

Traceability System for Tuna Imported to Thailand

1. Controls of imported tuna by Foreign Flag Vessels (Carrier Vessel and Fishing Vessel)

Before tuna fish are authorised to be imported into Thailand the Thai authorities are obliged to inspect all foreign vessels (both fishing vessels and carriers) and the origin of their catch. This is all done in accordance with PSM measures.

The Importation Control Measures for Foreign Flag Vessels has 3 procedures to control importation tuna as follows;

1.1 Before entry to port

The foreign-flagged vessels submit Advance Request for Port Entry (AREP) and additional documents via electronic system called Processing Statement Endorsement linked Port State Measures System (PPS). In addition, Ship owner, vessel master and ship agent have complied with The Ministerial Notification on Notification of Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives On Advance Data Reporting, and Determining Ports for Non-Thai fishing vessel wishing to enter the Kingdom B.E. 2560 (A.D. 2017) which is exhibited in the link below (link: https://www4.fisheries.go.th/local/file_document/20180417090902_1_file.pdf).

After the authorities are sure that the foreign-flagged vessel is not involved in any IUU fishing activity, this allows the vessel to obtain a permission to land.

1.2 Inspection at port

The Department of Fisheries has established SOP for vessel inspection. Onboard inspection is implemented by Custom Department and Department of Fisheries. The authorities thoroughly check in original document on board. All relevant documents are check such as navigation logbook, fishing logbook and hatch temperature logbook. AIS tracking is analyzed and the master will be interviewed in case of suspicious case.

After the authorities are sure that the foreign vessel is not involved in any IUU fishing activity and their catch is 100% legal, Port inspection report (PIR) can be. This allows the vessel to obtain a permission to offload.

1.3 Unloading Inspection

All carrier offloads are currently monitored by the PSM team under our SOP. During the monitoring process the DOF inspector undertaking the monitoring of the vessel offload will complete an Offloading Control and Inspection Report.

The process of off-loading of tuna raw materials onto a transport vehicle is also monitored by the authorities at port in order to prevent any illegal products entering the supply chain. The transport vehicle is then officially sealed.

After the truck is loaded with tuna fish it drives onto a weighing scale before driving out of the port. In this way the fish species and weights are estimated and recorded in tally sheet. At this stage only an estimated weight is obtained. The actual weight will be obtained at the processing plant.

2. Controls of imported tuna by container, truck and air freight

Before import, the importer or shipping should submit request Import Permit via Fisheries Single Window (FSW) according to Notification of the Department of Fisheries On Specified Criteria, Method and Condition to request for permission to import Aquatic Animal or Aquatic Animal Products B.E. 2560 (A.D. 2017).

DOF inspectors implemented risk analysis for inspection at discharged port before releasing goods. After that, the Import Movement Document (IMD) is issued which is the key document for importation part to processing part in traceability system.

In case of high risk, the container is seized by DOF inspectors for inspection at factory/cold storage to conduct sorting and sizing before releasing goods and IMD issuance.

3. Sorting and weighting of Tuna fish at processing plants

Upon arrival at processing establishments the tuna fish goes through a sizing process during which the actual weight and species of fish is obtained.

During this stage the actual weight and species of product is recorded in the Import Aquatic Animal Movement Document (IMD). This is the main document for tracing fish movement.

4. Process

At processing plants, DOF inspectors regularly conduct assessment audits of food safety and traceability system for imported tuna stocked and used. The processing plants must implemented HACCP system and record fish utilization both for domestic market and exportation on balance sheet namely raw material balance stock (RMBS). The records of each movement of lots of fish through raw material stock, processing, packing, labeling and fish utilization are monitored as part of the traceability system. When the processing plants would like to export, they will submit the balance sheet (RMBS) showing the use of fish for processing.

5. Export

When the processing plants request certificate for exportation, processing plants have to provide documents to DOF officials for verification. In case of issuance of Processing Statement Certificate (PS) the Import Aquatic Animal Movement Document (IMD) and balance sheet (RMBS) will be submitted to DOF officials for verification. PS is an important document to certify that tuna products processed in Thailand, using imported tuna caught by foreign fishing vessels, are all derived from legal fishing activities and sources. Health Certification is the document issued by DOF to certify that tuna products are processed by approved processing plants, meet the food safety requirement and the products are fit for human consumption.