

Multilateral Environmental Agreements and trade: A possible conflict in addressing IUU fishing

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Abstract

The global wild seafood industry is worth \$81.3 billion while approximately \$10 billion-\$23.5 billion is unaccounted for due to illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing. Not only are these revenues lost, but also many of the fish caught and sold are from fully or overexploited fisheries around the world, placing a huge ecological strain upon fish stocks. Numerous avenues exist for addressing this complex issue; however this presentation will focus on multilateral fishery management agreements. Some of these serve as a potentially useful tool in reducing this unlawful practice by blocking the importation of IUU seafood and encouraging sustainable fishing practices, although some governments have argued the agreements restrict free trade, citing GATT agreements. Furthermore, the high financial, technological and infrastructure investments needed to comply with the agreements may place developing nations at a trade disadvantage. This presentation touches on this potential conflict as an exploratory exercise for a thesis topic, and will provide opportunity for feedback and questions.