Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

Target 14.6: By 2020, prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, eliminate subsidies that contribute to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and refrain from introducing new such subsidies, recognizing that appropriate and effective special and differential treatment for developing and least developed countries should be an integral part of the World Trade Organization fisheries subsidies negotiation

Indicator 14.6.1: Progress by countries in the degree of implementation of international instruments aiming to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing

Institutional information

Organization(s):

Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations

Concepts and definitions

Definition:

Progress by countries in the degree of implementation of international instruments aiming to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.

Concepts:

The definitions and concepts associated with the indicator and utilized in the methodology are defined in the FAO term portal: http://www.fao.org/faoterm/collection/fisheries/en/

This indicator is based on a country's implementation of the different international instruments that combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU fishing). IUU fishing undermines national and regional efforts to conserve and manage fish stocks and, as a consequence, inhibits progress towards achieving the goals of long-term sustainability and responsibility as set forth in, inter alia, Chapter 17 of Agenda 21 and the 1995 FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. Moreover, IUU fishing greatly disadvantages and discriminates against those fishers that act responsibly, honestly and in accordance with the terms of their fishing authorizations. This is a compelling reason why IUU fishing must be dealt with expeditiously and in a transparent manner. If IUU fishing is not curbed, and if IUU fishers target vulnerable stocks that are subject to strict management controls or moratoria, efforts to rebuild those stocks to healthy levels will not be achieved. To efficiently curb the IUU fishing a number of different international instruments have been developed over the years that focus on the implementation of the different responsibilities of States.

The instruments covered by this indicator and their role in combatting IUU fishing are as follows:

- **The 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)**

This instrument is the basis upon which all the subsequent instruments are built upon. UNCLOS defines the rights and responsibilities of nations with respect to their use of the world's oceans, establishing guidelines for businesses, the environment, and the management of marine natural resources. It is a binding instrument, although its principles may also be applied by countries who are not party to it.

- **The Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 Relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks (UN Fish Stocks Agreement)**

The UN Fish Stocks Agreement entered into force on 11 December 2001, and is the most comprehensive of the binding international instruments in defining the role of Regional Fisheries Management Organisations and elaborating measures that could be taken in relation to IUU fishing activities. Although the UN Fish Stocks Agreement applies primarily to the highly migratory and straddling fish stocks on the high seas, its broad acceptance and application is evidenced by the reinforcement of other international instruments, implementation at the regional level, and to some extent by State practice within areas of national jurisdiction.

- **The International Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (IPOA-IUU)**

The objective of the IPOA is to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing by providing all States with comprehensive, effective and transparent measures by which to act, including through appropriate regional fisheries management organizations established in accordance with international law. This instrument covers all the aspects of a State’s responsibilities including, flag State responsibilities, coastal State measures, port State measures, internationally agreed market-related measures, research and regional fisheries management organizations.

- **The 2009 FAO Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (PSMA)**

The FAO Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing entered into force on the 5th of June 2016. The main purpose of the Agreement is to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing through the implementation of robust port State measures. The Agreement envisages that parties, in their capacities as port States, will apply the Agreement in an effective manner to foreign vessels when seeking entry to ports or while they are in port. The application of the measures set out in the Agreement will, inter alia, contribute to harmonized port State measures, enhanced regional and international cooperation and block the flow of IUU-caught fish into national and international markets.

- **The FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Flag State Performance (VG-FSP)**

The FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Flag State Performance spell out a range of actions that countries can take to ensure that vessels registered under their flags do not conduct IUU fishing, including monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) activities, such as vessel monitoring systems (VMS) and observers. They promote information exchange and cooperation among countries so that flag states are in a position to refuse to register vessels that are "flag-hopping" by attempting to register with another flag state or to refuse vessels that have been reported for IUU fishing. The Guidelines also include recommendations on how countries can encourage compliance and take action against non-compliance by vessels, as well as on how to enhance international cooperation to assist developing countries to fulfil their flag state responsibilities.

- **The FAO Agreement to Promote Compliance with International Conservation and Management Measures by Fishing Vessels on the High Seas (Compliance Agreement)**

The 1993 FAO Compliance Agreement entered into force on the 24th of April 2003. Its main purpose is to encourage countries to take effective action, consistent with international law, and to deter the reflagging of vessels by their nationals as a means of avoiding compliance with applicable conservation and management rules for fishing activities on the high seas. With respect to the role of RFBs, the preamble calls upon States which do not participate in global, regional or sub regional fishery organizations or arrangements to do so, with a view to achieving compliance with international conservation and management measures.

