



Authorised Vessel Lists

What Is the Authorised Vessel List?

An 'authorised' vessel list creates a positive list of vessels that are authorised to *fish* in the respective RFMO area of competence. Some RFMOs also require that carrier and support vessels are also authorised to operate in the RFMO area of competence. Authorised vessels are flagged to a member, or cooperating non-member, of the RFMO and are therefore expected to be operating consistent with the decisions of that RFMO. It differs from the 'Active' vessel list that exists in some RFMOs that provides verification or cross-referencing of those vessels authorised to fish and *those that conducted fishing activities* in a particular time period in the RFMO area of competence.

Benefits of Authorised Vessel Lists

Flagging vessels under a country's flag is the primary mechanism under international law to identify who is responsible for controlling the activities of that vessel (LOSC, Article 94). Authorising vessels to fish for specific species or within a defined area of competence (or both) is fundamental for flag State control and forms the primary basis for enforcement in fisheries. Depending on the type of data collected, the authorised vessel list may also provide critical information for scientists undertaking fishery stock assessments. An active vessel list enables measurement of a flag States' fishing effort/capacity against

some pre-agreed or approved baseline capacity, and it could potentially be used to verify legal fishing vessels if it is used to cross-reference the authorised vessel list for a given time period.

How Do They Work?

The requirements of an RFMO authorised vessel list can be defined in the treaty itself, or through the adoption of a specific management measure. In adopting either the treaty or the management measure, flag States commit to the collection and reporting the required information for each vessel they've authorised to fish in the treaty's area of competence. A component of this information is published on the RFMOs website to enable third parties to identify vessels authorised by their flag State to operate in the area, the number of specific vessel types and a range of other information. In contrast, active vessel lists have only been implemented through management measures and simply report whether the vessel was actively fishing over a prescribed time period (e.g. the previous 12 months).

For comprehensive review of the tuna RFMOs measures creating the **authorised vessel lists** and the suggested best practices please refer to [ISSF Technical Report 2022-11](#).



Assessment of Authorised Vessel List by RFMO

Recommended Best Practices

The following table shows the level of progress in each tuna RFMO in implementing the recommended best practices.

Color Coding Key

	Element(s) are consistent with the suggested best practices.		Some element(s) are present, but amendments or a change in procedure is needed to be consistent with best practices.		Element (s) are missing or inconsistent with best practices.
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RFMO	Definitions & Application			Data Fields & Minimum Data					Modification Procedures					Publication & Info Sharing
	<i>Standard definitions of fishing, fishing vessels, fisheries support activities, transshipment</i>	<i>Covers all harvest, carrier, support and supply vessels, irrespective of size or geographic location</i>	<i>Clarify that vessels not on RFV not deemed authorized</i>	<i>ID mandatory minimum data fields that must be completed and data field format</i>	<i>Require start/ end dates for authorization Empower Sect to remove if lapsed</i>	<i>ID non-compliance with minimum standards as a serious infraction</i>	<i>Include data on permits regarding species, spatial restrictions, at-sea transshipment or to function as a support vessels</i>	<i>IMO # required for both fishing and carrier vessels; all fishing vessels able to obtain IMO # must have one</i>	<i>New vessel and any changes sent minimum 45 days before fishing</i>	<i>Flag State must provide a reason for vessel's removal from RFV</i>	<i>Empower Sect to remove any vessel from RFV that on an IUU Vessel List</i>	<i>Allow updates to RFV vessel info from MCS activities</i>	<i>Maintain historical data (e.g., flag, ownership, charters), on RFV</i>	
CCSBT	✔	✔	✔	✘	Sect not able to remove/ place on IUU list	✘	✘	IMO number (if available)	✘	✔	✘	✘	✔	✔

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	Standard definitions of fishing, fishing vessels, fisheries support activities, transshipment	Covers all harvest, carrier, support and supply vessels, irrespective of size or geographic location	Clarify that vessels not on RFV not deemed authorized	ID mandatory minimum data fields that must be completed and data field format	Require start/end dates for authorization Empower Sect to remove if lapsed	ID non-compliance with minimum standards as a serious infraction	Include data on permits regarding species, spatial restrictions, at-sea transshipment or to function as a support vessels	IMO # required for both fishing and carrier vessels; all fishing vessels able to obtain IMO # must have one	New vessel and any changes sent minimum 45 days before fishing	Flag State must provide a reason for vessel's removal from RFV	Empower Sect to remove any vessel from RFV that on an IUU Vessel List	Allow updates to RFV vessel info from MCS activities	Maintain historical data (e.g., flag, ownership, charters), on RFV	
IATTC	✓	✓	✓	✗	Start/end dates not listed & Sect not empowered to remove and place on draft IUU list, but there is a general provision that vessels not on the RFV are eligible to be considered for listing	✗	✗	IMO #s not required for carriers	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓
ICCAT	✓	Does not apply to vessel less than 20 meters LOA	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓

RFMO	Definitions & Application			Data Fields & Minimum Data					Modification Procedures					Publica- tion & Info Sharing	
	Standard definitions of fishing, fishing vessels, fisheries support activities, transshipment	Covers all harvest, carrier, support and supply vessels, irrespective of size or geographic location	Clarify that vessels not on RFV not deemed authorized	ID mandatory minimum data fields that must be completed and data field format	Require start/ end dates for authorization Empower Sect to remove if lapsed	ID non-compliance with minimum standards as a serious infraction	Include data on permits regarding species, spatial restrictions, at-sea transshipment or to function as a support vessels	IMO # required; includes all vessel sizes able to receive an IMO #	New vessel and any changes sent minimum 45 days before fishing	Flag State must provide a reason for vessel's removal from RFV	Empower Sect to remove any vessel from RFV that on an IUU Vessel List	Allow updates to RFV vessel info from MCS activities	Maintain historical data (e.g., flag, ownership, charters), on RFV	Majority of data fields public	
IOTC		Does not apply to vessel <24 meters in-zone			Sect not able to remove/ place on IUU list			IMO #s not required for carriers						Not port of Registration	
WCPFC		Does not apply to vessels operating in their own EEZ						This				If IUU listed, once license revoked by flag State, Sect is directed to remove the vessel from the RFV / Sect able to remove non-member flagged vessels from RFV if found on other RFMO IUU vessel lists			Not port of Registration



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