

## Fishing vessel management in Vietnam

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**Abstract:** Vietnam is sea country, located on the East Sea coast with large space: an area of over 1 million km<sup>2</sup>, and over 3,260 km long and 198,000 km of rivers convenient for navigation and a system of river and seaports to thrive. The maritime economy plays an important role in national economic development in general and marine economy in particular. Along with the international economic integration, the increase of import and export goods, the goods transported by sea increased sharply with the current volume of about 250 million tons and will increase to 500 million tons by 2030; The number of vessels currently engaged in marine fishing has recently reached nearly 200,000 vessels. Meanwhile, operating in the South China Sea is very risky due to natural disasters such as storms, whirlwinds that endanger the navigation, fishing and other activities on the sea. To enhance the safety level of navigation on international and domestic maritime routes, prevent accidents at sea, improve the efficiency of economic activities at sea, contribute to ensuring security national security, as well as meeting the requirements of international organizations, the investment, the establishment of information systems for maritime safety and disaster information - rescue system is very necessary and important.

**Keywords:** fishing vessel, developing orientation

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### I. INTRODUCTION

With the number of fishing vessels up to 200,000 ships and increasing year by year plus the features of tropical waters with extremely harsh and complicated weather, the changing fishing ground factor. Therefore, the distribution of fishing vessel spread along 3260km created accidentally difficulties for the registration and management of fishing vessels in Vietnam. It is the reason, the number of the fishing vessel be registered annually cannot reach 100%, there are many fishing ships have activities without the registry, does not renew periodically every year. Because Vietnam cannot strictly manage fishing vessels, many fishing vessels are illegally exploiting or exploiting in other countries' waters. The consequence of failing to manage fishing vessels fleet lead to many mistakes. European Commission (EC) warning with seafood that exploited in Vietnam. When be warned "yellow card", the seafood products from Vietnam will be strictly inspected, 100% of shipment exported to the European market will be checked. Specifically, on the traceability of exploited fisheries, most of the documents confirming the origin of the inspected seafood materials do not meet the requirements for traceability, the errors are detected during the majority of inspection. are in the control system error in the string. Typically, the volume of landings from transshipment vessels is confirmed by the ships that the ship transfers; Most of the documents confirming the origin of seafood materials cannot access fishing vessel data and the loading and unloading output from the ledger. Law enforcement also controls complicated fishing vessels that violate IUU exploitation. In 2018, there were 85 cases / 137 ships / 1,162 fishermen violating foreign waters, increasing 28 cases / 46 ships / 379 fishermen compared to 2017, concentrated in countries including Thailand, Malaysia, Philippines, Cambodia, Indonesia ... Especially in 2017, the Vietnam Coast Guard has twice had to catch fishermen who returned from Indonesia with nearly 1,000 people, many of whom repeated violations both times. In Malaysia, Vietnamese fishermen go to catch and fake their number plates.



Figure 1. The location where Vietnamese fishing vessels were arrested by the Philippines in June 2019

## II. MAIN CAUSES

The cause EC give “ yellow card” to seafood from Vietnam at the end of October 2017 because Vietnam does not strictly control boats in and out, at sea and confirm species and yield when docking; State management of the fisheries sector is not responsible, leading to a decline in seafood and seafood resources that cannot be traced back to Europe (IUU exploitation violations). Since then, Vietnam’s Government deployed tracking system, supervise fishing operations, conduct law enforcement of fishing vessels violating IUU exploitation, implement fisheries traceability measures from exploitation to international cooperation activities and check measures against local IUU exploitation. However, the situation of fishing vessels violating foreign waters is still complicated. This not only caused heavy economic losses to fishermen and society but also negatively affected the image of Vietnam to regional and international countries.

Besides that, a number of legal regulations to manage and supervise the operation of fishing vessels on the sea are incomprehensive and not strict. The implementation of measures by the government where direct management of fishermen and fishing vessels has not been drastic. Especially, there are now a number of organizations and lines in both foreign and domestic performing brokerage activities, mobilizing and organizing Vietnamese fishermen to go to foreign waters to illegally exploit seafood.



