

Report of the  
Fourth Meeting of the Global Record Informal Open-Ended Technical and Advisory Working Group  
London, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland,  
11–13 April 2018

## PREPARATION OF THIS DOCUMENT

This is the report of the Fourth Meeting of the Global Record Informal Open-Ended Technical and Advisory Working Group held in London, United Kingdom, from 11 to 13 April 2018. The conclusions of the meeting, as agreed by participants, are an integral part of the report.

The material in the appendixes is reproduced as submitted.

### ABSTRACT

The fourth Meeting of the Global Record Informal Open-Ended Technical and Advisory Working Group (GRWG) was held in London, United Kingdom, from 11 to 13 April 2018.

The meeting was attended by experts from FAO Members, intergovernmental organisations and international non-governmental organisations. Issues discussed included: States' experiences in data upload; the IMO Resolution A.1117(30); developments of the Global Record information system; the revision of the International Standard Statistical Classification of Fishing Vessels (ISSCFV); the automatic mechanism for fisheries data exchange known as Fisheries Language for Universal eXchange (FLUX); the role of the Global Record in supporting the implementation of the FAO Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA); the broadening of States' participation prior to the public release of the Global Record; and the mechanisms foreseen to support capacity development.

The GRWG agreed that strengthening the involvement of Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) in the process through linkages with the Global Record information system and encouraging participation at RFMO and bilateral levels would increase data submission by States. The importance to focus on the submission of vessel details information initially and to align national legislation with the Global Record requirements, including on obtaining IMO numbers, was highlighted. The GRWG provided suggestions for improvements of the functionalities of the information system and recommended that a document on validation rules and detailed instructions, together with other guidance materials on data uploading and search functions, be prepared. The Secretariat was requested to study the applicability of the recent advancements on the UN/LOCODE list. The GRWG agreed on the necessity to broaden discussions for the revision of the ISSCFV list among a range of experts in fields beyond fisheries statistics and noted that specific classification categories for non-fishing vessels would be important. States were encouraged to consider the automatic submission of information to the Global Record using FLUX in order to improve update frequency and quality of information. The role of the Global Record in support of the implementation of the PSMA, particularly for data verification and risk analysis, as well as its potential to serve as a precursor of the PSMA global information exchange system, was highlighted. The sharing of Global Record National Focal Points' information to facilitate communication among States was considered beneficial to increase participation and facilitate communication among States. The GRWG agreed that by making information available, the Global Record could facilitate processes related to, inter alia, clearance for entry into port and implementation of catch documentation schemes. The opportunities available for capacity development in support of participation in the Global Record under the FAO PSMA / complementary instruments Global Capacity Development Programme were noted by the GRWG.

## **OPENING OF THE MEETING**

1. The fourth meeting of the Global Record Informal Open-Ended Technical and Advisory Working Group (GRWG) was hosted by the North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) in London, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, from 11 to 13 April 2018. The meeting was attended by 50 participants from 21 FAO Members, three intergovernmental organizations, two non-governmental organizations (NGOs), FAO, and three resource persons. A list of participants is attached as Appendix 3.
2. Ms Alicia Mosteiro, Coordinator of the Global Record of Fishing Vessels, Refrigerated Transport Vessels and Supply Vessels (Global Record), called the meeting to order, welcomed the participants and expressed FAO's gratitude to NEAFC for kindly hosting the meeting at their premises.
3. Mr Jacques Verborgh, President of the North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC), addressed the participants and gave an overview of NEAFC's fisheries management approach for the sustainable exploitation and conservation of the species covered under its Convention Area.
4. Mr Matthew Camilleri, Officer in charge of the FAO Fishing Operations and Technology Branch, acknowledged the close collaboration between NEAFC and FAO and highlighted NEAFC's active engagement in the implementation of international instruments and tools, as well as its contribution to capacity development in other regions.

## **MEETING ARRANGEMENTS**

5. Ms Mosteiro briefed the participants on the arrangements of the meeting. She recalled its informal and open-ended nature, clarifying that participants attend in their personal capacities with the objective to provide guidance for the development of the Global Record tool. She added that an administrative report of the meeting would be prepared and that the GRWG would approve the conclusions of the meeting, which will be presented at the Thirty-third Session of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) along with those of the third GRWG meeting held in Rome from 26-28 June 2017.

## **ELECTION OF THE CHAIRPERSON AND VICE CHAIRPERSON**

6. Ms Deirdre Warner-Kramer, acting Deputy Director of the Office Marine Conservation Department of the US Department of State, was elected as Chairperson. Ms Teresa Molina Schmid, Deputy Director General of Control and Inspection of the General Secretary of Fisheries of Spain, was elected as Vice Chairperson.

## **ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

7. The GRWG adopted the agenda as presented in Appendix 1.

## **PROGRESS REPORT AND STATE OF AFFAIRS OF THE GLOBAL RECORD PROGRAMME**

8. Ms Mosteiro updated participants on the current status of development and participation in the Global Record. She introduced the first working version of the information system currently implemented and reported on the high rate of participation achieved in recent months, in particular from FAO Members in the regions of Latin America, Europe and North America. The total number of participating FAO Members was of forty-two which collectively submitted a total of 7 213 vessels covering all sizes and vessel types. It was noted that whilst, the submission of "Vessel Details" information was satisfactory, information pertaining to other modules was scarce.
9. The GRWG agreed on the importance of supplementing vessel records with vessel photos and the Secretariat confirmed that the photo functionality would soon be available.

