



Addressing IUU Fishing in the Bay of Bengal – National Efforts and Regional Drive

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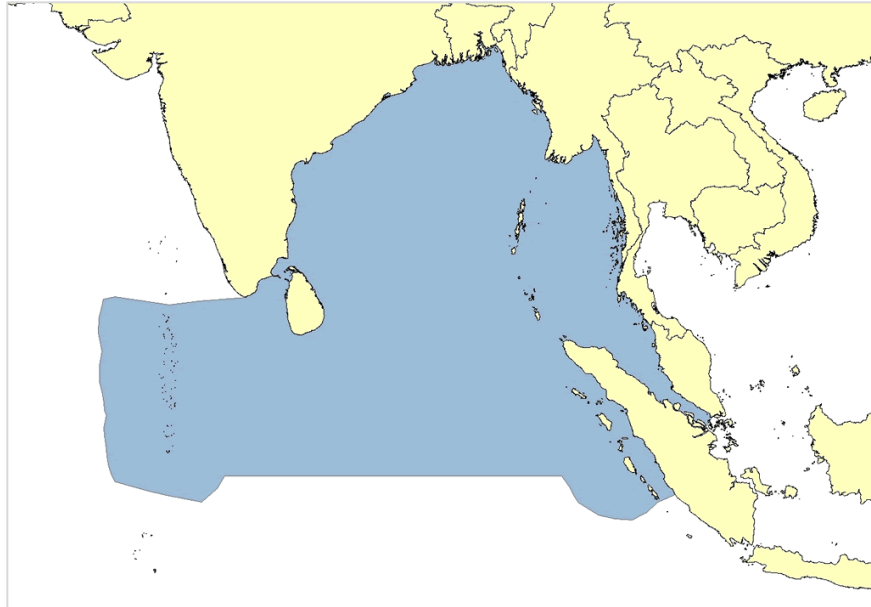
**Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental
Organisation**

www.bobpigo.org



BOBP: Inter-Governmental Organisation

A Regional Think Tank committed to facilitate evidence-based fisheries management



Bangladesh
India
Maldives
Sri Lanka

Contracting parties

Indonesia
Malaysia
Myanmar
Thailand

Cooperating parties

Themes

- Fisheries Resource Management
- Ecosystem & Biodiversity Conservation
- Livelihoods and Occupational Safety

