

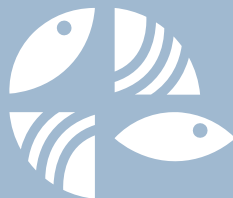
Fisheries Transparency Evaluation

*Transparency review and recommendations for
Fishing Industry Association (FIA) in Papua New
Guinea (PNG)*

February 2026

Public Report

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List of Acronyms

AIS: Automatic Identification System

BFAR: Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (Philippines)

CMM: Conservation and Management Measure

CTA: Cape Town Agreement

EM: Electronic Monitoring

FAO: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

FIA PNG: Fishing Industry Association Papua New Guinea

FFA: Forum Fisheries Agency

FOI: Freedom of Information

FOIA: Freedom of Information Act

GFW: Global Fishing Watch

ILO: International Labour Organization

IUU: Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (fishing)

MCS: Monitoring, Control and Surveillance

MLA: Maritime Labour Act (Philippines)

MOU: Memorandum of Understanding

NFA: National Fisheries Authority (PNG)

NGO: Non-Governmental Organization

PNA: Parties to the Nauru Agreement

PNG: Papua New Guinea

PSMA: Port State Measures Agreement

RTI: Right to Information

TAC: Total Allowable Catch

UN: United Nations

UNCLOS: United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

UNFSA: United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement

VDS: Vessel Day Scheme

VMS: Vessel Monitoring System

WCPFC: Commission for the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean

WTO: World Trade Organization

1. Introduction

About this report

This report is written by Eva van Heukelom from Natural Justice, an advisory incorporated in the Netherlands (www.naturaljustice.nl). The aim of this report is to evaluate the transparency, as defined by the Coalition for Fisheries Transparency (CFT), provided by Fisheries Industry Association (FIA) PNG and its members. It serves as an additional transparency resource by capturing key membership data that are not explicitly displayed in FIA PNG's public materials. By consolidating member information, vessel affiliations, and relevant governance contexts, the report aims to illuminate how membership practices align with industry standards, regional reporting requirements, and ongoing transparency initiatives.

The analysis focuses on FIA PNG members, the vessels they own or operate, and the extent to which member data is reflected in FIA PNG resources versus external reporting regimes (e.g. regional organisations). It also identifies transparency gaps at a policy or legislation level and recommends practical steps to improve public access to accurate, timely information. **Please consider the limitations & scope section on this page before considering the results in Chapter 4.**

For any comments or questions about this report, stakeholders are encouraged to reach out to Natural Justice directly via eva@naturaljustice.nl.

Sources and methodology

Grounded in publicly available information, this report deploys a multi-source methodology to assess FIA PNG membership transparency. The analysis synthesises information from FIA PNG's own disclosures (membership and reporting pages), regional and national legislation and policy documents from PNG, the Philippines, and Taiwan, and cross-referenced data from the WCPFC, NFA, and FFA ecosystems. The approach includes cross-checking vessel flag information against WCPFC records to validate compliance and reporting consistency for tuna operations within PNG's jurisdiction and incorporating insights from interviews with FIA PNG staff and relevant public policy materials. This combination of primary sources (official FIA PNG materials and interviews) and secondary sources (legislation, regional bodies, and certification data) support a high-level view of transparency practices and identifies policy gaps for future improvements.

Limitations & Scope

While this methodology offers valuable insights into transparency provided in PNG's fisheries by FIA PNG's members, several limitations should be acknowledged:

- **Focus on transparency as defined by CFT:** As a member of the Coalition for Fisheries Transparency (CFT), the objective was to review the policies and applicable legislation relevant to FIA PNG's members against the CFT Charter. The study does not interpret transparency as the public availability of all information, nor does it aim to provide a comprehensive review of all policies applicable to FIA PNG or its members.
- **Desktop review:** The review was largely based on publicly available documentation, supplemented by some confidential information provided by FIA PNG to support verification. However, the desktop-based nature of the review limited the ability to independently verify documentation, and no on-site visits were conducted.
- **Limited review of evidence of implementation:** The scope of this study is limited to reviewing applicable legislation and policies. It does not seek to verify the effectiveness of implementation of these laws or policies, which would require a significantly larger study conducted over a longer period of time. The focus is on understanding the policy framework for implementation and identifying potential opportunities for improvement. The study does not make claims regarding guarantees of implementation.
- **Language:** Some relevant legislation was available only in Mandarin (Taiwan) and was therefore reviewed using unofficial translations.

2. About Fisheries Industry Association and Papua New Guinea's Fisheries

About FIA PNG

FIA PNG was established to represent and advance Papua New Guinea's fishing industry through coordinated engagement with government, industry, and international partners. The organisation was founded in 1991 and has more publicly been demonstrating the formal collaboration of its members since at least the late 2010s. This collaboration included a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the National Fisheries Authority (NFA). This background frames FIA PNG as a sector-wide platform that seeks to harmonise private-sector action with national and regional sustainability objectives, supporting governance, market access, and improved social and environmental performance across PNG's fisheries value chain. The organisation's public materials emphasise stakeholder engagement, certification programs, and ongoing reporting as core mechanisms for transparency and continuous improvement.

Introduction to FIA PNG Membership

A membership list of FIA PNG can be found on their website [<https://www.fia-png.com/membership>], with subpages providing further detail on each membership category (e.g. tuna or lobster fishing, fishing or processing). Among these members, some operate vessels flagged to different countries, reflecting the cross-border nature of fleets active in PNG's fisheries. Overall, FIA PNG's membership includes a range of commercial fishing and processing entities, many of which operate across both the tuna and lobster sectors.

Lobster fisheries in Papua New Guinea are characterised as inshore activities. This means fishing occurs relatively close to coastlines and within relatively shallow waters where access is typically by small to mid-scale operators and artisanal groups, often with direct local supply chains and domestic processing. In contrast, tuna fisheries are pursued in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and Archipelagic Waters, relying on larger-scale purse seine and longline vessels that operate under national and foreign access arrangements and supply chains that extend regionally. The EEZ covers a nation's 200 nautical mile zone from its coastline, granting exclusive rights to marine resource exploitation, while Archipelagic Waters are semi-enclosed seas included within national jurisdiction, defined by archipelagic state rules that govern passage and fishing within those multi-island waters.

Geographic areas: what they mean

- **Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ):** A maritime zone extending up to 200 nautical miles from the baseline, where the coastal state has sovereign rights for exploring, exploiting, conserving, and managing natural resources. This area is a critical habitat for PNG's offshore tuna fleets and associated international fishing access arrangements.
- **Archipelagic Waters:** Waters enclosed by an archipelago, where the state exercises sovereignty over resources and internal passage; fishing activities in these waters are regulated under national law and archipelagic-specific provisions to balance navigation rights with resource management.
- **Inshore fisheries:** Fisheries conducted close to shore, typically within coastal lagoons, reefs, and nearshore habitats. These fisheries are usually smaller in scale and more directly integrated with local communities and domestic markets, exemplified by lobster operations in PNG.

FIA PNG's Tuna Members

PNG's EEZ is one of the richest tuna fishing zones in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean, attracting significant activity from both domestic fleets and foreign-licensed vessels. Tuna access and management in the region are shaped by two key bodies: the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), which supports Pacific states in sustainable fisheries management, and the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA), which jointly manage the region's purse-seine fishery. A core element of this management is the Vessel Day Scheme, a system that allocates and trades fishing days within PNA waters, helping coastal states control effort, maintain stock sustainability, and secure equitable economic returns.

Note: to ensure accuracy, Natural Justice has cross-checked any information from FIA PNG's vessel list with the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) [Record of Fishing Vessels](#).

