



West Africa Task Force
Working together to stop illegal fishing

West Africa



Estimated global losses from IUU fishing could be as high as **\$23.5 billion annually**



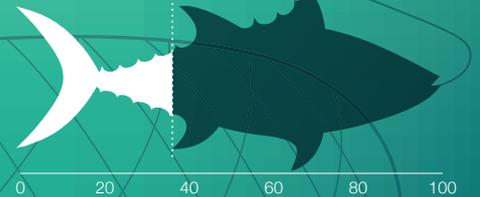
West Africa

Is a global hotspot for illegal fishing with estimated losses of \$1.3 billion, of which the 6 FCWC countries, who form the West Africa Task Force lose \$300 million a year.

West Africa losses **\$1.3b**

WATF losses **\$300m**

37%



of all fish caught in West Africa are **caught illegally**

Distant Water Fishing Nations from all over the world target the fish-rich waters of the Gulf of Guinea.

Main countries:

- China
- Taiwan
- Russia
- South Korea
- Spain
- France
- Thailand

It is reported that China expanded their West Africa fishing operations from:

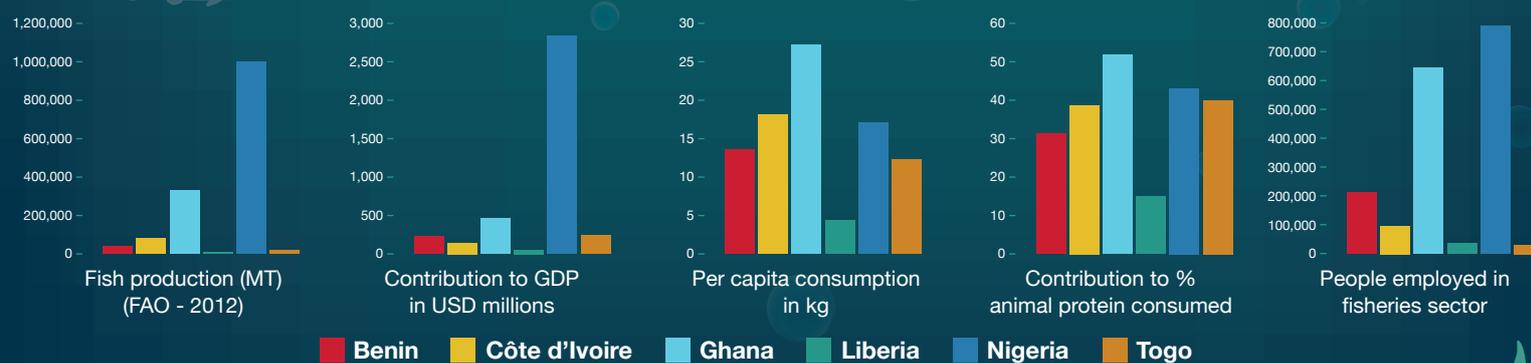


462 vessels



This is 1/5th of the total Chinese distant water fleet

Fish is vital for the health, economies and food security of African countries:



Illegal fishing

Illegal fishing has devastating social, economic and environmental costs. Countries are deprived of money that could fund development and economic growth. Fish stocks are depleted making it harder for small-scale fishers to support their families.

Damaging fishing methods destroy marine environments.



Illegal fishing operators

Evidence shows that illegal fishing operators not only fail to comply with fisheries rules and regulations but are part of highly organised, transnational criminal operations involved in a range of criminal activity:

- Document forgery
- Money laundering
- Tax evasion
- Human trafficking and human rights abuses
- Smuggling of arms, weapons, drugs and wildlife
- Piracy
- Environmental crimes



To tackle fisheries crime requires the involvement and commitment of many agencies nationally, regionally and internationally.





THE PROBLEM OF ILLEGAL FISHING IN

West Africa



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The West Africa Task Force member countries:

Top 10 violations

- No valid license
- Unauthorised gear or methods
- Fishing in prohibited areas
- Forged documents
- False or inaccurate information on catches
- Illegal transshipment
- Trade in illegally caught fish
- Targeting unauthorised species
- Damage to artisanal gear and vessels

Challenges

- A combined EEZ of 700,000 km²
- Low capacity to monitor and control waters
- Weak regional and national inter-agency cooperation
- Legal frameworks weak or not implemented
- Corruption

The West Africa Task Force has been established to help stop these violations and increase compliance in the fisheries sector.

How can we stop illegal fishing?

- By working together as a region
- Through national interagency cooperation
- Through supporting international processes and agreements such as the Port State Measures Agreement and the African Union Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture in Africa

How is the FCWC and the West Africa Task Force helping?

- The six FCWC member countries – Benin, Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria and Togo – are the founding countries. Together they are working as the WATF to share intelligence and cooperate on fisheries controls
- The WATF has established interagency National Working Groups, these will enable a more effective response to illegal fishing
- The WATF is supporting and championing national and international measures that are key to successfully stopping illegal fishing

What is the West Africa Task Force achieving?

Activity

- Gathering and sharing intelligence
- Sharing licensing information
- Requesting and receiving country to country support
- Requesting and receiving technical support
- Building inter-agency cooperation
- Taking enforcement actions
- Strengthening MCS capacity
- Building national, regional and international awareness
- Ensuring a common regional approach

Methods

- COMMUNICATIONS PLATFORM
- TASK FORCE MEETINGS
- TRAINING WORKSHOPS
- TOOLBOX
 - MANUALS
 - PRESENTATIONS
 - FORMS
- TECHNICAL SUPPORT
- COST-EFFECTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Results

- STRENGTHENED REGIONAL COOPERATION**
- ESTABLISHED WORKING PRACTICES**
 - AGREED TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE TASK FORCE
 - ACTIVITY OF THE TF EMBEDDED IN THE FCWC WORKPLAN
- MCS ACTIONS AND PROCESS**
 - STRENGTHENED DUE DILIGENCE FOR LICENSING AND FLAGGING
 - VESSEL INSPECTIONS AS A RESULT OF SHARED INTELLIGENCE
 - COUNTRY TO COUNTRY REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE
 - LICENSE AND FLAGGING APPLICATION DENIAL
 - VESSEL ARRESTS, AND RESULTING FINES
 - INVESTIGATIONS INTO BROADER FLEETS AND OWNERS
 - DEVELOP A REGIONAL REEFER CONTROL STRATEGY

A Technical Team made up of the FCWC Secretariat, Trygg Mat Tracking, Stop Illegal Fishing and NFDS supports the West Africa Task Force, with funding from Norad.

