ASEAN MCS IMPLEMENTATION COMMON ISSUES & CHALLENGES

- Regional Workshop on MCS for Combating IUU Fishing
- Bangkok, Thailand | February 2026
- Based on inputs from ASEAN Member States
- Focus: Strengthening, Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS)

PROVEN APPROACHES – READY FOR ROLL OUT!

ASEAN MCS IMPLEMENTATION COMMON ISSUES & CHALLENGES (OVERALL SITUATION)

- MCS frameworks are established across ASEAN
- Implementation remains uneven and fragmented
- Strong policies but limited operational effectiveness
- Key gap: Policy design vs implementation capacity

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1.1 NATIONAL CHALLENGES: CAPACITY & RESOURCES

- Limited surveillance coverage (EEZ gaps)
- Insufficient patrol assets and monitoring systems
- Human resource constraints (inspectors, analysts)
- Budget limitations for operations and technology

🔴 Limited patrol vessels & fuel
🔴 Large EEZ, low patrol frequency

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1.2 NATIONAL CHALLENGES: GOVERANCE & COMPLIANCE

- Weak inter-agency coordination
- Incomplete legal enforcement
- Low compliance at local level
- Gaps in vessel registration and traceability

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1.3 NATIONAL CHALLENGES: TECHNOLOGY & ENFOREMENT

- Partial adoption of VMS, AIS, e-logbooks
- Weak system integration
- Challenges in enforcement and sanctions
- High prevalence of small-scale fisheries

🔴 Incomplete VMS / AIS coverage
🔴 Systems not integrated

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2.1 REGIONAL CHALLENGES

- Limited real-time data sharing
- Inconsistent MCS standards across countries
- Transboundary nature of IUU fishing
- Uneven capacity among ASEAN Member States
- Cooperation remains ad hoc

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2.2 REGIONAL GAPS OVERVIEW

CAPACITY

GOVERANCE

RESOURCES

TECHNOLOGY

DATA SHARING

REGIONAL COOPERATION

3. COMPARATIVE MATRIX (SUMMARY)

Country Group	Key Challenges	Needs	Priority Support
Advanced (TH, ID, VN)	Tech integration, enforcement	Advanced analytics	Digital integration
Mid-level (MY, PH)	Coordination, traceability	System upgrade	Capacity building
Emerging (CA, MM, BU)	Legal, coordination gaps	Institutional strengthening	Technical assistance
Small-scale (LAO, TL)	No systems, low capacity	Basic MCS systems	Foundational support
All AMS	Data sharing gaps	Regional platform	ASEAN coordination

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4. RECOMMENDATIONS: NATIONAL LEVEL

- Strengthen human and institutional capacity for MCS
- Enhance surveillance systems
- Accelerate digitalization (VMS, AIS, e-logbooks)
- Strengthen legal enforcement and compliance systems
- Improve traceability (registration, licensing, catch documentation)
- Enhance inter-agency coordination mechanisms
- Engage small-scale fisheries through community-based approaches
- Increase sustainable financing for MCS

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5. RECOMMENDATIONS: REGIOANL LEVEL

- Develop ASEAN-wide MCS information sharing platform
  - Focal point / one-system for ASEAN -> concern on data-sharing
- Harmonize MCS standards, SOPs, and procedures
- Strengthen joint patrols and cross-border cooperation
- Establish regional capacity building programmes
- Promote technology sharing and innovation
- Strengthen regional governance and trust
- Support implementation of international instruments (e.g. PSMA)

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COMBATING ILLEGAL FISHING IN THE ASEAN