



BELIZE HIGH SEAS FISHING VESSEL CIRCULAR



FVC-13/08

Issued: 21st March 2013

Rev: 1

TO: ALL SHIPOWNERS, OPERATORS, CHARTERERS, MASTER AND CREW, DEPUTY REGISTRARS AND RESIDENT AGENTS

SUBJECT: VALIDATION OF CATCH CERTIFICATES IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) NO.1005/2008 ESTABLISHING A COMMUNITY SYSTEM TO PREVENT, DETER AND ELIMINATE IUU FISHING

Reference: Issued in accordance with Part II 3 (1)(f) and Part VII 19(1)(2) of the Belize High Seas Fishing Act, 2003

BACKGROUND:

Council Regulation (EC) No.1005/2008 Establishing a Community System to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate IUU Fishing entered into force on 1st January 2010. This Regulation provides that the trade with the EC of fishery products obtained from IUU fishing will be prohibited.

The Catch Certification Scheme is an essential part of the IUU Regulation which will improve and facilitate the control and compliance with conservation and management measures in cooperation with third countries. The Catch Certification Scheme allows for fishery products to be imported into the EC only when accompanied by a validated catch certificate. The objective of the catch certification scheme is to ensure product traceability at all stages of production from, catch – to processing and transport – to marketing; to be a tool for compliance with conservation and management measures; and to support cooperation between flag States- country of processing and - country of marketing (which facilitate controls and compliance with conservation and management rules). Through this instrument, the Belize Fisheries Department will certify that the catches concerned have been made in accordance with applicable laws, regulation and international conservation and management measures.

APPLICABILITY

The Catch Certification Scheme applies to all marine fishery products caught from 1st January 2010. It will apply in a non-discriminatory manner to all unprocessed or processed catches which is intended for export to the EC.

PROCESS FOR VALIDATION OF A CATCH CERTIFICATE

1. Any party requesting the validation of a catch certificate must submit an electronic copy of the catch certificate in which section 2 to 8 and 10 and in Appendix I (and sections 6 and/or 7 in the event of transshipment) is completed. Please refer to the attached guideline for the completion

of the catch certificate. Particular attention should be given to the recording of the weight information.

2. In addition to the completed form the following information and documents should be submitted:
 - a. All relevant catch reports consistent with the period of operation indicated on the certificate to be validated.
 - b. Discharge reports consistent with the catch reports indicated above.
 - c. All relevant copies of EEZ licenses for operations within the EEZ of any State during the catch date indicated.
 - d. Vessel monitoring position data must be available for the period of operation indicated. Where there are no position reports available through our VMS, manual position report should be provided in a format to be agreed upon.
 - e. Information on the intended destination of the consignment for which validation is required must be provided.
 - f. Vessel must be in possession of a valid HSFL.
 - g. Vessel should be in compliance with all relevant conservation and management measures of the respective RFMO area where it operates.

Validation of the catch certificate will not be processed if the above information has not been provided.

3. If the Fisheries Officer is satisfied with the information provided and has no grounds to doubt the exhaustiveness and accuracy and compliance with applicable management measures he or she will proceed to ensure validation of the catch certificate by the authorized personnel.

ENFORCEMENT AND COMPLIANCE

This Circular is considered a legally binding document in accordance with Part XIII 108(1)(2) of the Merchant Ships Registration Act 2010. Failure to comply with this circular will result in disciplinary actions taken against the vessel owners, operators and master or any other party affiliated with the operation of the vessel.

IMPLEMENTATION

This Fishing Vessel Circular is to be implemented with immediate effect and shall remain in force until further notification by the Belize Administration.

Any queries related to this Circular should be directed to:

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