

## Frequently Asked Questions

### WHAT IS NEW IN THE EU CATCH CERTIFICATION SCHEME AFTER THE AMENDMENT OF THE EU IUU REGULATION

(April 2025)

#### GENERAL QUESTIONS ON CATCH

##### 1. What is CATCH?

CATCH is an EU-wide real-time IT system for the management of all procedures linked to the EU catch certification scheme. It allows the submission of all catch certificates and related documents accompanying the fishery products to be imported into the EU in accordance with the EU IUU Regulation (Council Regulation (EC) No 1005/2008) as amended by Regulation (EU) 2023/2842 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 November 2023<sup>[1]</sup>.

The main objective of CATCH is to streamline the catch certification process and all linked procedures and to offer a fully digitised and paperless workflow. It facilitates the exchange of data, information and documents between all involved trading parties and control authorities and therefore simplifies and speeds up the administrative procedures.

CATCH is intended to improve the effectiveness of the EU IUU Regulation's catch certification scheme by ensuring a centralised digital management environment with the objective to identify and prohibit importation into the EU of fishery products obtained from IUU fishing.

CATCH offers the possibility to create, validate and submit catch certificates and/or related documents by non-EU countries' operators and authorities.

##### 2. Who are the users of CATCH?

According to the revised IUU Regulation, the EU importers and the competent authorities of the EU Member States will be subject to the mandatory use of CATCH in the context of the catch certification scheme.

For the importation of consignments of fishery products into the EU, importers shall submit to the competent authorities in the EU Member States the required documentation and the information contained therein through CATCH, and Member States' authorities shall process such submission through CATCH.

However, CATCH also allows non-EU countries' operators and authorities to create, validate, and transfer catch certificates and related documents directly in CATCH. As such, the production flow of relevant data and documents can become digital from the origin of the product (exporting flag State) to the final destination (importing Member State).

##### 3. Is the use of CATCH compulsory?

The use of CATCH will be compulsory for EU importers for the submission of the catch certificates and related documents and the information contained therein, referred to in Chapter III of Council Regulation (EC) No 1005/2008, to the EU Member States' authorities from 10 January 2026\*.

Non-EU countries' exporters and authorities will be able to use the system on voluntary basis. It is not compulsory for them but strongly recommended.

\*Two years after the entry into force of Regulation (EU) 2023/2842 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 November 2023.

**4. When will CATCH become compulsory?**

From 10 January 2026 the importers of fishery products in the EU will have to submit the catch certificates and related documents and the information contained therein to the authorities in the Member States through CATCH.

**5. Can I start using CATCH before the new legal provisions start to apply?**

Yes, the system is already up and running, which means that catch certificates, processing statements (Annex IV) and importer declarations can be created via CATCH. However, its use is not mandatory yet. For the time being, CATCH is accessible only to EU Member States authorities and EU importers. Access to CATCH for training of non-EU countries' operators and authorities is expected in the second half of 2025.

**6. How can I gain access to CATCH?**

CATCH is a web-based digital environment which is part of TRACES NT. New users (for the time being only EU importers and EU Member States' competent authorities) can apply for access directly through the system.

The first step is to create your EU login account<sup>[2]</sup> if you do not already have one. This is a mandatory security layer. Once you have created your EU login, you must request a role to have access to TRACES NT, as **Operator** or **Authority**.

The European Commission provides access only to the first user of the notified central competent authorities in EU Member States and non-EU countries. Subsequently the process follows a delegated access management model (central competent authorities granting access to other users in the authorities and to operators and its first users).

This means that an operator user (importer) will have to be linked to an operator company and be validated by its responsible authority. It should select in the system the central competent authority with CATCH domain in its country. The central competent authority should validate the request in TRACES NT.

**7. What languages will CATCH be available in?**

CATCH will be available in all official EU languages.

**8. Will CATCH ensure a paperless workflow in the EU catch certification scheme?**

To achieve a complete paperless workflow, non-EU countries' operators and authorities will have to use CATCH directly.

The obligation to submit the relevant information and documents via CATCH is for the EU importer while the direct use of CATCH for the creation, validation and endorsement of documents by non-EU countries' operators and authorities, although highly recommended, is voluntary.

Non-EU countries' operators and authorities can decide to continue using paper-based certificates or to directly use CATCH to create and validate catch certificates and related documents.

If the EU importer continues to receive the documents in paper format, the importer will be required to enter CATCH and submit the data from such documents manually in CATCH (and attach the scanned paper documents).

The European Commission is offering to certain non-EU countries that have IT systems capable of creating catch certificates for exports to the EU, the possibility of establishing interoperability between these IT systems and CATCH, on condition that the aforementioned systems comply with the data requirements and system's security as laid down in CATCH.

The European Commission is currently promoting the direct use of CATCH by non-EU countries, highlighting the benefits for trade facilitation, like speeding up the administrative procedures at the border, increasing the reliability of data, the fact that the use of the tool is free of cost, the system is available in all EU official languages, etc.

The European Commission also encourages the EU importers to promote the direct use of CATCH with their non-EU countries' suppliers.

Currently, more than 113.000 users from about 90 countries worldwide are using TRACES directly, meaning that they create certificates and documents online for trade of food, animals, organic products, and other commodities. Some of these non-EU countries have already shown interest in CATCH.

**9. What are the benefits of the use of CATCH for EU Member States' authorities?**

CATCH enhances cooperation and coordination between the competent authorities of the EU Member States and between economic operators and their competent authorities. The main objectives of CATCH are:

- to allow for the detection of fraudulent catch certificates;
- to prevent overuse of catch certificates through quantity management when catch certificates are used several times in relation to different consignments destined to the EU market;
- to support risk management applied to official controls;
- to harmonise the documentary workflows.

**10. What are the benefits of the use of CATCH for the operators?**

CATCH harmonises the procedures foreseen under the EU catch certification scheme. In addition, it will speed up the administrative procedures, it will facilitate the submission of required data by providing a "copy as new" function that will allow the re-use of information previously introduced in the system and will provide a multilingual environment.

Once non-EU countries choose to use CATCH directly, it will also make the whole process easier as all the workflows will be electronic, and papers will be no longer required.

