Regional Workshop on Crimes in the Fisheries Sector
Regional Plan of Action to Promote Responsible Fishing Practices, including Combating Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing in the Region (RPOA-IUU)
14-16 April 2026
Bali, Indonesia

Summary Report

General Overview

A Regional Workshop on Crimes in the Fisheries Sector was held in Bali, Indonesia, from April 14 to 16, 2026, in a face-to-face mode. The workshop was attended by 7 of 11 RPOA-IUU Participating Countries (Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and Timor-Leste). The Australian National Centre for Ocean Resources and Security (ANCORS)-University of Wollongong, INTERPOL, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC), the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC), and the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) participated as experts in the workshop.

In collaboration with the International Monitoring, Control, and Surveillance (IMCS) Network, the workshop aimed to strengthen understanding, coordination, and operational capacity to address crimes in the fisheries sector through enhanced intelligence-sharing, legal frameworks, and cooperative enforcement mechanisms. The workshop was generously funded by Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO), which also provided technical expertise through dedicated representatives during the workshop.

Opening Session

The remarks from the RPOA-IUU Secretariat were delivered by the Executive Director, Mr Saiful Umam. First, he expressed his sincere gratitude to the Government of Canada for its generous support and partnership. Then, he highlighted that the definition of IUU fishing, fisheries-related crimes, and crimes associated with the fisheries sectors has broad expression. Through this workshop, he added that the workshop would help fishery officers to build capacities and skills for addressing the complexity of crimes in the fisheries sectors. In addition, he mentioned that the workshop was designed to strengthen the legal understanding of hot pursuit and the importance of coordinated regional enforcement mechanism.

RPOA-IUU Secretariat

The Vice Executive Director of the RPOA-IUU Secretariat, Mr Yudhistira Rizky Abdillah, identified key trends in the sector that include vessels operating without registered nationalities, unauthorized catch transfers at sea, trafficking in persons, and smuggling of illegal goods. A significant 2024 case study involving the vessels FV RUN ZENG 03 and 05 highlights the success

of effective information exchange, as these vessels were tracked from Indonesian to Australian and Papua New Guinean waters, ultimately leading to their seizure and the imposition of criminal sanctions. To achieve more deterrent sanctions in the future, the RPOA-IUU is considering more coordinated enforcement mechanisms, such as a regional hot pursuit framework and a comprehensive data-sharing protocol.

The second presentation session delivered by Ms. Dita Primaoktasa, as Senior Program Officer of the RPOA-IUU Secretariat, outlined the strategic priorities of the Regional Plan of Action to Promote Responsible Fishing Practices, including Combating IUU Fishing (RPOA-IUU) for improving regional cooperation and information exchange. A central objective is the development of a comprehensive data-sharing mechanism that categorizes information into strategic, tactical, and operational tiers to support everything from long-term policy planning to immediate day-to-day management. This mechanism prioritizes six key data types: fisheries catch, vessel tracking (AIS), port details, IUU fishing reports, market trade data, and environmental ecological data. Additionally, the RPOA-IUU maintains a Watch List platform that aggregates detailed records of vessels engaged in illicit activities—such as the Neptune and Yu Fong 168—sourced from member nations and regional management organizations to facilitate effective responses.

RPOA-IUU participating countries have also established a formal collective commitment to take appropriate coastal, flag, and port state measures against vessels without nationality, recognizing that such vessels operate without governance and undermine regional security. By implementing these core elements and sharing lessons from regional incidents, the RPOA-IUU seeks to eliminate legal loopholes and strengthen uncoordinated law enforcement efforts.

The Australian National Centre for Ocean Resources and Security (ANCORS)

Associate Professor Camille Goodman, defines jurisdiction as a State's authority under international law to make, apply, and enforces rules regarding person and property. It is divided into two primary types:

- Prescriptive Jurisdiction: The capacity of a state to make and apply laws; this can sometimes extend extraterritorially.
- Enforcement Jurisdiction: The capacity to compel compliance with those laws; this is strictly territorial unless a specific treaty or custom allows otherwise (the "Lotus rule").

This session also outlines that coastal States can undertake enforcement action in relation to a range of crimes in the fisheries sector. The enforcement can vary:

- Coastal States can act against foreign ships if they are not in 'innocent passage' or are involved in FISC (Fiscal, Immigration, Sanitary, or Customs) offenses within the territorial area.
- Coastal States have exclusive rights to enforce rules regarding living resources (fishing) and environmental protection.

She also explained that on the High Seas, Flag States have exclusive jurisdiction over their vessels. Non-flag States can only board or enforce laws in exceptional cases, such as ' hot pursuit' or through specific international treaties like the UN Fish Stocks Agreement.

