

Kuril Islands Report (A Snapshot)

An investigation into the disputed EEZ Fishing Infrastructure and Associated Activities

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Global Fishing Watch



Fisheries and Oceans
Canada



July 15, 2021

Agenda:

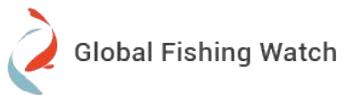
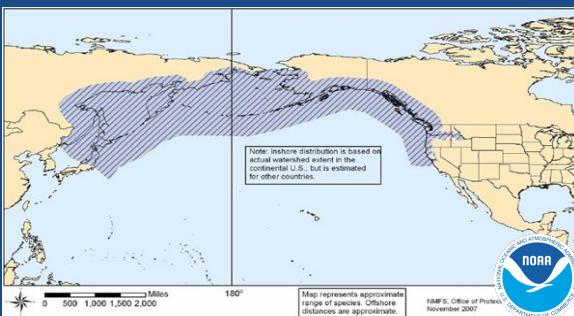
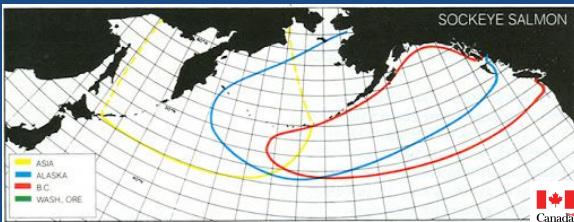
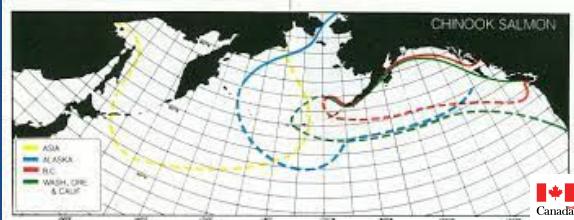
- Scene setter: RFMOs, Operating Area, Pacific Salmon Migration Patterns
- Kuril Islands Fish Processor infrastructure
- Who's who in the fishing business (Kuril Islands Edition)
 - *Data Dive:* Behavior and identification of the fishing vessels that operate inside the EEZ
 - *Data Dive:* Behavior and identification of the fishing vessels that operate outside the EEZ
- Carrier Vessels that support Fishing Vessels in and around the Kuril Islands
- VOIs
- Conclusion & Recommendations

How did we get here:

- Pacific Salmon Stock Decline
- Overfishing/human activity being touted as one reason
 - *Intel Gap:* Is high seas transhipment a gray zone human overfishing activity that is one factor causing Salmon decline during their Pacific migration patterns, and subsequently being funneled through the Kuril Islands?
 - Are Salmon originating in Canada/USA being captured during the middle of their migration patterns on the high seas or within EEZs
- Kuril Islands a suspected AOI due to it's fishing base infrastructure supporting Russian and foreign flagged fleets

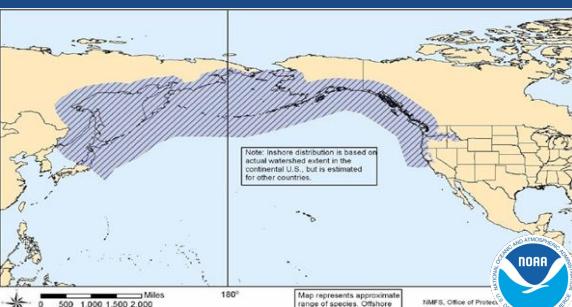
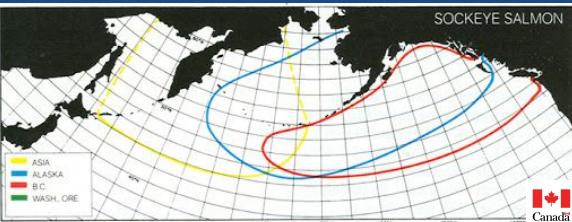
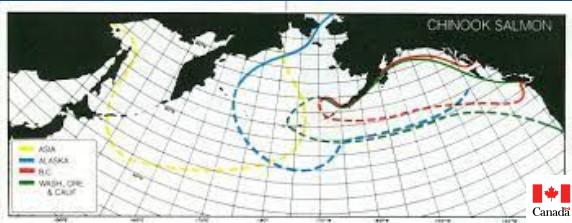
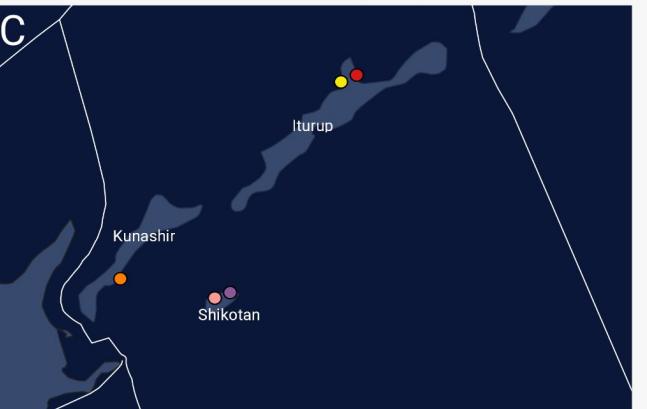
Original Distribution of Genus *Oncorhynchus* (Pacific Salmon)

© 2005 State of the Salmon, a joint program
of Wild Salmon Center and Ecotrust



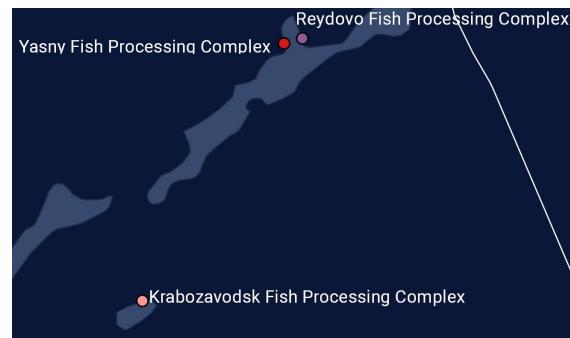
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JSC Gidrostroy owned facilities in Kuril Islands

- **Yasny Fish Processing Complex, JSC Gidrostroy**
 - Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certified
 - Species: Pink and Chum Salmon Fisheries
 - Exports to Asia, Europe and North America, mostly Russia, China and the UK
 - Salmon Catch arrives between mid-July and September
 - Fish are then transported into holding tanks towed by small tugboats
- **Reydovo Fish Processing Complex, JSC Gidrostroy**
 - Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certified
 - Species: pollock, cod, flounder, greenling, pink salmon, chum salmon, pollock caviar, and; Pacific salmon
 - Produces 400 tons of product per day and has ~ 3000 tons of cold storage capacity.
 - According to WWF, in 2017 these two Gidrostroy facilities made up 2/4 of all MSC certified salmon processing facilities in the Pacific ([now 12 in Pacific, 10/12 in Russia, 2 in Alaska](#))
- **Kraborazvodsk Fish Processing Complex, JSC Gidrostroy**
 - Processes 300,000 metric tons of fish annually
 - Can freeze 900 metric tons of pelagic fish per day, primarily sardines.
 - Species: Pacific saury, squid, mackerel, herring, cod, offal, and pollock are also produced here