FIA PNG Member	Corresponding WCPFC-listed Company	Registered in	Name vessels	Flag vessels	Species	WCPFC Registry
Bluecatch Corporation	Bluecatch Corporation	PHI	Kamilah	PHI	Tuna	Link
			Mavienne	PHI	Tuna	Link
			Veera	PHI	Tuna	Link
			Queen Marilou 777	PHI	Tuna	Link
			Queen Marilou 888	PHI	Tuna	Link
			Queen Marilou 999	PHI	Tuna	Link
Domingo Teng Fishery	Domingo Teng Fishery	PHI	Queen Jenny – 138	PHI	Tuna	Link
			Queen Jina-101	PHI	Tuna	Link
Fairwell Fishery	Fair Bravo	TWN	Fair Bravo No.707	TWN	Tuna	Link
	Fair Discovery Fishery Co Ltd	TWN	New Fair Discovery No.707	TWN	Tuna	Link
	Fair Well Fishery Co Ltd	TWN	Fair Well No.707	TWN	Tuna	Link
	United Bear Fishery (PNG) Ltd	PNG	Viva Bear 707	PNG	Tuna	Link
	United Jaguar Fishery (PNG) Ltd	PNG	Viva Wantwant 707	PNG	Tuna	Link
	Viva Fafa Fishery Co Ltd	TWN	Viva Fafa No.707	TWN	Tuna	Link
	Win Forever Fishery Co Ltd	TWN	Win Forever No.707	TWN	Tuna	Link
	Winmax Fishery (PNG) Ltd	PNG	Viva Eagle 707	PNG	Tuna	Link
	Win Power Fishery Co Ltd	TWN	Win Power No.707	TWN	Tuna	Link
	Win Rich Fishery Co Ltd	TWN	Win Rich No.707	TWN	Tuna	Link
	Win Thaishun Fishery Co Ltd	TWN	Win Thaishun No.707	TWN	Tuna	Link
Frabelle	FFC Subic Seafoods Corporation	PHI	Purple Beauty	PHI	Tuna	Link
			Sunflower 8	PHI	Tuna	Link
			Jasmin 888	PHI	Tuna	Link
	Frabelle	PHI	Vanda 888	PHI	Tuna	Link
			Red Robin	PHI	Tuna	Link
			Gardenia 88	PNG	Tuna	Link

			Golden Sapphire	PNG	Tuna	Link
			Milflores 888	PNG	Tuna	Link
			Purple Lilac	PNG	Tuna	Link
			Kaile 888	PHI	Tuna	Link
			Marita 88	PHI	Tuna	Link
			Red Tulip	PNG	Tuna	Link
	KF PNG Ltd	PNG	Amaryllis 88	PNG	Tuna	Link
Win Far Fishery Group	Long Chuang Fishery Co Ltd	TWN	Win Far No.618	TWN	Tuna	Link
	Long Jin Fishery Co Ltd	TWN	Win Far No.628	TWN	Tuna	Link
	Kuo Chang Fishery Co Ltd	TWN	Win Far No.626	TWN	Tuna	Link
	Kuo Hsiung Fishery Co Ltd	TWN	Win Far No.636	TWN	Tuna	Link
RD Fishing PNG Ltd.	Southern Tuna Sea Fishing Ventures Inc	PHI	Dolores 873	PHI	Tuna	Link
Starcki Venture Corporation	Starcki Venture Corporation	PHI	Treska	PHI	Tuna	Link
			Chenille	PHI	Tuna	Link
			Margarita	PHI	Tuna	Link
Trans-Pacific Journey Fishing Corp (TPJ)	Trans-Pacific Journey Fishing Corp (TPJ)	PHI	Gabrielle L.T.	PHI	Tuna	Link
			Lauren Marie Taylor	PHI	Tuna	Link
			Sophia Martina	PHI	Tuna	Link
			Tobias Miguel	PHI	Tuna	Link
			Joe Turner	PHI	Tuna	Link
			John Fisher	PHI	Tuna	Link
			Belinda	PHI	Tuna	Link
			Papa Resty	PHI	Tuna	Link
			Mama Linda	PHI	Tuna	Link
			Matteo T C	PHI	Tuna	Link
TSP Livestock & Development Corporation	TSP Livestock & Development Corporation	PHI	Queen Evelyn-101	PHI	Tuna	Link
			Princess Janice	PHI	Tuna	Link
			Queen Janice	PHI	Tuna	Link

FIA PNG's Lobster Members

One fishery of particular significance to FIA PNG members is the lobster fishery. This fishery is diver-based and targets the Ornate Rock Lobster (*Panulirus ornatus*). FIA PNG members use NEMO as the monitoring system for this fishery. NEMO is an end-to-end platform built around a mobile-satellite VMS transceiver, with all data feeding into the fisheries monitoring system implemented by NFA. Every dinghy operating in the lobster fishery, as well as other small-scale coastal fisheries in PNG, is equipped with this system.

The following FIA PNG Members fish, process, and/or export lobster:

- Maru United Limited (PNG)
- United Seafoods LTD (PNG)
- Aquila Enterprise Limited (PNG)

3. Overview of relevant legislation

Core Fisheries Frameworks

Papua New Guinea

In 1994 the PNG government introduced the *Fisheries Management Act 1994*, shaping the fisheries management system to secure long-term development and adequate management of the sector. Since then, updated Fisheries Management Acts have followed to further consolidate efforts to maximise the sector while guiding its management by principles of sustainability. Through scaling of MCS system and increased regional and international collaboration, its fisheries management system has continued to become more robust throughout the years. It includes, among others, an enforcement unit, observer programme, and Vessel Monitoring System (VSM) Operations Unit. Most notable policy shift came in 2015, after increased efforts to address IUU-fishing risks. For details about the units making up PNG's Monitoring, Control, and Surveillance system, check out the NFA website: <https://www.fisheries.gov.pg/mcs>

- Core fisheries framework: Fisheries Management Act 1998 and Fisheries Management (Amendment) Act 2015, plus implementing Fisheries Regulations. *Scope of Fisheries Management Act 1998 includes any fishing or fishing related activity. Fishing related activity is defined as including storing, buying, transhipping, processing, or transporting fish or fish products taken from fisheries waters up to the time they are landed (a); and on-shore storing, buying, or processing (b); and refuelling or supplying fishing vessels, selling or supplying fishing equipment or performing other activities in support of fishing and (c); exporting fish or fish product from the country (d) and; engaging in the business of providing agency, consultancy or other similar services for and in relation to fishing or a related activity.*
- Related maritime/safety framework: Merchant Shipping Act 1975; National Oceans Policy Implementation Plan 2024–2030; National Fisheries Authority (NFA) MCS policies.
- International instruments: Party to UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), FAO's Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA) (2018). Signatory (but not ratified) IMO Cape Town Agreement (CTA), ILO Work in Fishing Convention 188 (C-188), and WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies.

Philippines

- Core fisheries framework: Republic Act No. 8550 (Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998) as amended by RA 10654, and implementing BFAR Administrative Orders.
- International instruments: Party to UNCLOS, PSMA (2017), ILO C-188 (2020), and WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies (2024); signatory (but not ratified) CTA.

Taiwan

- Core fisheries framework: Fisheries Act (中華民國漁業法) and subordinate regulations, including the Ordinance to Govern Investment in the Operation of Foreign Fishing Vessels for distant-water fleets.
- International instruments: Not a UN member and therefore not a formal C-188, PSMA or Cape Town Agreement party, but states it aligns port and MCS practices with some requirements. As WTO Member, Taiwan / Chinese Taipei has become a party to the WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies (2025).

Figure 1: Overview signatures and ratification of relevant international agreements

Instrument	PNG - Signed	PNG - Party	PHI - Signed	PHI - Party	TWN - Signed	TWN - Party
UNCLOS (1982)	Yes (1982)	Yes	Yes (1982)	Yes	N/A	N/A
FAO Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA)	Yes (2018)	Yes	Yes (2017)	Yes	N/A	N/A
ILO Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 (C-188)	–	No	–	No	–	N/A
IMO Cape Town Agreement on Fishing Vessel Safety (2012)	Yes	No	Yes	No	N/A	N/A
WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies (2022)	Yes	No	Yes	Yes (2024)	“accepted”	Yes (2025)

4. Comparison with the Charter of the Coalition for Fisheries Transparency

Introduction

The Global Charter for Fisheries Transparency, developed by the Coalition for Fisheries Transparency (CFT), is an internationally recognised framework compiling the recommendations of leading civil society organisations (CSOs) working in fisheries transparency, accountability, and good governance. The Charter sets out **ten core policy principles** spanning vessel information, fishing activity, and fisheries management, aiming to promote best practices, combat illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, and protect fundamental rights in the sector.

FIA PNG, as a member of the Coalition for Fisheries Transparency, aligns its transparency initiatives with the Charter's principles. While the Charter is primarily directed at government adoption and implementation, it also provides a robust reference for evaluating private sector transparency practices within the fisheries supply chain, including tuna and lobster fisheries in PNG's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

Since the Charter addresses transparency responsibilities that fall primarily on involved governments, this assessment first considers the expectations placed on FIA PNG members based on the legal obligations of Papua New Guinea as the coastal State, as well as those imposed by relevant flag States, i.e. Papua New Guinea, Philippines, and Taiwan. In addition to these baseline legal expectations, the review looks at how FIA PNG and its members voluntarily implement further transparency measures to strengthen accountability and align more closely with the Charter's principles. This comparison serves as an evaluation of current practices against international civil society consensus on fisheries transparency, highlighting both regulatory compliance and areas for further progress within PNG's fisheries sector.

Disclaimer: This assessment is based on the Coalition for Fisheries Transparency (CFT) Charter, including its ten principles for fisheries transparency. Any conclusions or recommendations reflect alignment with the CFT Charter and do not represent broader advice from Natural Justice beyond that scope.