Rationale:

The purpose of this indicator is to show a picture of the state of implementation of the instruments to combat IUU fishing, at a national, regional and global level. The first edition of the indicator will provide a baseline of the current state of implementation of these agreements. Subsequent indicator estimates will then be able to show any progress made by countries.

Although the exact score will be important from one reporting year to the next for determining the progress made by a country, to aid the interpretation of this indicator, the score will then be converted into one of five bands as following:

Score	Bands
>0 –< 0.2	Band 1: Very low implementation of applicable instruments to combat IUU fishing
0.2 –< 0.4	Band 2: Low implementation of applicable instruments to combat IUU fishing
0.4 –< 0.6	Band 3: Medium implementation of applicable instruments to combat IUU fishing
0.6 –< 0.8	Band 4: High implementation of applicable instruments to combat IUU fishing
0.8 – 1.0	Band 5: Very high implementation of applicable instruments to combat IUU fishing

Additionally, a State may receive an indicator score of “N/A”, in the case that none of the instruments are applicable. This would only be the case if the country is land locked and does not flag any vessels that conduct fishing or fishing related activities.

Countries that do not submit a response to the questionnaire on which the indicator is based or do not approve the use of their responses to the questionnaire for use in this indicator, will not receive an indicator score.

Comments and limitations:

Aside from the status of a country as party or non-party to an international agreement which is available as public record, the indicator is a self-analysis by the country of their state of implementation of the various international instruments. Although questions in the questionnaire will be accompanied by pop up guides describing any technical aspects or terms, there may be a small variance in interpretation by different respondents.

Additionally, due to the fact that responses are not provided by an independent source, responses could in theory be politically influenced.

Methodology

Computation method:

The indicator is based upon responses by States to a certain sections of the questionnaire for monitoring the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and related instruments (CCRF). These are sections covering the implementation of different international instruments used to combat IUU fishing. The responses will be converted using an algorithm to obtain a score for the indicator. Each instrument will be covered within a given variable, as follows:

Variable 1 (V1) - Adherence and implementation of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

Variable 2 (V2) - Adherence and implementation of the 1995 United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement

Variable 3 (V3) - Development and implementation of a national plan of action (NPOA) to combat IUU fishing in line with the IPOA-IUU

Variable 4 (V4) - Adherence and implementation of the 2009 FAO Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA)

Variable 5 (V5) - Implementation of Flag State Responsibilities in the context of the 1993 FAO Compliance Agreement and FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Flag State Performance

Depending on responses by FAO Members on the adherence and implementation of the above-mentioned instruments, States will score an indicator value between 0 and 1. Each variable is given a weighting, which takes into consideration the importance of the instrument in combating IUU fishing as well as the overlap between the instruments. The variable weightings are as follows:

Variable	Weighting*
V1	10%
V2	10%
V3	30%

V4	30%
V5	20%

(*) item on “Applicability of instruments”

For binding agreements, States will still be able to score points if they are not party to the agreement but are implementing its provisions. States will also score points if they have initiated the process to becoming party to an agreement.

This indicator is automatically computed within the web-application on which the countries will be responding to the questionnaire. Once the questionnaire is completed the respondent will be presented with a report of the indicator, describing the methodology and the score attained. The user will then be able to give a final confirmation of the indicator. The final scores from all the respondents will automatically be collected onto a database. This web-application will also allow the user to access in any the following languages: English, French, Spanish, Chinese, Arabic and Russian.

Choice of weighting per variable:

The weightings for each variable have been carefully selected. These have been determined based upon their importance of their role in combatting IUU fishing as well as in consideration of the overlap present in between the different instruments. It is also for this consideration of overlap that the VG-FSP and the Compliance Agreement have been combined into Variable 5.

Applicability of instruments:

A set of questions will be present to determine certain characteristics of States (coastal, port, flag and land-locked). This will ensure that the indicator scoring for a country is not negatively affected if an instrument is not applicable to them. In such case, the weighing of the variable that is not applicable is redistributed into the remaining variables. In cases where none of the instruments is applicable, the country will get an indicator score of “N/A”.

Variable	**Cases in which Instruments are not applicable**
V1	The only case where this instrument becomes not applicable, is when the State is land-locked and they are not a flag state.
V2	Is not applicable if the country is land-locked and not a flag State or a coastal State but is not a flag State or Port State.
V3	Same as Variable 2.
V4	Same as Variable 2.

