



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing requirements

If you are importing fish into Great Britain from another country you must follow the UK's Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing requirements which came into effect in January 2021.

What are the UK's IUU fishing requirements?

IUU fishing documentation (catch certificates, processing statements and evidence of storage) must be sent in advance to the relevant Port Health Authority (PHA) for imports of fish and fishery products. Certain exemptions apply as outlined in [Annex I of the UK's IUU fishing regulation](#). These requirements are wholly separate, and in addition to, sanitary and phytosanitary requirements.

- **Catch certificates** are a key tool in reducing IUU fishing and provide assurance that the fish imported is caught legally and in-line with relevant regulatory and management measures. This is validated by the flag state of the catching vessel.
- If fish is processed in a country that is not the flag state of the catching vessel, a **processing statement** is required. This document shall be endorsed by the competent authority of the processing country. Processing includes filleting, packing, canning, freezing, smoking, salting, cooking, pickling, or preparing fish for market in any other manner.
- If the product has been stored in a country that is not the flag state of the catching vessel or processing state, then **evidence of storage** is required. This should consist of documented evidence or a specific form, to show that the product was stored and remained under the surveillance of the competent authority in that third country.

Note: EU Member States are treated as 27 separate countries for the purposes of IUU fishing.

Actions to take:

1. These documents are required now (including for imports from the EU) and must be sent by email (or provided physically if the PHA requests) to the relevant PHA in advance of the consignment's arrival. In the future these documents will need to be uploaded on to IPAFFs, but Defra will provide notice in advance of this becoming a requirement.
2. Contact the PHA to find out how far in advance you need to send the documents - but the minimum timings set in the legislation are 72 hours in advance for imports by sea, 4 hours by rail or air and 2 hours by road.

Fees and Compliance

PHAs charge a fee to recover costs for checking these documents (or, if deemed necessary, performing a physical inspection). These fees are set by individual authorities and will therefore vary.

PHAs and the Marine Management Organisation are responsible for enforcing these requirements and may take enforcement action where appropriate.

Further information

For further information on the requirements for importing fish or fish products into the UK please visit www.gov.uk/guidance/importing-or-moving-fish-to-the-uk.

For help and support on the UK's IUU fishing requirements, please contact info@marinemanagement.org.uk or call the Marine Management Organisation helpline on 0330 041 6999