Overview of comparison

Dark blue – Higher level of alignment demonstrated (at policy & legislation level)

Blue – Significant level of alignment, with opportunities for improvement identified (at policy & legislation level)

Grey – Limited alignment and/or pending further assessment (at policy & legislation level)

P1. Unique Identification		Requirements in place for all vessels and high level of transparency through several publicly available databases (NFA, FIA PNG, FFA, WCPFC)
P2. Vessel Lists		Requirements in place for all vessels and high level of transparency through several publicly available databases (NFA, FIA PNG, FFA, WCPFC)
P3. Beneficial Ownership		Limited data collected and no information publicly disclosed
P4. Flags of Convenience		No FoC within the scope of work. Potential opportunities for improvements identified.
P5. Vessel Positioning		High visibility of PNG-flagged vessels through GFW collaboration. Opportunities for improvement for vessels flying other flags.
P6. Transshipment		Only allowed under stringent conditions.
P7. Traceability		Limited information availability of legal requirements. GDST collaboration supports FIA PNG efforts.
P8. International Instruments		CTA is not ratified, and full implementation of ILO C-188 is pending review. Social certification supports alignment, but is limited to half of all FIA PNG vessels and does not replace legislation and effective governmental enforcement.
P9. Accessibility and Participation		Limited legal requirements and unclear where FIA PNG efforts are further supporting this principle. Pending further review.
P10. Human Rights & Forced Labour		Limited legal requirements. Social certification supports alignment but is limited to half of all FIA PNG vessels. Wi-Fi availability and observer coverage are fully implemented and paramount.

P1: Unique Identification

A unique and uniform system for identifying fishing vessels is essential for accountability and transparency, especially beyond national jurisdiction. Since vessel names can be duplicated or changed, a Unique Vessel Identifier (UVI), used by authorities at all levels, provides the best safeguard for reliably tracking and holding vessels accountable. UVIs are critical for verifying where and by whom fish were caught, ensuring catch legality, and deterring illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing.

A. National Vessel Register

Governments are recommended to establish a mandatory national fishing vessel register. In Papua New Guinea (PNG), the National Fisheries Authority (NFA) maintains an official list of fishing vessels authorised to operate within the EEZ, supporting legal compliance and traceability. According to the NFA website, the last update was in 2017, which is too outdated to fulfil this requirement. However, the same information is still available due to PNG's participation in the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) and Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC).

The FFA is a regional agency that supports 17 Pacific Island countries in managing, monitoring, and controlling tuna fisheries, including PNG, but not Philippines or Taiwan. It is recognised for maintaining a centralised FFA Vessel Register, a regional roster of vessels that have met the agency's minimum requirements and are considered in "good standing" for fishing in member EEZs.

The Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) is an international organisation responsible for the conservation and sustainable management of tuna and other highly migratory fish stocks in the western and central Pacific Ocean. The Commission maintains a Record of Fishing Vessels that lists all authorised vessels, including those flagged to PNG, the Philippines, and Taiwan, permitted to fish within its Convention Area, which covers both coastal States' EEZs and the High Seas.

Beyond the vessel data provided through these international organisations, FIA PNG also a Tuna Fleet List that discloses the UVI and vessel name publishes on all vessel owner by their members.

B. Global-Record Data Fields

For large-scale vessels, the register must include, at minimum, the FAO Global Record data fields: vessel name, IMO-compliant Unique Vessel Identifier (UVI), current flag, length overall, and gross tonnage. The FFA's Register and the WCPFC's Record of Fishing Vessels both collect this data, ensuring regional alignment with FAO requirements and international best practice. The WCPFC, as the regional fisheries management organization governing high-seas and tuna fisheries in the Pacific, requires every member to supply these fields for each fishing vessel intending to operate in the Convention Area.

FIA PNG Tuna Fleet List includes the IMO-compliant UVI and current flag, but does not contain the remaining data fields of length overall and gross tonnage.

C. Expanded Registration Data

Beyond the Global Record data fields, registers should include beneficial ownership details, Maritime Mobile Service Identity (MMSI) numbers, and vessel photographs to improve vessel traceability. All FIA PNG members already provide their vessel data to the WCPFC Vessel Registry through their respective flag States, and PNG-flagged vessels are likewise listed in the FFA Vessel Registration List. The FFA Register collects photographs, proof of corporate ownership, MMSI numbers, and other key identifiers, but it lacks information on the beneficial owner. It does include the name of the Vessel Registered Owner, Vessel Master, and Vessel Charterer. WCPFC's Vessel registry similarly require comprehensive information for vessel identification and monitoring, with additional fields on historical information like former flag State(s). It also does not contain any fields for the beneficial owner.

D. Timely Data Updates

Vessel register data must be updated at least annually and shared with the FAO Global Record and relevant RFMOs. Flag States PNG and Taiwan do not provide data into the FAO Global Record. Available information through FFA and WCPFC are regularly updated per FFA and WCPFC requirements. FIA PNG also committed to an annual update of their Tuna Fleet List.

E. Public Accessibility

Fishing vessel registry data should be made publicly available and easy to access. The FFA Vessel Register, WCPFC Registry, NFA Vessel List, and FIA PNG Tuna Fleet List are all available online. Information is available in English and accessing the information does not require any log in and is easily available.

Evidence & URLs

- FFA Vessel Register: <https://vessel-register.ffa.int>
- FFA information: <https://ffa.int>
- PNG NFA Vessel List: https://www.fisheries.gov.pg/files/ugd/2c6676_5a467dc952424854b6a6589ffdaef169.pdf
- FIA PNG Vessel List: <https://www.fia-png.com/fishing-vessels>
- WCPFC Vessel Register: <https://vessels.wcpfc.int/vessel/3895>
- WCPFC information: <https://www.wcpfc.int>

P2: Vessel Lists

Unique Vessel Identifiers (UVIs) on their own offer limited insight into the characteristics and activities of a fishing vessel. Additional data, such as licensing details, methods of capture, targeted species, and authorisations, are required to judge compliance and potential risks to flag, coastal, and port States. Readily available vessel information equips national regulators, industry actors across the seafood supply chain, and civil society groups for monitoring, control, and surveillance in real time. Publicly accessible registers enable analysis of how fishery and financial resources are used, by whom, and to what extent. Principle 2 urges governments to publish comprehensive, up-to-date lists of vessel licences, authorisations, subsidies, access agreements, and records of sanctions, and to supply these to the FAO Global Record along with regional vessel lists.

A. Public report of comprehensive, up-to-date vessel information that highlights fishing licences

Fishing licences themselves are generally not published. An internal review of PNG licences confirms they are typically granted for one year or less and include detailed particulars of the vessel. These particulars cover vessel size, tonnage, name, and port of registry. Licences also record automatic location communicators such as the FFA regional registration and Inmarsat mobile numbers. Additionally, licences list endorsements related to targeted fish stocks, types of fishing activities authorised, and designated ports for the catch. All licences are issued subject to the Fisheries Management Act 1998, ensuring regulatory compliance and sustainable fishing practices. The Vessel Registry on the WCPFC website lists all vessels belonging to FIA PNG's members and shows the period for which each vessel holds a valid fishing licence. Although the licences themselves are not published, any stakeholder can verify whether a vessel was authorised to fish during a given timeframe by consulting this registry together with the vessel data. Since the principle requires public information that identifies a vessel's fishing licence status rather than publication of the licences themselves, this requirement appears to be fulfilled for all FIA PNG members.

B. Public report of access agreements

Papua New Guinea is a formal member of the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA), a sub-regional alliance of eight Pacific Island countries that collectively manage the world's largest sustainable tuna purse-seine fishery through coordinated licensing, the Vessel Day Scheme (VDS), and a range of conservation measures. The VDS is the cornerstone of this system: instead of issuing unlimited or open-ended licences, PNA members allocate and trade a set number of fishing days, which places a hard cap on overall fishing effort and ensures that access to the fishery is both controlled and transparent.

Alongside its PNA membership, PNG also negotiates bilateral access agreements with countries such as the Philippines and Taiwan, as mentioned on the NFA website. These arrangements operate independently of the PNA framework and grant foreign vessels access to PNG's EEZ under specific licences and conditions. Philippine and Taiwanese fishing vessels operate within PNG waters under these bilateral agreements, which are usually renewed annually and incorporate provisions consistent with PNG's fisheries laws and regional standards. FIA PNG members fishing lobsters have vessels flagged to PNG. Several FIA PNG tuna members own tuna vessels flagged outside of PNG:

- Bluecatch Corporation owns vessels flagged to the Philippines
- Domingo Teng owns vessel flagged to the Philippines
- Frabelle PNG Ltd owns vessels flagged to the Philippines.
- RD Fishing PNG Ltd owns vessels flagged to the Philippines
- Starcki Venture Corporation owns vessels flagged to the Philippines
- Trans-Pacific Journey Fishing Corporation owns vessels flagged to the Philippines
- TSP Livestock & development Corporation owns vessels flagged to the Philippines
- Win Far Fishery group owns vessel flagged to Taiwan

A complete overview was presented in this report under

FIA PNG's Tuna Members_ Flag State of each vessel owned by a FIA PNG member is published as part of the annually updated vessel list on the FIA PNG website. Additional transparency could be provided by clarifying which (daughter) company is owned by which FIA PNG member, as this field is currently missing and it provides a challenge to link some FIA PNG members to the vessel data provided in public registries such as the FIA PNG Vessel List and the WCPFC Vessel Registry.