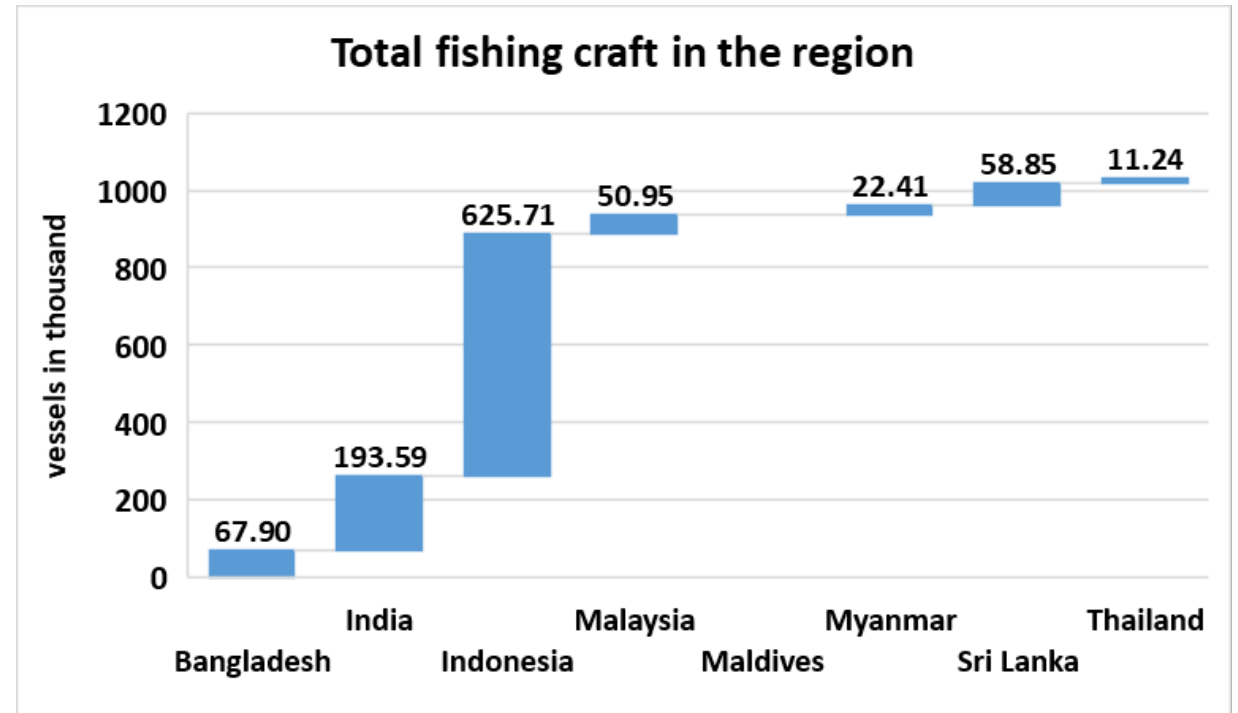
Verticals

- Research **4** Development
- Policy Advocacy
- Capacity Development



Fishing: Characteristics of the Region

- BOB Region comprises lower middle to middle income countries.
- Multiple fishing points- diverse fisheries.
- Large number of fishing vessels.
- Fisheries is seen as a livelihood activity – *with focus on increasing production.*
- ***Co-existence of formal and informal governance mechanism – inadequate bridging process.***



Over 1 million fishing vessels ply in the region. There are about 2.6 million fishing vessels in the world.

(FAO Fisheries & Aquaculture Yearbook 2019)



BOB – Paradox of Plenty

Problems

- A part of the northern Indian Ocean bordered by 06 developing countries and 02 Small Island Developing States (SIDS) = **resource constraint**
- About 23% stocks are over-exploited and 6.6% stocks are collapsed = **Not so healthy fish stocks**
- Average 5-6 tropical cyclones/year, IMD = **Disaster prone**
- Warming faster than other seas: **Climate vulnerability**

Prospects

- **Fisheries is the most prominent activity.** Oil and gas exploration and shipping are developing rapidly.
- **Over 400 million people** in the Bay of Bengal area are dependent on coastal and marine resources for their food, livelihood and security (BOBLME Project).
- **Large catch:** 4,514 thousand tonnes valued at USD 6,658.47 million in 2010 USD (SeaAroundUs).



IUU Fishing – a global threat to sustainability

A major impediment for sustainability of marine fisheries sector

Undermines management and conservation measures; severely impact livelihoods of millions of people

Globally, up to 20% of traded fisheries products are from IUU fishing; about US\$ 23 billion per year.

A 2016 USA National Intelligence Council Report termed IUU a bigger problem than piracy

Food Security & Loss of Livelihoods	Tension between the countries	Undermines rule of law	Likely to contribute to piracy, risky working condition, etc.
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IUU Fishing – Emerging global discourse

