U.S. Seafood Import Monitoring Program

- Beginning January 1, 2018, seafood imported into the United States must comply with the requirements of the U.S. Seafood Import Monitoring Program (SIMP).

- The rule creates permitting, data reporting, and record-keeping requirements for imported seafood and will provide the information needed to prevent the products of illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, or misrepresented seafood, from entering the U.S. market.

- This new rule is part of a broader seafood traceability program that covers both imports and U.S. domestic production. Equivalent information regarding harvest, landing, and chain of custody for U.S.-produced seafood is being collected pursuant to various other Federal and state requirements.

- The program applies to Atlantic cod, Atlantic blue crab, dolphinfish (Mahi Mahi), grouper, red king crab, Pacific cod, red snapper, sea cucumber, sharks, swordfish, and albacore, bigeye, skipjack, yellowfin, and bluefin tuna.

- Implementation for shrimp and abalone has been stayed.

- Over the past year, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and other U.S. government agencies have provided information to exporting countries through webinars, written materials, and in-person technical meetings. NOAA will continue to work with producers, processors, exporters, and importers to support and enforce compliance.

- The information to be reported and retained under this rule will help authorities verify that the fish or fish products were lawfully acquired and are accurately represented, by being able to trace import shipments back to the initial point of harvest or production.

General Points on IUU Fishing and Traceability:

- As both a top seafood producer and importer, the U.S. takes very seriously its responsibility to combat illegal practices that undermine the sustainability of ocean resources.

- IUU fishing and seafood fraud threaten valuable natural resources that are critical to global food security, and put law-abiding fishers and seafood producers at a disadvantage in the United States and abroad.

- Traceability measures like the ones SIMP establishes are an internationally accepted method for combating IUU fishing and seafood fraud, and will help facilitate legal trade for law-abiding fishers and seafood producers in the U.S. and abroad.

- Traceability can significantly improve information about harvesting levels that can be used to strengthen sustainable fisheries management.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS:

Final Rule Federal Register Notice:
https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2016/12/09/2016-29324/magnuson-stevens-fishery-conservation-and-management-act-seafood-import-monitoring-program

General Information (includes outreach materials in nine languages):
http://www.iuufishing.noaa.gov/RecommendationsandActions/RECOMMENDATION1415/FinalRuleTraceability.aspx

Compliance Guide (plain language Q&As)
http://www.iuufishing.noaa.gov/Portals/33/SIMPComplianceGuide2017.pdf?ver=2017-08-23-172430-060