



International Pole & Line Foundation Fishery Improvement Toolbox

Maldivian Fishery Information System and Engagement with Traceregister for Improving Traceability

IPNLF FIT CASE STUDY SERIES

FISHERY IMPROVEMENT TOOL: TRACEABILITY

IMPROVEMENT TOOL AREA 3.2

IPNLF CONTACT: SHIHAM ADAM

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INTRODUCTION

One of IPNLF's first projects in the Maldives was the development of a Fishery Information System (FIS), which is a relational database system for compiling fishery data. It was developed with the primary objective of replacing the Maldives' prior fishery data compiling system that was becoming redundant and obsolete.

FIS is modular in structure, with a database of fishing vessels allowing users to track and renew fishing licenses while also supporting compliance with the European Union's (EU) Regulation to manage Illegal, Unreported & Unregulated (IUU) fishing that became effective in January 2010. It also contains information about fish purchasing entities for them to compile the purchase data and a logbook system to compile fishing trip level catch and effort data as required by the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC).

A key aspect of the FIS is the module on catch documentation, where a fish purchase lot (detailed records of purchases on a given day) is uniquely tracked by the buyer/processor up to the point of export. At the point of export, information from other modules is fetched (e.g., year/date, vessel, catch location, species, gear, etc), together with the product(s) and export destination(s) information, to produce a detailed "catch document", also known as a catch certificate, that is a mandatory aspect of the EU Regulation.

Engagement with Traceregister adds further value and credibility to the FIS, because information about the Maldives produce can be traced to its origin by buyers and/or consumers. Using their application programming interface (API), and Ministry support, IPNLF enabled our members to trace Maldives products with retailers and buyers through these paired systems.



ACTIVITIES

Activities

The first use of FIS for the purposes of tracing seafood products occurred through the IPNLF member World Wise Foods, when it was used in conjunction with a system they were implementing in Thailand. IPNLF's primary engagement with Traceregister was initiated with another member, Whole Foods Markets (USA), who also continue to use their systems to implement traceability standards throughout their supply chain.

Traceregister is a business platform where seafood products are traced via interoperability protocols across multiple software platforms throughout the world, adding value and credibility to seafood businesses and their customers. Through collaborative development, IPNLF ensured that Traceregister was enabled to gather relevant information from the FIS, to ensure Whole Foods can also robustly trace products sourced from Maldivian processors. To enable this, IPNLF worked together with local processors, the Maldives Ministry of Fisheries, Marine Resources and Agriculture, and the FIS developer who is still retained by IPNLF. Once the Ministry and processors agreed on what information could be shared, unique keys (software codes) were developed and shared with processors so that Traceregister could seamlessly “fetch” the authorized information. This allowed the shipments and their detailed information to be efficiently traced as an option for the processors when requesting for Catch Certificates through the FIS platform.



OUTCOMES

Food traceability was one of the top five food trends in 2019, according to IFIC (the International Food Information Council Foundation). Increasingly, consumer choice is driven by information about the provenance and sustainability credentials of a food product. TE Foods suggests, “The pure presentation of traceability information will shift to telling the “story of the food” in a way which the consumers can easily absorb. Attaching photos, videos, inspection documents, nutrition data will make the journey of the food more interesting”. This is exactly what IPNLF and its members will continue to achieve for one-by-one tuna fisheries globally through engaging the IPNLF FIT Traceability Improvement Tool and Sourcing Transparency Platform (STP).

OUTCOMES

Through working with various public and private partners, this project increased the confidence of buyers of Maldivian seafood products, elevated sustainability credentials of the Maldives fishery tuna products and promoted more market demand for Maldivian tuna. The use of Traceregister continues to rapidly innovate so it can consistently provide more robust and comprehensive services for processors, importers and retailers. As more customers subscribe to the Traceregister, more buyers will also be able to trace Maldives products through this system, and IPNLF will continue to help its members stay at the cutting edge of such innovations.

This project also increased the profile of the Maldivian FIS while further promoting the unique value offering of the Maldivian fishery products. IPNLF has continued to be associated and engaged with the FIS since July 2012, thanks to generous financial support provided by the IPNLF members, Marks & Spencer, Sainsbury's and World Wise Foods.



ABOUT

About IPNLF

The International Pole and Line Foundation (IPNLF) promotes the sustainable management of the world's responsible pole-and-line, handline and troll (collectively known as 'one-by-one') tuna fisheries while also recognising the importance of safeguarding the livelihoods they support.

IPNLF's work to develop, support and promote one-by-one tuna fisheries is subsequently fully aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We believe effective and equitable global governance is essential to protect and restore the ocean, and this should be achieved by ensuring the participation of local and coastal communities in decision-making processes.

Environmental sustainability in tuna fisheries can only be fully achieved by also putting an end to the overfishing and destructive fishing practices that are driving the degradation of already threatened marine species, habitats and ecosystems. Allied with its members, IPNLF demonstrates the value of one-by-one caught tuna to consumers, policymakers and throughout the supply chain. IPNLF works across science, policy and the seafood sector, using an evidence-based, solutions-focused approach with strategic guidance from our Board of Trustees and advice from our Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) and Market Advisory Group (MAG).

IPNLF was officially registered in the United Kingdom in 2012 (Charity 1145586), with branch offices in the UK, South Africa, Indonesia, The Netherlands, and the Maldives.

About FIT

IPNLF are the global one-by-one tuna fishery and supply chain specialists, and the Fishery Improvement Toolbox (FIT) provides a framework whereby we can offer tailor-made project support and consultancy services to our members. When IPNLF members seek to demonstrate their responsible seafood sourcing on IPNLF's Sourcing Transparency Platform (STP), they can also target strategic improvements to specific seafood supply chain issues by engaging IPNLF directly through its FIT. The FIT is designed to work collaboratively alongside IPNLF's STP and when combined, these tools offer members a way to transparently demonstrate their ongoing improvements and responsible performance to all stakeholders in seafood supply chains, including end-consumers.

The FIT also provides a clear pathway to our members so that they can actively engage in collaborative improvements made in the fisheries they source from, and in their associated supply chains. The FIT is underpinned by a holistic understanding of sustainability, offering a framework for social, economic, environmental and operational improvements. The FIT has five main components that will help facilitate targeted improvements in one-by-one supply chains:

- Social Responsibility
 - ToolEcosystem and Management Tool
 - Traceability Improvement Tool
 - Plastic Neutrality Tool
 - Seafood Quality Assurance Tool
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