A search reveals the full content of the access agreements of PNG cannot be found online, nor does any official reference to the existence of the agreements provide much detail on what is included in the agreement. While the CFT Charter does not specifically call for publication of the agreements, the publication of all foreign fishing access agreements is included in the Fisheries Transparency Initiatives (FITI) Standard (Version 1.1, 2017), which the CFT Charter references on several occasions. Specifically, it encourages the publication of all foreign access agreements, including their associated protocol(s). It also references, if available, studies or reports undertaken by national authorities or foreign parties to an agreement providing an evaluation or oversight of the agreement, including those that describe the number of authorisation issues, reported catch of these vessels, and any assessment of compliance.

Mandate to publish access agreements lies with the NFA. Opportunity of improvement for FIA PNG may be to provide more explicit information of under which access agreements the foreign-flagged vessels are granted access to the PNG EEZ.

C. Public report of fishing authorisations

Authorisations specifying fishing vessels' permitted activities, including gear type, species, and areas, are publicly reported via Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) like the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC). The WCPFC Vessel Register contains authoritative listings of these authorised vessels operating in the Convention Area, reinforcing compliance and stakeholder oversight.

D. Public report of subsidy recipients and provisions

Subsidy disclosure is not included in the reviewed documentation, such as vessel registers and fishing licences. However, transparency around fisheries subsidies is critical for promoting sustainable fisheries governance and aligns with growing international expectations. The World Trade Organization's (WTO) Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies aims to curb harmful subsidies that contribute to overfishing and illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing activities. Papua New Guinea (PNG) is a signatory to this Agreement but has not yet ratified it. The country is reportedly working through its national processes to achieve ratification. The Fishing Industry Association of PNG (FIA PNG) website does not provide details on subsidies received by its members.

In 2017, PNG ended one form of fishery subsidy that had existed previously, a discounted price scheme for fishing days under the Vessel Day Scheme. This subsidy was provided on the premise that companies receiving discounted fishing days would land and process their catch within PNG. Since 1 January 2018, the policy has changed: all

companies must now pay the full price for fishing permits, but those that land and process their catch in PNG are eligible for a processing subsidy. This subsidy amounts to approximately USD 400 per metric ton of fish processed locally. This processing subsidy remains classified as a fishery subsidy under the WTO Agreement, as it benefits marine wild-capture fishing and fishing-related activities, including processing.

Formal policies and registration of any subsidies to processing facilities are reviewed and it can be confirmed a formalised system exists. Publicly almost no information regarding the subsidy conditions or recipients is available.

E. Public report of histories of non-compliance

Publicly available histories on vessels' non-compliance, sanctions for fisheries or labour law violations, or other offences help deter illegal behaviour. Some regional and national databases, including FFA and WCPFC registers, incorporate such compliance information to guide monitoring and enforcement decisions. No vessel owned by FIA PNG members were listed. Review confirmed that there is no history of non-compliance with any of these vessels.

For transparency purposes, FIA PNG may choose to more clearly reference where histories of non-compliance can be found to support the history of compliance.

F. Publication of the aforementioned information in a central global repository, i.e. FAO's Global Record

UN FAO's Global Record serves as a public international repository that consolidates vessel licence, authorisation, and compliance data, synchronising national and regional information for global fisheries governance. According to the Global Record, there is currently no data submitted by PNG or Taiwan. According to FAO, data is supplied by official State authorities, not by vessel owners. This presents an opportunity for FIA PNG's members to encourage the governments under which their vessels are flagged to contribute to the Global Record.

While some of this information is available through other publicly accessible databases, the Global Record includes additional fields that are useful for stakeholders. The Philippines provides data on vessels, authorisations, and ports: three of the six possible data categories. Missing categories include historical details, inspections and surveillance, and port denials.

G. Government collecting supplementary data and supporting cooperative data exchange with other States and international bodies, such as the FAO.

Beyond the vessel data available through the registries of FFA, WCPFC, NFA, and FIA PNG, additional information on PNG- and Philippine-flagged vessels is shared through FAO's Global Information Exchange System (GIES), supporting multilateral coordination among PSMA Parties. This data is accessible only to other PSMA Parties and is not publicly available, but it contributes significantly to cooperative data exchange with other States.

Evidence & URLs

- FFA Vessel Register: <https://vessel-register.ffa.int>
- FFA information: <https://ffa.int>
- PNG NFA Vessel List: https://www.fisheries.gov.pg/_files/ugd/2c6676_5a467dc952424854b6a6589ffdaef169.pdf
- FIA PNG Vessel List: <https://www.fia-png.com/fishing-vessels>
- WCPFC Vessel Register: <https://vessels.wcpfc.int/vessel/3895>
- WCPFC information: <https://www.wcpfc.int>
- FAO Global Record: <https://globalrecord.fao.org>
- FAO Global Information Exchange System: <https://www.fao.org/port-state-measures/operational-resources/gies/en/>
- FAO Port State Measures Agreement – Parties to the PSMA: <https://www.fao.org/port-state-measures/background/parties-psma/en>

P3: Beneficial Ownership

Beneficial owners are the individuals or entities who ultimately own, control, and profit from a vessel or company. When information on beneficial ownership is unknown or obscured, these owners can evade penalties and sanctions, enabling them to persist in potentially illicit activities with impunity. Although legislation on beneficial ownership often extends beyond the fisheries sector, it plays a critical role in revealing the complex financial structures behind fishing operations.

The principal aim of enhancing transparency in beneficial ownership is to disrupt the financing of illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing. While prosecuting beneficial owners retrospectively can be effective, preventing illicit financial flows upfront by exposing beneficial ownership serves as a stronger deterrent against engaging in illegal activities. Beneficial ownership frequently remains concealed through corporate vehicles such as joint ventures and limited liability companies, which obscure the true locus of control. Such opacity permits illegal proceeds to be assimilated into legitimate financial streams and reinvested in subsequent fishing ventures, perpetuating cycles of unlawful conduct. Furthermore, undisclosed beneficial ownership heightens risks of conflicts of interest and corruption within fisheries management agencies, particularly when high-ranking officials hold undeclared stakes.

To mitigate such risks, based on the guidelines provided by Open Ownership it is recommended that ownership disclosure includes the names of beneficial owner(s), the mechanisms by which ownership or control is exercised, the declaring corporate entity, and identification of the individual submitting the declaration. Information collection should be standardised and sufficiently detailed to allow competent authorities to unambiguously identify persons and ownership arrangements. These requirements must be codified in national legislation to ensure enforceability and consistency.

A. Collect key beneficial owner(s) information

Papua New Guinea (PNG), as a member of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) since 2016, has committed to promoting beneficial ownership transparency within its extractive sectors, namely mining, oil, and gas. However, a publicly accessible registry of beneficial owners, as recommended by EITI, is not currently available. Moreover, this commitment primarily covers extractive industries and does not explicitly extend to fisheries.

In the fisheries context, the National Fisheries Authority (NFA) collects beneficial ownership information only for a limited subset of vessels authorised to fish beyond the PNG Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). This information is not publicly disclosed in fishing vessel registries. A review of relevant legislation confirms that PNG currently lacks a legal definition of "beneficial ownership" within fisheries statutes. The only identified definition is found in the Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorist Financing Act 2015, which does not suitably apply to fisheries regulatory contexts. This absence of a clear, fisheries-specific definition can lead to inconsistent reporting, with vessel operators determining what ownership information to disclose. Examination of public registries maintained by FIA PNG, WCPFC, and NFA reveals that beneficial ownership data are generally missing. Fishing licences record the name and address of the owner but do not specify whether this refers to the legal or beneficial owner. Since there is a distinct section for charterer details, the owner information is assumed to relate to the legal owner. Charterers, who typically operate vessels temporarily, are distinct from beneficial owners who maintains enduring ownership or control.

Taiwan operates a closed vessel registry system that mandates disclosure of ownership information to national authorities but does not require public disclosure of beneficial ownership for fishing vessels. The Fisheries Act and related maritime regulations govern vessel registration and ownership transparency; however, beneficial ownership definitions and registries appear absent from publicly accessible legal documents. Domestic law requires ownership registration details but does not explicitly mandate beneficial ownership disclosure or public registry availability.

The Philippines enforces regulated vessel registration through the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) and fisheries licensing via the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR). While legal frameworks require disclosure of vessel ownership, including documentation on investors or owners, no explicit statutory obligation to disclose beneficial owners in a publicly accessible registry for fishing vessels could be found. The Philippines lacks a comprehensive definition of beneficial ownership in fisheries law. Philippine laws on corporate ownership and anti-money laundering may include beneficial ownership concepts but appear to not be integrated into fisheries-specific regulations or registries.

B. Collect beneficial ownership information in a standardised way through online forms, with clear guidance to facilitate compliance.