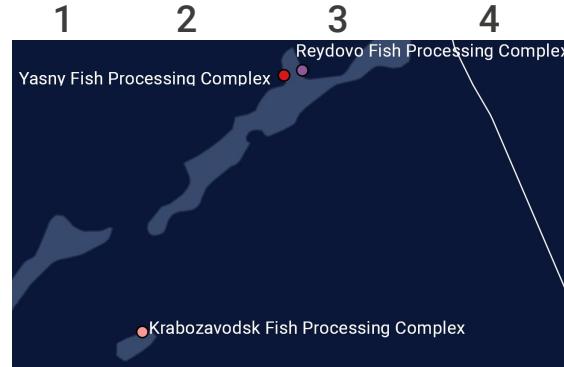


Yasny Fish Processing Complex

JSC Gidrostroy, 2nd most powerful fishing entity in Russia

- Owned by Russian ex-senator Alexander Verkhovskiy (1)
- Second largest revenue generator in the Russian fish processing market with \$331 million dollars made in 2016 with a 277.4 thousand ton catch quota
- In July of 2018, Alexander Verkhovskiy made a \$430 million USD purchase of Sakhalin Governor Oleg Kozhemyaka's Preobrazhensky Base: a trawler fleet based out of Primorsky Krai Maritime Territory (Primorye), adding additional quota of 150 thousand tons of fish
- Other shareholders
 - a. Senator for Chukotka Autonomous Okrug Efim Malkin (2)
 - b. Constituent Duma representative Chukotka Okrug Irina Panchenko (3)
 - c. Controversial Russian-Israeli billionaire Roman Abramovich* (4)

Related Individuals



The largest fish processing project in the Kuril Islands was launched with VEF

President [Vladimir Putin](#) gave a symbolic start to the work of the modern fish processing plant of the Gidrostroy company on the island of Shikotan. A unique project for the Russian fishery industry was implemented by the specialists of the Icelandic company Skaginn 3X.

Ostrovnoy Fish Factory, Dalnevostochny Rybak Management Company Group

- Opened 2017
- Operated by Ostrovnoy Rybokombinat LLC, member of the Dalnevostochny Rybak Management Company Group
- Species:
 - Canned: small pelagics
 - Processed: fish meal like surimi, derived from targeted species which include pollock, salmon, scallop, crab, and squid
 - Starting in 2019 the deep processing of cod and salmon fish species was included
- Over 30 vessels which caught more than 70,000 tons in 2018
- FV OSTROVNOY 9, owned by this facility was issued with an administrative violation for a 2 nm incursion within the United States Exclusive Economic Zone in 2020
- FV Ostrovnoy-8 engages in the “transportation of chilled salmon up to a thousand tons at a time.”
- Exports to Russian markets and to the countries of the Asia-Pacific region - Japan, China, and South Korea.



Ostrovnoy Fish Factory

Dalnevostochny Rybak Management Company Group

- Dalnevostochny Rybak Management Company CEO and owner is Ruslan Alexandrovich Zakrevsky (1)
 - Also Executive Director of Interrybfot LLC which also owns reefers, one factory trawler, two longline vessels and one crab vessel.
- Owner of Ostrovnoy Rybokombinat LLC however is Irina Alekseevna Bulgakova
 - Currently in liquidation while merging with Dalnevostochny Rybak Management Company

Owner



1



Yuzhno-Kurilsk Fish Factory, PCF Yuzhno-Kurilsk Ryibokombinat Co., Ltd

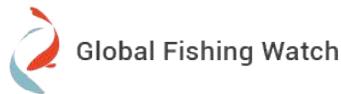
- On-shore fish processing complexes with the capacity to produce up to 200 tons of product per day
- Hold up to 1200 tons of wet and frozen fish products
- Species: white fish (pollock, flounder), small pelagics (mackerel, sardines), squid as well as pink salmon, chum salmon and char
- Exports to Russia and to the markets of Japan, South Korea, China, the European Union, and Africa



1



Yuzhno-Kurilsk Fish Factory



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Fleet Info

Fishing vessels actively fishing in the area

Between January 2018 - April 2021, a total of 127 non-Russian flagged fishing vessels

Flag	Count	Percent
China	60	48%
Chinese Taipei	51	40%
South Korea	12	9%
Vanuatu	4	3%