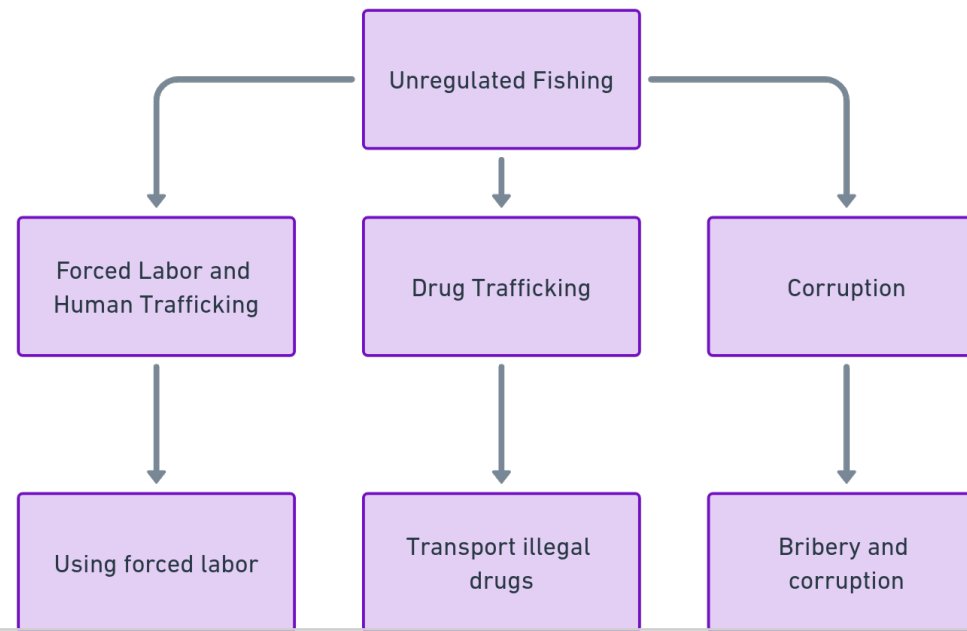
The diagram consists of two large, stylized arrows pointing towards each other. The left arrow is orange and points to the right, containing the text 'Fisheries Management Issue'. The right arrow is grey and points to the left, containing the text 'Law and Order Issue'. A thick black diagonal line runs from the bottom-left towards the top-right, crossing the space between the two arrows.

Fisheries
Management
Issue

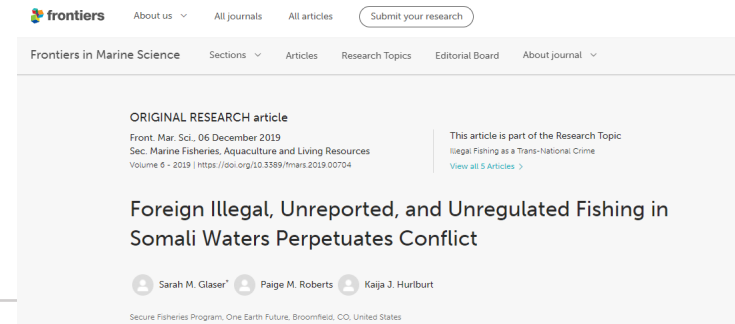
Law and Order
Issue

Global experience shows that IUU fishing can be graduated to fisheries crime

Fisheries
Crime
Problems



IUU
Fishing



The challenge is to address it at the fisheries management level

South Asia's United Front Against IUU Fishing

- The definition of IUU fishing, as provided by FAO in IPOA-IUU serves as a basis for international understanding and action against such practices.
- However, specific aspects and emphases may vary slightly from one national context to another, as countries adapt the definition to their legal and regulatory frameworks, marine environments, and fishing practices.