Figure 2. Fishing vessels of Vietnamese fishermen captured and burned by the island nation of Palau in June 2015

### A. Because of the ignorance of fishermen

Vietnamese fishing vessels seized in recent years are most of the ship owners, captains and fishermen still lacking in understanding of geographical boundaries and maritime boundaries of regional countries as well as knowledge of the dharma. laws of countries. Vietnamese fishermen violate foreign waters to illegally exploit some fishing vessels in the process of exploiting the seafood due to clinging to the fish channel or not knowing the information about the boundary of the seas, so they accidentally invaded. When they were arrested and confiscated, they knew that they caught fish in the exclusive economic zone of the host country. Therefore, fishermen need to be equipped with basic legal knowledge at sea. Before going to sea, the ships need to check the entire communication system, coordinates, compass, marine diagram, and maritime safety equipment. In addition, the fishermen working on the ships must promptly report to the authorities when detecting the ship owners, the captain has signs of organizing the sending of ships to foreign waters to catch; It is absolutely forbidden to respond when determining whether you have violated foreign waters, or clearly identifying foreign ships as law enforcement forces at sea.

### B. Because of the greed of fishermen

There are many Vietnamese fishermen for the immediate economic benefit, although they have grasped the provisions of the law, know the boundaries of the sea areas but still deliberately violate the waters of the countries to catch the seafood permission. It is easy to recognize that this is an extremely complicated issue when fishermen who are aware of their behavior are wrong but still deliberately violate. For the immediate benefit, long-term benefits are ignored. It is this amount of illegally exploited seafood that makes the European Commission (EC) withdraw "yellow card" for Vietnam's seafood.

### C. Because fishing grounds have been depleted or robbed when exploiting on fishing grounds

According to the report of the General Department of Fisheries of Vietnam, the situation of Chinese fishing vessels encroaching on Vietnamese waters and catching aquatic products is frequent, continuous, more

and more, making it difficult for our fishermen, one number of cases threatens both life and property. At present, some fishing grounds in Vietnam have exhausted the source of seafood, while some adjacent fishing grounds are more abundant, so many Vietnamese fishermen have given ships to exploit seafood. This is the cause of the situation of Vietnamese fishing vessels illegally exploiting in other country's fishing grounds, causing serious consequences.

For nearly 5 years since its establishment, Vietnam Fishery inspection has discovered, controlled and prevented 80,145 turns of vehicles, of which foreign fishing ships were over 42,000 times, violating the fisheries law.

Most recently, a fishing boat of Quang Nam fishermen in Vietnam while catching in the traditional fishing ground was besieged by Chinese ships, carrying weapons to climb aboard and robbing seafood. To avoid robbery peeling off occurs on the sea, fishermen when exploiting aquatic products need to organize according to the model of production teams and teams at sea. Do not go to the waters of the countries to illegally exploit. When fishing in waters adjacent to foreign waters, it is necessary to keep a safe distance, avoid the case due to the influence of the ocean currents, bad weather makes the boat drift to the waters of other countries. In the course of exploiting and operating on the sea, if an incident occurs, it is necessary to immediately notify the nearby ships and notify the functional agencies for timely plans on rescue and support. Fishermen need to learn about Vietnamese and international Law of the Sea to understand and avoid violations when exploiting.



Figure 3. Vietnamese fishing vessel stabbed by foreign ships

**D. Because inadequate management and control of fishing vessels off-shore fishing by authorities; controlling the fishing grounds of each vessel is still lax, the fishing vessels licensed to operate in this field go to other fishing grounds to catch.**

For a long time, the situation of fishing vessels exploiting seafood in the wrong area and not on the right route has often occurred. Like a ship with a length of more than 15m, it operates in the open area, mainly practicing double-legging. This not only seriously affects coastal seafood resources, but also causes unsafe for small capacity vessels allowed to operate in this area.

Meanwhile, the ship has a length of less than 12m, but it reaches out to the area to exploit seafood, causing unsafe for people and property. However, because the regulations related to shipping sizes and regions, mining routes are overlapping, the functional forces are difficult to manage and control, even without sanctions to handle when detecting schools if the owner of the ship violates. Coastal marine resources are increasingly declining, fishermen often stealthily encroach on local waters to exploit, but due to lack of specific regulations, functional forces among localities are also "applied" in the management and handling of violations. Therefore, it is necessary to have stronger management measures to thoroughly handle the situation of overlapping mining areas as well as to ensure that fishing grounds are not depleted of aquatic resources.