Gear	Count	Percent
Squid Jigger	88	69%
Unknown	28	22%
Other*	6	5%
Trawler	5	4%

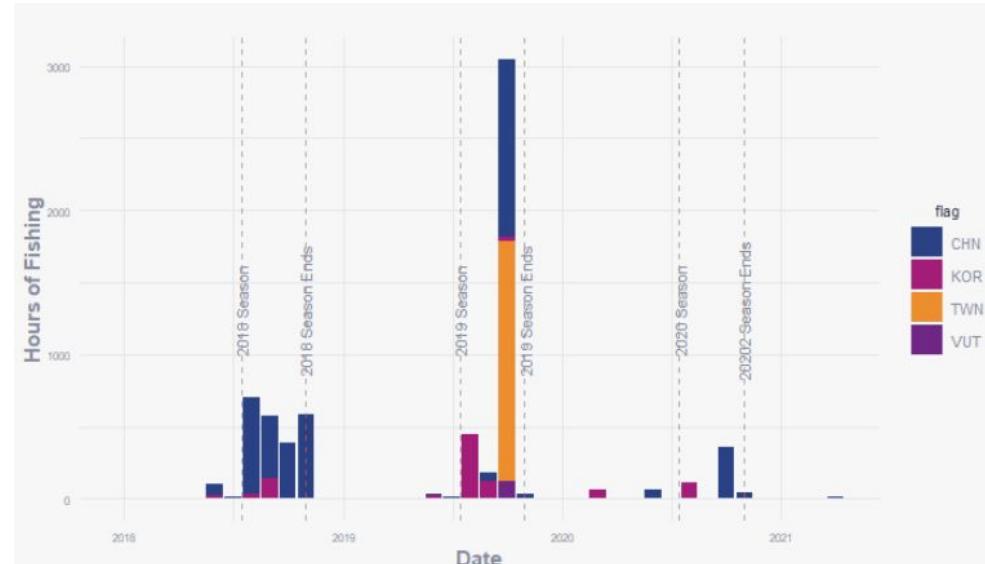
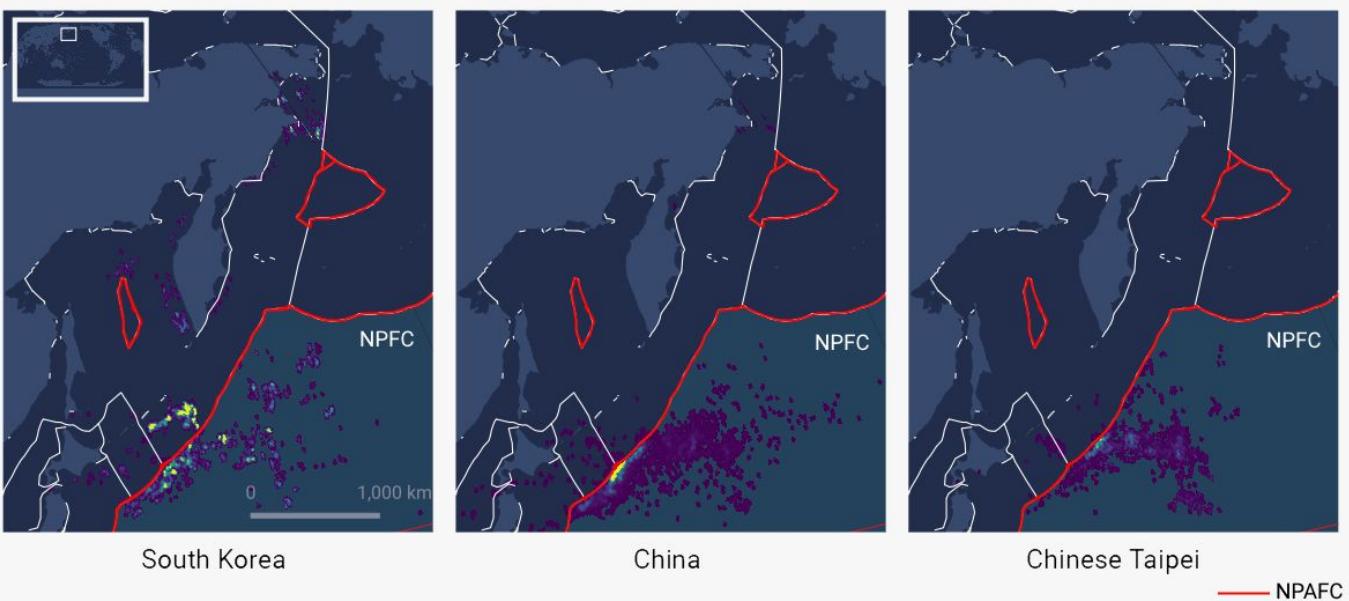
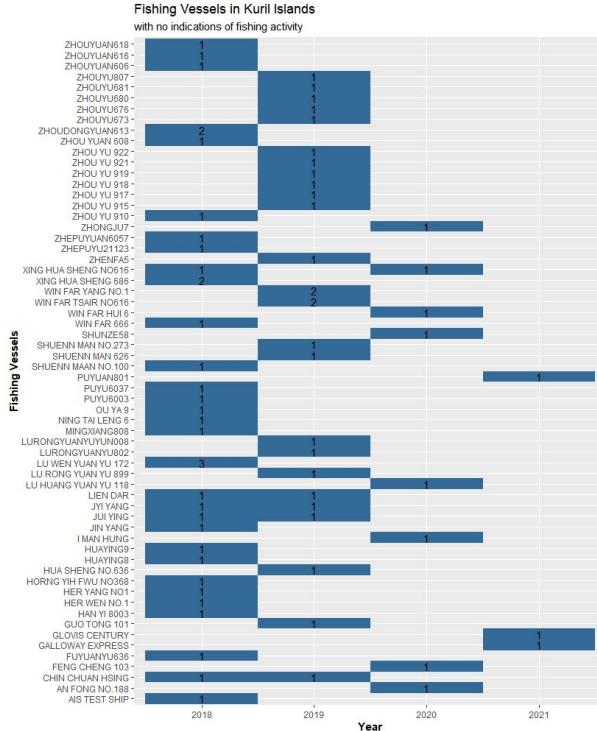


Figure 1: Hours of fishing since January 1st 2018 until April 2021

Spatial trends in fishing activity (30 days prior to entering Kuril Islands)



