

# IMPLEMENTING A VALUE CHAIN APPROACH TO FISHERIES CRIME

Summary of a dialogue forum on 11 September 2025 featuring Nick Branigan,  
Chair of the North Atlantic Fisheries Intelligence Group

## 1 Why take a value chain approach to fisheries crime?

- \* Fisheries value chains can span up to six stages within a country: preparation, fishing, landing, processing, transport, and sale
- \* Each stage involves distinct activities, actors, regulatory requirements, documentation, and compliance controls
- \* Mapping the chain helps authorities undertake targeted risk assessments, identify crime vulnerabilities, and pinpoint regulatory and enforcement interventions
- \* Alongside illegal fishing, value-chain analysis can help identify instances of corruption, tax and customs fraud, money laundering, embezzlement, document fraud, and human trafficking
- \* Sanctions for these crimes are often higher than those for illegal fishing

## 2 What are the challenges?

- \* Value chains are often complex, non-linear, species- or fishery-specific, and seasonal, making them difficult to map accurately
- \* Multinational corporate structures can obscure ownership, enable value manipulation, and conceal indicators of fisheries crime
- \* Many value chains are transnational, requiring aligned risk assessments and comparable capacities across multiple jurisdictions

## 3 What are potential strategies to mitigate these challenges?

- \* Even hypothetical or modelled value chains can highlight common crime risks and enforcement opportunities
- \* Continuous information gathering (e.g. from trade associations and port authorities) helps investigators understand normal patterns and detect anomalies
- \* An expanding range of open-source information—such as vessel-tracking data, corporate registries, and trade databases—can complement official sources
- \* Multi-agency and cross-border cooperation is essential for effective risk assessments and coherent enforcement actions