### **III. MEASURES TO PREVENT VIETNAMESE FISHING VESSELS FROM VIOLATING SEAFOOD EXPLOITATION**

Because the above causes directly pushed Vietnam's seafood sector to be stuck with the "yellow card" of Europe, so it is necessary to set out solutions to solve and manage fishing fleet urgent.

#### **A. Enhancing management and safety inspection for fishing vessels**

The coastal localities have implemented many solutions to ensure safety for people and fishing vessels operating on the sea. Accordingly, the localities along with the Border Guard enhance the management of fishing vessels, check the safety of fishing vessels, ensure that fishing vessels with safety conditions are allowed to go to sea. In addition, ships are required to comply with regulations on declaration and control of output and composition of aquatic species unloaded through the port. Coordinating with sectors and localities to continue organizing training, propaganda, and dissemination for officials and fishermen on the provisions of ensuring safety for people and fishing vessels operating on the sea; instructions on using communication equipment on fishing vessels and ensuring rules to avoid a collision. Currently, Vietnamese fishing vessels are mainly small-sized fishing vessels, wood-shells (about 99%), recently-built steel and composite shell ships account for a negligible amount. Most of the wooden fishing vessels are built according to folk samples, due to their small size, the arrangement and installation of equipment on the ship have many limitations, the arrangement of the lack of scientific compartments does not guarantee the anti-sinking properties. On the other hand, due to economic conditions and production practices, equipment on board is equipped by people in the simplest possible way to reduce shipbuilding costs, affecting the quality of the ship. For ship machines, to reduce initial investment costs, people mainly install second-hand, second-hand, used and diversified machines imported from many countries such as Japan, South Korea, and the US. Germany, China... Regarding safety equipment, most small-sized fishing vessels, although equipped but not enough as prescribed, many poor quality equipment, lack of labels, have not been appraised by authorities. Therefore, ensuring safety for people and fishing vessels, there are many difficulties and challenges.

#### **B. Attach the navigation device on the fishing vessel**

According to EC regulations, offshore fishing vessels must install black boxes (cruise monitoring equipment). Particularly, fishing vessels of 24 m or more must be fitted with a black box. In order to be transparent and against illegal fishing. According to the statistics of Vietnam National Administration of Fisheries, 3,000 Movimar devices have been installed (black box - this is a modern system, using all the equipment and satellite services of France, products of Transceiver Center and satellite navigation. Center for Satellite Transceiver and Positioning (CLS) is manufactured by the French National Aerospace Agency. Currently, reviewing has been fitted the right objects. At the same time, instructing people in detail, adding features such as forecasting fishing grounds, information associated with the interests of fishermen. Vietnam is one of the leading countries in installing cruise monitoring equipment, especially the Pacific region. Movimar system manages via satellite so it is very effective to monitor fishing vessels; can you know where the fishing vessel is caught, how to move. Besides, fishermen will be provided with weather forecasts as well as an early warning about storms at sea, so that they can avoid, stay. Currently, the Directorate of Fisheries also provides fishing news reports to help fishermen effectively exploit in Vietnam's waters, minimize journeys, fuel and fishing more effectively. In addition, for search and rescue, the Movimar system is currently the best system for information and communication for functional units at sea (naval, fishery, border guard) when incidents occur. Beyond the Movimar system, there are still 2 systems of BLACK BOXES (cruise monitoring) of other fishing vessels. A VX-1700 system installed over 10,664 offshore fishing vessels. And 25,000 coastal fishing vessels install HF radio (mainly ICOM machines), and 7000 near-shore fishing boats install a watch receiver (only to receive).