Vessels without fishing activity in the EEZ

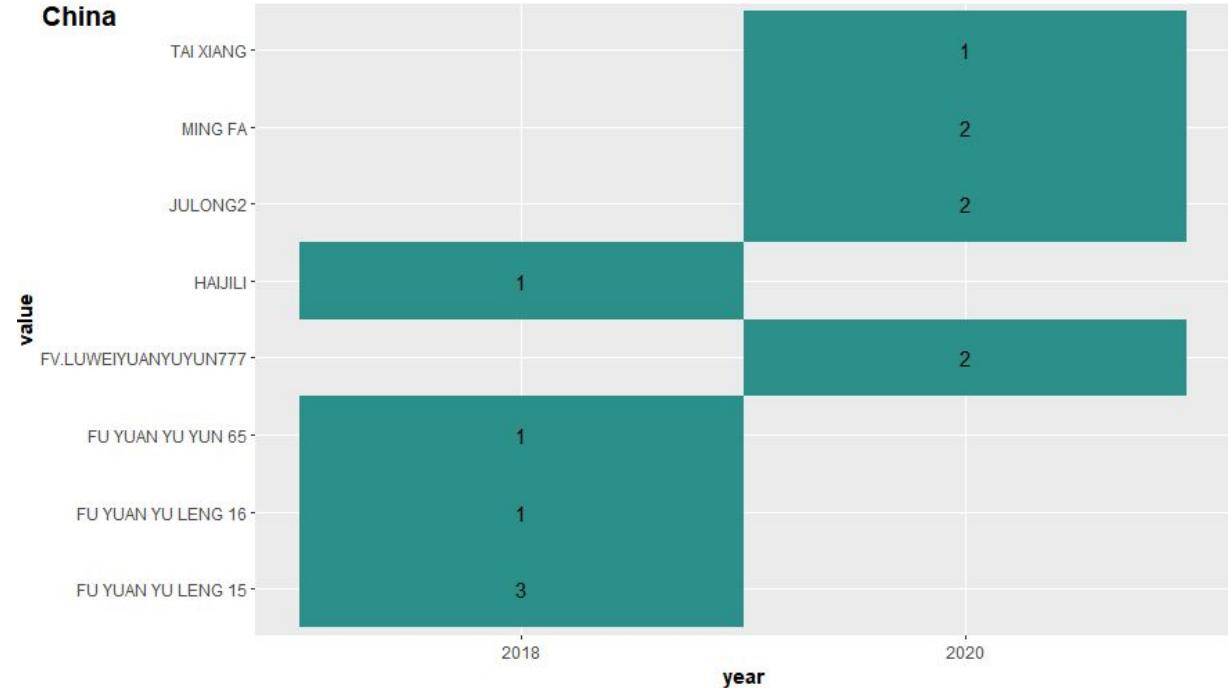


Loitering trends of foreign vessels

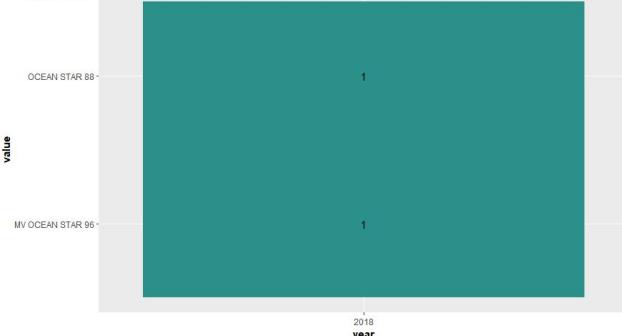
Panama



China



Dominica



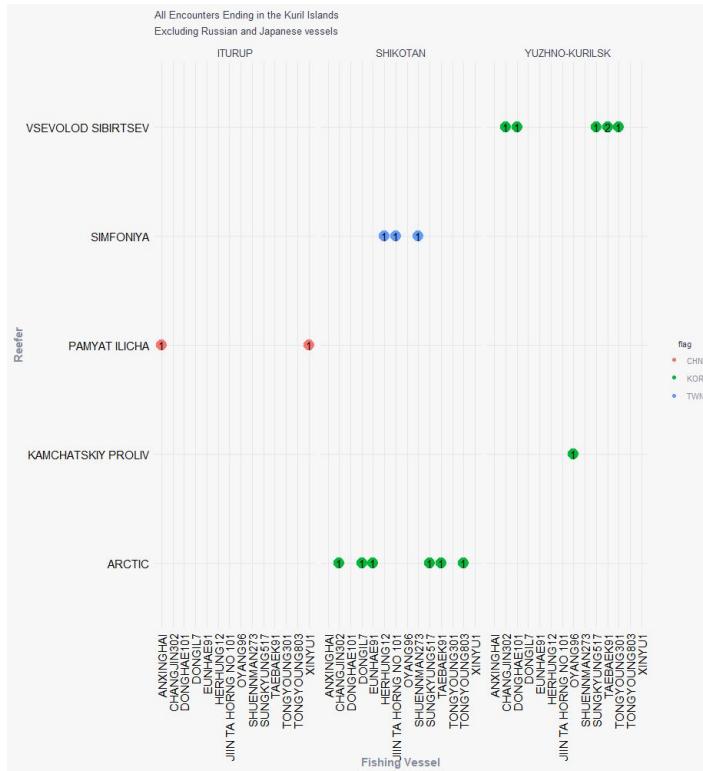
Global Fishing Watch



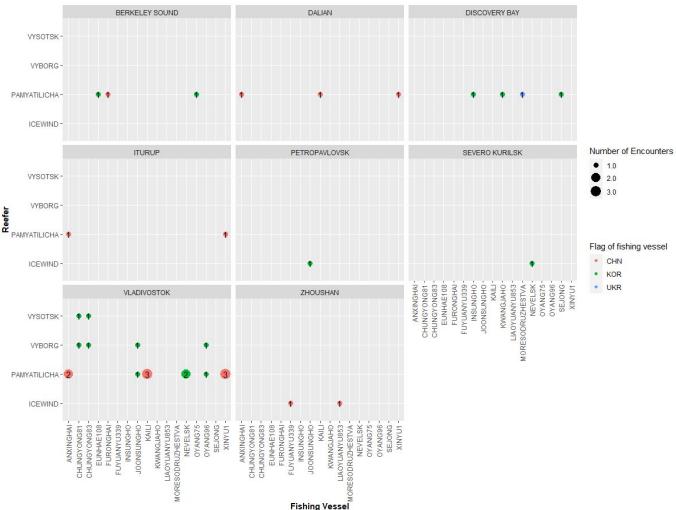
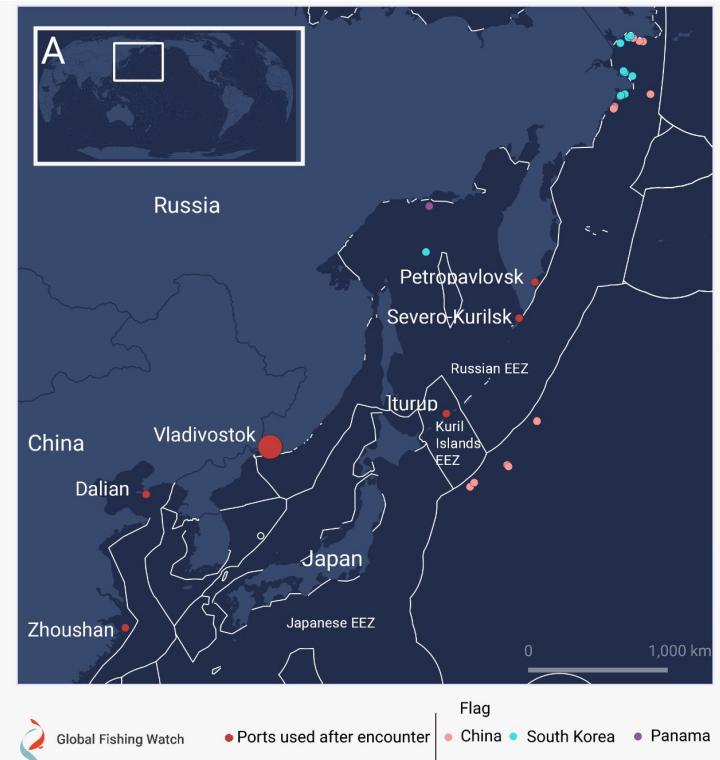
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All encounters with non-Russian vessels which ended in Kuril Island ports



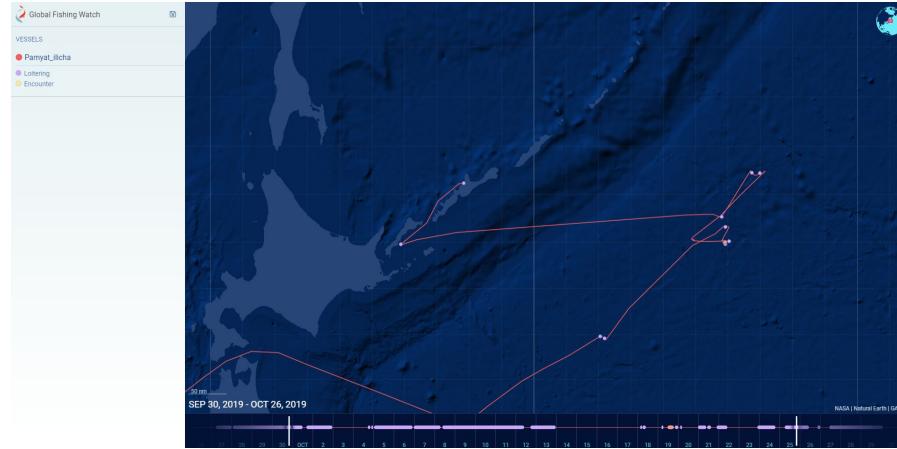
Carrier vessel activity around the Bays of Iturup and associated fishing vessels



