONTROL AND SURVEILLANCE IN 84 COUNTRIES

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND - COUNTRY REPORT

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IUU RISK INTELLIGENCE

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SUMMARY

This evaluation of Fisheries Monitoring Control and Surveillance report for Ireland 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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IRELAND – COUNTRY REPORT



FAO landings (2013): 246,340 tonnes

Fisheries contribution to GDP (2012): 1.2%

Law of the Sea (Ratification/accession): 21st June 1996

Coastline: 1448 km

RFMO Membership: Through EU Membership to various RFMOs

Patrolling agencies: Irish Naval Service, Sea Fisheries Protection Authority

Rank	Priority for maritime security tasks
1.	Narcotics Smuggling
2.	Protection of Oil installations and underwater pipelines
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: 8

Score Range: 7-8

Yes, Ireland has sufficient surveillance infrastructure to effectively patrol fishery resources within the EEZ. The Irish Naval Service has 1 helicopter patrol vessel (*L.É. Eithne*), 2 large patrol vessels (*L.É. Niamh*; *L.É. Roisin*), 2 offshore patrol vessels (*L.É. Aisling*; *L.É. Samuel Beckett*), and 2 coastal patrol vessels (*L.É. Orla*; *L.É. Ciara*) (Irish Naval Service 2016). Irish Air Corps has 2 Casa CN-235 maritime patrol aircraft (IISS 2013). See SFPA (2016); IDF (2015); Jane (2011); Mellett (2002); IISS (2013) documents for more information.

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

Score: 7

Score Range: 7-8

Available information suggests there is enough trained manpower in both Irish Naval Service and Sea Fisheries Protection Authority for fisheries control duties (Anon 2016). SFPA has 70 Sea-Fisheries Protection officers to enforce fisheries laws and promote compliance around the Ireland's coast. In addition, there are two divisions namely Investigations Unit, which conducts in-depth analysis to check possible violations of sea fisheries laws, and the Case Management Unit, which is responsible for detection of infringements and tracking IUU cases through various stages from initial detection to eventual prosecution in the courts (SFPA 2008). A recent EU Audit report states that SFPA inspectors have a dual role as both fisheries control and seafood health inspectors "*clearly creates a significant draw on resources*" (Anon 2018).

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

Score: 8

Score Range: 7-8

Existing information suggests that Irish fishing vessels above 15 m in length have to send their VMS position reports to Fisheries Monitoring Centre at Haulbowline, while fishing both in the EFL waters and on the high seas (Irish Naval Service 2012b). Ireland is signatory to the FAO Compliance Agreement

by membership of the European Union. Irish flagged vessels have relatively high compliance rate on the high seas (HSTF 2006).

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

At any point VMS reports are received from around 400 active vessels within Irish exclusive fishing limits (EFL). Since January 2005, all Irish fishing vessels over 12 metres in length have to be fitted with transponders and report their positions to the Fisheries Monitoring Centre at Naval Base Haulbowline (Irish Naval Service 2015; Gerritsen et al., 2012). The most recent data on 6 March 2018 reveals that 209 fishing vessels are fitted with VMS and ERS (Electronic Recording Systems). The FMS is capable of tracking AIS signals and up to 200 fishing vessels in Ireland AIS transmit signals to the FMC).

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

Score: 4.5

Score Range: 3-5

The Irish at-sea observer programme has witnessed significant progress over the years and coverage has increased in many fisheries within the Irish EEZ. Observers collect samples, data on retained and discarded catch, collect otoliths for age estimation, and monitor discards in the trawl fisheries (Borges et al., 2004, 2005). Under the Irish National programme, Nephrops fishery received 17 observer-days, which was around 0.3% of fishing effort in 2005 (Hoare 2011). Data from Lordan et al., (2011) suggests that around 400 observer-days at sea were reported for the year 2009.

SECTION 2: INSPECTIONS

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

Score: 7.5

Score Range: 7-8

In 2017, the Sea Fisheries Protection Agency (SFPA) conducted 1215 inspections at sea (SFPA 2018). In 2015, the Sea Fisheries Protection Agency (SFPA) officers conducted 1476 inspections of which 1078 inspections were undertaken at sea (2115 fishing boats were registered in Ireland) (SFPA 2016).

During the year 2011, the Irish Naval Service conducted 1287 fishery patrol days; 1313 vessels were boarded leading to 12 detentions and 41 warnings were issued to fishing vessels. In 2010, the Irish Naval Service conducted 8 inshore patrols for the Sea Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA) and 3 Joint Deployment fishery patrols with other EU member states. The SFPA has also authorised British fisheries protection vessels to undertake inspections of Non-Irish fishing vessels (mainly French, British and Spanish fishing vessels) for transboundary fish stocks within its EFL; British FPVs undertook 13 such patrols in 2010 (SFPA 2011a).