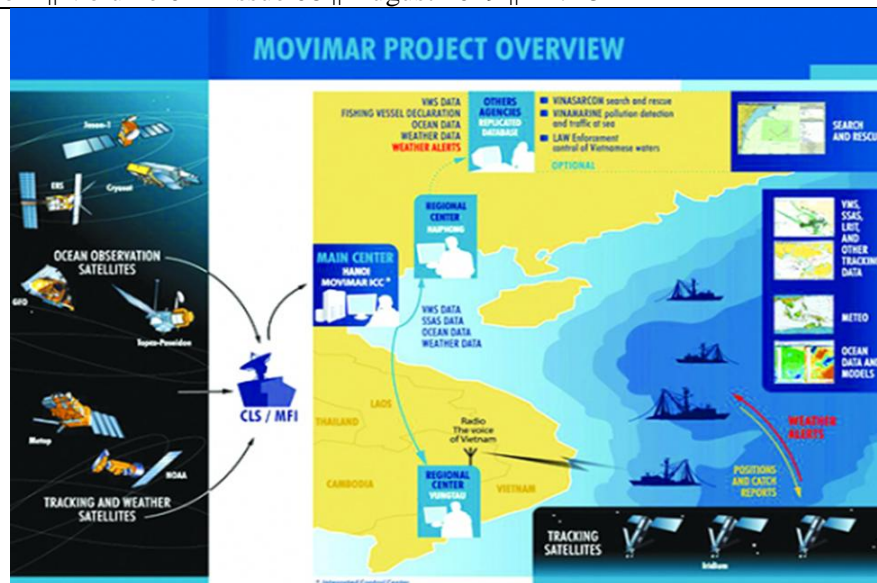


Figure 4. Movimar satellite technology

### C. The Government issues laws on fishing vessel management

To overcome Europe's gold card issue, on January 16, 2018, the Prime Minister issued Decision No. 78 approving the National Action Plan to prevent, minimize and Eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated seafood exploitation by 2025. Accordingly, the plan's goal is to prevent, minimize and eliminate illegal, unreported activities, and not in accordance with regulations of Vietnamese and foreign organizations and individuals in Vietnam's seas; to promote sustainable and responsible fisheries development, contributing to national and regional security and international integration; ending the situation of Vietnamese fishing vessels and fishermen illegally exploiting seafood in countries' waters. In this decision, the Government of Vietnam has introduced mechanisms, policies to implement and one of the policies is to upgrade the fishing vessel management information system and decentralize to the local authorities, manage, monitor and control IUU exploitation locally and in the community. In addition, the European Commission (EC) also recommended that Vietnam should focus on improving the offshore fishing vessel management information system. Accordingly, fishing vessel monitoring equipment installed on board must operate continuously 24/24 and automatically send signals to shore at least 2 hours/time.

## IV. THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE COAST GUARD IN MINIMIZING AND ENDING THE STATUS OF VIETNAMESE FISHING VESSELS VIOLATING FOREIGN WATERS

Firstly, on the basis of the functions and tasks assigned, to continue to thoroughly grasp the Prime Minister's directives and electricity, the viewpoint, and direction of the Ministry of Defense on the prevention, reduction, grading, ending the situation of Vietnamese fishing boats and fishermen illegally exploiting seafood in foreign waters.

Secondly, strengthen coordination with related functional forces such as Border Guard, Navy, Fisheries to promote propaganda, dissemination and legal education for fishermen. Regularly organize the propaganda and dissemination of legal education for ship owners, captains, fishermen and related members on the provisions of Vietnamese and international laws as well as the laws of the countries concerned. Marine-related in the field of seafood exploitation, focusing on key areas of the locality with many fishing vessels and fishermen violating foreign waters. At the same time, propaganda for fishermen to be aware and fully understand the consequences of violations, proceeding to stop violating the waters of the countries. Besides, the units need to guide fishermen to know the boundary of Vietnam sea with other countries, especially the areas that have not been identified, overlapped, sensitive, especially the direct propagation for the vessels offshore fishing activities. It is necessary to request the means of practice at sea to install the cruise monitoring system and automatic identification device AIS for management; Before the ship goes to sea to operate, the means owner, the captain must write a commitment to strictly abide by the law when exploiting at sea, not to bring fishing vessels and fishermen to foreign waters to exploit marine products, and must regularly maintain contact information with Vietnamese functional forces.