Vessel of Interest - Pamyat Ilicha

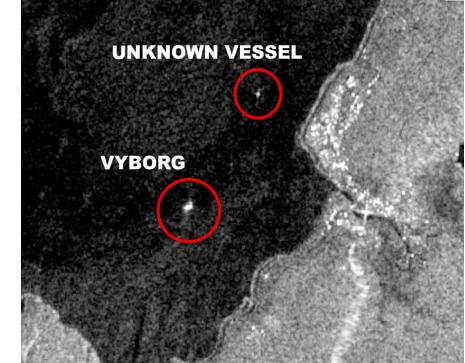


(Source: NPFC Vessel Registry)



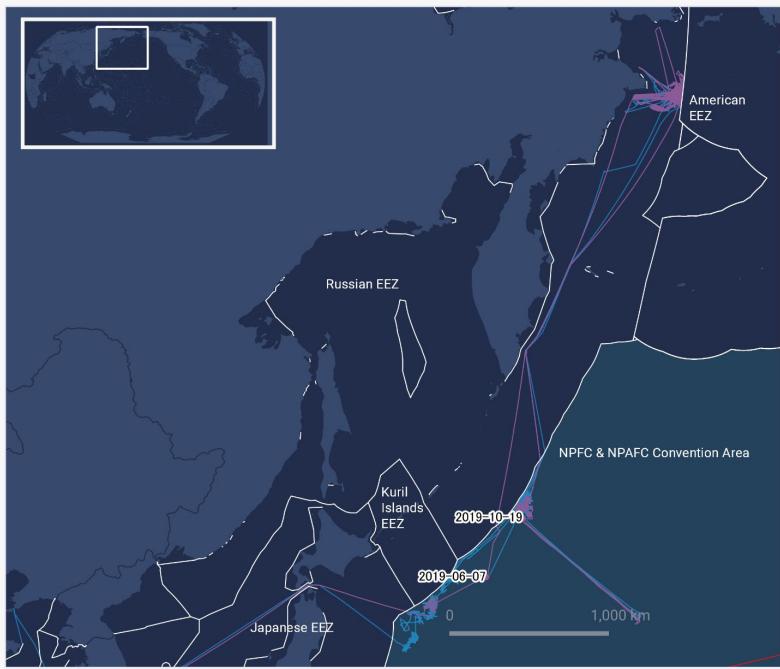
(Source: GFW Map 3.01)

- 2019-10-23-11:40 : Met with the ANXINGHAI at (7-hour encounter) ->
- 2019-10-23-20:00 : Met with XINYU NO.1 at 2019-10-23-20:00 (6-hour encounter) ->
- 2019-10-23-09:06 : Loitering off Kunashir (22 hours) ->
- 2019-10-25-05:27 : Arrives and loiters 3km off Iturup Coast (29 hours)

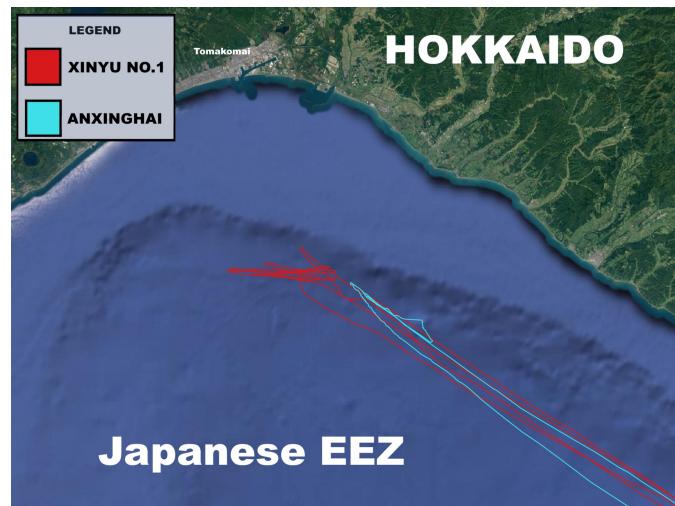
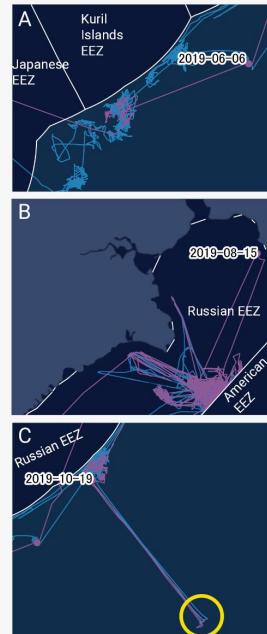


(Source: Sentinel 1)

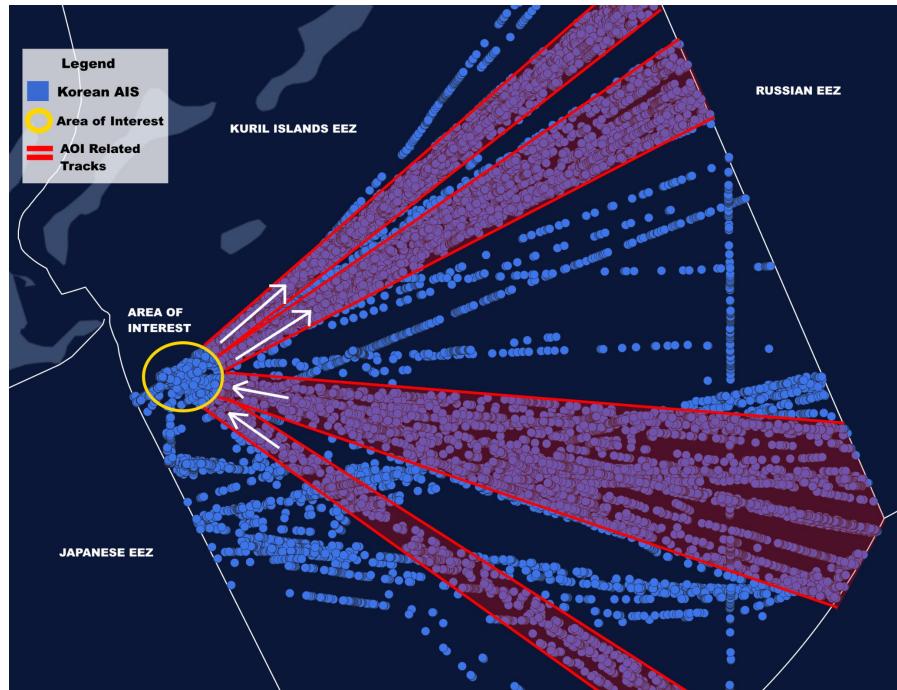
Vessels of Interest: ANXINGHAI & XINYU NO.1