Strategic Considerations in the National Initiatives

- **Key Strategies:**

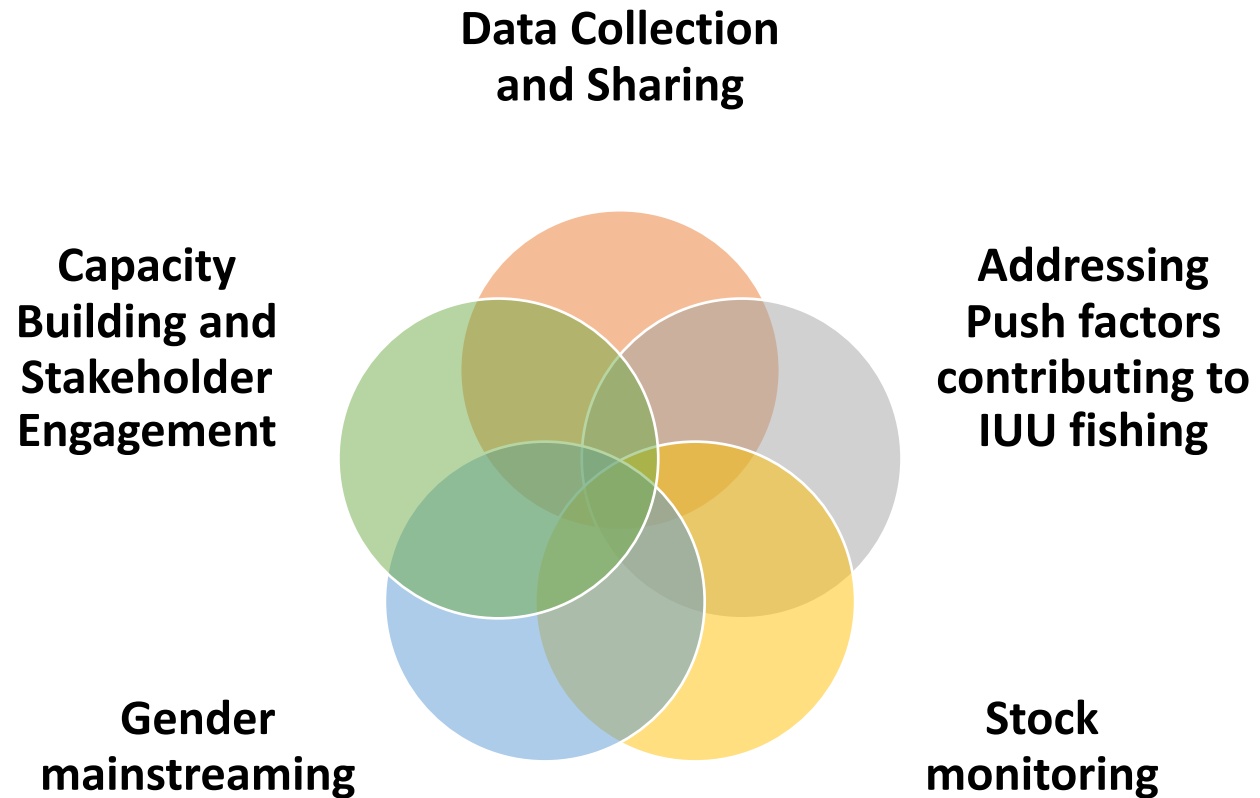
- **Legal and Policy Frameworks:** Strengthening of legal frameworks, including adherence to international agreements like the FAO Port State Measures Agreement.
- **Monitoring, Control, and Surveillance (MCS):** Enhancing MCS capabilities, utilizing technology such as Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS), and strengthening regional cooperation for more effective surveillance and enforcement.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Promoting community-based management, public awareness, and stakeholder participation in combating IUU fishing.

- **Challenges and Opportunities:**

- **Common Challenges:** Monitoring vast marine areas and ensuring compliance among a diverse and dispersed fishing community.
- **Collaborative Opportunities:** Sharing best practices, leveraging technology, and enhancing regional cooperation to strengthen surveillance and law enforcement against IUU fishing activities.



Scope of further strengthening the NPOA-IUUs



Scope of Regional Cooperation in NPOA-IUU

Country	Scope of Regional Cooperation in NPOA-IUU
Bangladesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Engagement with regional bodies- Bilateral and multilateral agreements with neighboring countries for joint patrols, information sharing, and enforcement actions.- Participation in regional workshops, training, and capacity-building initiatives.
Sri Lanka	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Active participation in IORA and the IOTC- Collaborative research and data sharing on fish stocks and marine ecosystems.- Regional dialogues and agreements to address cross-border IUU fishing.
Maldives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Strong emphasis on cooperation within the framework of the IOTC.- Partnerships with regional organizations for the development of MCS strategies.- Regional collaboration for capacity building and technology transfer.
India	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Engagement with the RFBs for enhanced regional fisheries management.- Bilateral agreements with neighboring countries,- Initiatives for regional capacity building, including MCS, and joint research.