Thirdly, coordinating and cooperating closely with the Navy, Border Guard, and Fisheries forces and local specialized inspection forces to organize patrolling, inspection, control and enforcement of fisheries law

assigned waters. Coordinate well with functional forces to supervise activities of fishing vessels at sea, promptly detect and prevent fishing ships and fishermen from showing signs of violating foreign waters. The process of patrol, inspection, and control needs to focus on adjacent and overlapping sea areas, areas where many fishing vessels pass through, areas of frequent violations. To attach importance to detecting and proposing strictly handling acts of brokerage and investment in fishing ships and fishermen violating foreign waters, redeeming fishing ships and fishermen illegally. Currently, sanctions for violations of foreign maritime violations of illegal seafood exploitation are not strong enough, local management is still lax, political organizations have not yet entered, and there is no law to handle. Clear penalty ... so many "greasy" fishermen continue to go to foreign waters illegally fishing. As a leading force, directly enforcing the law at sea, the Coast Guard should consult effectively, accurately and effectively for local People's Committees to set up interdisciplinary teams to strictly implement regulations related to this issue, tightening administrative control measures. Actively coordinate with relevant ministries, departments, agencies, and agencies to do a good job of reviewing, amending and supplementing existing policies as well as legal documents, regulations, and sanctions to do good management, enhance law enforcement effectiveness in managing seafood exploitation activities and strictly handle violations, not to recur the violations.

Fourthly, it is necessary to synchronously implement measures to support and protect fishermen and guide fishermen to know how to protect themselves. Facing the current sovereignty disputes in the East Sea, fishermen doing business on offshore waters need to continue to be supported. In addition to propaganda, warning, making sanctions to strictly handle cases of fishing vessels in violation, functional sectors, including the Coast Guard, Fishery and Border Guard, there must be measures to protect citizen protection. There have been many cases where fishermen are catching in the waters under the sovereignty of the country but still being controlled by foreign functional forces, inviting their waters and being guilty. Therefore, fishermen must guide the way to protect themselves. At the same time, promptly warn fishermen that they are in adjacent waters or have moved to foreign waters to help them return soon, limiting the unfortunate risks, reducing the number of fishing vessels and Our fishermen violate foreign waters. Actively and proactively in the reception of fishermen, soon to bring our fishermen caught by foreign countries, handle water reunited with families and communities. Timely support and help fishermen in overcoming consequences and incidents when working long-term on the sea, as reliable support for fishermen to reach out to sea.

Finally, proactively and positively in advising and proposing a mechanism for coordination between the Coast Guard Force and the law enforcement forces of the countries in information exchange and handling of related cases to marine fisheries.

In fact, among Vietnamese fishing vessels and fishermen being chased, arrested and beaten by foreign countries, there are many fishing vessels and fishermen who are practicing in the overlapping waters and unspecified waters, even in the waters of our country. Therefore, the Government of Vietnam should promote the process of negotiating the delimitation of the overlapping waters between Vietnam and other countries. Ministries, departments, agencies, and authorities need to develop coordination mechanisms among countries in information exchange and handling cases related to marine fisheries activities; Establishing hotlines against illegal catching; strengthen joint patrols with related countries; expanding international cooperation on fisheries, enabling fishermen to be assured of exploiting and cooperating to exploit on legal fishing grounds

## V. CONCLUSION

Tighten management, strengthen inspection, examination and control of fisheries at fishing ports and at sea; strictly handle violations of illegal, unreported and unregulated exploitation (IUU exploitation); promptly prevent fishing vessels and fishermen from showing signs of violating foreign waters illegally fishing to stop this situation. It is necessary to develop a mechanism to control ships and fishery products originating from the exploitation of Vietnamese ports, ensuring the implementation of regulations on national measures with ports. Functional forces need to strictly control vessels working in fisheries when exporting and entering ports; resolutely not to go to sea when there are not enough procedures, papers, and equipment according to regulations; strictly handle according to regulations fishing ships showing signs of violation of illegal seafood exploitation in foreign waters; focusing on finding and proposing to strictly handle acts of brokerage, investment in fishing vessels, fishermen going to violate, redeeming fishing ships and fishermen illegally. The concerned forces strengthen patrols, inspections, and control on the sea areas, prevent Vietnamese fishing vessels from violating foreign waters and timely support fishing vessels and our fishermen when they encounter problems, suffer from water. The current management of fishing vessels is to solve the problems: Remove the "yellow card" of Europe with seafood products in Vietnam, prevent problems related to the infringement of Vietnam's national sovereignty as well. as international. These are extremely urgent issues, so there is a need for intervention from both the Vietnamese Government as well as from the daily fishermen who exploit marine products at sea.

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