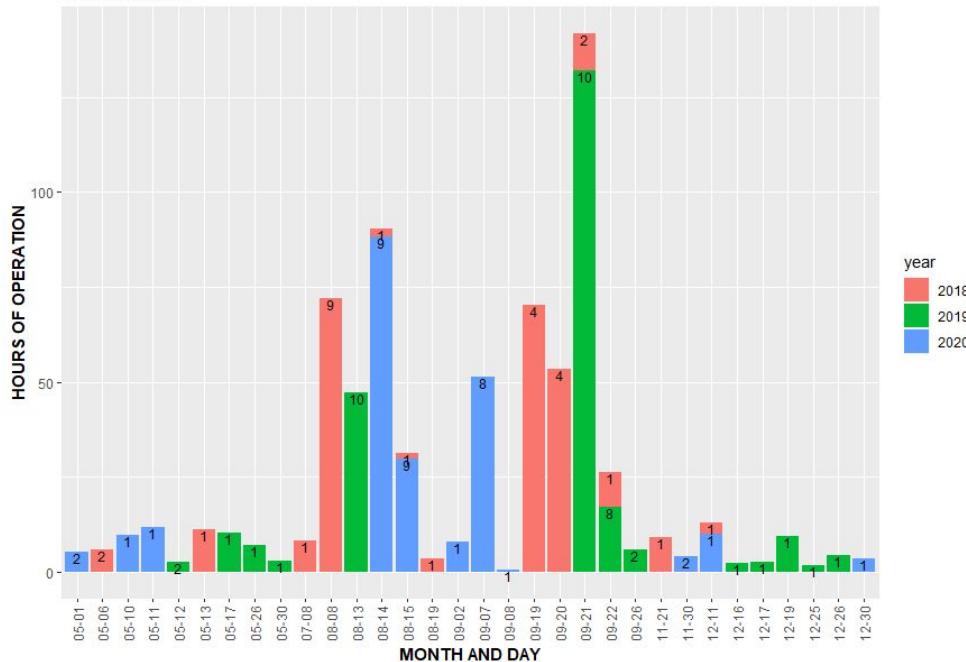
Global Fishing Watch ● ANXINGHAI ● XINYU NO.1 ○ Point of Interest



Vessels of Interest - South Korean Fleet

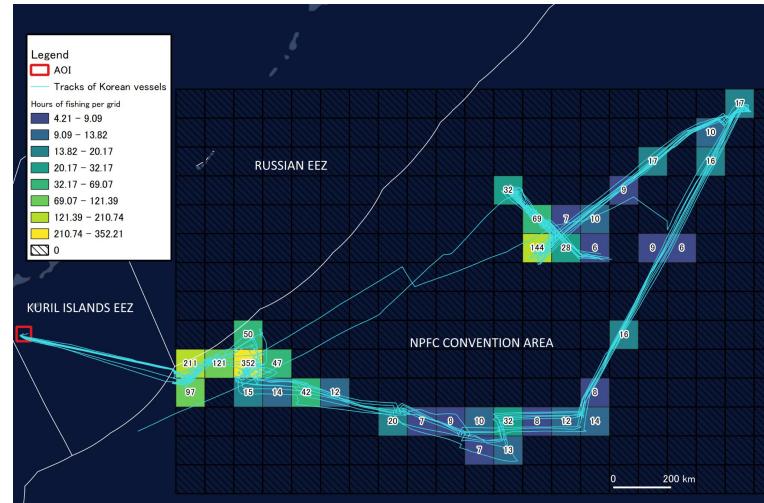
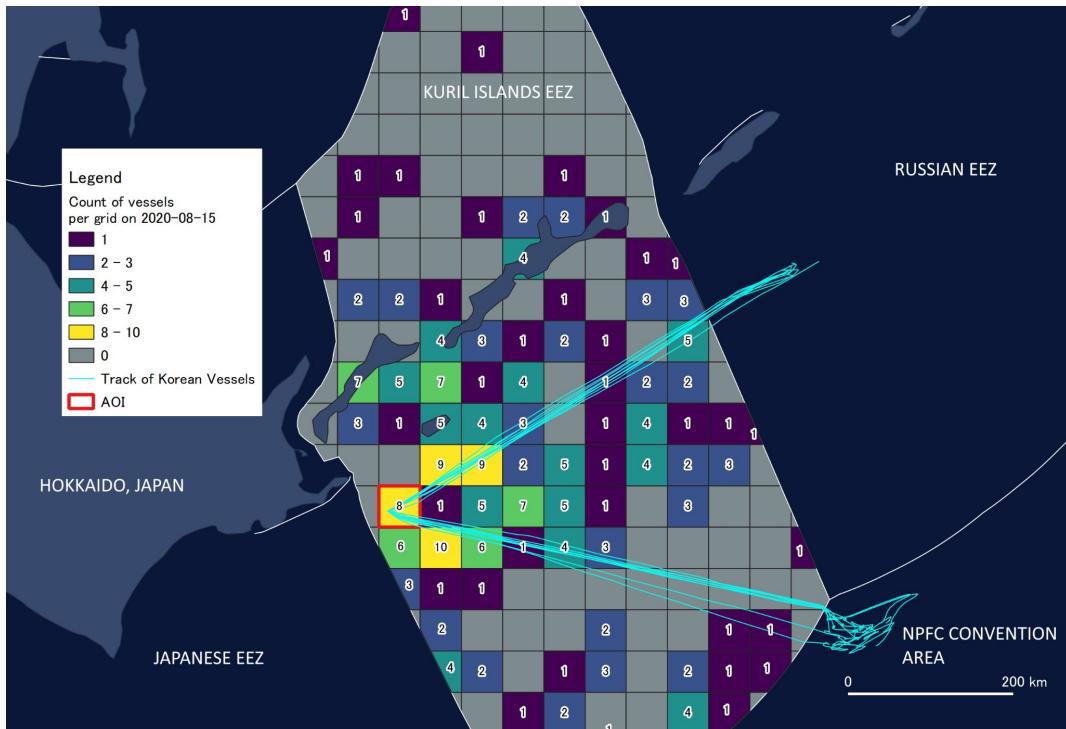