**11. What training is needed to use CATCH? Will the European Commission provide it?**

The European Commission is already providing trainings to the EU Member States' authorities. In addition, there is an extensive set of online help material and a CATCH documentation web page (as part of the TRACES NT documentation). Operators and authorities can consult pre-recorded help materials available [here](#). These training materials will be updated on a regular basis.

As regards non-EU countries, regional and bilateral information seminars have been organised by the European Commission.

Closer to the date of effective application of the compulsory use of CATCH, a functional mailbox will be available to submit questions.

**12. Will a manual for using CATCH be available in advance of its mandatory implementation?**

A users' manual is available on the TRACES NT documentation website, under the CATCH module[\[3\]](#). This manual is publicly available even without login into TRACES NT. As CATCH developments are still ongoing, the manual might not always reflect the latest changes made to the IT environment.

**13. What if CATCH does not work?**

CATCH will be ready and operational well in advance of its mandatory use in accordance with the legislation. In any event, contingency measures will be laid down in the implementing provisions to address any particular situation (i.e. if the system is not available to users).

**14. What is the European Commission doing to encourage non-EU countries' operators and authorities to use CATCH directly?**

The European Commission is promoting the use of CATCH by non-EU country operators and authorities through seminars, trainings and exploring interoperability solutions for those non-EU countries that already have IT systems for validating catch certificates.

CATCH is part of TRACES NT, an online platform, developed by the European Commission in the early 2000's, for sanitary and phytosanitary certification required for the importation of animals, animal products, food and feed of non-animal origin and plants into the EU. TRACES NT is already used by 90 countries worldwide and some of them have already showed interest in using CATCH for the catch certificates and related documents.

The use of the system by non-EU countries will provide more certainty to the data and for them it will facilitate trade. The continued use of paper catch certificates will be a burden for EU importers, hence products accompanied by paper catch certificates would inevitably be subject to longer import procedures.

**15. Is it possible to add attachments to the catch certificate in CATCH?**

Yes, this is possible. In case the catch certificate has been transmitted by the exporter to the importer in paper format, the original catch certificate must be scanned and uploaded in CATCH as accompanying document. It is also possible to scan and upload other documents related to the catch certificate submission in CATCH.

**16. Will non-EU countries be able to connect their IT systems generating catch certificates to CATCH?**

The European Commission is open to engage in discussions with interested non-EU countries about interoperability between CATCH and their national IT systems, developed and used for the generation and validation of catch certificates.

This interconnection could be ensured through web services. The pre-requisite for establishing interoperability with CATCH is the ability of the national systems to provide all data and information required in the catch certificate and related documents under Chapter III of Regulation (EC) No 1005/2008 as amended by Regulation (EU) 2023/2842 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 November 2023.

**17. Who has access to the data validated by non-EU countries in CATCH?**

Information from catch certificates and any other documents foreseen under the catch certification scheme must be submitted, through CATCH, to EU Member States' authorities who check and verify this information and take decisions on authorisation or refusal of importations.

The use of personal data in this context is limited to the implementation of the objectives laid down in Regulation (EC) No 1005/2008, Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data, apply to the information processed through CATCH.

**18. Will non-EU countries' authorities be able to extract data they have validated in CATCH?**

Yes, non-EU countries' authorities will be able to access and extract data that they have validated through CATCH. However, they will not have access to data validated by other countries.

They will be able to extract this data via the QlikSense of CATCH, a functionality that can provide statistical data based on information submitted through the system.

**19. If a non-EU country already uses TRACES NT to validate other certificates, will it need to request a new access to use CATCH?**

The authorities that have already an EU Login in TRACES NT can use it also in CATCH. However, they will need to request an extra role to access CATCH.

The authorities from non-EU countries that will be provided a role in CATCH by the European Commission will be those notified to the European Commission under Article 20 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1005/2008 (flag State notification) and other authorities in charge of implementing other provisions laid down in the EU catch certification scheme (for example the endorsement of documents referred to in Article 14(1) and 14(2)).

The European Commission will contact non-EU countries to collect information about the authorities entitled to a role in CATCH, and to indicate the administrator users in these authorities.

**20. Is there an open-source version of CATCH that could be used by non-EU countries?**

There is no open-source version of CATCH available. CATCH is a web-based system that can be used by non-EU countries after creating an EU login account and requesting a role to have access to TRACES NT, as "Operator" or "Authority". The purpose of giving access to CATCH to non-EU operators and authorities is to give them the possibility to create and validate catch certificates and related documents, required for exporting fishery products to the EU, directly in the IT system instead of having to issue these documents on paper.

CATCH is not a database that can be used by non-EU countries for other purposes than the one described. It should be noted that the authorities of non-EU countries that are registered in CATCH will only be able to access data that they have validated through CATCH, and not information from other countries.

**21. Is CATCH based on the UN/CEFACT standard?**

Yes, CATCH is based on the UN/CEFACT standard.

**22. When will the European Commission adopt implementing regulations to lay down the rules for the functioning of CATCH?**

The rules for the functioning of CATCH will be adopted before the date of application of the modified catch certification scheme provisions i.e. before 10 January 2026.

**23. What is the procedure to be followed for using CATCH to validate catch certificates if the flag State has not previously used TRACES NT?**

The first step is to create your EU login account if you do not already have one. This is a mandatory security layer. Once you have created your EU login, you must request a role to have access to TRACES NT, as Operator or Authority.

The European Commission provides access only to the first user of the notified central competent authorities of non-EU countries (authorities in non-EU countries that are notified under Article 20 of the Council Regulation (EC) No 1005/2008 to validate catch certificates). Subsequently the process follows a delegated access management model (central competent authorities granting access to other users in the authorities and to operators and its first users).

More information can be found on the TRACES documentation website, under the CATCH module[\[4\]](#).

**24. Will a non-EU country that has not notified its authorities as flag State under Article 20(1) of Council Regulation (EC) 1005/2008 be able to validate catch certificates in CATCH?**

No, according to Article 20 of Council Regulation (EC) 1005/2008, catch certificates validated by a flag State can be accepted by Member States only when that flag State has notified to the European Commission the information required by paragraphs 1 and 2 of the said Article and Annex III of the mentioned Regulation. If the authorities of a country are not notified to the European Commission, the creation of a catch certificate for vessels flying the flag of that country will not be possible.

