

Illegal Fishing – are we even interested?

In the Pacific islands there is not a lot of opportunities for people to monitor activities in their economic zones.

The following were directed to the audience to trigger some discussions and allow the sharing of experiences and knowledge with illegal fishing.

- a. What are the costs involved to be able to detect illegal fishing activities?*
- b. What is the time frame for surveillance products to be made available?*
- c. What is the best product to use? UAVs, aircraft or satellite?*
- d. Can we trust the EEZ boundaries and are they accurate?*

- There are three different types of vessels i.e Recreation, Transport and Fishing vessels. It is possible to identify the vessel type through satellite images which can only cover hotspots. Satellite images are available for short periods and get delivered within 6 to 8 hours of it being captured. There is a need to improve this process and to identify a solution for where image data can be delivered faster and timely.
- Palau engaged Aerosonde Ltd, a private UAV company to carry out surveillance around the country's EEZ, however the work did not cover 200 miles of the EEZ. Palau is therefore looking into launching the surveillance from boats and recovering it back on boats at sea so that it covers an extended range.
- If you know where the hotspots are, than you're more likely to catch illegal fishing boats.
- Tuvalu highlighted that it might be worthwhile to consider the possibility for the fisheries sector and other industries in the Pacific to invest in near real time observations to monitor the movement of maritime vessels.