SPECIFIC DAYS OF KOREAN FLEET PRESENCE IN AOI
seperated by year

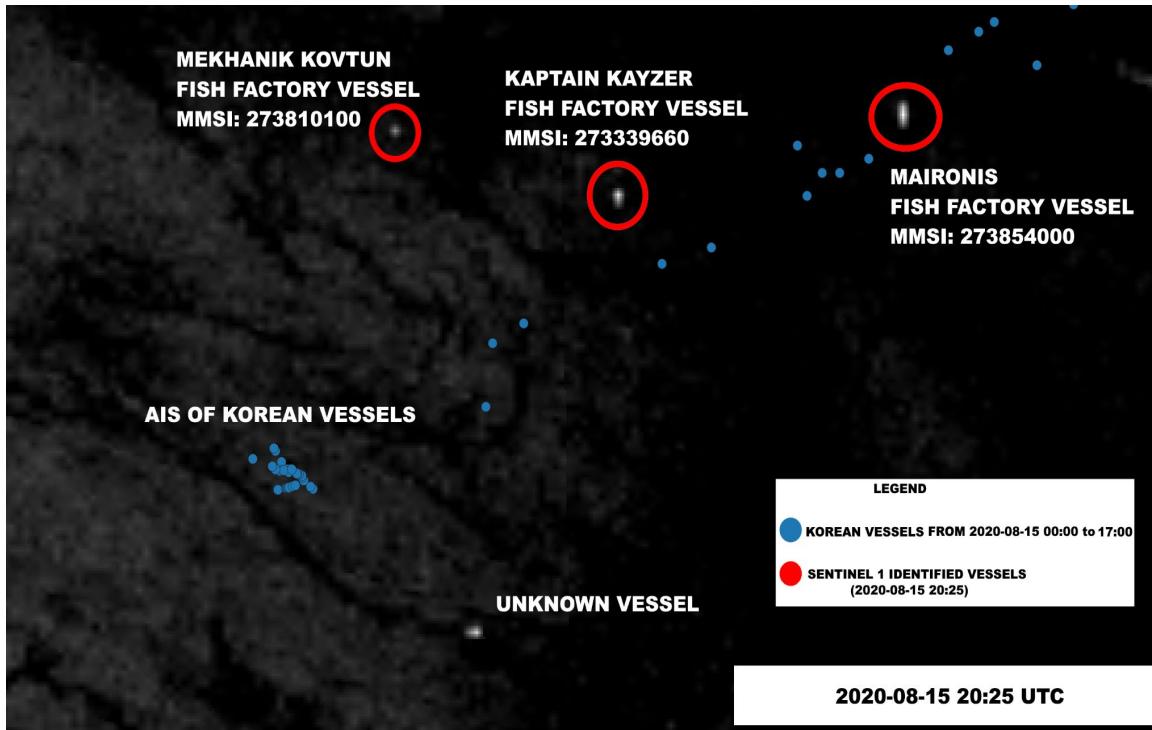


The numeric values on the bars represent the unique number of Korean vessels within the AOI during that year on that specific date

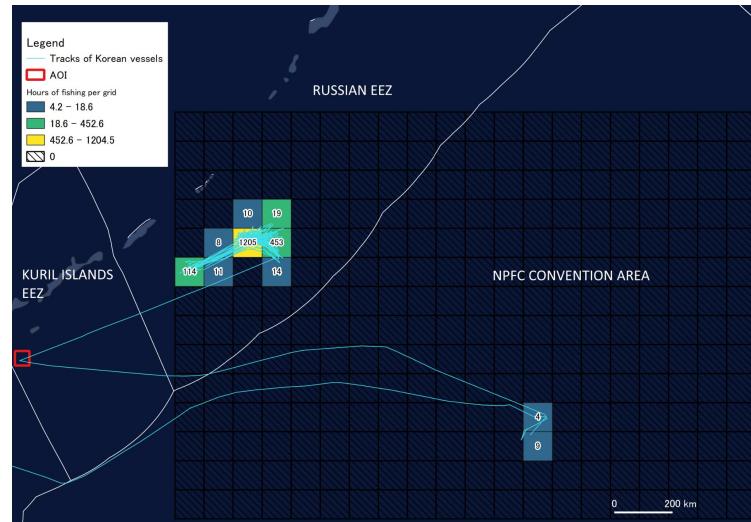
Vessels of Interest - South Korean Fleet (cont.) (2020-08-15)



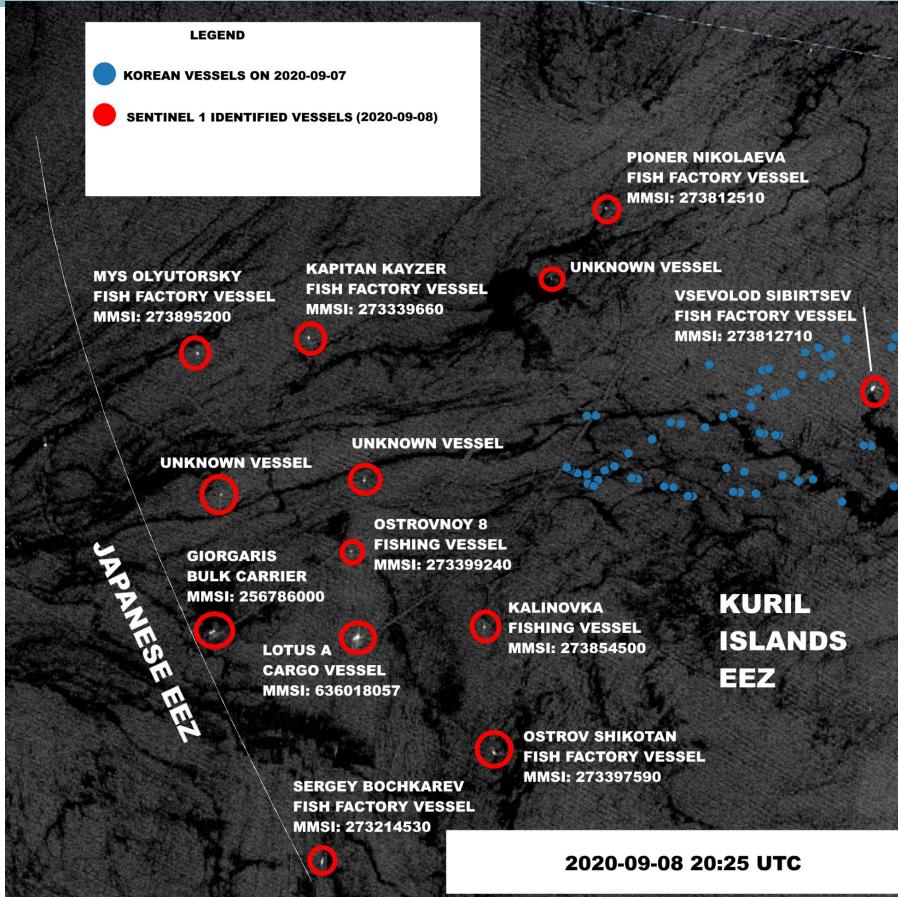
Vessels of Interest - South Korean Fleet (cont.) (2020-08-15)



