



Policy Action and Implementation Activities to Combat IUU Fishing in Myanmar

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Myanmar Fisheries Context

Coastline

2,832 km

Marine EEZ

486,000 km²

Four Principal Fishing Grounds

Rakhine, Ayeyarwady, Mon, Tanintharyi

Department of Fisheries (DOF Myanmar)

The DOF leads fisheries conservation, food security and sustainable sector development under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation.

- ❑ 15 Region/State Fisheries Departments
- ❑ Four fisheries training centres and one institute
- ❑ Research, management and aquaculture divisions



Policy Implementation and Regional Alignment

Existing Legal Foundation

- Myanmar Marine Fisheries Law (1990) and its amendments.
- Port entry and inspections follow national administrative procedures.
- DOF reviews and updates these laws to meet international standards.
- Foreign fishing vessel licences have been suspended since the 2015–2016 fishing season.

National Plan of Action on IUU Fishing

The DOF Myanmar identifies implementation of the NPOA–IUU as a core sector plan

Regional Coordination and information sharing

- ASEAN Network for Combating IUU Fishing (AN–IUU)
- SEAFDEC technical cooperation
- Cooperation with Thailand DOF on port State measures (verifying PMDs, catch certificates and carrier vessel information)
- Sharing the list of fishing and carrier vessels measuring 24 m and above on the RFVR Database



Key Implementation Indicators (2025–2026)



2,824

Licensed Offshore Fishing Vessels



9,070

Licensed Inshore Fishing and carrier Vessels



Active VMS Deployment

Offshore fishing & carrier
3,687

Inshore carrier
193



ENFORCEMENT

57 Cases

IUU Violations Detected & Actioned

Section 25(a)
Myanmar Marine
Fisheries Law (1990),



Fishery Product Exports Total

463,788 MT

Volume Weight

\$689.15M

Export Value (USD)



National MCS Implementation and PSM

Licensing and Registration

Comprehensive licensing for inshore and offshore fishing vessels.

Mandatory vessel marking and identification.

Vessel Monitoring (VMS)

Operational VMS Control Center in Naypyidaw and 5 coastal sub-centres.

Full coverage for offshore fishing vessels since 2020.

Checks and Inspection

Strict check-in/ check out protocols.

Inspection of fishing logbooks, sailing orders, and gears at designated ports.

Enforcement Action

Destruction of illegal fishing vessels.

Prosecution of domestic and foreign vessel violations.

Port State Measures

Myanmar participates in the PSMA Global Information Exchange System (GIES) for the implementation of PSMA agreement.

Designated ports currently handle domestic vessels landing only.

Foreign fishing vessels are not allowed to enter Myanmar ports without permission.



Traceability, Evidence and Market Controls

Current Implementation

- Basic catch, landing and transfer records are maintained
- Food-safety, inspection and export-control requirements are in place
- Documentation and digitalization are yet uniform across all fisheries and landing sites.

Next steps for Myanmar

- Strengthen designated landing points with basic landing records
- Common data fields linking license, VMS, landing and export records
- Progressive digitization of supply-chain records
- Extend traceability to freshwater fisheries

Practical priorities

- Standardize minimum catch and landing data.
- Link landing, processing and export records
- Strengthen document verification and risk based inspection
- Begin digitalization through selected fisheries and pilot locations
- Provide training and technical support to relevant stakeholders



Capacity and Transshipment

Capacity Building

Strengthen officers, inspectors and communities through practical training.

- Fisheries institute and training center
- SEAFDEC regional programs
- Technical and vocational skills

Transshipment control

Monitor at-sea transfers and close loopholes that enable unreported catch.

- Track high-risk activities
- Train inspection officers
- Strengthen legal provision



Current Challenges and Practical Responses

CHALLENGE 01

Surveillance & Resources

Large marine areas,
remote coastal, limited
staff and high patrol costs

PRACTICAL RESPONSE

Use risk-based patrol planning, vessel
tracking alerts and structured reporting
from coastal communities.

CHALLENGE 02

Data and system interoperability:

Vessel, licensing, port, catch
and enforcement data are not
yet connected in one frame.

PRACTICAL RESPONSE

Adopt common data fields and standard
operating procedures through a phased
digital information system

CHALLENGE 03

Traceability and Catch Documentation:

Informal landing and
trading channels make fish
origin verification difficult.

PRACTICAL RESPONSE

Enforce designated landing points, basic
catch documentation and progressive
supply-chain digitization.

CHALLENGE 04

Legal Enforcement & Evidence:

Inspection findings lack
standardized evidence
compilation, chain of custody
package and legal officers.

PRACTICAL RESPONSE

Use evidence checklists and specialized
legal training for inspectors.



National Priorities and Requested Support

National Priorities

1 Data and Information Systems

Build reliable, interoperable and timely fisheries data and enforcement information frameworks.

2 HR and Institutional Coordination

Deploy highly trained personnel and established clear inter agency operational procedures.

3 Enforcement and Financial Capacity

Secure sustainable operational resources for patrols, inspections, evidence collection and legal follow-up

Request for Regional Support

1 Capacity Building and Training

Provide operational training on VMS/MCS, port inspection, traceability, evidence management, and prosecution.

2 Technical Guidance and Standards

Develop common data standards, strengthen information-sharing channels, and establish a methodology to estimate IUU economic losses.

3 Practical Tools and SOPs

Implement standard operating procedures and practical tools for foreign-vessel control and transshipment monitoring.

4 Institutional Cooperation

Maintain active contact points for the rapid exchange of time-sensitive data on suspected vessels and transboundary cases.



Myanmar Way Forward

Short term

- Advance the Union Fisheries Law process
- Prioritize vessel registration and VMS coverage

Focus: legal foundation and immediate surveillance

Indicators: vessel registry updated; % of offshore and inshore vessels with active VMS

Medium term

- Operationalize catch documentation and traceability
- Connect with regional MCS information networks

Focus: traceability and regional cooperation

Indicators: catch documents verified; cases exchanged regionally

Long term

- Scale up community co-management models
- Institutionalize continuous performance review

Focus: sustainability and community resilience

Indicators: communities under co-management; annual performance review held



Conclusion

1 Stronger policy

Modern laws, reliable data and consistent enforcement are the foundation of sustainable fisheries.

2 Collaboration is essential

Regional cooperation helps Myanmar detect, deter and respond to IUU activities beyond national waters.

3 Implementation must be practical

MCS, traceability, community participation and capacity building must work together.



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