



THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

PRESS RELEASE

FIGHTING ILLEGAL FISHING: WARNINGS FOR KIRIBATI, SIERRA LEONE AND TRINIDAD & TOBAGO, WHILE SRI LANKA IS DELISTED

EU warns Kiribati, Sierra Leone and Trinidad & Tobago with yellow cards as they risk being uncooperative in the fight against illegal fishing. Sri Lanka reforms its fisheries system and is delisted.

Brussels, 21 April 2016

Today the Commission expands the global fight against illegal fishing by warning three more countries in the Pacific, the Atlantic Ocean and the Caribbean. Kiribati, Sierra Leone and Trinidad and Tobago risk being listed as uncooperative in the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing. At the same time, the Commission lifts the red card and associated trade measures off Sri Lanka, as it has significantly improved its national fisheries governance.

European Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, Karmenu **Vella**, said: *“Today's decisions are yet another sign of the EU's determination to fight illegal fishing globally. It also shows that we can bring important players on board: Sri Lanka has now a robust legal and policy framework to fight illegal fishing activities. As the fight against IUU fishing is part of the EU's commitment towards sustainability and good ocean governance, each third country that comes on board is an asset.”*

...

On a more positive note, after a lengthy dialogue process **Sri Lanka** has now successfully reformed its fisheries governance system. The country was issued with a [yellow card](#) in 2012 and been [listed by the Council in February 2015](#). By today it has amended its legal framework, strengthened sanctions and improved its fleet control.

Sri Lanka joins the growing list of countries (Ghana, Papua New Guinea, Korea, the Philippines, Fiji, Belize, Panama, Togo and Vanuatu) that have reformed their systems, following a warning by the EU.

Why is the Commission proposing to remove Sri Lanka from the list of non-cooperating countries?

Sri Lanka was listed as uncooperative by the Council in February 2015. The proposal to remove Sri Lanka from the list is the result of constructive cooperation between the country and the Commission, which has led to structural reforms in the national fisheries management system. The country has developed new legislation, increased sanctions, improved monitoring, control and inspection and strengthened traceability systems.