



Representative Chris Tuck

House Democratic Leader

Alaska State Legislature

District 23 - Representing Dimond Estates, Foxridge, Taku, Campbell, Northwood and Windemere

House Joint Resolution 23 Fact Sheet

High levels of IUU crab and salmon imports are affecting domestic fisherman both in Alaska and the U.S. by driving down overall seafood prices.

Since 2000, the Alaskan crab market has lost an estimated \$600 million due to illegal Russian crab harvests.¹

During that same amount of time, Alaskan coastal communities have lost \$11 million in landing tax revenue.

Russian-Caught IUU Crab & Salmon Fishing has Severe Consequences for the Sustainability of many Commercial Seafood Species ²

Crab and salmon populations migrate throughout the Northern Pacific, primarily traveling between Russian and Alaskan waters, meaning crab and salmon populations that are exploded in Russian waters may consequently produce low harvests in Alaskan waters.³

From 2000 through 2010, for every legal crab caught in Russia, as much as 2.6 crabs were caught illegally.⁴

Total harvests of Russian-caught salmon in Russia's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) are twice their official Total Allowable Catch (TAC).⁵

Estimates suggest some regions within Russia's waters and within international waters adjacent to Russia's Exclusive Economic Zone are suffering catch rates upwards of 90% of the area's total run.⁶

Studies show 85% of commercial fishing industries are now fished up to their biological limits or beyond, and IUU fishing is one of the major contributors to this problem.⁷ (See graph on page 4).

¹ Public testimony given by Mark H. Gleason (Executive Director, Alaska Bering Sea Crabbers) at the United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations (2014). Available online at http://www.foreign.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Gleason_Testimony.pdf

² Petrossian et al., "Factors Affecting Crab and Lobster Species Subject to IUU Fishing." (2015). Available online at http://www.academia.edu/10202882/Factors_Affecting_Crab_and_Lobster_Species_Subject_to_IUU_Fishing

³ Institute of the North: "Bering Strait Region Case Study" (2005). Available online at <http://www.institutenorth.org/assets/images/uploads/files/5.5-Bering-Strait-Region-Case-Study.pdf>

⁴ World Wildlife Fund: "Estimates of Illegal and Unreported Fish in Seafood Imports to the USA" (2014). http://assets.worldwildlife.org/publications/675/files/original/Marine_Policy_Article_Illegal_and_Unreported_Fishing_US.pdf

⁵ Wild Salmon Center: "North Pacific Salmon Fisheries Economic Measurement Estimates," (2009). Available online at http://www.wildsalmoncenter.org/pdf/Salmon_Economic_Valuation.pdf

⁶ The Wild Salmon Center: "A Review of IUU Salmon Fishing and Potential Conservation Strategies in the Russian Far East," (2009). Available at http://www.wildsalmoncenter.org/pdf/WSC_IUU_paper_v3.pdf

⁷ Pitcher, T & Cheung, W (2013). "Fisheries: Hope or Despair?" Available online at http://ac.els-cdn.com/S0025326X13003044/1-s2.0-S0025326X13003044-main.pdf?_tid=8f57d48c-c444-11e4-bef1-00000aacb362&acdnat=1425676127_21c8c84982de84d9d7bf87d31d5257ba



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Evidence Suggests IUU Crab is Entering Legal Markets in the United States

From 2000 to 2010, the official Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for illegal Russian King Crab was about 500 million pounds, however, throughout the same decade Russia exported 1.3 billion pounds of King Crab to Japan, South Korea and the United States alone.⁸

During those years, the U.S. imported well over 60% of Russia's total allowable catch.