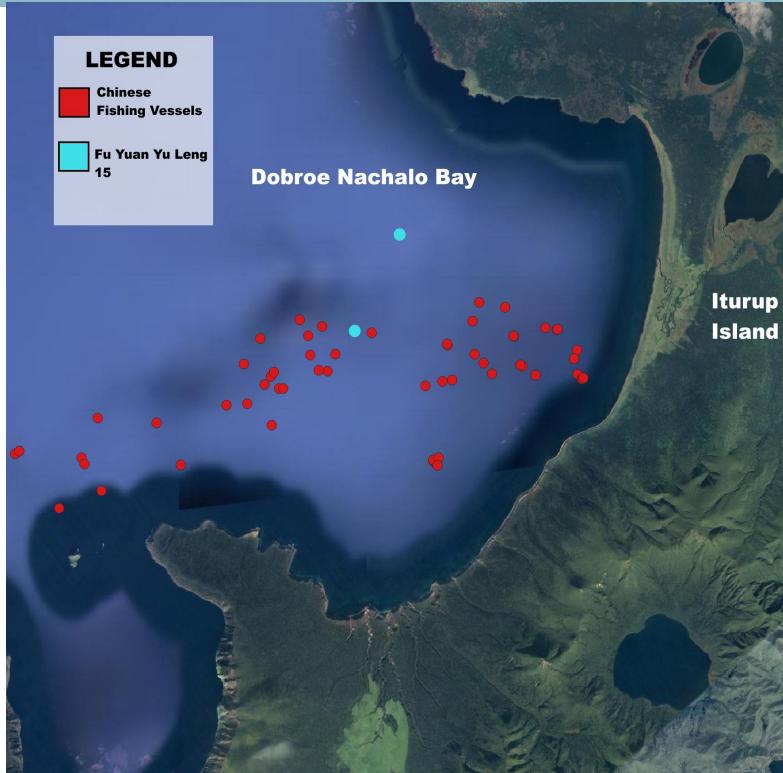
Vessels of Interest - South Korean Fleet (cont.) (2020-09-07)



Vessels of Interest - South Korean Fleet (cont.) (2020-09-07)

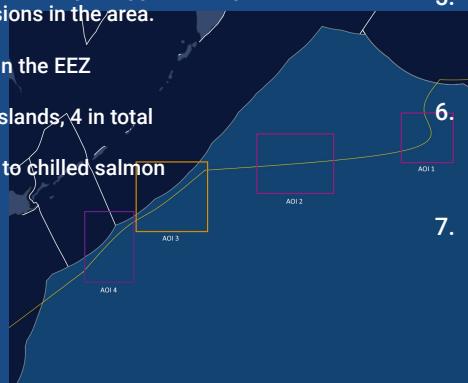


Vessels of Interest - Dobre Nachalo Bay



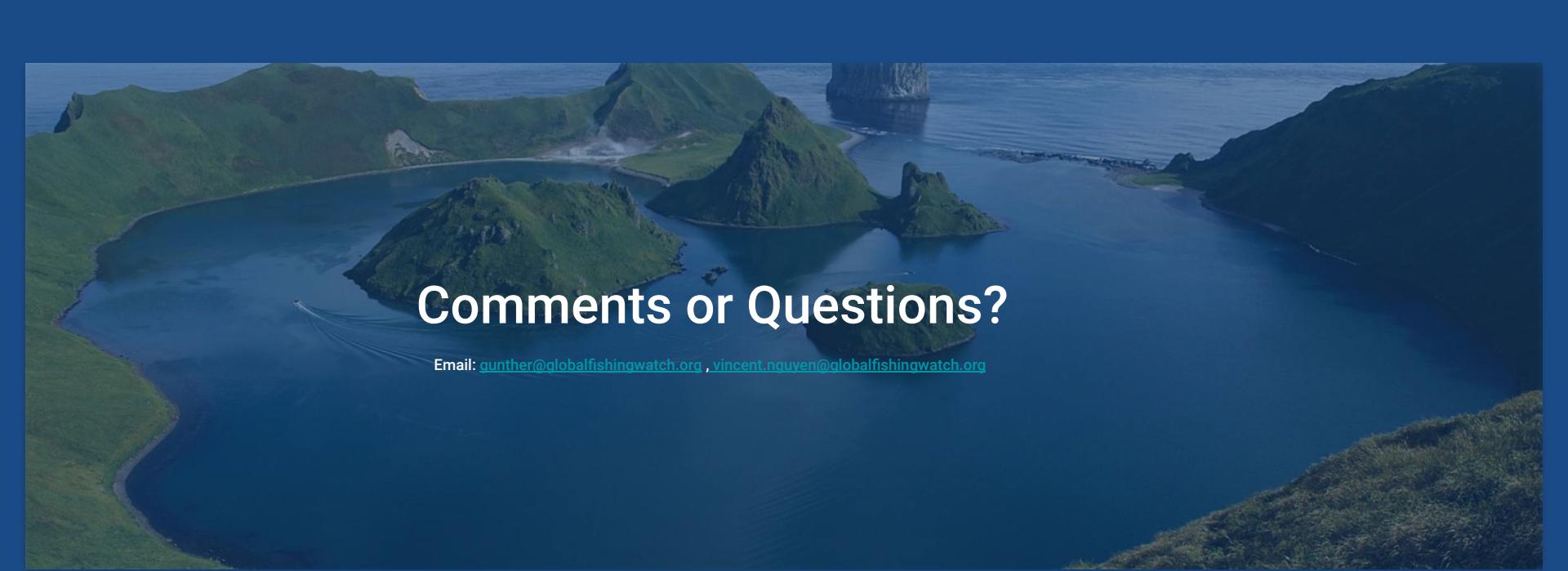
Conclusion:

- 20 specific vessels of interest (VOIs) which operate in both the NPFC and Kuril Islands EEZ were identified
- 107 additional vessels were identified as fishing in the Kuril Islands EEZ
- Unexplained Korean behavior in the EEZ after fishing effort operations in possible waters identified as Salmon fishing grounds.
- Historic salmon fishing activities in Dobre Nachalo Bay signify that Chinese vessels are likely to engage in salmon fishing in the EEZ as one Salmon derived fishing ground source
- Presence of large fish factory with “dark” vessels around foreign flagged fishing vessels in the EEZ based on signal behavior and emissions in the area.
- Foreign flagged reefers (Transhipment vsis) loitering in the EEZ
- More than just 1 salmon processing plant in the Kuril Islands, 4 in total
- Ostrovnoy 8 Fish Factory Vessel is a potential VOI due to chilled salmon transportation



Recommendation:

1. Monitor Alaskan EEZ for incursions like that of Ostrovnoy-9 while on-way to Alaskan Far-Western portion of EEZ
2. From this position head South towards the Northern fishing waters of Korean fleet of interest (AOI 1 & AOI 2)
3. Continue due south along Russia EEZ boundary towards intersection between Kuril Islands EEZ and Russian EEZ (AOI 3 & AOI 4)
4. Consider vessels of interest for targeting from GFW provided list in final report
5. OSINT language analysis of information provided in final report to access supply chain and other intel gaps, interviewing Kuril Islands frequenters
6. Consider intel cooperation from Russia TINRO or Border Guard on accessing these areas legally to observe behavior within the Kuril Islands
7. Imagery of Kuril Islands EEZ during the period of activities of interest, especially around the AOIs or areas without currently available imagery

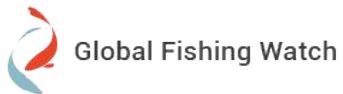


Comments or Questions?

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