**25. Will a non-EU country that has not notified its authorities as flag State under Article 20(1) of Council Regulation (EC) 1005/2008 be able to use CATCH?**

Yes, non-EU countries other than the flag States notified under Article 20(1) of Council Regulation (EC) 1005/2008 will be able to create, sign, declare or endorse other documents / information in CATCH, e.g. processing statements (Annex IV), non-manipulation documents, landing/transshipment events.

**26. Can flag States replace a catch certificate that was created and already validated by them directly in CATCH?**

No, the flag State's authority must cancel the catch certificate and ask the exporter to start the procedure in CATCH again.

To quickly create a new catch certificate, the exporter can use the functionality "copy as new" based on the cancelled one. This action greatly speeds up the submission process. In order to link both certificates in CATCH, the exporter will be able to add the certificate reference of the cancelled one, in the section "supporting documents". The newly created catch certificate will be submitted to the flag State authority for validation and a new document number will be assigned.

**27. What will be the relationship between CATCH and the RFMO catch documentation schemes, recognised as equivalent to the EU catch certification scheme in accordance with Article 13 of Regulation (EC) No 1005/2008?**

For the Catch Documentation Schemes recognised as equivalent to the EU catch certification scheme, operators and authorities will continue using and implementing the said schemes and their IT platforms. It will not be possible to create or introduce these catch certificates in CATCH.

In case the exporter or importer selects in CATCH one of the species covered by such RFMOs Catch Documentation Schemes, they will be informed that they must use the corresponding RFMO Catch

Documentation Scheme IT environment. The link to the relevant RFMO IT environment will be provided.

**28. What will be the relationship between CATCH and the RFMO statistical documents?**

Species covered by statistical documents according to RFMOs rules are also subject to the EU catch certification scheme requirements. A validated catch certificate should therefore be submitted through CATCH in addition to the statistical document requirements.

The submission of the statistical document in CATCH will not be mandatory, however the importer will always have the possibility to attach scanned copies of these documents as complementary information to the submission through CATCH.

**QUESTIONS on CATCH RELEVANT TO EU IMPORTERS**

**29. I am an EU importer: do I need to register to use CATCH? To whom should I direct my request for registration?**

Yes, you must log in into TRACES NT first. To do this, you need an EU login account, which is the first step.

Once you have registered in EU login, you can log into TRACES NT and request a role that will allow you access to the application.

If you represent a company, you are an operator user and therefore, on the login screen you can select a role in TRACES NT as “operator”.

If your company does not exist yet in the system, you can create it by clicking “create a new operator”. After that, you will have to select the responsible authority by searching for the central competent authority with CATCH domain in your country<sup>[5]</sup>. This authority will first have to validate your company in the system, and then validate you, as a first user linked to that company.

**30. I am an EU importer: how to use CATCH if I receive a paper catch certificate from the exporter?**

Once you are registered in TRACES NT and your central competent authority has validated your role as operator, linked to a company with the activity “fishing importer” (or representative of the importer), you can access CATCH and fill all required information related to the catch certificate and other relevant documents by copying this information from the paper version into CATCH.

On the TRACES NT home page, in the upper-left menu, click on “documents” and select “CATCH”. Click the green button located in the top-right window entitled “create new catch certificate”. If you have received a catch certificate according to the amended Annex II of the Council Regulation (EC) No 1005/2008, you need then to select the option “Create new catch certificate”. If you have received a catch certificate in the previous template (i.e. the one applicable before 10 January 2026), the option to be selected is “Create new catch certificate (paper version validated by flag State before 10 January 2026)”<sup>1</sup>.

You will have to introduce all the information from the paper catch certificate into CATCH, following the different steps. All information fields marked with a red asterisk are mandatory.

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that the previous template will be acceptable for a transitional period of two years after the application of the new template (until 10 January 2028).

The original catch certificate received on paper has to be scanned and attached as accompanying document, in section “Supporting documents”.

In case you receive the catch certificate and other documents in their paper format, you will still have to submit the originals to the competent authority in your Member State.

Once you have introduced all the compulsory information you can click the button “finish document” in the lower right corner. If everything is correctly filled in, your catch certificate has been created in CATCH. It will have the status “valid”. If some of the boxes were not filled in correctly you will see an error message. When you click on each of the messages you will be redirected to the box and field which requires modification.

The information “created by importer” next to the reference number will appear.

**31. Will EU importers still have to submit the original catch certificate in case that the non-EU country is not using CATCH?**

Yes, if the importer receives the catch certificate on paper, the importer will also have to submit it, together with all relevant documents foreseen under the catch certification scheme, to the Member State competent authority. In addition, the importer will have to fill in the data required in CATCH and to attach a scanned copy of the original catch certificate and of the other relevant documents in CATCH.

**32. I am an EU importer: what if I receive a paper catch certificate and some of the mandatory information is not provided?**

You will not be able to create and submit the catch certificate in CATCH. You will have to contact your exporter to obtain a complete catch certificate. The exporter will have to contact the relevant flag State authority which will need to cancel the incomplete catch certificate and replace it with a complete one.

**33. I am an EU importer: how to use CATCH if I receive from the exporter a catch certificate created and validated directly in CATCH?**

If the non-EU country created and validated the catch certificate or other documents directly in CATCH, you will receive them from the exporter directly in CATCH, and you will be able to proceed by directly launching the importer declaration.

**34. I am an EU importer: once the catch certificate is available in CATCH, what should I do to launch the importer declaration in the system?**

You must launch the importer declaration by clicking on the button displayed at the bottom right of the valid catch certificate page, “new follow up” and then “launch importer declaration”.

The commodities related to the importer declaration have to be selected using the EU Combined Nomenclature (CN) code. You must indicate the net fishery product weight in kg (this refers only to the fish component of the product to be imported, without other ingredients such as water, oil, vegetables....) as well as the net weight in kg of the products to be imported (including the fish component and other ingredients).

CATCH allows the use of several catch certificates and related documents in the same importer declaration.