In 2012, Japan imported twice the legal TAC level of red, blue and spiny brown crab from Russia, and in the same year, the United States imported 88% of all of Russia's TAC for red, blue and golden king crab.⁹

The U.S. Coast Guard has engaged a number of major IUU crab cases that have reached American markets, including a 2011 case involving \$2.75 million worth of Russian-caught King Crab being confiscated in Seattle, Washington.¹⁰

Examples of Current Domestic Efforts to Reduce IUU Fishing

H.R. 774. The Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing Enforcement Act of 2015

(Introduced by U.S. Representatives Madeleine Bordallo and Don Young)

- Would enhance the enforcement authority of the U.S. Coast Guard and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to regulate and combat IUU fishing.
- Would strengthen existing enforcement measures by increasing the capacity for inspection, identification, and monitoring of illegal foreign vessels.
- Broaden data sharing authority with foreign governments in order to identify and penalize nations that do not comply with fisheries management regulations.
- Makes changes to domestic law necessary to fully implement the *United Nations Food & Agriculture Organization's Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing*, such as increased domestic port security on incoming foreign vessels.

Presidential Memorandum Establishing a Comprehensive Framework to Combat Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing and Seafood Fraud

- Signed on June 17th, 2014 and established a Presidential Task Force tasked with reporting to the President official recommendations to combat IUU fishing to be released in December of 2014.
- March 2015 Recommendation to Congress on IUU fishing accessible at:
http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/ia/iuu/noaa_taskforce_report_final.pdf
- The task force's recommendations focused around increased international cooperation, enhanced enforcement tools, public-private partnerships and tracing seafood harvests.

⁸ Marine Conservation Institute: "Plundering the Seas – The Damage from Pirate Fishing on US Fishermen and Communities" (2014). Available at

http://www.marineconservation.org/media/filer_public/filer_public/2014/09/04/mci_iuu_report.pdf

⁹ World Wildlife Fund: "Illegal Russian Crab: An Investigation into Trade Flow" (2014). Available at

http://assets.worldwildlife.org/publications/733/files/original/WWF_Illegal_crab_report_final_15_Oct_2014.pdf?1413407573

¹⁰ The Seattle Times: "U.S. Agents Seize \$2.75 Million Worth of Russian King Crab" (2011). Available at
<http://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/us-agents-seize-275m-worth-of-russian-king-crab/>



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Russian Crab Exports to Major Markets and Harvest Volume (2007-2010)

(Metric Tons)

Export Volume (live & frozen weight)	2007	2008	2009	2010
King Crab				
U.S.	19,256	15,049	12,161	8,007
Japan	28,198	14,254	14,565	7,664
South Korea	934	459	498	357
Total King Crab Exports	48,387	29,762	27,225	16,028
Snow Crab and Other Crab				
Japan	42,254	40,243	36,742	26,537
South Korea	17,896	11,540	12,846	5,915
U.S.	6,110	4,817	5,922	6,338
Total Snow/Other Crab Exports	66,260	56,600	55,509	38,791
China (All Crab species)	13,665	6,984	5,681	2,549
Total Crab Exports to Major Markets	128,312	93,345	88,415	57,368
Harvest Volume (live weight)				
Harvest of King Crab	23,641	19,352	N/A	N/A
Harvest of Snow/Other Crab	22,802	22,933	N/A	N/A
Total Russian Crab Harvest	46,443	42,285	36,523	39,596
Crab Exports (live weight equivalent)	173,825	124,206	116,128	78,996
Estimated IUU Crab Harvest	127,382	81,921	79,894	39,370

Note: 2010 figures are preliminary. McDowell Group estimates.

Source: FAO, CFMC, Japan Customs, Korea Customs and NMFS.

Barriers Alleviating IUU Fishing

- Poor information sharing (import/export data, vessels known for IUU fishing, logistics for law enforcement, etc.) between major seafood trade partners including China, South Korea, Japan, Russia and the United States.
- Lack of enforcement authority in foreign ports to address the growing “Flag of Convenience” trend.¹¹
- King and Tanner crab’s exclusion from Country-Of-Origin Labeling requirements, creating additional difficulties to prevent IUU crab from reaching American markets.
- No threat of prosecution for vessels found to be IUU fishing in Russian waters – Typically carries a small fine instead.