Assumed to not be fulfilled, considering the lack of captured beneficial ownership data (see under A).

C. Collect beneficial ownership information to enable authorities to unambiguously identify people, entities, and arrangements, using clear identifiers, and to enable the accuracy of the data to be verified to a reasonable level.

Not fulfilled, considering the lack of captured beneficial ownership data (see under A).

D. Capture information on beneficial ownership disclosure in law and limit to what is necessary to achieve the policy objective, with clear rationales and legal bases.

Not fulfilled, considering the lack of captured beneficial ownership data (see under A).

Evidence & URLs

- Maritime Data. (2023, March 20). What is Vessel Ownership Data? Retrieved November 19, 2025, from <https://www.maritimedata.ai/post/what-is-vessel-ownership-data>
- Pew Charitable Trusts. (2023, October). Ownership of Fishing Companies, Vessels Need Greater Transparency and Accountability [PDF]. Retrieved November 19, 2025, from <https://www.pew.org/-/media/assets/2023/10/ownership-of-fishing-companies-vessels-need-greater-transparency-and-accountability.pdf>
- FFA Vessel Register: <https://vessel-register.ffa.int>
- PNG NFA Vessel List: https://www.fisheries.gov.pg/_files/ugd/2c6676_5a467dc952424854b6a6589ffdaef169.pdf
- FIA PNG Vessel List: <https://www.fia-png.com/fishing-vessels>
- WCPFC Vessel Register: <https://vessels.wcpfc.int/vessel/>

P4: Flags of Convenience

Flags of convenience (FoCs) refer to vessels registered in countries other than those of their owners, often to reduce costs and avoid strict regulations. Under UNCLOS Article 91, flag States must maintain a genuine link with vessels flying their flag and are legally obligated to control and monitor their activities. The flag State serves as the primary defender against illegal fishing and associated crimes.

However, vessels engaged in illegal fishing frequently "flag hop," switching flags to evade detection and enforcement. They often register in low-to-middle-income countries (LMICs) and some FoC States due to lower fees, weak port controls, poor fisheries management, and lax enforcement. In addition to FoCs, vessels may flag to States outside Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs), escaping RFMO rules that govern fishing activities. Large fishing companies further complicate enforcement through multi-layered corporate structures spread across multiple jurisdictions.

Ending the use of FoCs and enforcing genuine flag State control is critical to combat illegal fishing and ensure accountability in global fisheries.

A. Careful oversight before granting their flag

Papua New Guinea (PNG) does not operate an open ship registry and is not considered a flag of convenience (FoC). The PNG vessel registry is closed to foreign-owned vessels without legitimate links to PNG, complying with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) Article 91, which requires a genuine link between a vessel and its flag State. To register a vessel in PNG, ownership must be held by a PNG citizen or a company incorporated under PNG law with its principal place of business in PNG. Additionally, the vessel cannot be registered concurrently in another country. Registration requires submission of proof of ownership, company incorporation certificates, owner identification, and payment of applicable fees, as stipulated in Article 14 of the Merchant Shipping Act 1975.

Taiwan similarly operates a closed ship registry system, allowing foreign-owned vessels to register only under conditions meeting legal criteria ensuring a genuine link. The Philippines also maintains a closed registry administered by the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA), requiring fishing vessels to be locally owned, properly registered, and licensed by the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR).

All these Flag States, PNG, Taiwan, and the Philippines, are parties to UNCLOS and are expected to comply with their Flag State duties under international law. Thus, vessels flagged under FIA PNG members appear to have Flag States capable of enforcing relevant regulatory and compliance obligations.

B. Publish list of authorised vessels publicly

PNG's National Fisheries Authority (NFA) and National Maritime Safety Authority (NMSA) maintain registers of authorised vessels operating within PNG waters. Public access to updated vessel lists enhances transparency, deters illegal fishing, and supports stakeholder awareness. Similarly, Taiwan publishes authorised vessel registries under its fisheries and maritime administration frameworks, while the Philippines provides vessel registration information through BFAR platforms. For more information, see [0 Vessel Lists](#).

C. Deregister vessels unable to meet the standards

The NMSA and NFA have legal authority to suspend or cancel vessel registrations and fishing licences if operators fail to comply with statutory requirements, including fisheries management rules or failure to maintain a genuine link to PNG. Enforcement measures post-deregistration include prohibitions on fishing in PNG waters and penal sanctions under national legislation, as captured in the Fisheries Management Act 1998.

Taiwan's Coast Guard Administration and fisheries authorities regulate vessel registration under the Fisheries Act. Vessels violating licensing terms or fisheries laws may be suspended or deregistered, effectively stripping legal flag status. The Philippines similarly mandates deregistration upon breaches of licensing or safety standards by MARINA and BFAR, ensuring that only compliant vessels remain flagged and authorised.

D. Give special attention to foreign vessels seeking to register in a Flag State different from where their owners reside

Given risks of vessel “flag hopping” to evade regulation, PNG appears vigilant towards vessels seeking registration far from the beneficial owners’ domicile. Rigorous due diligence and verification of beneficial ownership and operational control are necessary to prevent misuse of flag registry systems. This practice aligns with UNCLOS Article 91 obligations and regional fisheries monitoring frameworks implemented by WCPFC and PNA members.

E. Disclose vessel registration for large-scale vessels to the Global Record and relevant RFMOs

Under the WCPFC Convention, Article 2(1) defines the Convention Area as encompassing both coastal States’ Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) and the High Seas. It requires members to maintain an accurate, up-to-date record of vessels authorised to fish within the Convention Area. This record, publicly accessible via the WCPFC Vessel Registry, facilitates data availability. PNG, Taiwan, and the Philippines comply with these provisions by submitting vessel registration data to the Global Record and WCPFC Secretariat, enhancing collective monitoring and enforcement of vessel compliance within PNG’s EEZ and beyond.

Data of FIA PNG member’s vessels is only recorded if they are flagged to the Philippines. See Principle 0 for more information.

Evidence & URLs

- FFA Vessel Register: <https://vessel-register.ffa.int>
- WCPFC Vessel Register: <https://vessels.wcpfc.int/vessel/>
- Fisheries Management Act 1998 (No. 48 of 1998) (PNG)
- Republic Act No. 8550 — The Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998 (PHI)
- Fisheries Act (中華民國漁業法) — the main law governing fisheries in Taiwan (TWN)
- Ordinance to Govern Investment in the Operation of Foreign Fishing Vessels — regulates foreign investment in Taiwan’s distant-water fleet (TWN)

P5: Vessel Positioning

Modern technology in the form of satellite-based tracking systems such as Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS) and Automatic Identification Systems (AIS) provides monitoring of vessel positioning at sea. Despite the availability of this information, 75% of the world’s industrial fishing vessels are not publicly tracked, especially due to the lack of available VMS data. IUU fishing relies on concealing the location and behaviour of vessels from authorities. Collectively, VMS and AIS data provide critical information on fishing effort and spatial distribution that supports fisheries management, compliance, and conservation efforts.

The combination of VMS, designed specifically for fisheries monitoring, and AIS, originally developed for maritime safety, enhances monitoring, control, and surveillance capability crucial for combatting IUU fishing globally. It is imperative to require tracking systems on both large-scale and small-scale vessels. Taken in the aggregate, these systems also provide essential data on fishing effort and location to assist fisheries managers.

A. Mandate AIS on all vessels, regardless of size, and requiring the system to be turned on for the duration of a voyage.

Papua New Guinea mandates the carriage and continuous operation of Automatic Identification Systems (AIS) on all vessels, regardless of size, within its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). The AIS must remain switched on throughout all voyages, including times in port, to ensure uninterrupted tracking. Deliberate deactivation or tampering constitutes a breach of the Fisheries Management Act 1998 (Sections 45–47) and related regulations. This aligns with the International Maritime Organization’s (IMO) requirements under the SOLAS Convention (Chapter V, Regulation 19), which mandates AIS carriage for vessels on international voyages, although fishing vessels can be exempted unless

national legislation imposes otherwise. The Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) Conservation and Management Measure (CMM) 2018-01 (Paragraphs 19 and 20) reinforces mandatory AIS operation on fishing vessels to improve monitoring and compliance. The Philippines' Fisheries Code (Republic Act No. 10654), and Taiwan's Fisheries Act similarly require AIS carriage and continuous operation for vessels under their flags, consistent with regional and global standards.

B. Mandate VMS on industrial fishing vessels

VMS is mandatory for all industrial fishing vessels licensed to operate in PNG waters, required by the Fisheries Management (Amendment) Act 2015 and Fisheries Regulations. VMS units must transmit vessel positions at specified intervals to the National Fisheries Authority (NFA). This requirement mirrors standards set by WCPFC CMM 2018-01 (Paragraphs 14–18), which obligates member states to ensure satellite-based vessel monitoring systems are installed and maintained on eligible vessels for effective Fisheries Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS). Equivalently, the Philippines' BFAR Administrative Orders and MARINA regulations mandate VMS carriage and operation, while Taiwan enforces VMS requirements consistent with Fisheries Act provisions and regional obligations under the WCPFC framework.