**35. I am an EU importer: what should I do when I receive a catch certificate directly created and validated in CATCH and a paper-based processing statement (Annex IV)?**

In this case, you have to introduce the information from the processing statement (Annex IV) received on paper into CATCH. To do that, you go to the homepage of CATCH and select the button displayed on the top-right of the page “Create new processing statement” followed by “From catch certificate”. After entering the requested details, the processing statement page is displayed, with the valid catch certificate linked to it.

For the identification of the commodities in the processing statement (Annex IV), the EU Combined Nomenclature (CN) codes must be used.

You will have to introduce all the information from the paper processing statement (Annex IV) into CATCH, following the different steps. All information fields marked with a red asterisk are mandatory.

A scanned copy of the processing statement (Annex IV) will have to be uploaded as accompanying document. The health certificate, if available, can also be uploaded.

Once all the information of the processing statement (Annex IV) has been introduced in CATCH, you click the button “finish document”. The document should appear in CATCH as “valid”.

After this, you have to launch the importer declaration.

In case that the processing statement (Annex IV) refers to several catch certificates, it should be first ensured that all the catch certificates are already in CATCH before creating such processing statement. If they are all there, the system allows to link the processing statement with several catch certificates.

**36. I am an EU importer: what if I receive a paper processing statement (Annex IV) and some of the mandatory information is not provided?**

You will not be able to submit the processing statement (Annex IV) in CATCH. You will have to contact your exporter to obtain a complete processing statement (Annex IV). The exporter will have to contact the relevant endorsing authority which will need to cancel the incomplete processing statement (Annex IV) and replace it with a complete one.

**37. I am an EU importer: I will lose a lot of time copying all the data from the paper certificates and related documents into CATCH. There is a lot of information to provide.**

For the first documents introduced in CATCH, the information will indeed have to be entered manually. However, once CATCH is used, the workload will be quickly reduced as CATCH includes the option “copy as new” which allows you to quickly create a new catch certificate, or processing statement (Annex IV), based on a previous one. This action will speed up the submission process. Much of the data can be re-used, such as fishing vessels, exporter details and information on flag State authorities.

CATCH also includes the selection of favourites (operators, fishing vessels, catch areas and masters) which allows you to quickly fill in part of the certificate. This also speeds up the submission process.

Nevertheless, the best option would be to invite exporters to submit the catch certificates to their authorities directly in CATCH. This will ensure a paperless document workflow.

The European Commission is also promoting the direct use of CATCH among non-EU countries and is assessing interoperability between IT systems.

**38. I am an EU importer: how will I receive authorisation for import from the competent authorities in my Member State in relation to a consignment and related documents submitted through CATCH?**

Once the importer declaration has been completed, you must submit it for import control through CATCH. The catch certificate and all other documents, together with the importer declaration, are then received by the relevant Member State's competent authority. The status "Import control authority notified" will appear.

The import control authority will have to authorise or refuse the importation. You will receive, through CATCH, a notification when this is done.

**39. Is it possible to correct a catch certificate/processing statement (Annex IV) in CATCH and who can make the corrections? If not, how are typographical and keyboard errors managed in the system?**

Two solutions have been developed in CATCH to correct typo errors made by importers when copying the paper catch certificate into CATCH. Before the submission to the import control authority, the importer can use the REPLACE functionality. After the submission, the importer will be asked to use the AMENDMENT functionality.

The REPLACE functionality allows the importer to correct data copied from the catch certificate and pre-validated in CATCH, whilst cancelling the original one. The system creates a link between both certificates. To do that, the importer will need to open the catch certificate with the errors (and not linked to any importer declaration), click on the "More" button at the bottom of the page, and then on "Replace". Once corrected, the importer clicks on "Finish document" and the status is "valid".

The AMENDMENT functionality allows the importer to amend a catch certificate, already linked with other documents and submitted in an importer declaration to the Member State authority. To do that, the Member State authority (import control authority) will need to open the importer declaration, click on the "More" button on the bottom of the page, and then on "Send certificates for amendment". The authority will select the certificate in question and mark the box(es) to be amended. The importer will then receive a notification stating that the catch certificate (CATCH.CC) is ready to be amended. When the importer opens it, the status is "To be amended" and only the box(es) marked by the Member State authority is opened for edition, together with a comment from the authority. Once amended, the importer clicks on "Amend document" and the status of the certificate is "Amended". The Member State authority will then receive a notification and can proceed with the decision on importation.

**40. How is the catch certificate transferred in CATCH from the exporter to the EU importer or to the processing plant?**

Once the catch certificate is validated by the competent flag State authority directly in CATCH, the exporter must complete the section "next operator", present in the "Transport details" tab, and click on the button "Update next operators" to transmit the document to the receiving relevant operator. One or more operators can be added in that section.

**41. Does CATCH send automatic notifications to operators (importers, customs, etc.) when a catch certificate has been validated?**

After the non-EU flag State competent authority has validated one or more catch certificates related to a consignment, the exporter having submitted such certificate for validation will receive a notification in CATCH. The exporter will then be able to transfer such certificate(s) to the importer in

the EU, by providing them access to the certificate in CATCH, through the “Next operator” section. The importer will receive a notification in CATCH and once the catch certificate has been submitted for import control, the Member State competent authority will receive a notification too.

**42. Will CATCH be covered by the EU Single Window Environment for Customs? Will customs authorities be notified of the IUU import authorisation or refusal provided by IUU competent authorities through CATCH?**

Yes, interoperability between CATCH and the EU Single Window Environment for Customs is foreseen in the revised legislation by January 2028 at the latest. This environment provides for a framework to improve information sharing and digital cooperation between customs administrations and other government authorities in charge of enforcing non-customs formalities at the EU border in areas such as health and safety, environmental protection, IUU fishing, food and product safety, agriculture, etc. This will allow economic operators to clear certain customs formalities more easily.

The EU Single Window Environment for Customs enables interoperability between the customs and non-customs domains to streamline the electronic exchange of documents and information required for the goods clearance process. The system is known as the EU Customs Single Window Certificates Exchange System (EU CSW-CERTEX).

Work to enable interoperability between the customs and the CATCH module is ongoing.

Once CATCH is connected to the EU CSW-CERTEX, customs authorities will automatically receive the decision to authorise or refuse the consignment taken by the IUU competent authorities.

