



Sustainable Fisheries
P A R T N E R S H I P

FIPs - Transparency, Traceability and Accountability

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Drin Lutchman, Program Director (FIP Evaluations & External Relations)

FIPs - Transparency, Traceability and Accountability

- Introduction
- The role of FIPs in seafood supply
- FIPs - Current transparency and traceability
- Universal Fishery IDs for increased transparency and traceability - A model for FIPs?
- Discussion & Recommendations

FIPs - Transparency, Traceability and Accountability

This Fishmarket session focuses on transparency, traceability and accountability in FIPs. FIP transparency continues to increase with public reporting on components including participants lists, vessels lists and volume. However, unlike MSC certified fisheries. FIPs do not have the reassurance of chain of custody (CoC). SFP's current work on Fishery Universal Fishery IDs to increase fishery traceability will be presented, followed by an interactive session on lessons learned from this and other initiatives, and what's next for FIP traceability and accountability.

Links to pre-reading materials are provided here:

- [Universal Fishery IDs.](#)
- [Fishery IDs: The Future of Seafood Traceability and Sustainability.](#)
- [Universal Fishery IDs Pilot Projects.](#)
- ["Publix is partnering with SFP and Thai Union to design and test the use of universal fishery IDs in the Philippines blue swimming crab supply chain."](#)



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2025 FIP RESEARCH DATABASE



354

initiated FIPs
to date



170

active FIPs
in 2025



42%

of the FIPs cover
the artisanal sector



84

flag countries
associated to FIPs



10.9

months (avg) to
achieve stage 3



FIP start window

- 2001 - 2005
- 2006 - 2010
- 2011 - 2015
- 2016 - 2020
- 2021 -

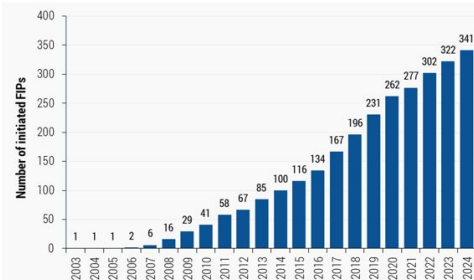
Year
2025

© 2026 Mapbox © OpenStreetMap

To learn more about this latest version and download the full database, please visit:
<https://sustainablefisheries-uw.org/databases/fishery-improvement-projects-database/>

FIPs contribution to global seafood supply

Wild production: Increased number of FIPs and certified fisheries

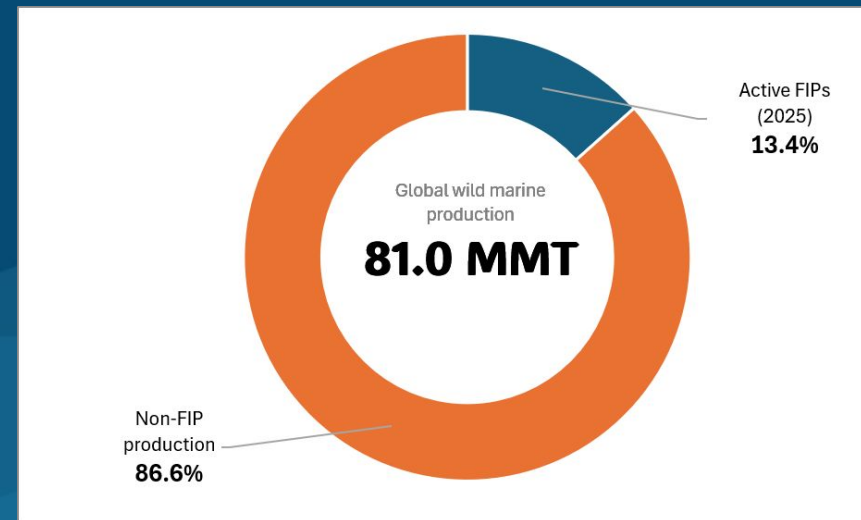


FIPs

Tuna; Squid; Octopus; Swimming crab

MSC / other certifications

Swordfish; Classic whitefish; Tuna; Marine Ingredients



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FIPs - Current transparency and traceability



Six-month review – FIPs must report on action progress.



Annual review - FIPs must report on action progress and MSC performance indicator scores.