C. Aid in Norway's proposal for a new international agreement on vessel tracking

No clear reference of any relevant flag States supporting Norway's proposal has been found.

D. Require vessel tracking to be public

PNG collaborates with Global Fishing Watch (GFW) to make vessel tracking data publicly available to increase transparency and oversight of fishing activities within its EEZ. Vessel tracking data is shared in near real-time with Global Fishing Watch and the PNG tuna fleet is the only one to share data with GFW in this manner. This initiative provides stakeholders with access to real-time AIS and VMS data. However, transparency for foreign-flagged vessels, particularly those flagged to the Philippines and Taiwan operating in PNG waters, may vary due to differing national policies on data sharing and openness. *Pending confirmation from GFW.* The WCPFC encourages members to enhance vessel tracking data transparency, consistent with CMM 2018-01 (Paragraph 24), but no clear requirement appears to be in place.

The Philippines currently lacks a broad, public-facing vessel tracking data platform comparable to Papua New Guinea's collaboration with Global Fishing Watch (GFW). While the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) utilises AIS and VMS data for enforcement and monitoring, there is limited public disclosure or data-sharing collaboration that makes vessel tracking information openly accessible. This gap limits broader stakeholder engagement and external oversight in Philippine fisheries.

Taiwan similarly does not maintain a public vessel tracking transparency platform accessible to civil society akin to PNG-GFW cooperation. Although Taiwan enforces AIS and VMS carriage and reporting requirements under its Fisheries Act and Coast Guard Administration regulations, data tends to be maintained within governmental or inter-agency systems without routine public dissemination. This limits transparency at the civil society level.

Neither the Philippines nor Taiwan are currently formal members of the Fisheries Transparency Initiative (FiTI), which advocates for public disclosure of key fisheries governance data, including vessel tracking. PNG engages with FiTI but has to date not demonstrate full alignment with its standard.

Evidence & URLs

- Fisheries Management Act 1998 (No. 48 of 1998) (PNG)
- Republic Act No. 8550 — The Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998 (PHI)
- Fisheries Act (中華民國漁業法) (TWN)
- Ordinance to Govern Investment in the Operation of Foreign Fishing Vessels (TWN)
- FFA Vessel Registration List — FFA Vessel Register: <https://vessel-register.ffa.int/> (vessel-register.ffa.int)
- FiTI Standard Version 1 — FiTI Standard (Fisheries Transparency Initiative): [https://fiti.global/fiti-standard\(fiti.global\)](https://fiti.global/fiti-standard(fiti.global))
- Papua New Guinea Customs – Ships: <https://www.customs.gov.pg/border/ships>
- Sustainable Fisheries Management Begins with Vessel Tracking — Global Fishing Watch fact sheet: <https://globalfishing-watch.org/fact-sheet/susTWNnable-fisheries-management-begins-with-vessel-tracking/> (Global Fishing Watch)
- Fisheries Management (Amendment) Act 2015 — Papua New Guinea: No. 1 of 2015 (parliament.gov.pg)
- National Fisheries Authority (PNG) – Monitoring, Control & Surveillance: <https://www.fisheries.gov.pg/mcs> (NFA Papua New Guinea)

- Australian Government – Memorandum of Understanding with PNG National Maritime Safety Authority: <http://www.amsa.gov.au/about/who-we-work/memorandum-understanding-papua-new-guinea-national-maritime-safety-authority>
- National Oceans Policy Implementation Plan, 2024-2030 (PNG)

P6: Transshipment

Transshipment, the transfer of catch from fishing vessels to other vessels at sea, is widespread globally but poses significant challenges for fisheries governance. Transshipment conducted without proper authorisation and monitoring facilitates extended periods at sea by fishing crew, increasing risks of abuse, exploitation, and forced labour lasting months or years. This practice also opens avenues for vessel operators to falsify or conceal catch data, including species composition, catch methods, geographic origin, and volume, undermining stock assessments and legal compliance. A major issue is the exemption of reefer vessels from stringent catch documentation and monitoring requirements in many regions, breaking the chain of custody vital for traceability (Principle 7 of responsible fisheries). This gap hinders accurate tracking of fish through the supply chain, allowing illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing to persist undetected.

A. Ban transshipment unless pre-authorised, monitored, and publicly documented

Papua New Guinea's Fisheries Management Act 1998, as amended, explicitly defines transshipment as "the transfer of fish or fish product to or from any vessels, including transfer from a fishing vessel to a land-based facility, but excluding purchases from artisanal fishers under licence" (Section 2). This activity is governed comprehensively under the Act, thereby encompassing all transshipment operations within PNG's EEZ.

The Act mandates that any transshipment within PNG waters must be authorised by the National Fisheries Authority (NFA), ensuring regulatory oversight over such operations. Critically, Section 35(2)(c) of the Act restricts transshipment at sea by vessels operating under access agreements, including those flagged to Taiwan and the Philippines, which constitute key member companies of the Fishing Industry Association PNG (FIA PNG), to designated ports or other approved locations, explicitly limiting open-sea transfers. Further, Section 39 confirms that transshipment by foreign vessels is subject to the same rules of authorisation and control.

Penalties may apply: Section 58 extends sanctions to any operator or foreign fishing vessel that contravenes transshipment requirements, including failure to comply with notification and reporting obligations established under Section 39. This legal framework demonstrates PNG's clear intention to tightly control transshipment; however, enforcement challenges and resource limitations may undermine effectiveness, especially given the prevalence of unregulated transshipment in many global fisheries.

B. Adherence to the FAO International Guidelines on Transshipment

The FAO International Guidelines on the Regulation of Transshipment (2019) advocate pre-authorisation, observer coverage, comprehensive reporting, and integration with catch documentation schemes to firmly establish traceability. PNG's legislation appears to align with many FAO principles, but any explicit formal incorporation or declaration of these guidelines into statutory instruments or policy documents remains limited.

C. Real-time reporting of transshipment events to RFMOs and State authorities

PNG mandates near real-time electronic reporting of all transshipment events to the NFA and through regional mechanisms such as WCPFC. This requirement corresponds to WCPFC CMM 2019-01 (Paragraphs 14–18), which establishes standards for electronic catch and transshipment declarations timely submitted to flag, coastal, and port States.

The Philippines' Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) similarly imposes reporting obligations under its administrative orders, reflecting the need for immediate information exchange to support compliance and enforcement. Taiwan requires its fishing fleet to report transshipment activities electronically as a core component of WCPFC obligations. It is unclear whether data timeliness, completeness, and inter-agency communication are in place.

D. Ensure fishery observer coverage on all vessels engaged in transshipment

PNG's Fisheries Management Act (Division 3, Articles 49–52) legally establishes the observer programme aimed at collecting reliable and accurate scientific, management, and compliance data. Observers are empowered to monitor and report on key attributes including catch species, quantities, sizes, fishing methods and locations, environmental impacts, vessel operation, and transshipment activities (Article 50). Crucially, Article 52(2) expressly mandates all vessels holding PNG fishing licences to permit observer access to all relevant areas where fish are caught or transhipped.

Similar observer requirements are codified in Philippine fisheries law and Taiwan's regulatory framework, in line with WCPFC CMM 2019-01 provisions mandating observer presence on both fishing and carrier vessels during transshipment. Nonetheless, constrained observer capacity and logistical difficulties at sea create enforcement vulnerabilities and highlight the need for complementary monitoring technologies.

Tuna fishing by FIA PNG members appears to have 100% observer coverage. References the observer programme is also made in several documents and on its website, and it is shown some training of observers has taken place.

E. Invest in advanced electronic monitoring technologies

Recognising observer limitations, electronic monitoring (EM) technologies such as closed-circuit television (CCTV) and satellite tracking may serve as augmentative tools within PNGs Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) programmes. No formal legal obligations are in place to date.

The Philippines and Taiwan have initiated pilot EM projects supported by regional and international programmes, aligning with WCPFC encouragement to adopt innovative electronic monitoring solutions. Despite technological advancements, high costs, infrastructure deficiencies, and privacy concerns remain barriers to widespread deployment, suggesting a phased and supportive approach is likely necessary.

Evidence & URLs

- Fisheries Management Act 1998 (No. 48 of 1998) (PNG)
- Republic Act No. 8550 — The Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998 (PHI)
- Fisheries Act (中華民國漁業法) (TWN)
- Ordinance to Govern Investment in the Operation of Foreign Fishing Vessels (TWN)
- National Fisheries Authority (PNG) – Monitoring, Control & Surveillance: <https://www.fisheries.gov.pg/mcs> (NFA Papua New Guinea)
- National Oceans Policy Implementation Plan, 2024-2030 (PNG): https://justice.gov.pg/images/branches/Oceans/JG_DJAG_OOA_NOP_IP.pdf
- FIA PNG Website: www/fia-png.com

P7: Traceability

Obtaining essential information about the origin of seafood, including who caught it, when, where, and how, is challenging in the absence of transparency mandates within complex, global seafood supply chains. The pathways fisheries products follow involve multiple actors and jurisdictions, often obscuring the legal status of the catch. This complexity has prompted major seafood-importing States to implement robust seafood traceability and import control systems (ICSs) that enable authorities to verify the legality of seafood products entering their markets by tracing each item back through its supply chain.

