



17 February 2021

## Sharing information online to safeguard fish resources

The Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) has published a bilingual webpage to inform Indonesian fishers about the risks associated with illegal fishing in the Australian Fishing Zone (AFZ).

The new AFMA webpage includes animated educational videos and translated chartlets which complements on water enforcement action against Indonesian Foreign Fishing Vessels (FFVs) operating unlawfully within the AFZ.

Since April 2021, AFMA with the support of Maritime Border Command (MBC); a multi-agency task force within the Australian Border Force (ABF) and enabled by the Australian Defence Force (ADF) have expanded operations to counter incursions by fishing vessels from Indonesia being used to operate illegally in Australian waters.

The webpage is part of AFMA's efforts to support enforcement action by educating Indonesian fishing operators about fishing within the MOU Box. The MOU Box is an area within the AFZ in the Timor Sea where Indonesian fishers, using traditional fishing vessels and methods only, are permitted to fish.

AFMA and the ABF are working with Indonesian officials to distribute translated information and fisheries enforcement education chartlets to fishing communities - underpinning the strength of our relationship with our Indonesian government partners and commitment to protecting our shared fishing resources.

While most Indonesian fishing occurs north of the maritime boundary between Australia and Indonesia, an increase of illegal fishing activity has been experienced over the last ten months.

Throughout 2021, incursions by Indonesia fishers within the AFZ, targeting beche-de-mer (sea cucumber) around Cartier and Ashmore Island Marine Parks, Scott Reef and further southwest at Mermaid Reef Marine Park has resulted in the interdiction of illegal fishing vessels and legislative forfeitures leading to the seizure of catch, fishing equipment and disposal of fishing vessels.

Australian Marine Parks are unique marine environments of high conservation value and importance to the Australian community. Protecting these marine parks is a priority for the Australian Government.

AFMA's General Manager Operations Peter Venslovas said "the majority of Indonesian fishing vessels operate in the MOU Box area in accordance with the agreement"

"This is attributed to a strong Australian education and enforcement response, and a highly successful working relationship with our Indonesian Fisheries government counterparts".



Australian Government

Australian Fisheries Management Authority

“Developing education material for Indonesian fishers in their language complements our work with Indonesian officials to inform fishers that breaking the rules in Australian waters is not worth the risk.”

“Our message to foreign fishers that choose to fish outside the rules is simple. We will intercept you, you will lose your catch, your fishing equipment and possibly even your vessel”.

“The seizure of fishing gear and disposal of vessels serves as a reminder to those seeking to exploit Australia’s marine resources that Australian authorities have zero tolerance for such illegal activity”.

Find more about the traditional Indonesian fishing rules within the Australia-Indonesia MOU Box and risks associated with illegal fishing in the Australian waters at [www.afma.gov.au/moubox](http://www.afma.gov.au/moubox) (Indonesian version), <https://www.afma.gov.au/traditional-indonesian-fishing-mou-box> (English version).

Suspected illegal and suspicious activity can be reported in three ways: calling the 24 hour CRIMFISH hotline **1800 CRIMFISH (1800 274 634)**, emailing [intelligence@afma.gov.au](mailto:intelligence@afma.gov.au) or [report online at afma.gov.au](https://www.afma.gov.au/report-online)

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Media contact:

Australian Fisheries Management Authority: 0437 869 860

Links:

English: [https://www.afma.gov.au/AU-ID MoUBox](https://www.afma.gov.au/AU-ID_MoUBox)

Bahasa: <https://www.afma.gov.au/moubox>