**QUESTIONS on CATCH RELEVANT TO EU EXPORTERS AND EU RE-EXPORTERS**

**43. Will the use of CATCH be mandatory for exports of fishery products caught by EU Member States’ fishing vessels?**

The use of CATCH will be mandatory for fishery products caught by EU Member States’ fishing vessels, processed in non-EU countries and then imported into the EU. EU Member States will have to validate catch certificates for these products in CATCH.

In addition, Member States' competent authorities will have to validate catch certificates in CATCH, when required by a non-EU country in accordance with Article 15 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1005/2008.

Concerning exports of fishery products caught by EU Member States’ fishing vessels to non-EU countries with their own national IUU import control schemes, the conditions laid down in these schemes must continue to be respected. The use of CATCH in these cases will only be possible after confirmation by these countries.

**44. In case of re-exports from the EU of fishery products caught by non-EU countries’ fishing vessels previously imported into the EU, will the re-export certificate have to be produced through CATCH?**

Yes, when fishery products caught by non-EU countries’ fishing vessels, imported into the EU and not processed therein are re-exported, the validation of the re-export section of the catch certificate will have to be made in CATCH.

**45. What if the EU re-exporter is someone else than the EU importer in cases of re-exports from the EU of fishery products caught by non-EU countries' fishing vessels and previously imported into the EU?**

The EU re-exporter needs to have the document number of the catch certificate(s), the name of the flag State and the importer declaration concerned (the serial number of the importer declaration created by CATCH). With this information, the re-exporter will be able to access the relevant catch certificate in CATCH and select the procedure "re-exportation" in CATCH. After filling in the re-export section of the catch certificate, the re-exporter will be able to submit it to the Member State's competent authority.

**CHANGES TO THE CATCH CERTIFICATE, RELATED DOCUMENTS AND  
PROCEDURES INTRODUCED BY THE AMENDMENT OF COUNCIL REGULATION  
(EC) 1005/2008 (THE IUU REGULATION)**

**46. Will the content of the catch certificate change and when are these changes expected to take effect?**

Yes, the amendment of the IUU Regulation introduces some changes to the template laid down in Annex II. The new template for catch certificate will provide more precise information on fishing activities and products along the supply chain. As of 10 January 2026, the new template must be used for creation and validation of catch certificates.

The changes are:

- Fishing vessel identification: it requires to provide the IMO number and, if IMO number is not applicable, other unique vessel identifier, if applicable. (Boxes 2, 6 and 7)
- Fishing gear must be indicated. (Box 2)
- Fishing trips: the catching dates must be indicated "from-to". (Box 3)
- Catch area: in addition to the FAO area(s), it requires to also provide EEZ and/or High Seas, and the RFMO area if applicable (please see Q53). (Box 3)
- The weight boxes have been amended for a clearer understanding of the quantities to be declared in each box. (Box 3)
- The name and signature of the master of the fishing vessel can be replaced by the name and signature of the fishing license holder. (Box 5)
- All transshipment operations in ports of non-EU countries (including in ports of the flag State) must be recorded. Landings must be recorded only in ports other than those of the flag State. (Box 7)
- Transport details have been modified. (Box 10)
- The EU importer declaration has been modified. (Box 11)
- The legal basis for refusal of the catch certificate has been added. (Box 13)

**47. Are there any other changes to the catch certification scheme?**

Yes, to complement the amended IUU Regulation, the European Commission has introduced a new template (called non-manipulation document) to ensure a consistent, uniform and non-discriminatory implementation of the provisions of Article 14(1)[\[6\]](#). It will apply to consignments, destined to the EU, that transit through a non-EU country where the product is not manipulated (please see also Q61).

CATCH will offer the possibility to complete and create such document directly in the system with no additional paper generation, should the authorities of the transit country decide to use CATCH.

**48. I am representing a non-EU country competent authority, and I am in charge of the validation of EU catch certificates (flag State authority notified in accordance with Article 20(1) of EU IUU Regulation). What will be the impact of the amended IUU catch certification scheme on my authority and is there anything I should do?**

The amendments to the IUU Regulation have been notified by the European Commission, on behalf of the EU, to the World Trade Organisation on 10 January 2024.

In addition, the European Commission has contacted all non-EU countries (flag States) who submitted notifications in accordance with Article 20(1) of the EU IUU Regulation and provided them with information regarding the changes introduced by this amendment to the IUU Regulation.

Before 10 January 2026, these countries<sup>2</sup> will be invited to provide to the European Commission information on whether they wish to use CATCH directly and be granted a role. The required information should also include additional information on national authorities responsible for validation or endorsement of other documents foreseen under the amended catch certification scheme (e.g., in relation to processing, transit, transshipment and landing operations).

In addition, the authorities of non-EU countries other than those notified under Article 20(1) of the EU IUU Regulation will also be invited to provide information on whether they wish to use CATCH directly and be granted a role to be able to endorse, sign and declare documents foreseen under the amended catch certification scheme (e.g. in relation to processing, transit, transshipment and landing operations).

**49. I am representing a non-EU country competent authority, and I am in charge of endorsing EU processing statements (Annex IV). What will be the impact of the amended IUU catch certification scheme on my service and is there anything I should do?**

From 10 January 2026, fishery products processed on land (or processed on board of factory vessels after transshipment) will have to be exported to the EU with a processing statement (Annex IV) even when the flag of the fishing vessels that caught the fish is the same as the country of processing.

Non-EU countries, where processing of fishery products that are exported to the EU takes place (including flag States), will be contacted by the European Commission to provide them the opportunity to use CATCH.

**50. What information should be provided in the boxes related to the fishery product in the catch certificate (boxes 3 and 4)?**

Box 3 should include the information on:

- Species constituting the consignment covered by the catch certificate, indicating the scientific (Latin) name (ASFIS);
- The FAO 3-alpha species code (ASFIS);
- The product code (at least 6-digit Harmonised System code);

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<sup>2</sup> This also concerns Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs).

- The catch date and catch area for each vessel;
- The weight.

In addition, for each vessel and in relation to the fishery products covered by the catch certificate, the following information is to be provided:

- the applicable conservation and management measures (box 4);
- the type of processing authorised on board of the vessel and/or the product presentation codes used in reporting catch information.