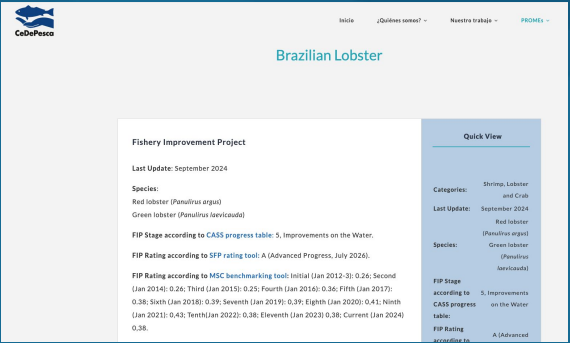
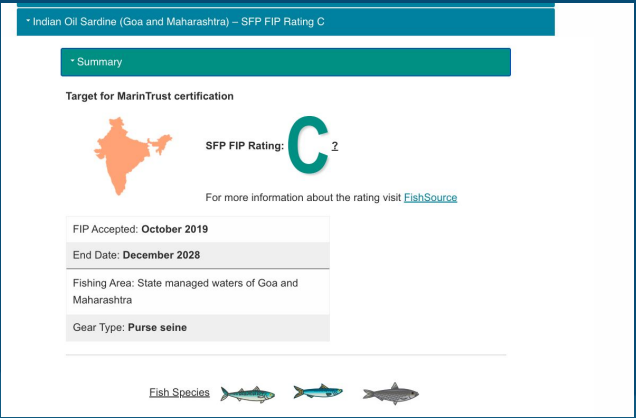
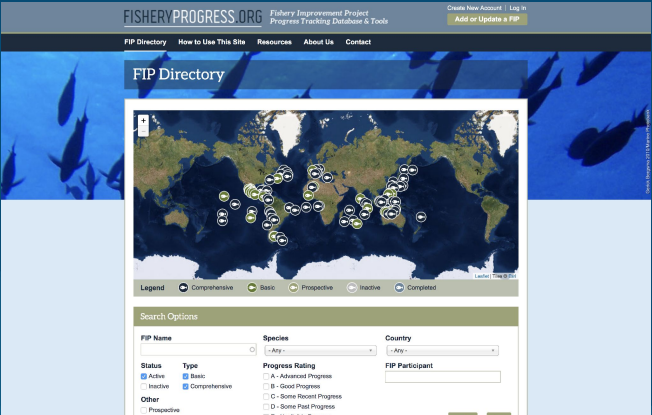


Three-year audit review (only required for comprehensive FIPs) – independent, in-person review of action results



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FIPs - Current transparency and traceability



Connecting FIP Data to Transparency, Traceability and Accountability

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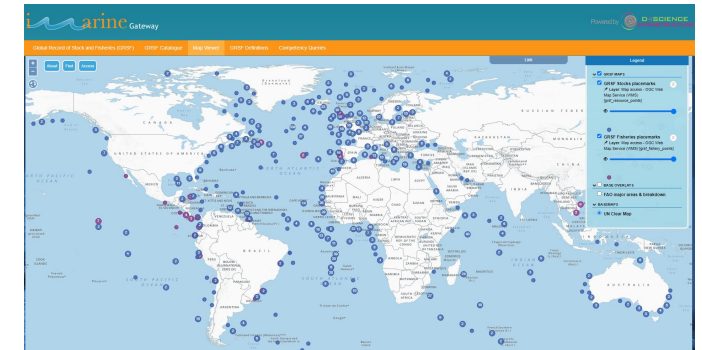
Universal Fishery IDs