Provision of Hot Pursuit

The legal framework for hot pursuit, as set out in Article 111 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), provides a provision for a coastal state to enforce its laws against foreign vessels beyond its maritime zones. The hot pursuit applies when a coastal State has 'good reason to believe,' and the offences occur within internal waters, archipelagic waters, the territorial sea, contiguous zone, continental shelf, or the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

To maintain its legal standing, a pursuit must remain uninterrupted and will terminate if the pursued ships enter the territorial waters of their own state or a third state. Another requirement for the hot pursuit is that the asset that is used for pursuing should be marked by the government service.

INTERPOL

Mr. Paulo Alves, as Criminal Intelligence Analyst, explained INTERPOL Policing Capabilities that cover the detection and investigation of transnational crimes through advanced database, analytics, and forensic tools. The operational outputs of this framework include:

- Intelligence and Real-time Coordination
    - Global Interconnectivity (I- 24/7): continuous data exchange through secure systems ensures law enforcement maintains real-time situational awareness of emerging global threats
    - Cross-Border Synergy: real-time information sharing across 196 member countries facilitates seamless joint investigations and rapid responses to multi-jurisdictional crimes
    - The Notice Systems: international alert mechanisms, such as Red Notices, enable the efficient tracking, location, and provisional arrest of high-profile fugitives globally
- Identification and Forensic Analysis
    - Biometric and asset tracking: access to global databases, including biometrics, travel documents, and vehicles
    - Advanced forensic support: Data extraction and forensic analysis capabilities strengthen evidence gathering and case development.
- Specialized Investigative Outcomes
    - Targeted crimes support: analytical tools to enhance the capacity to dismantle complex criminal networks involved in illegal fishing, human trafficking, and organized crimes

    - Bridging legal gaps: Standardised systems and collaboration frameworks help overcome legal and operational barriers between countries.
- Institutional Strengthening
    - Capacity Building: Targeted training programs elevate the technical skills of local law enforcement, ensuring they can effectively utilize international policing tools.
    - Operational Effectiveness: By improving technical and forensic capacity, agencies increase their overall success rate in complex investigative outcomes

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC)

Ms. Frances Damazo, as National Program Officer, identified three distinct of overlapping categories of illegality in the fisheries sectors. First category, illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing that encompasses primary fishing offences, such as fishing without a valid license, utilizing prohibited gear, and ignoring regulations. Meanwhile, crimes associated with the fisheries sector is that crimes that is not closely linked to fishing operations; however, it happens in the fishing vessels as a shadow, for example, drug trafficking, weapon trafficking, and piracy. On the other hand, crimes in the fisheries value chain are the offences that is not linked to IUU fishing but involving in fishing operation.

The presentation also highlighted the type of crimes that occur across various maritime zones. The location of a crimes determines jurisdiction and enforcement capacity. Beyond the high seas, no single country can control it. Damazo emphasized that international cooperation is essential to monitor, investigate, and prosecute maritime crimes effectively.

UNODC, in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), has developed *Combating Crimes in the Fisheries Sector: A Guide to Good Legislative Practices.* This legislative guide can be used by States as a tool for reviewing, amending, or drafting relevant national legislation to combat crimes in the fisheries sector.

To address these complexities, the UNODC provides technical assistances and capacity building programs, concerning on value chain analysis, legislative assistance, inter-agency cooperation, corruption risk management, and policy awareness.

Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA)

Ms. Kathryn Benning, as Capability Development Manager, presented national and regional intelligence briefings that are important to support Monitoring, Control, and Surveillance (MCS) efforts. The fisheries intelligence serves as a foundation for investigative practices because it provides analytical insight to identify and address the crimes challenges. Fisheries intelligence information needs to be shared to relevant States as supplementary data for conducting a targeted inspection and thorough investigation of offences. This session also emphasised the importance of structured intelligence products, sharing best practice of knowledge, and the RPOA-IUU workplan being strategically linked to regional IUU fishing threats

and priorities. Information-sharing is also considered a foundation of cooperation when addressing crimes in the fisheries sector, needs a targeted, secure, and timely data.

Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Centre (SEAFDEC)

Mr. Kongpathai Saraphainavich, as the Head of Training and Research Supporting Division, presented the profile of the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC). SEAFDEC is an autonomous inter-governmental body established in 1967, serving 11 Member Countries with a vision to ensure sustainable fisheries management and regional food security. To combat Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, SEAFDEC has implemented several technological and policy-driven tools, most notably the Regional Fishing Vessels Record (RFVR) and the electronic ASEAN Catch Documentation Scheme (eACDS).

The RFVR functions as a collaborative online database that shares 28 Key Data Elements—such as vessel registration, ownership, engine specifications, and fishing gear—for vessels 24 meters and larger to enhance transparency and inspection capabilities. Complementing this, the eACDS provides a digital framework for "fishing to plate" traceability, utilizing web and mobile applications to streamline catch reporting, port controls, and market trading across the region. Between 2020 and 2025, SEAFDEC's strategic priorities have centered on strengthening Monitoring, Control, and Surveillance (MCS) efforts, improving traceability, and facilitating legal reforms through 46 capacity-building activities that have engaged over 1,400 participants.

