REPORT TO CONGRESS

METRICS FOR EVALUATING THE SEAFOOD IMPORT MONITORING PROGRAM

Developed pursuant to: Joint Explanatory Statement accompanying the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020 (Public Law 116-93)
Paul Doremus, Acting Assistant Administrator
National Marine Fisheries Service
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Benjamin Friedman
Deputy Under Secretary for Operations
Performing the Duties of Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere
and NOAA Administrator
“Further, NOAA shall evaluate, within the biannual report to Congress on IUU fishing, SIMP’s effectiveness regarding (1) the preservation of stocks of at-risk species around the world and (2) the protection of American consumers from seafood fraud; and, within 180 days of enactment of this Act, shall report to the Committees on the metrics it intends to use for such evaluation.”

THIS REPORT RESPONDS TO THE COMMITTEES’ REQUEST.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Executive Summary</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Proposed Metrics</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Metrics Associated with Audits</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Identify and Minimize Trade Reporting Anomalies</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Metrics Associated with Harvest Documentation</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Seafood Import Monitoring Program (SIMP) was designed and established as a traceability program. It is founded on the concept and presumption that comprehensively documenting the supply chain for SIMP species, from the harvest event to U.S. importation, ensures that the imports are not the product of illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing. Within the biannual report to Congress on IUU fishing, The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s (NOAA) National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) will provide an evaluation of the effectiveness of SIMP. Evaluating the effectiveness of SIMP involves the screening of data related to the product supply chain to identify insufficient and unsubstantiated documentation and further deter the potential import of improperly documented harvests and shipments. In this report, we describe proposed metrics for evaluating SIMP for the biannual report to Congress on IUU fishing.

II. PROPOSED METRICS

There is currently no recognized or identified methodology to accurately measure the global volume and rate of IUU fishing and therefore no actual way to evaluate the impact of the SIMP program on reducing IUU fishing and seafood fraud. Likewise, there is no way to determine how much IUU fish and fish product is being deterred from entry to the U.S. with certainty. The success of SIMP must therefore be based upon metrics that support the conclusion that documenting a valid supply chain as well as screening import data in a manner designed to elicit the submission of valid documentation provides assurance that U.S. seafood imports are not fueling or supporting IUU fishing activity. If the United States, one of the largest seafood importers in the world, is not importing and consuming IUU fish and fish products, it can reasonably be concluded that SIMP is significantly reducing IUU fishing.

The following metrics are being established to measure the effectiveness of SIMP.

A. Metrics Associated with Audits

Metrics associated with audits provide information on the strength and integrity of the compliance with respect to program documentation requirements and help us determine SIMP’s effectiveness by ensuring that SIMP is reaching all aspects – the people, activities, and products – of the supply chain. Confidence in the supply chain ensures that minimal IUU fish and fish product is infiltrating the import stream.

- Audit compliance – This metric would set a target for the percent of SIMP import filings audited that are determined to be in compliance with SIMP requirements. Audit compliance demonstrates the understanding and awareness of reporting and record keeping requirements by importers, and allows us to validate that importers are documenting a credible import supply chain. This metric also helps to plan and direct communications, outreach, and educational needs. It may also help us determine targeted audits and enforcement initiatives. The measurement for this
metric will be determined through the comparison of audit results to date and ongoing performance going forward.

- Audits completed – This metric would set a quarterly target number for audits to conduct as a percent of entries filed. The number and percentage of entries filed provides information on the scope of activity that represents our sample of audit checks to ensure that our audit numbers represent a statistically satisfactory sample. SIMP audits are randomly selected each week. The scope and complexity of each audit can vary significantly. In the interest of ensuring that our sample size is maintained and “on par” with SIMP objectives, we will routinely monitor our target numbers. Target numbers will be determined through an evaluation of ongoing capacity for work assessment compared to the level of staffing available and engaged in conducting the audits and the pace of overall entry filings.

- Importers audited – This metric would set a target to ensure that a targeted percentage of all permit holders importing SIMP products are audited in a year. This metric allows us to reach a specific percentage of all importers dealing in SIMP species. Though the overall sample of import entry filings audited will realistically represent only a small portion of the many thousands of import shipments to the United States, a focus on permitted importers provides a picture of the activity of a large percentage of those who import SIMP species. Focus on the importers should allow us to audit the majority of SIMP importers while minimizing numbers of auditors and audits conducted.

- Targeted audits – Metrics resulting from targeted audits provide more detailed information on species and product source.
  - Species audited – This metric would help us determine how many or what percentage of all imports audited (through targeted audits) should be assigned to each SIMP species. Once we have this information, we can more clearly determine where to focus tailored outreach and communication efforts and generate more intentional guidance that will clarify what is necessary for species-specific supply chains.
  - Product source audits – To ensure that we are receiving information on product source for a given fishery, we will structure an audit profile to make sure that a predetermined number of audits from given fisheries are conducted. We can measure our success by whether or not we are conducting audits that are representative of the supply chain and product sources. This information will be used to determine the number of targeted audits that will be conducted each quarter.

B. Identify and Minimize Trade Reporting Anomalies

Metrics associated with trade reporting anomalies will be identified, qualified, and quantified through the ongoing use of analytics. Information technology will be used to identify problem areas and deficiencies with documentation and to strengthen awareness and understanding of global trade and international requirements (laws, regulations, and permitting) and to enhance overall compliance with SIMP requirements. Use of the metrics will inform actions that will be taken to enhance the deterrence to import IUU...
fish and fish product. This capability requires that NMFS establish and implement a cloud-based analytics system to assess and scrutinize SIMP product trade flows to model and identify key issues and anomalies in reporting and trade. Analytics using technology such as machine learning and artificial intelligence will enable the recognition of deficient reporting and potential fraudulent practices. Being able to recognize and quantify these metrics will strengthen overall assurance that U.S. imports do not include IUU fish and fish product.

C. Metrics Associated with Harvest Documentation

Metrics associated with harvest documentation allow us to determine how and where SIMP product originated. We will establish and develop a repository of known/identified foreign fisheries and foreign fisheries laws, permits, and other harvest authorization requirements for SIMP species for use in confirming the legality of the harvest. We will assess the overall list of SIMP species, create an initial repository, and continue to track known/identified sources and known/identified harvest requirements. This process will also allow us to measure the overall number of imports so that we can more definitively document harvest authorization – and is important to determining the legality of harvest.