



# IUU Risk Intelligence

Putting Compliance First

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

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### TUNISIA - COUNTRY REPORT

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## SUMMARY

*This evaluation of Fisheries Monitoring Control and Surveillance report for **Tunisia** 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 to comments, and revisions will be made upon submission of documentary 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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## TUNISIA – COUNTRY REPORT



**FAO landings (2013):** 109,782 tonnes

**Fisheries contribution to GDP (2012):** 9%

**Law of the Sea (Ratification):** 24<sup>th</sup> April 1985

**Coastline:** 1148 km

**RFMO Membership:** ICCAT

**Patrolling Agencies:** Tunisia Coast Guard; Tunisia Navy



Rank	Priority for maritime security tasks
1.	Terrorism and National Security
2.	Human trafficking
3.	Organised Crime

## 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

Tunisia has 15 patrol boats for effective patrolling in its maritime zone. Regular patrolling of both domestic and foreign fishing vessels is reported including exclusive offshore patrols. See Anon (2014); IISS (2013) reports for more information. Tunisian navy has two 65 ft Full Cabin Inboard boats (built in USA) and two MetalCraft Marine Sentry 44 high-speed aluminum patrol boats for faster interception of vessels within territorial waters (Mazumdar 2015). Tunisian navy received three new Multi Service Offshore Patrol Vessels (MSOPV) namely *Hannon (P612)*, *Jugurtha (P 610)* and *Syphax (P611)* during 2018 and is likely to receive the fourth MSOPV in 2019 (defenceWeb 2018). In 2018, Tunisia navy also received two locally built 80-ton patrol vessels *Kerkouane (P212)* and *Utique (P211)*.

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

Score: 5

Score Range: 4-5

Available information suggests Tunisia Coast Guard and Ministry of Fisheries have adequate manpower for fisheries enforcement duties. No information is available on compliance or enforcement competence of these authorities in the marine fisheries sector.

More than 60 fisheries inspectors are spread across 41 small and large fishing ports with at least two fisheries inspectors at each major port while some of the smaller ports have no inspectors during the entire year (Anon, *pers.comm.*, 2018).

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

Score: 0

Score Range: 0-0

Existing information suggests that the country does not have such capabilities. Tunisian fishing boats have been intercepted for illegal fishing in Libyan waters.

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

Score: 1

Score Range: 1-2

100 fishing vessels are equipped with VMS tracking devices (Atcha 2017; GFCM 2015). Fishing vessels above 15 meters in length are required by law to have VMS tracking system. Tunisia has 25 tuna purse seiners, 868 fishing vessels (>15 m), 400 sardine purse seiners, 430 trawlers and more than 10,500 artisanal boats that fish in coastal waters using traditional gear.

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

Score: 1

Score Range: 1-2

Compliant with ICCAT observer coverage requirements. Available information suggests that there is limited observer scheme in Bluefin tuna fishery for both catcher and towing vessels to comply with ICCAT Rec. 14-04. Observers were deployed for a few months on 5% of tuna and swordfish vessels in ICCAT waters (ICCAT 2014).

## SECTION 2: INSPECTIONS

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

Score: 5

Score Range: 3-5

At-sea presence is relatively high for Tunisian Coast Guard and Naval Forces, but illegal fishing is not the focus as human smuggling and terrorism are given more importance. Dedicated fishery patrols are very rare, as Coast Guard officers are not adequately trained on fisheries laws or identifying violations; and lack of inter-agency management aggravates this situation. Further, as fisheries officers do not form part of the surveillance teams at sea, offences uncovered are dispatched to DGPA for prosecution after arriving at port (Anon, *pers. comm.*, 2018).

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

Score: 1

Score Range: 1-4

No finding. Such data is not available for Tunisian fisheries. Tunisia has one “Reims F406” aircraft for aerial surveillance missions (Anon 2011).

Aerial surveillance is primarily not envisioned for monitoring fishing activity of national or foreign vessels (Anon, *pers.comm.*, 2018).

**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

The two ports (Bizerte and Tabarka) can handle foreign fishing vessels operating in the Mediterranean Sea. Foreign tuna vessels are not allowed to transship or land catches in Tunisian ports. More than 60 fisheries inspectors are spread across 41 small and large fishing ports with at-least two fisheries inspectors engaged at each major port; while some smaller ports might have no inspectors throughout the year. While illegal tuna transshipments with foreign trawlers and purse seiners were a problem in the past, very few such reports have come to notice in recent years mainly due to increased vigilance by fishermen and patrols by coast guard. Foreign trawlers mainly from Italy fished illegally in offshore waters but reports of such incidents have decreased for the past two years (Anon, *pers.comm.*, 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: 4.5

Score Range: 3-5

Illegal trawling in coastal waters and unregulated fishing using clandestine boats are some of the commonly identified fisheries violations in Tunisian waters. Fishing vessels have been found operating in prohibited areas, fishing in closed zones (e.g. Octopus) and there is high illegal gear usage in artisanal, industrial pelagic and benthic fisheries. Each year around 300-500 fishing offences are reported in pelagic and bottom fisheries that are forwarded to DGPA for prosecutions. By conservative estimate, 1500 small-scale boats operate illegally in coastal waters. Trawlers fish illegally in waters below 50 metres depth and damage fishing gear of coastal fishers leading to frequent

conflicts. Foreign trawlers from Sicily were also reported to fish illegally in many sections along the coast. Use of undersized mesh in fishing gear, landing of juvenile fish, fishing during closed seasons and use of illegal gear are common offences identified every year. Coastal fishing boats receive less landing inspections due to shortage of staff and budget cuts that allow many violations to go unnoticed from this sector (Anon, *pers. comm.*, 2018).

See DGPA (2010); Derouiche et al., (2015); FAO (2011); Anon (2019); Lamine (2017); CAOPA and REJOPRAO (2016) reports for more information.

**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

Law number 94-13 prohibits transshipments at sea unless a prior authorization is obtained from the fisheries ministry. However, the effectiveness of this regulation is largely estimated through vessel reporting procedures rather than direct inspections at sea (Anon, *pers.comm.*, 2018).

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

Score: 1.5

Score Range: 1-4

Such inspections are not required for fishing vessels. However, random fishing gear inspections are undertaken at ports during closed seasons and landing checks are undertaken using risk-based approach for small landing beaches (Anon, *pers.comm.*, 2018).

See Anon (2019); CAOPA and REJOPRAO (2016); FAO (2011) reports for more information on widespread use of illegal gears in small-scale fisheries.

**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: 4.5

Score Range: 3-5

Law No. 2013-34 of 21 September 2013 supplementing Law No. 94-13 of 31 January 1994 on the exercise of fishing is the main national legislation for fisheries management in Tunisian waters. The country has not adopted NPOA



on IUU Fishing to fight and eliminate illegal fishing. Tunisia is not a party to the FAO Compliance Agreement, UN Port State Measures Agreement, and the UN Fish Stocks Agreement. See CAOPA and REJOPRAO (2016); FAO (2011); Lamine (2017) reports for information on compliance issues.

The current law is perhaps the best fisheries code for this region, but the setback is that it is not effectively enforced by the National Guard. So, it makes little difference in comparison to the one preceding it (Anon, *pers. comm.*, 2018).

<b>Flag of Convenience</b>	<b>No</b>	Source: ITF (2015)
<b>Vessels on the RFMO - IUU vessel list</b>	<b>No</b>	

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

*Last Updated: 09 May 2019*



## 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](mailto:pramod.raju@gmail.com) to provide any feedback).

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