Seafood-supplying States face the challenge of complying with these varied import control requirements while maintaining and expanding their export markets. Given the vast volume and diversity of global seafood trade, establishing comprehensive traceability systems is a critical task for all nations.

Key data points essential for effective seafood traceability systems include species identification, catch location, gear type used, and unique vessel identifiers (see Principle 1). Interoperable and verifiable data must be collected from all sources throughout the supply chain, spanning from harvest to consumer. Once collected, this data must be efficiently transmitted along the supply chain, analysed for discrepancies or potential violations such as mislabelling or illegal catch, and acted upon promptly. The verification of such data is ideally conducted by authorised public bodies to ensure integrity, rather than relying solely on private-sector mechanisms.

A. Prioritise development or adoption of robust traceability schemes compatible with existing Import Control Schemes (ICSs)

PNG's government of PNG operates an Integrated Fisheries Information Management System (iFIMS), a central platform that collects and manages data on vessel licensing, fishing authorisations, catch and effort reporting, and monitoring and control activities, enabling authorities to track which vessels are authorised to fish, under what conditions, and with what reported catches over time. Complementing this, the Fishing Industry Association's Fishery Industry Management System (FIMS) is an industry-run digital traceability platform that records and shares detailed supply-chain information for PNG tuna products and has been recognised for its ability to interoperate with other systems and to capture and transmit the full set of 56 Key Data Elements (KDEs) as defined by the Global Dialogue on Seafood Traceability (GDST). These include, *inter alia*, who caught the fish, where and when it was

harvested, what gear was used, and how much was landed and processed, across the supply chain. Together, iFIMS and FIMS appear to “pass the interoperability test” for global seafood traceability, providing an integrated, end-to-end data environment capable of supporting ICS-compatible traceability for tuna exports and enabling competent authorities and downstream buyers to verify the origin of products.

PNG’s National Fisheries Authority manages licensing, reporting, and related documentation to support traceability and does so within this broader digital ecosystem, using iFIMS on the government side and interfacing with FIMS on the industry side. Relevant legal provisions are primarily found in the Customs Act, which regulates export controls, but in practice these legal requirements are operationalised through the integrated use of iFIMS and FIMS to generate, validate, and exchange the traceability data required under import control schemes (ICSs), ensuring that export documentation is backed by verifiable, digital records. Finally, FIA PNG has been a GDST Partner since 2022.

B. Existence of digitised and interoperable databases for effective seafood traceability data collection

FIA PNG is a partner of GDST, an international initiative committed to advancing global seafood traceability standards and systems to enable interoperable and verifiable sharing of supply chain data among governments, industry, and civil society. FIA PNG’s partnership with GDST and participation in its governance appears to contribute to advancing traceability practices, facilitating data standardisation and exchange that are critical for compliance with international markets, particularly in the global tuna supply chain.

Within this framework, FIMS serves as FIA PNG’s digital traceability platform, designed to capture and transmit GDST KDEs and currently undergoing testing for the latest version of the GDST interoperability test, demonstrating that its data structures and transfer protocols meet global interoperability expectations. On the government side, iFIMS functions as the national fisheries information backbone, integrating licensing, catch, and monitoring data, and its linkage with FIMS allows for end-to-end, digitised, and interoperable traceability that supports verification by competent authorities as well as information needs of downstream buyers.

For more detail on FIMS and its role within GDST, see [the GDST partner profile on FIA PNG](#).

Evidence & URLs

- ‘The Standard’, Global Dialogue on Seafood Traceability (GDST): <https://thegdst.org/resources/standard/>
- ‘Partner Commitments’, Global Dialogue on Seafood Traceability (GDST): <https://thegdst.org/about/partner-commitments/>
- Fisheries Management Act 1998 (PNG)
- Customs Act 1951 (PNG)

P8: International Instruments

International instruments provide essential frameworks for coordinated global responses to pressing fisheries challenges. This section examines three critical agreements aimed at regulating fishing vessels and the trade in fisheries products globally: the Food and Agriculture Organization’s (FAO) Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (PSMA), the International Maritime Organization’s (IMO) Cape Town Agreement (CTA), and the International Labour Organization’s (ILO) Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, including its Work in Fishing Convention (No. 188). These United Nations bodies cooperate through a specialised working group to pool expertise and resources to combat illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing.

Ratification and implementation of these instruments strengthen governments’ ability to coordinate enforcement, facilitate early detection of violations related to IUU fishing, improve safety standards onboard vessels, and promote fundamental labour rights within the fishing sector.

A. FAO Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA)

The FAO PSMA, effective since June 2016, is the first binding international treaty specifically targeting IUU fishing by empowering port States to inspect foreign fishing vessels seeking entry and deny port access to vessels engaged in illegal activities. Papua New Guinea ratified the PSMA in 2018, incorporating its provisions into domestic legislation under the Fisheries Management Act 1998 and associated regulations. Through this ratification, the PNG government gains authority to refuse port services, conduct vessel inspections, and cooperate with other States to prevent IUU-caught products from entering markets.

The Philippines ratified the PSMA in 2017, incorporating its rules within national laws administered by the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR), while Taiwan, though not a UN member and not a formal PSMA State Party,

aligns its port inspection regimes with the PSMA's standards through its participation in the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC).

B. IMO Cape Town Agreement (CTA)

The IMO's Cape Town Agreement (CTA) (2012) addresses the safety of fishing vessels, particularly those 24 metres in length and above. The CTA seeks to modernise and unify global safety standards, including construction, equipment, stability, and crew training measures, thus reducing maritime accidents and fatalities in fishing fleets. Papua New Guinea signed the CTA but has yet to ratify it, hindering full implementation domestically and weakening its legal leverage overfishing vessel safety.

The Philippines, likewise, a signatory but not ratified, continues to rely on national maritime safety laws and IMO conventions to regulate fishing vessel safety, while Taiwan implements maritime safety through the Taiwan Coast Guard but does not participate in the CTA. The lack of comprehensive adoption impairs the region's capacity to uniformly raise safety standards and harmonise enforcement, leaving crews vulnerable and risking operational gaps.

FIA PNG and its members do not have the authority to enforce ratification of the CTA. Their members could seek other means to enforce the content of CTA through private efforts to increase safety of fishing vessels of 24 metres in length and above. One clear effort that FIA PNG has conducted in this context, is to obtain the FISH Welfare for Crew Standard which covers Safety and Health of crew in Principle 3. Currently, almost half of FIA PNG member's vessels (26/53) are certified under this standard. Alternatively, the SSCI-recognised RFVS certification may provide additional support to crew employed by FIA PNG's members.

C. ILO Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 (C-188)

ILO Convention No. 188 sets an international benchmark for labour rights and working conditions in the fishing sector, ensuring decent work standards, occupational safety, fair treatment, and welfare provisions for fishers. PNG ratified ILO C-188 in 2019, the Philippines ratified C-188 in 2020 and has incorporated its requirements into national labour and fisheries regulations, including provisions covering crew contracts, repatriation, and occupational health standards. Taiwan has yet to ratify C-188, limiting its formal obligations to enforce international labour standards on Taiwanese-flagged vessels.

As seen with the CTA, FIA PNG and its members do not have the authority to enforce ratification of the ILO C-188 or better implementation and enforcement through its national legal systems. One clear effort that FIA PNG has conducted to ensure crew welfare, is to obtain the FISH Welfare for Crew Standard which is based on ILO C-188 and covers several of its articles. Currently, almost half of FIA PNG member's vessels (26/53) are certified under this standard. Alternatively, the SSCI-recognised RFVS certification may provide additional support to crew employed by FIA PNG's members.