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

Score: 8

Score Range: 7-8

During 2014, two surveillance aircraft dedicated 1147 hours on fisheries control. The Irish Defence Forces – Air Corps division has two CASA CN 235 maritime patrol aircraft and five Cessna planes for maritime surveillance of the EEZ; the two CASA aircraft reportedly operate 7 days a week (SFPA 2016; IDF 2015; Irish Air Corps 2016). The Air Corps also operates fixed wing aircraft and helicopters to monitor inshore fisheries activities. In 2014, the Irish Air Corps supported 50 Maritime Air Patrols observing 326 fishing vessels using the CASA/IPTN CN-235 maritime patrol craft for fisheries surveillance obligations (SFPA 2015). During the year 2011, the two CASA CN235 aircraft conducted 290 patrols for 1557 flight hours logging 3780 vessels.

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

Score: 6

Score Range: 5-7

In 2017, total of 3240 inspections fishing vessel inspections were conducted by SFPA and Irish Navy (SFPA 2018). Several lapses have been identified for controls of pelagic fish landings at Irish ports and factories during a recent EU audit (Siggins 2018).

SFPA has five senior port officers posted at major fishing harbors and 3 port officers staffed at SFPA headquarters. These officers are responsible for enforcement of both national and EU fisheries regulations; in addition, there are 70 fisheries inspection officers for monitoring vessels at fishery harbors (SFPA 2008). There are 5 major fishing ports located at Castletownbere, Killybegs, Ros an Mhil, Dunmore East and Howth; in addition, there are 40 secondary ports and 80 piers/landing centers spread-out along the Ireland's

Coast. Ireland through the European Union is also a signatory to the FAO Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate IUU Fishing (Signed on November 22, 2009; Approval: July 7, 2011). Inspections at ports involve checks on compliance with quotas, examination of weight & species in the boxes, and inspection of logbooks. Ireland has also signed a bilateral agreement with France to provide regular exchange of information on landings by French vessels in Ireland and vice versa; this agreement allows sharing information on inspections and other data collected by fisheries inspectors (SFPA 2011b). A recent EU audit of fisheries controls at Irish ports revealed '*significant weaknesses*' in control of some commercial fish stocks (Anon 2018).

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: 7

Score Range: 5-7

Yes, largely in most commercial fisheries. See Q.8 for more information. During 2015 over 146 inshore patrols were also conducted by SFPA from May to October (SFPA 2016). See Anon (2016); Cosgrove et al., (2014); Mellett et al., (2011); Fahy (2008); Pramod and Pitcher (2006); EU (2005) documents for more information on compliance with quotas and management issues in coastal fisheries. In 2006, there were 1843 active vessels from Ireland; of which 223 serious infringements were noted (EU 2008). See Anon (2018) report which states that a recent EU audit revealed several lapses for monitoring recreational and coastal fish stocks (Anon 2018).

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

Score: 7.5

Score Range: 7-8

Unreported transshipments at sea are not reported to be a problem in Ireland's EEZ. Under EU-IUU Regulation controls, transshipment operations can only take place in two designated ports of Killybegs and Castletownbere and require prior notification of 3 working days. Ireland is signatory to the UN Fish Stocks Agreement. Irish fishery limits are well patrolled both through VMS, at sea inspections, dockside checks and aerial patrols. Hence, illegal transshipments pose a minimal problem in Ireland's EEZ. See SFPA (2017); SFPA (2014); Gerritsen and Lordan (2010) for more information.

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

Score: 7

Score Range: 7-8

Measures are in place to undertake regular inspection of fishing gear during at-sea patrols and inspections at fishing ports (See SFPA website for more information). Fishing gear violations are met with stringent warnings, penalties and detentions in Ireland’s EEZ. Inspections by SFPA include checks on documentation of license, VMS equipment, fish hold and nets (SFPA 2009; SFPA 2014).

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: 7

Score Range: 5-7

Fisheries Amendment Act 2003 (No. 21) of 1 July 2003 and Sea-Fisheries and Marine Jurisdiction Act 2006 are the two main national legislations for fisheries management in Ireland waters. Ireland has adopted NPOA on IUU Fishing measures through European Union membership requirements. In 2016, more than 3900 fisheries inspections were conducted at-sea, landing ports and fish factories (SFPA 2017). A recent EU audit of fisheries control at Irish ports revealed weaknesses in port controls for some commercial fish stocks (Anon 2018).

A European Commission audit of Irish fisheries controls in 2018 identified lapses in Weighing on Landing inspections of fishing fleets at Ireland ports targeting horse mackerel, herring and blue whiting fish stocks which *“undermines the ability to ensure an effective control system”* (Siggins 2018).

Ireland is party to UN Fish Stocks Agreement, FAO Compliance Agreement and the UN Port State Measures Agreement through the European Union. See Siggins (2018); Anon (2018); Anon (2016); Le Floc’h et al., (2015); O’Riordan (2015); SFPA (2014); EU (2014); Farrell et al., (2010) documents for more information. ClientEarth (2016) report suggests that fisheries penalties are very low in Irish waters.

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



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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 (<http://iuriskintelligence.com/>). (The author can be contacted at prammod.raju@gmail.com to provide any feedback).

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