¹¹ Flag of Convenience (FOC) act as fake identification for ships involved in illegal activity while out at sea. FOC refers to an international law loophole which allows ships to fly the flag of a nation other than its country of ownership. This grants the ship to fish according to the regulations of the flag country. Many vessels found to be involved in IUU fishing are registered with countries that have little to no fishing regulations and almost never have the resources available to enforce any of those regulations.

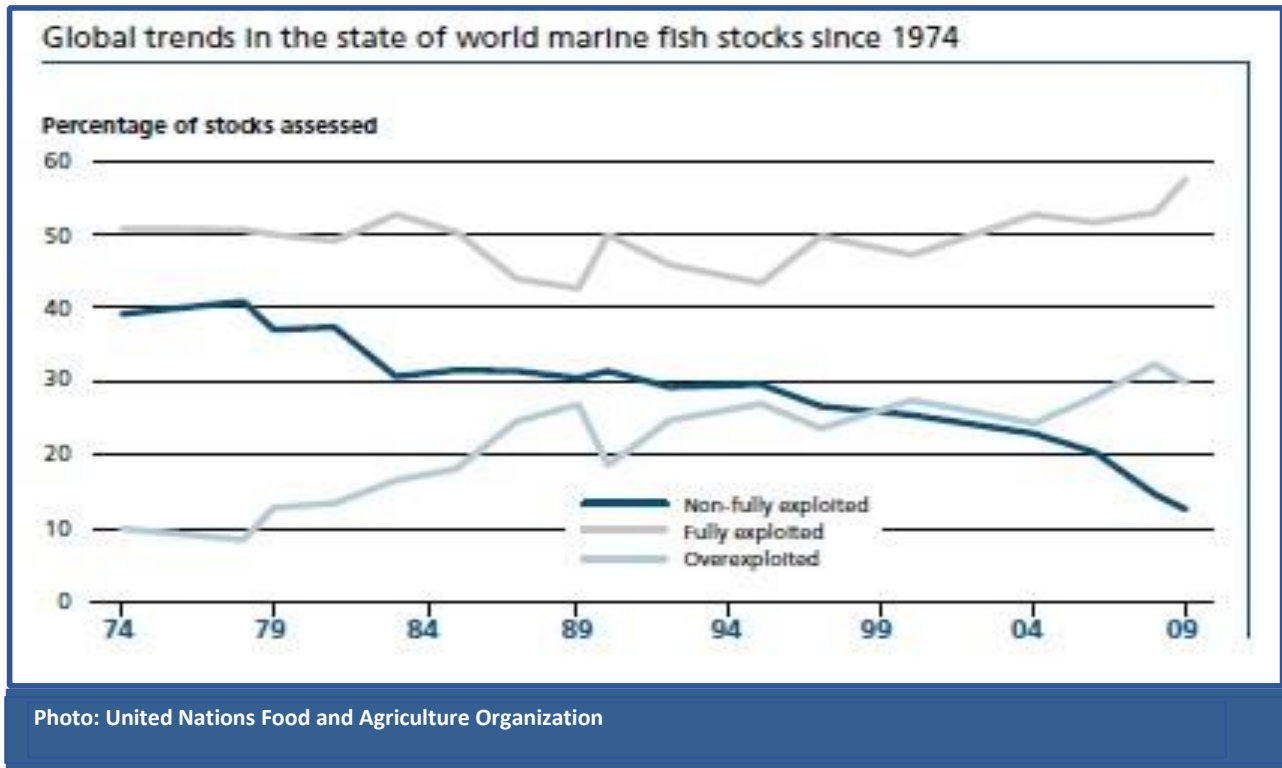


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http://www.marinconservation.org/media/filer_public/filer_public/2014/09/04/mci_iuu_report.pdf

Contact Aaron Druyvestein at (907) 465-2095 or by email at aaron.druyvestein@akleg.gov