**51. Can I use the local name of the species to fill the catch certificate (box 3 – species)?**

No. To ensure the proper identification of the species covered by the catch certificate it is recommended to use the names included in the list of species for fishery statistics purposes (ASFIS), managed by the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Statistics and Information Branch (NFISS). ASFIS list of species includes 13.420 species items and, for each of them, codes (ISSCAAP group, taxonomic and 3-alpha), taxonomic information (scientific name, author(s), family, and higher taxonomic classification) are provided.

The list is yearly updated, and its most recent version will be available in CATCH (drop down menu for the selection of the species).

The most recent version of the list can be found [here](#).

**52. How to fill the new weight boxes of the catch certificate related to the fishery products?**

*“Estimated weight to be landed in kg”* - this box should be used in case of a direct landing of fishery products in the EU (landing in EU designated ports of fishery products not previously landed in other ports). It will contain data based on the fishing logbook. It should indicate the weight of the catches that are intended to be landed.

*“Net catch weight in kg”* - this box should be used in case the fishery products are landed in third countries before exportation to the EU. It should indicate the weight of the catches, after landing, that are intended to be exported to the EU. This box should be used if the landing did not take place under the supervision of a competent authority.

*“Verified weight landed (net catch weight in kg)”* - this box should be used in case the fishery products are landed in third countries before exportation to the EU. It should indicate the weight of the catches, after landing, that are intended to be exported to the EU. This box should be used if the landing did take place under the supervision of a competent authority.

Estimated weight to be landed in kg	Net catch weight in kg	Verified weight landed (net catch weight in kg) <sup>(3)</sup>
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**53. Do exporters need to provide new information about the catch area? If yes, what specific new information is required?**

Yes, more information about the catch area will be required for each species caught by each fishing vessel within the referred catch dates, such as:

- FAO area(s); and

-Exclusive Economic Zone(s) and/or High Seas; and if applicable

-Relevant Regional Fisheries Management Convention Area(s).

This information is important for the identification of the applicable conservation and management measures which must be declared in the same catch certificate (box 4) and is part of the necessary information to confirm the legality of the fishing activities.

**54. Do longitude and latitude (current system based on FAO Fishing Map) of the catch area need to be provided through CATCH following the amendments to the catch certificate?**

No, providing the exact coordinates of the fishing area is not mandatory. However, more detailed information can always be provided through CATCH (by uploading supporting documents).

**55. Will IMO / UVI number be made a mandatory field? What about vessels that do not have the IMO or a UVI number? Can the RFMO- or the flag State-issued registration numbers be used to fulfill this requirement?**

The IMO number should be provided if such number is mandatory for the vessel under the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), or a regional fisheries management organization (RFMO), or national legislation; and in any other case the IMO number has been assigned to the vessel.

If the vessel concerned has been assigned a UVI (unique vessel identifier) e.g. under a RFMO, such number will have to be provided.

If neither of the previous two applies, the flag State national registration number will suffice.

**56. Is the landing authorisation in box 7 of the catch certificate only required where transshipment has taken place, or is transshipment and landing treated as two separate scenarios for the purpose of this section?**

These are two separate scenarios. Landings have to be included when they take place in another third country than the flag State, whereas a transshipment within a port area has to be included in all cases, i.e. regardless if it takes place in a port area of the flag State or in a port area of another third country.

**57. Will the use of processing statement (Annex IV) change and from when?**

Yes, the amendment to the IUU Regulation introduces an important change concerning the use of the processing statement (Annex IV) that will apply 2 years after entry into force (i.e. from 10 January 2026).

To improve traceability, processing statements will be required for fishery products processed on land (or on board of factory vessels after transshipment, please see Q59) and imported into the EU, regardless of where the processing has taken place (in the flag State or in another non-EU country). This means that processing statements should be endorsed even in cases where the flag State of the fishing vessels that caught the fish and the country where the processing operation took place are the same.

**58. What are the changes to the processing statement (Annex IV) template?**

The template of the processing statement laid down in Annex IV will include the obligation to apply a unique number, that will be provided by the authorities endorsing the statement.

**59. When will a processing statement (Annex IV) be needed?**

A processing statement (Annex IV) will be required for processing operations carried out on fishery products after landing in approved establishments.

Processing operations requiring a processing statement (Annex IV) include cutting, filleting, canning, smoking, salting, cooking, pickling, drying or preparing fish for market in any other manner. Fishery products subject only to freezing and/or packing will not require a processing statement (Annex IV).

In addition, a processing statement (Annex IV) will be required for processing operations carried out on fishery products on board of factory vessels after transshipment from a donor vessel(s). In these cases, the box of the processing statement “total landed weight (kg)” should be read as “total weight received from transshipment (kg)”.

**60. Is a processing statement (Annex IV) needed for processing operations authorised by the flag States on board of its catching vessels?**

No. For more information on the use of processing statements, please see Q59.

**61. What will be the requirements to import into the EU fishery products, which transited, were stored and/or split into different consignments in a non-EU country other than the flag State and which have not undergone any operations other than unloading, reloading or any operation designed to preserve them in good and genuine condition?**

In these cases, the fishery products will have to be accompanied by a catch certificate, a processing statement (Annex IV) if relevant, and documented evidence that fishery products did not undergo operations other than unloading, reloading or any operation designed to preserve them in good and genuine condition, and that they remained under the surveillance of the competent authorities in that non-EU country. Such evidence must be provided as follows:

- if the consignment is not split in that non-EU country, a single transport document issued to cover the passage through that non-EU country from the territory of the flag State or the State in which processing takes place, will be required;
- if the consignment is split in different sub-consignments in that non-EU country, a non-manipulation document validated by the competent authorities of that country will be required for each sub-consignment. A template for the non-manipulation document has been established through the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2025/453 of 18 December 2024, published on 6 March 2025 [\[7\]](#). The use of this document will be mandatory as from 10 January 2026.

To note, the said non-manipulation document can be used also in cases when the consignment is not split, instead of the single transport document.

**62. I am a non-EU country processor. How to fill the weight boxes of the processing statement (Annex IV) based on the related catch certificate?**

The weight information in the catch certificate will be available in the box “Net catch weight in kg” or “Verified weight landed (net catch weight in kg)”.

