

U.S. Coast Guard, Canadian Forces, International Partners Conclude Operation North Pacific Guard 2026



JUNEAU, Alaska – The U.S. Coast Guard, Canadian forces, and international partners concluded a joint patrol countering Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing as part of Operation North Pacific Guard (NPG) 2026.

Operation NPG is a multinational counter-IUU fishing operation which represents the very best of interoperability between the U.S. and international partners to detect, deter, and combat IUU fishing.

The joint mission included U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Midgett(WMSL 757), U.S. Coast Guard Pacific Area Maritime

Information Fusion Center, U.S. Coast Guard Pacific Area Tactical Law Enforcement Team, U.S. Coast Guard Arctic District, and the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Office of Law Enforcement. The operation was conducted in coordination with international partners; including the Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Canadian Coast Guard, Japan Coast Guard, Fisheries Agency of Japan, Korea Coast Guard, and Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries of the Republic of Korea.

During the 25-day patrol in the North Pacific, the crew of the Midgett conducted eight high-seas boardings and inspections, detecting three potential violations of conservation and management measures established by Regional Fisheries Management Organizations. Additionally, joint crews identified several potential violations, including illegal shark fin harvesting, through coordinated high-seas patrols, aerial surveillance, and electronic monitoring. Potential violations were submitted to the fishing vessel's flag state for adjudication.

"For over 30 years, NPG has combated IUU fishing on the high seas, which has a direct positive impact on U.S. fish stocks and our U.S. seafood economy," said Capt. Brian Whisler, commanding officer of the USCGC Midgett. "I am proud of our work to uphold good governance on the high seas through tactical-level coordination with trusted international partners, and this Operation continues to provide a huge return on investment each year. The U.S. Coast Guard collaborates with our allies and partners to secure the seas against illegal fishing, trafficking, and external destabilizing influences."

Countering IUU fishing is by statute a homeland security mission. Salmon species depart the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and depending on the species, can spend over five years on the high seas of the North Pacific before returning to U.S. waters. During this time, they are vulnerable to

illegal foreign harvesting, which directly undermines lawful U.S. fishermen and national protein security, and the cultural significance of these species. In addition, highly migratory species such as tuna, marlin, and shark swim between the U.S. EEZ and the high seas and are likewise susceptible to IUU fishing outside of the U.S. EEZ.

NPG began in the early 1990s to enforce the United Nations General Assembly's moratorium on high-seas drift nets, and the intel-driven operation has now evolved to counter all IUU fishing threats in the North Pacific Ocean. IUU fishing remains a global threat. Every year between 11 and 26 million metric tons of fish are caught through IUU fishing around the world, threatening national security, international relations, and global economies.

From U.S. Coast Guard Arctic District, Aug. 17, 2026