Evidence & URLs

- FIA PNG Website: www.fia-png.com
- ILO C-188 (Work in Fishing Convention)
C188 - Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 — NORMLEX
(ILO): https://normlex.ilo.org/dyn/nrmlx_en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO:12100:P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:312333
- Cape Town Agreement (2012), IMO:
<https://www.imo.org/en/MediaCentre/HotTopics/Pages/CapeTownAgreementForFishing.aspx>
- PSMA (Agreement on Port State Measures)
Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA) — FAO (Parties / background): <https://www.fao.org/port-state-measures/background/parties-psma/en/>
- Agreement on Port State Measures — UN Treaty Collection
entry: <https://treaties.un.org/Pages/showDetWNIs.aspx?clang=en&objid=080000028049aa1a>
- Fairness, Integrity, Safety and Health (FISH) Standard for Crew, Version 1.1 (12 August 2021),
<https://fishstandard.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/fish-standard-for-crew-version-1.1-12-aug-2021.pdf>
- Responsible Fishing Vessel Standard (RFVS) Standard,
<https://bspcertification.org/Downloadables/pdf/BSP%20-%20RFVS%20Standard%20-%20Issue%202.0%20-%202022.-June-2022.pdf>

P9: Accessibility and Participation

In both fisheries and broader governance contexts, accessing government information remains a persistent challenge for the public and affected stakeholders, impeding meaningful participation in decision-making processes. Fisheries management decisions often directly affect livelihoods, yet equitable access to vital information is not always assured. Such access must be universal, irrespective of socioeconomic status, education, gender, political affiliation, or other factors, to ensure truly inclusive governance. However, barriers including complex scientific data, technical jargon, and inaccessible formats disproportionality marginalise vulnerable groups, weakening their ability to engage effectively.

The right to information has been recognised as a fundamental human right under Article 19 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and further reinforced under Goal 16 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Principle 9 of the WCPFC Charter also emphasises the criticality of access to information to enable stakeholders to actively participate, scrutinise, and influence decision-making before irreversibly resource commitments occur.

A. Examine the status of the right to information or evaluate the effectiveness of existing legislation

PNG's constitution includes a Right to Freedom of Information (Section 51). As more often is the case with the right to information, it makes exceptions for data availability if this may interfere with another right or legal obligation. One that is listed that is often invoked in the context of fisheries, is trade sectors or confidential commercial information, as well as matters relating to national security (Section 51 (1)(a)(c)). It can therefore reasonably be expected this constitutional reference on their own will not guarantee effective access to fisheries data.

The Fisheries Management Act 1998 mandates some transparency, including public reporting of fisheries statistics via the National Fisheries Authority (NFA) website. A review of the website reveals access to detailed regulatory, licensing, and catch data remains limited. A review of FIA PNG resources reveals some disclosure beyond general summaries, but it is unclear if FIA PNG's efforts will truly guarantee more access to information to any stakeholders to PNG's fisheries.

The WCPFC does not prescribe formal stakeholder consultation or RTI mechanisms in its Conservation and Management Measures (CMMs); however, it emphasises transparency principles and encourages member States to involve stakeholders in decision-making processes. WCPFC's Charter (Principle 9) endorses access to information as vital for meaningful participation but leaves actual implementation to member States' discretion.

B. Public information should be accessible

Governments must guarantee the completeness, accuracy, and timeliness of fisheries information by ensuring data are presented in accessible formats, including translation into major local languages, and through user-friendly distribution channels like digital platforms and community outreach. PNG NFA publishes a significant amount of information on their policies on their website, for instance on [this page on Monitoring, Control, and Surveillance](#).

The Philippines generally adopts digital publishing of fisheries data, but inconsistency in data quality and format hinders broad accessibility. An ongoing legal case related to fisheries transparency prescribed in their updated Fisheries Act means it is uncertain whether this will improve in the near future. Taiwan publishes limited fisheries statistics in Mandarin with minimal multi-language options, reducing accessibility for non-Mandarin speakers.

The WCPFC advocates for transparency and availability of fisheries data but stops short of mandating inclusive presentation standards, which are left to member States to enact and enforce.

C. Collaborate with Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)

Collaboration with CSOs plays a crucial role in bridging information gaps and supporting stakeholders to interpret and utilise fisheries data effectively. FIA PNG actively partners with several NGOs, including Global Fishing Watch, which appears to have significantly addressed access to some fisheries data in PNG ([0 Vessel Positioning](#)).

D. Give special attention to marginalised and underserved groups

Meaningful equity in access requires tailored outreach to marginalised and underserved groups, including women, indigenous communities, and rural fishers. Particular challenges arise from language barriers, low literacy, and limited digital access. Insufficient information could be found to assess whether FIA PNG's efforts are giving special attention to these groups.

Evidence & URLs

- FIA PNG Website: www.fia-png.com
- WCPFC Vessel Register: <https://vessels.wcpfc.int/vessel/>
- Fisheries Management Act 1998 (No. 48 of 1998) (PNG)
- Constitution of the Independent State of Papua New G (1999) (PNG)

P10: Human Rights Abuse and Forced Labour

Many vessel owners and operators sacrifice human well-being to reduce operational costs and maximise profit. They often engage in deceptive recruiting practices targeting workers from economically disadvantaged communities with limited employment options, pushing crew members beyond safe working limits. Common abuses include wage withholding, retention of vital documents, confinement at sea for prolonged periods without communication access, and exposure to unsafe working conditions, poor sanitation, and health hazards. These conditions frequently amount to modern-day slavery, encompassing bonded labour, human trafficking, physical abuse, injury, and death, often without accountability. A pervasive lack of transparency surrounds these human rights abuses throughout the recruitment process, voyage duration, and repatriation.

A. Collection of robust data related to crew onboard all fishing vessels

Effective protection of crew welfare depends on comprehensive data collection. Essential data includes crew identification and demographics (nationality, age, gender), contractual terms, confirmation of workers' understanding of contracts, recruitment agencies involved, recruitment locations and methods, and detailed vessel condition reports. This enables verification of rights protection and risk assessment. While PNG's Fisheries Management Act 1998 mandates reporting of crew details for licensed vessels. WCPFC only includes reference to the usual number of crew onboard a vessel, but lacks any further data.

B. Publication of aggregated crew data

Not found.

C. Ensure availability of grievance mechanisms

Not found.

D. Providing Wi-Fi access on fishing vessels

Although not mandated by law, Wi-Fi or other means of communication access onboard fishing vessels have become recognised as fundamental for crew welfare, enabling contact with family and shore-based support. Recognising this, many FIA PNG member companies have voluntarily extended Wi-Fi access to their crews, reflecting best practices aligned with PNG fisheries management goals emphasizing crew well-being. Improved digital connectivity supports mental health, grievance reporting, and enhances transparency regarding vessel operations.

E. Collaborate with Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)

In the context of crew welfare, the most notable CSO collaboration is that with the FISH Welfare for Crew certification. See [0 on International Agreements on ILO C-188](#).

Evidence & URLs

- FIA PNG Website: www.fia-png.com
- WCPFC Vessel Register: <https://vessels.wcpfc.int/vessel/>
- Fisheries Management Act 1998 (No. 48 of 1998) (PNG)

5. Conclusion & Recommendations

Recommendations to enhance alignment with CFT's Charter

A. Improved financial transparency: ownership structure and UBO information

- At the time of review, the FIA PNG membership list appeared to be outdated, which made it difficult to clearly link the vessel list and the WCPFC Vessel Registry to FIA PNG members. As this information is of particular importance to stakeholders, it may be helpful to consider establishing clear procedures to ensure membership information is updated promptly when changes occur.
- A separate page listing tuna members appears to provide an accurate overview; however, as it currently displays logos only, there may be value in also including the full legal names of member companies and, where available, links to their websites, to further enhance clarity.
- Providing more explicit information on the website that links vessels to member companies could further strengthen transparency. Clear insight into ownership structures is widely recognised as an important element of fisheries transparency.
- In light of the fact that PNG does not currently maintain a UBO registry or publish UBO information, achieving the level of financial transparency envisaged by the CFT Charter may present certain challenges.
- Once ownership and membership information is more easily accessible to stakeholders, it may be beneficial to consider promoting enhanced transparency around UBO ownership, which can play an important role in efforts to address IUU fishing. For further information, see [P3: Beneficial Ownership](#).

B. Improved transparency on subsidy policies and recipients

- There appears to be a formal MoU in place, as well as an adequate registration system for subsidy beneficiaries. However, information on subsidies does not currently appear to be publicly available.
- It may be helpful to consider publishing, at a minimum, information on eligibility criteria for subsidies and the total value of subsidies granted each year. The CFT Charter further recommends expanding this transparency to include the names of subsidy recipients, which would not necessarily require the publication of exact amounts, although that would provide the highest level of transparency. For further information, see [D. Public report of subsidy recipients and provisions](#).

C. Improved availability of information on grievance mechanisms for staff onboard FIA PNG members' vessels

- Currently, there appears to be limited publicly available information regarding conditions onboard vessels and mechanisms to ensure worker voice and empowerment. Many vessels have not yet obtained SSCI-recognised social certification programs, which makes it unclear how worker voice mechanisms, particularly grievance mechanisms, are implemented and monitored.
- Considering that many FIA PNG members' vessels provide WiFi access to crew, there is a valuable opportunity to leverage this connectivity to enhance worker empowerment and access to grievance mechanisms.
- It would also be beneficial to provide more information about the composition of crews on FIA member vessels, for example whether migrant labour is employed. Where relevant, outlining the provisions in place to ensure that information is accessible to all crew members, taking into account language barriers and literacy levels, would further support transparency and worker protection.

Note: improvements in the abovementioned areas, may also contribute to better alignment with [P9: Accessibility and Participation](#).

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