*Box 3 catch certificate*

Net catch weight in kg	Verified weight landed (net catch weight in kg) (3)
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The box “total landed weight (kg)” in the processing statement should indicate the quantity that appears in box 3 of the corresponding catch certificate, even if not all the fish referred to in box 3 has been used in the processing country.

*Processing Statement*

Catch certificate number	Vessel name(s) and flag(s)	Validation date(s)	Catch description	Total landed weight (kg)	Catch processed (kg)	Processed fishery product (kg)

The box “Catch processed (kg)” in the processing statement should indicate the weight of the fish that has been processed (total or partial amount of the weight declared in the column “Total landed weight (kg)”).

Catch certificate number	Vessel name(s) and flag(s)	Validation date(s)	Catch description	Total landed weight (kg)	Catch processed (kg)	Processed fishery product (kg)

The “Processed fishery product (kg)” in the processing statement should indicate the weight of the fish contained in the final product (not considering other ingredients such as oil, brine, salt, or vegetables).

Catch certificate number	Vessel name(s) and flag(s)	Validation date(s)	Catch description	Total landed weight (kg)	Catch processed (kg)	Processed fishery product (kg)

The net weight of the final product to be exported (i.e. including other ingredients such as oil, brine, salt, or vegetables) is not mandatory in the processing statement (Annex IV).

- 63. How to use processing statements (Annex IV) in case the catches certified by one or more catch certificates are subject to more than one processing operation in one or more non-EU countries? How to link a processing statement to a subsequent processing statement in these cases?**

In the case of fishery products which are subject to more than one processing operation in the same country or in a different country, a processing statement (Annex IV) is required for each processing operation.

The processing statement endorsed for the subsequent processing operation should make reference to the preceding processing statement, indicating - in an additional box - its document number and the quantity of product from the preceding processing statement (i.e. the quantity declared in the box “processed fishery product (kg)” in that previous processing statement).

A template including such an additional box is provided below and in Annex I (“Processing statement subsequent to processing statement(s)”) and can be used on a voluntary basis.

The operator(s) concerned may submit, on a voluntary basis, additional details on transport from the point of processing to the subsequent point of processing. Such traceability information will facilitate possible verification of the identity of the final products exported to the EU (please see also Q74).

The use of this additional box for subsequent processing statements as well as additional information on transport between two points of processing will also be possible in CATCH, both for EU importers in case they receive paper-based documents and in cases operators and authorities in non-EU countries decide to use CATCH directly for the creation and endorsement of the required documents under the EU catch certification scheme.

**PROCESSING STATEMENT SUBSEQUENT TO PROCESSING STATEMENT(S)**

DOCUMENT NUMBER\* : .....

I confirm that the processed fishery products: ... (product description and Combined Nomenclature code) have been obtained from catches under the following catch certificate(s):

Catch certificate number	Vessel name(s) and flag(s)	Validation date(s)	Catch description	Total landed weight (kg)	Catch processed (kg)	Input from the previous PS** (kg)	Processed fishery product (kg)
						Previous PS document number	

Name and address of the processing plant:

...

Name and address of the exporter (if different from the processing plant):

...

Approval number of the processing plant:

...

Health certificate number and date:

...

Responsible person of the processing plant	Signature:	Date:	Place:
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Endorsement by the competent authority:

...

Official:	Signature and seal:	Date:	Place:
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\*Insert document number

\*\* Input is meant to be the total or partial quantity of “processed fishery product” reported in the preceding processing statement.

**64. Can simplified catch certificates<sup>3</sup> be linked to a processing statement (Annex IV) in CATCH?**

Yes, CATCH allows to select simplified catch certificates when creating and endorsing a processing statement (Annex IV).

**65. Fishery products from an operator in a non-EU country using CATCH directly to create and validate the catch certificates are sent to a processing operator in another non-EU country which is not using CATCH. The products, after processing, are exported to the EU. In this case, the authorities responsible for the endorsement of the processing statement will receive the catch certificate that has been created and validated in CATCH as a PDF document electronically signed by the flag State. How will it be possible for the competent authorities of the country where processing takes place to verify the validity of this catch certificate?**

If the authorities of the country where the processing operation takes place do not use CATCH, they do not have access to the system to check the validity of the catch certificate. However, the authorities will be able to scan the QR code on the catch certificate which will allow them to check its validity.

In case of doubts, the authority of the processing country can in any case verify the content of the catch certificate directly with the flag State in question.

It is however highly recommended to continue the paperless flow (using CATCH) also in the processing country.

**66. Fishery products from an operator in a non-EU country whose authorities continue validating the catch certificates on paper are sent to another non-EU country for processing, and this country uses CATCH. The products, after processing, are exported to the EU. In this case, can the authorities endorse the processing statement in CATCH after receiving paper catch certificates?**

No, in cases where the catch certificates continue to be validated on paper, all the subsequent steps in the documentary flow need to be paper based, including subsequent endorsement of processing statements.

#### **EU IMPORTER DECLARATION AND TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS**

**67. When the use of CATCH becomes mandatory for EU importers, for some time they will continue receiving catch certificates and related documents which were validated days, weeks or even months before, i.e. using the templates that were in force before 10 January 2026. How will importers be able to use CATCH if they receive these documents (using the templates applicable before 10 January 2026)?**

The documents validated, endorsed, signed or declared before the obligation to use the new template will continue to be accepted, but their submission by the EU importer to the authorities in the Member States shall be done through CATCH. Therefore, until 10 January 2028, CATCH will offer the possibility to introduce information from the templates applicable before and after 10 January 2026.

**68. Will it be possible to have both simplified catch certificates and normal catch certificates accompanying one consignment? If yes, will it be possible to submit an importer declaration in CATCH linked to both simplified catch certificates and normal catch certificates?**

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<sup>3</sup> Form laid down in Annex IV to the Commission Regulation (EC) No 1010/2009.

Yes, a consignment can be accompanied by both simplified catch certificates and normal catch certificates, and it is possible that the same importer declaration is linked to simplified and normal catch certificates.

**69. Will the importer declaration for simplified catch certificates be the same as the one for the normal catch certificates after 10 January 2026? Will the importer declaration for catch certificates created before and after 10 January 2026 be the same?**

From 10 January 2026 all importer declarations will be created and submitted in CATCH in accordance with the amended box 11 (Annex II).