Regional Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter, and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing (RPOA-IUU) for the Bay of Bengal region

- Enhanced Data Sharing and Transparency
- Strengthening MCS
- Harmonization of Legal Frameworks and Standards
- Capacity Building and Technical Assistance
- Inclusion of Small-Scale Fisheries and Community Engagement
- Addressing IUU Fishing in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ) (Needs strengthening)
- Approach for Gender and Working Conditions (Needs strengthening)



Enters BOBLME Project: Sustainable Management of Fisheries

Outcome 1.2: IUU catch in the BOBLME reduced.

Output 1.2.1 BOBLME countries join and implement a Regional Plan of Action (RPOA) on IUU fishing.

Output 1.2.2. National POAs-IUU and national IUU MCS systems and Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) strengthened.

Output 1.2.3 Tools for promoting best practice to combat IUU developed and implemented. (MCS, PSM and traceability,

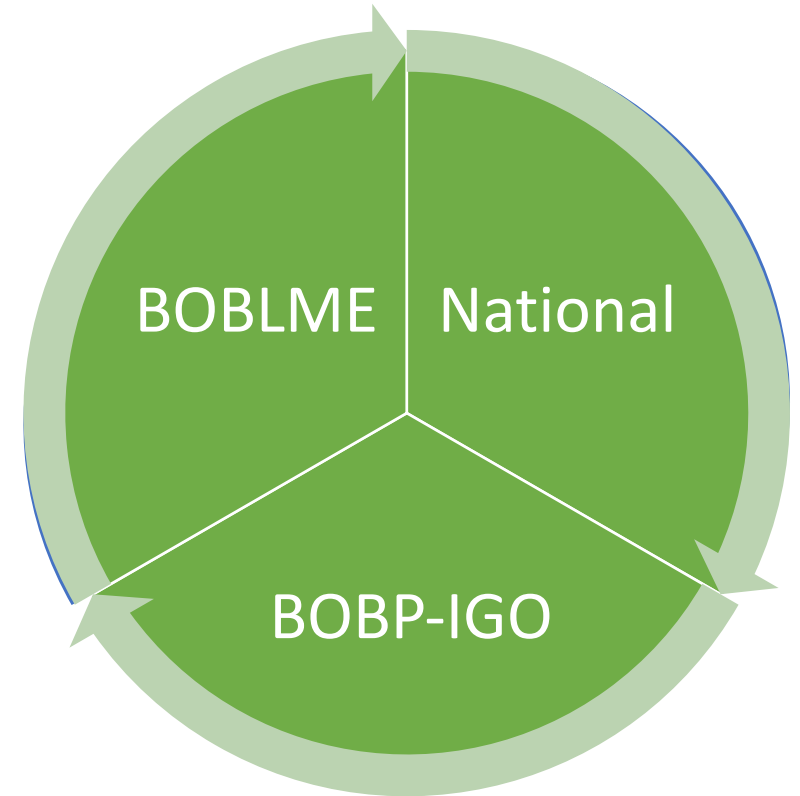
and policies and national actions to combat IUU fishing developed and implemented in national pilot/investment project

Output 1.2.4 Regional Capacity Building Program on port inspections, MCS, and traceability implemented.

BOBP-IGO: To matching of project & policy

Project Targets:

- 20% reduction in IUU fishing from 2014.
- Implement RPOA-IUU.
- Strengthen NPOA-IUU, MCS, VMS.
- Tools for promoting best practices to combat IUU fishing developed and implemented in national pilot/investment projects.
- Advance training for 20 national fisheries staff trained in each country.
- Gender is mainstreamed.



Does project and national targets marry?

Are the current efforts enough to contain and solve IUU fishing within fisheries sector and stopping it from escalating to a law and order problem?