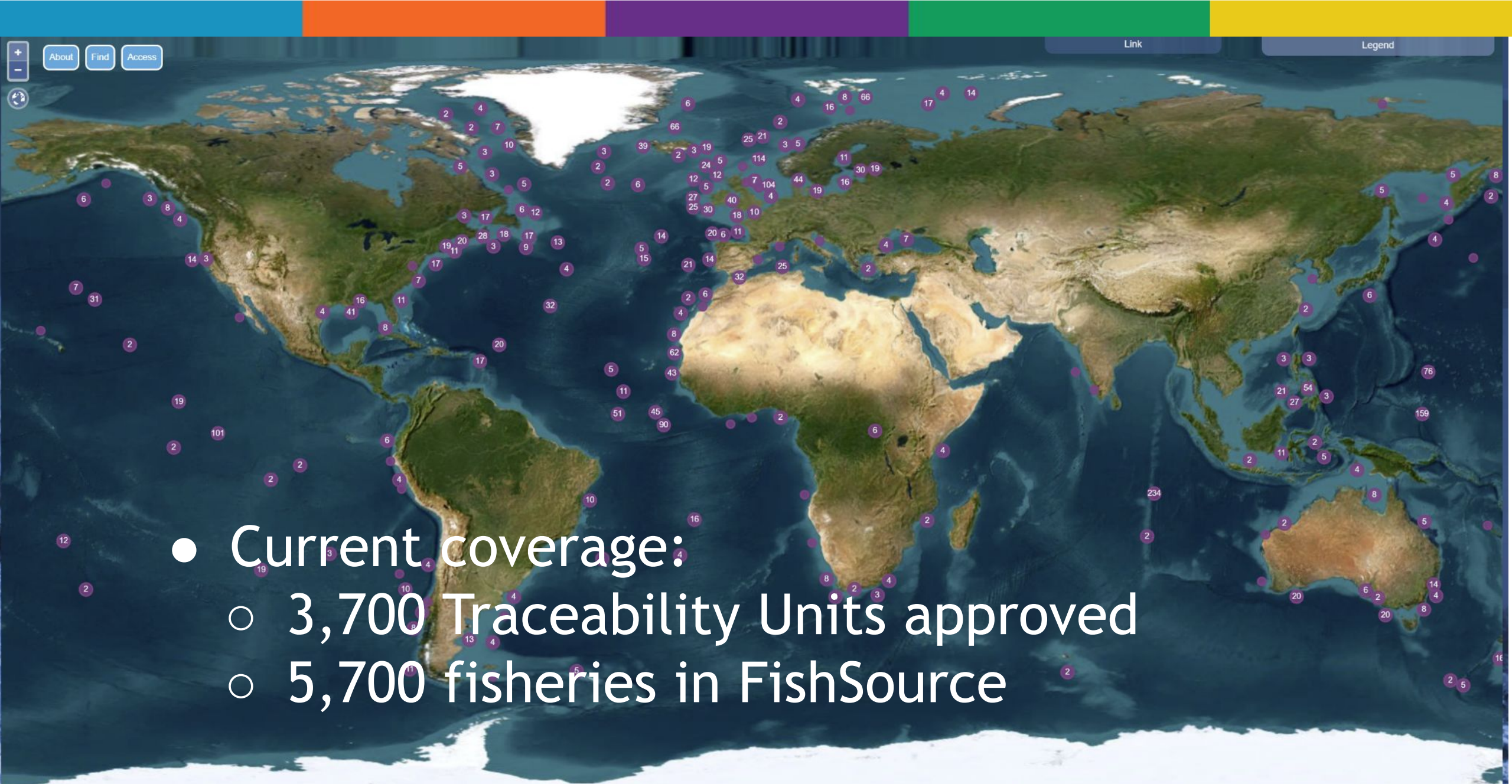
What is a universal fishery ID?

- A unique code assigned to every wild fishery in the world (similar to a UPC) to systematically identify source fisheries
- A common ‘language’ or ‘translator’ for supply chains and regulators
- Verifies source fisheries to strengthen traceability
- Connects source fisheries to information on fisheries management and sustainability

Universal Fishery IDs - increased transparency and traceability

- Collaboration between FAO, Ram Legacy database, FishSource
- Catalogue of global stocks and fisheries
- Producing unique codes for each stock and fishery
- Going global with a fishery identification service
- Setting a global standard for
 - Traceability
 - Catch reporting
 - Management
 - Product identification/labelling
 - Science, academia, NGOs





- Current coverage:
 - 3,700 Traceability Units approved
 - 5,700 fisheries in FishSource

Fishery IDs: Transparency and Traceability

- Traceability
 - Data is recorded → fisheryIDs (FIDs) make it resolvable
- Transparency
 - Visibility = **FIDs** help correlate records across systems
 - Disclosure = **FIDs** carry that correlated record outward
- So what? The same fishery, verified the same way, everywhere the data goes