This will apply for all consignments regardless if they are accompanied by simplified catch certificates or normal catch certificates and regardless if they were validated before or after 10 January 2026. This importer declaration is part of CATCH and this system will be of mandatory use for the submission of all importer declarations after 10 January 2026.

**70. Will it be possible, after 10 January 2026, to create in CATCH a processing statement linked to an old (validated before 10 January 2026) and a new (validated after 10 January 2026) catch certificate?**

Yes, it will be possible to link old catch certificates and new catch certificates to the same processing statements (Annex IV) until 10 January 2028. After that, old catch certificates will no longer be accepted in CATCH.

**71. Article 16(1) states that “the catch certificate together with all the relevant accompanying documents shall be submitted at least three working days before the estimated time of arrival at the place of entry into the territory of the Union”. Will the derogation granted by Regulation (EC) No. 1010/2009 still apply to the submission of the documents in CATCH?**

Yes, the current provisions set out in Article 8 and Annex VI to Regulation (EC) No. 1010/2009 will remain in force. However, that Regulation will be revised, therefore the European Commission cannot prejudge the outcome of this revision process.

**72. What weights must be provided in the EU importer declaration (box 11) in CATCH after 10 January 2026?**

The importer will have to select in CATCH the corresponding catch certificate or processing statement (Annex IV) and launch the importer declaration. Then the importer will have to select the products by EU CN code.

For each of the EU CN codes selected, the importer will have to fill the box “Net fishery product weight in kg” (i.e. the weight of the fish contained in the product not considering other ingredients such as oil, brine, salt, or vegetables etc.).

Box 11

Product description	CN code	Net weight in kg	Net fishery product weight in kg
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The importer will also be requested to provide the “net weight in kg” of the product intended to be imported (i.e. including other ingredients such as preservation materials, brine, salt etc.).

This weight should correspond to the net weight of the product declared to customs. It is not always the weight found in the catch certificate or processing statement.

Box 11

Product description	CN code	Net weight in kg	Net fishery product weight in kg
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### 73. How to fill the “Net fishery product weight in kg” of the EU importer declaration (box 11) in CATCH after 10 January 2026?

The importer will have to select in CATCH the corresponding catch certificate or processing statement (Annex IV) and launch the importer declaration. Then the products have to be selected by EU CN code.

#### Box 11 “Net fishery product weight in kg”

For each of the EU CN codes selected, the importer will have to fill the box “Net fishery product weight in kg” (i.e. the weight of the fish contained in the product not considering other ingredients such as oil, brine, salt, or vegetables etc.).

Box 11

Product description	CN code	Net weight in kg	Net fishery product weight in kg
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Relevant information on such weight is available in the received documents accompanying the consignment (catch certificates, processing statements (Annex IV) and, in case of consignments split when in transit through a non-EU country different from the flag State or processing State, non-manipulation document).

- Consignments accompanied only by a catch certificate

If the consignment is accompanied only by a catch certificate, the relevant information to fill the box “Net fishery product weight in kg” (box 11) is the weight indicated in the catch certificate in the box “Net catch weight in kg” or “Verified weight landed (net catch weight in kg)”.

#### *Box 3 catch certificate*

Net catch weight in kg	Verified weight landed (net catch weight in kg) (3)
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In case only part of the weight of the fish covered by the catch certificate is declared for importation, that partial weight should be provided in the importer declaration in the box “net fishery product weight in kg”.

- Consignments accompanied by a catch certificate and a processing statement (Annex IV)

If the consignment is accompanied by a catch certificate and a processing statement (Annex IV), the relevant information to fill the box “Net fishery product weight in kg” (box 11) is the weight indicated in the box “Processed fishery product (kg)” of the processing statement which provides the weight of the fish contained in the product (not considering other ingredients such as oil, brine, salt, or vegetables).

*Processing statement*

Catch certificate number	Vessel name(s) and flag(s)	Validation date(s)	Catch description	Total landed weight (kg)	Catch processed (kg)	Processed fishery product (kg)

If only part of the weight of the fishery product referred to in the processing statement is declared for importation, that partial weight should be provided in the importer declaration in the box “net fishery product weight in kg”.

- Consignments accompanied by a catch certificate, with or without a processing statement, and a non-manipulation document

If the consignment is accompanied by a catch certificate, with or without a processing statement, and a non-manipulation document, the relevant information to fill the box “Net fishery product weight in kg” (box 11) is the net fishery product weight indicated in the non-manipulation document.

If only part of the weight of the fishery product referred to in the non-manipulation document is declared for importation, that partial weight should be provided in the importer declaration in the box “net fishery product weight in kg”.

More information on the non-manipulation document will be provided soon.

**74. Will it be the responsibility of the EU importer to complete transport details, or will the exporter be required to complete this?**

The exporter has to complete the details of the first transport from point of export in the appendix to the catch certificate. If any information on transport is missing (for subsequent transport journeys outside the control/knowledge of the exporter), the importer can be requested to provide it. The importer, in any case will need to provide in box 11 - importer declaration, the means of transport upon arrival of the consignment. In CATCH, the importer will be able to complement information on transport details in any event.

**ANNEX I**

**PROCESSING STATEMENT SUBSEQUENT TO PROCESSING STATEMENT(S)**

DOCUMENT NUMBER\* :.....

I confirm that the processed fishery products: ... (product description and Combined Nomenclature code) have been obtained from catches under the following catch certificate(s):

Catch certificate number	Vessel name(s) and flag(s)	Validation date(s)	Catch description	Total landed weight (kg)	Catch processed (kg)	Input from the previous PS** (kg)	Processed fishery product (kg)
						Previous PS document number	

Name and address of the processing plant:

...

Name and address of the exporter (if different from the processing plant):

...

Approval number of the processing plant:

...

Health certificate number and date:

...

Responsible person of the processing plant	Signature:	Date:	Place:
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Endorsement by the competent authority:

...

Official:	Signature and seal:	Date:	Place:
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\*Insert document number.

\*\* Input is meant to be the total or partial quantity of “processed fishery product” reported in the preceding processing statement.