V5	Is not applicable if the country is not a flag State.

For more details regarding the list of question, scoring and applicability, please refer to Appendix 1 and 2.

Treatment of missing values:

- At country level

Indicator will only be available for responding countries who approve of the use of their responses to the CCRF questionnaire for this indicator.

- At regional and global levels

Data will only be aggregated from responding countries.

Regional aggregates:

Regional and global aggregates for this indicator will count the number of countries within a region or globally that fall under each of the five bands, as a proportion of the countries within a region or globally that have reported this indicator. This approach better illustrates the distribution of scores in each region and avoids determining a mean score for a region that assumes that non-reporting countries are equal to the mean, which would not be appropriate for a means-of-implementation type indicator like this.

Sources of discrepancies:

Data for this indicator is not internationally estimated.

Methods and guidance available to countries for the compilation of the data at the national level:

Once the countries receive the questionnaire, they will have access to a manual that will guide the user along the best process for completing the questionnaire. Due to the various themes that are covered within the questionnaire, it is essential that the focal point or user gather the responses using a well-coordinated process involving all the relevant staff that are in charge of the work within the various themes contained within the questionnaire, such as the focal point for the indicator. Additionally, the manual will also have a section describing the methodology of the indicator.

Within the questionnaire application, the user will be able to find pop up guides embedded in the application describing technical aspects or terms encountered.

URL to the authenticated CCRF questionnaire application: FAO Questionnaire for Monitoring the Implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and Related Instruments

Quality assurance:

The questionnaire was created upon the request of the Members to the Committee on Fisheries. Within this process, FAO would not be in a position to question the responses of countries. Equally,

this would require independent analysis of the status of implementation in the field of all responding countries for every edition of the questionnaire, a task that would require a substantial outlay of resources.

FAO is however carrying out national and regional workshops on the implementation of international instruments to combat IUU fishing. During these workshops, the indicator is used a tool to understand the situation within the countries, all the while ensuring that there is a clear understanding of the questions or any other technical aspects relevant to this indicator.

Furthermore, once the user has completed the questionnaire, the user is able to extract a report of the indicator detailing their responses to the relevant questions and the corresponding scoring. The questionnaire respondent will then be able to validate the indicator score, which will in turn be automatically stored onto FAO databases. This system has been put in place, not only to ensure that no mistakes were made during the completion of the questionnaire but also to ensure transparency of the indicator process.

Data sources

Description:

For the complete list of questions used for this indicator, please refer to appendix 1.

The questionnaire is sent out to all FAO member States on a biennial basis. The questions used for this indicator will be included into the Committee on Fisheries Questionnaire for monitoring the implementation of the 1995 FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and related instruments.

Data availability

Description:

The data required for this indicator is not currently available. It will become available in early 2018 after the closure of the 2017/18 edition of the Questionnaire for monitoring the implementation of the 1995 FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. Thereafter it will be collected regularly every two years through the Questionnaire for monitoring the implementation of the 1995 FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

Time series:

2017 (When available will become baseline)

Disaggregation:

Due to nature of indicator, there will only be one score per country which could then be aggregated regionally or globally.

Calendar

Data collection:

Current data collection cycle: November 2017 – February 2018

Next data collection cycle: November 2019 – February 2020.

Data release:

Current data collection cycle: April-June 2018

Next data collection cycle: April-June 2020

Data providers

Data is typically provided by the National Fishery Ministries/departments.

Data compilers

FAO

References

URL:

SDG 14.6.1: http://www.fao.org/sustainable-development-goals/indicators/14.6.1/en/

Appendix 1: Questions and scoring

[machine readable image pending]

Appendix 2: Example indicator scoring

The general question ascertain the applicability of the instruments to a State.

- Country A is a coastal State, port State and flag State with high levels of implementation of instruments to combat IUU fishing.
- Country B is a coastal State, port State and flag State with very low levels of implementation of instruments to combat IUU fishing, however it still scores some points for initiating the processes of becoming a party to certain agreements and base implementation of UNCLOS.
- Country C is a coastal State and port State but does not flag any vessels conducting fishing or fishing related activities. It is not a party to any of the agreements but has a high level of implementation of instruments to combat IUU fishing to which it is applicable.

The table on the next page shows hypothetical responses for this three countries, the scores that they achieve with these responses and finally the bands that these scores translate into.

[machine readable image pending]

Related indicators

SDG 1, SDG 2, SDG 5, SDG 12, SDG 13, SDG 14.2/4/5/6/7/c