Case Study 2: Philippines Blue Swimming Crab

- **Implementer:** Thai Union/Phil Union + Publix + Wholechain
- **Product:** Artisanal blue swimming crab
- **What happened:** Thai Union required its supplier, Phil Union, to integrate FIDs into its data collection; Wholechain rebuilt its platform to capture them; BFAR explored use for BSC management
- **So what?**
 - BFAR wrote FIDs into its national BSC management plan
 - Phil Union as aggregation point; implementation in complex, dispersed supply chain
 - Backend traceability secured via Wholechain



Implications - Transparency and Traceability

- Works across fishery types: industrial, artisanal
- Dual data flow: commercial + regulatory
- Much of the necessary data is already collected
 - FIDs can resolve / standardize
- FIDs are programmable into existing traceability systems
- Standardized unit across supply chains
 - example: QR codes for importer / buyer verification
- Facilitates compliance reporting and monitoring

Other Potential Applications

- On-the-water
 - Electronic logbook systems
 - Electronic monitoring systems
- Additional complex supply chains
- Further dual integration of commercial and regulatory systems
- Use in customer-facing QR codes
- Linking to existing seafood standards



Commercial Applications



Universal Fishery IDs to avoid mislabeling and seafood fraud:

Processed products: frozen fillets, canned fish, surimi, and ready-to-eat meals

- Species substitution
- Laundering Illegal Fishing (IUU) & Origin Fraud



Commercial Applications

Stakeholder	Internal Integration & Operations (Tech & Data)	Compliance, Regulation & Sourcing Specs	Collaboration & Value Chain Engagement
Governments	• Integrate IDs directly into licensing, MCS, catch documentation, and trade frameworks. • Link IDs adoption to quotas, licences, and subsidies.	• Mandate ID usage within official import and export documentation. • Publish data openly to foster public transparency.	• Align internationally with RFMOs and neighboring countries for consistent regional reporting.
Fishing Industry (Fleets & Processors)	• Record IDs at the source (logbooks, EM, landings). • Carry the ID throughout the supply chain.	• Prepare proactively for upcoming strict traceability and origin regulations.	• Differentiate products with verifiable fishery origin. • Educate suppliers and buyers to maintain consistent ID usage.
Markets (Importers, Retailers & Brands)	• Integrate ID fields into internal traceability and product-data systems.	• Require valid Fisheries IDs in purchasing specs and contracts. • Screen sourcing risks to verify regulatory compliance or certifications.	• Display verified fishery origins to consumers for trust. • Engage with suppliers to secure consistent data streams.
NGOs / FIPs / Ratings Agencies	• Interlink datasets (performance, certification, trade, compliance). • Use IDs to align environmental assessments and ratings.	• Track global progress and pinpoint data/coverage gaps.	• Promote widespread ID adoption across all stakeholders. • Raise global awareness on combating IUU and improving sustainability.
Service Providers (Tech & Traceability Systems)	• Embed dedicated ID fields in software architectures. • Enable interoperability across diverse platforms. • Use IDs in dashboards to monitor sourcing.	• Simplify manual entry with dropdowns/look-ups. • Train users and future-proof systems against regulations.	• Facilitate data sharing and tool adoption across industry clients.

Ongoing in relation to Fishery IDs

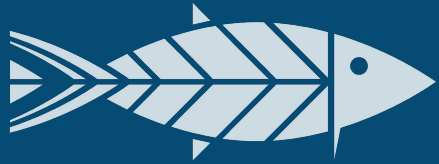
- GDST: SFP will be leading the Fishery IDs Dialogue to incorporate it into the GDST standard.
- Going on discussions with other Ratings Systems (Seafood Watch, Ocean Wise, Good Fish Guide, WWF) to integrate the Fishery IDs.
- Meeting scheduled after summer to introduce the Fishery IDs to the EU authorities.

Fishery IDs = global consistency + stronger transparency + support sustainable sourcing

Adopt early. Embed everywhere. Connect globally.

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For more information, please contact:

Drin Lutchman

Program Director (FIP Evaluations &
External Relations)

indrani.lutchman@sustainablefish.org