These initiatives focus on critical operational areas such as VMS analysis to support port inspections, transshipment monitoring, and the application of international frameworks like UNCLOS. Looking toward 2026 and beyond, SEAFDEC is poised to expand its reach through new collaborative projects, including the ASEAN-JICA capacity-building project and regional programs aimed at integrating advanced technology into fisheries governance across the Indo-Pacific. The 2026 implementation plan further details 15 planned sessions specifically targeting MCS, Port State Measures (PSM), and the estimation of IUU losses.

Conclusions

During the conclusion session, the RPOA-IUU Secretariat presented a way forward for the workshop. It was outlined that the RPOA-IUU Secretariat intends to continue the Data-sharing Mechanism Working Group's Activities, enhance its Vessel Watchlist and conduct specialized intelligence training with Australian support. Furthermore, participating countries are encouraged to utilize coordinated enforcement mechanisms to effectively deter IUU fishing and crimes associated with the fisheries sector. The workshop's findings will be reported to this year's Coordination Committee Meeting (CCM) to formally incorporate these recommendations into the 2027 Work Plan.

Regional Workshop on Crimes in the Fisheries Sector
14-16 April 2026

Participant List

No	Country/Organization	Representatives	Position	Email
1	Australia	Eliza Kimlin	Senior Fisheries Officer	Eliza.kimlin@afma.gov.au
	Australia	Grace Becker-Scott	Senior Maritime Domain Awareness Officer	grace.becker-scott@afma.gov.au
2	Brunei Darussalam	Mr. Surdi Erwandi Mansor	Senior Fisheries Licensing Officer	surdi.mansor@fisheries.gov.bn
	Brunei Darussalam	Mr. Pg Md Hafiz Radzuan Pg Jamaluddin	Senior Fisheries Licensing Officer	hafiz.jamaluddin@fisheries.gov.bn
3	Cambodia	Monirith Kao	Director of Marine Fisheries Administration Inspectorate	kaomonirith@yahoo.com
4	Indonesia	Sirman Rajagukguk	Fisheries inspector	sirmanrajagukguk9494@gmail.com
	Indonesia	Airlangga Angga	Investigation/Marine inspector	angga.kkp@gmail.com
5	Malaysia	Abdul Jabbar Mohamad Yusuff	Senior Fisheries Officer	abdul_jabbar@dof.gov.my
	Malaysia	Nur Fadhlina Chan Binti Mahadie Chan	Fisheries Officer	fadhlina@dof.gov.my
6	Thailand	Mr. Rawee Rittichai	Senior Fisheries Officer	Ritti1972@gmail.com
	Thailand	Ms. Punnatut Kangrang	Fishery Biologist	aui_kangrang@hotmail.com
7	Timor-Leste	Pedro Rodrigues	National Directorate of Inspection for Fisheries	MCS.PESKAMOR@GMAIL.COM

8	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC)	Frances Damazo	National Program Officer	frances.damazo@un.org
9	Australian National Centre for Ocean Resources and Security (ANCORS)	Camille Goodman	Associate Professor	cgoodman@uow.edu.au
10	Australian Fisheries Management	Kathryn Benning	Capability Development Manager7 Authority (AFMA)	kathryn.benning@afma.gov.au
11	Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC)	Yanida Suthipol	IUU Fishing Countermeasure Section Head	yanida@seafdec.org
	Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC)	Kongpathai Saraphaivanich	Training and Research Supporting Division Head	kongpathai@seafdec.org
12	Interpol	Paulo Alves	Criminal Intelligence Analyst	p.alves@interpol.int
13	RPOA-IUU Secretariat	Saiful Umam	Executive Secretary of the Directorate General of Surveillance for Marine and Fisheries Resources/Executive Director	saiful.umam@kkp.go.id
	RPOA-IUU Secretariat	Yudhistira Rizky Abdillah	Vice Executive Director	yudhistirarizky@gmail.com
	RPOA-IUU Secretariat	Erlinda Q. Aina	Senior Program Officer	Erlinda.aina@gmail.com
	RPOA-IUU Secretariat	Dita Primaoktasa	Senior Program Officer	dprimaoktasa@gmail.com
	RPOA-IUU Secretariat	Fariez Luhur Prihastama	Program Officer	fariezluhurp@gmail.com
14	Department of Fisheries and Ocean Canada	Dustin De Gagne	Senior Program Officer	Dustin.DeGagne@dfo-mpo.gc.ca
	Department of Fisheries and Ocean Canada	Dan Vo	Field Supervisor	Dan.Vo@dfo-mpo.gc.ca