

Title: **Globalisation and Better Governance: Combating IUU fishing**

Author(s): Alberto Spagnoli

Abstract: The European Union ranks third worldwide in terms of fishing power, with 5.7 million tonnes landed in 2006 and a fishing fleet active in every ocean. It is also the leading importer of fish (worth some –20 billion in 2006). That is why the European Commission considers that the European Union has a major responsibility that obliges it to take the lead in combating illegal fishing. Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing is thriving throughout the world. According to estimates, this global commerce is worth 3 to 10 billion euros per year. As a comparison, legal landings by the EU fleet reached 6.7 billion euros in 2006. The scope of marine poaching and its environmental, economic and social impact make it a political priority. Illegal fishing depletes world stocks and compromises the protective measures implemented to ensure their sustainability. It affects significantly the economic performance of legal fishing fleets by reducing catch volumes and depressing prices. Furthermore, by targeting the national waters of developing countries which do not have the means to patrol them effectively, illegal fishing robs these underprivileged populations of an essential food source. The European Commission proposed in 2007 a strategy aimed at depriving illegal fishing of its commercial outlets in the European Union. This strategy would involve, in particular, widespread State-based port control, which forces each State to ensure that the fishing products they import are legal. In other words, all fish, molluscs and crustaceans (including processed products) entering the European Union will have to be certified by the flag State of the vessel which caught them. Vessels whose flag State does not certify the products on board will not be able to access European ports. In order to develop such measures, the new strategy takes an overarching approach to the problem, taking account of the activities through which illegal fishing finds outlets: transshipment of catches, processing, landings in port and marketing. A package of measures including certification requirements, commercial and other sanctions, strengthened control standards, and increased international cooperation should deprive illegal fishing of commercial outlets in the EU and thus to strike fraudsters where the impact will be the greatest: their profits. Implementing measures are now actively being discussed with EU Member States, stakeholders and the international community. Issues such as pursuing EU nationals engaged in IUU fishing beyond EU waters are being tackled. Sensitive areas such as increased administrative burdens for EU border controls, importers and retailers and the cost of implementing certification systems by developing countries are also being examined.