## STATES' EXPERIENCES IN DATA UPLOAD

10. The participants recognized the importance of the Global Record as a tool to fight against IUU fishing.

11. The Working Group noted that, in many cases, submission of data to the Global Record was hampered by the reluctance of vessel owners and operators to request IMO Numbers for their vessels. Some of the FAO Members resolved the problem by reviewing their national legislation introducing the requirement to apply for an IMO number. The European Union States obliged owners and national authorities to request IMO numbers for all fishing vessels of 15 meters and above, authorised to fish in waters outside their national jurisdiction. Concerning this, it was further noted that IMO numbers can be requested to IHSM directly by flag States, without owners and operators involvement.

12. The important role of the National Focal Point to coordinate the collection of information from national agencies for submission to the Global Record was stressed. The Secretariat recalled that FAO Members were formally requested to designate a National Focal Point as soon as possible.

13. In order to facilitate data submission, the GRWG agreed that business rules used for data validation should be made available and that flag States should have the possibility to retrieve their own national fleet information from the Global Record in order to crosscheck and verify the existing uploaded information.

14. Concerning the enquiries related to the Port's Information Module, the Secretariat clarified that as agreed at the second meeting of the GRWG, flag States should submit all national ports in which vessel registration, inspection and fish landing occurs. It was noted that designated ports are only required in relation to the obligations set out in the PSMA. Furthermore, the participant from IMO informed that the UN/LOCODE list was under revision and therefore the use of the current version should be considered carefully.

15. Some experts expressed their interest in exchanging information through automated mechanisms and recognized the need for regional coordination to optimize resources and share experiences.

## IMO RESOLUTION A.1117 (30)

16. Ms Mosteiro introduced the topic of the Unique Vessel Identifier (UVI), recalling its relevance to correctly and unequivocally identify vessels worldwide during their entire life span and highlighted its importance for building historical records of vessels. She updated participants on the recent extension of the IMO Numbering Scheme, in particular on the last IMO Resolution A.1117 (30) which extends the Numbering Scheme to all motorised inboard fishing vessels of 12 meters and above that are authorised to operate in waters outside national jurisdiction and vessels above 24 meters of wooden hull.

17. The invited expert from the private company IHS Markit, responsible of issuing IMO Numbers on behalf of the IMO, described the application process to obtain IMO numbers, emphasizing that IMO numbers can be requested through a template at no cost by: the owner of the vessel, manager of the vessel, shipyards, the operator of the vessel, the flag State, classification societies, solicitors and agents. He pointed out that fees may be applied by the intermediate agents only. Participants were also informed that the number of existing vessels assigned with IMO numbers as at March 2018 was of 25 242 for fishing vessels and 930 for reefers.

18. Ms Mosteiro recalled that some RFMOs have adopted binding measures for certain segments of the fleet to have an IMO number. She added that the implementation of the Global Record was based on a phased approach, focusing at the initial stage on the larger vessels operating in waters outside their national jurisdiction. She explained that ultimately it was up to the flag States to decide which vessels should be required to have IMO numbers and be eligible for submission to the Global Record information system.

## GLOBAL RECORD INFORMATION SYSTEM UPDATES

19. Mr José Antonio Acuña introduced the recent system updates of the first working version of the Global Record information system. He described the four different data Exchange mechanisms envisaged: two manual (through the website by filling an online template and through CSV files) and two automatic (through FLUX between the Global Record and FAO Members or the Global Record and Third Parties, the latter requiring the endorsement by the respective flag States). Working with automated data exchange mechanisms using UN/CEFACT Schemes was described as the preferred option.

20. A live demonstration of the Global Record Information System was delivered, showing, in particular, the step-by-step uploading process through CSV files currently implemented and the database querying facility. As noted by the Secretariat, the linkages among the different information modules are crucial and very useful to support the verification of information and risk analysis during the inspection processes.

21. Participants were informed that the other manual data exchange mechanism through the website, as well as the data link exchange mechanism with IHSM using web services (that will later be upgraded to FLUX when available), are intended to be implemented before the next COFI meeting in July 2018. In the particular case of FLUX, the GRWG was informed that the Global Record expects to start connecting firstly with the European Union in the third quarter of 2018 and soon after with RFMOs (NEAFC and GFCM in particular).

22. The GRWG welcomed the demonstration and some participants expressed their willingness to upload other information modules and to start working with FLUX-TL, when possible.

## ISSCFV - VESSEL TYPES (FISHING VESSELS, TRANSSHIPPING VESSELS, SUPPLY VESSELS)

23. Ms Mosteiro introduced the current status and changes foreseen in the Vessel Types list of the International Standard Statistical Classification of Fishery Vessels by Vessel Types (ISSCFV) established by the Coordinating Working Party on Fishery Statistics (CWP) in 1984. She indicated that the Global Record is using the 1984 version, but its revision was an opportunity for the participants to provide their views and suggestions considering the new IUU fishing reality.

24. The GRWG noted that IMO vessel types should be coherent with this classification and recommended to keep using the 1984 version for the Global Record for the time being.

25. Many participants recognized the broad nature of the category “Non-fishing-vessels” and agreed that support and supply vessels should be classified separately with some level of detail. To this end, the need to extend discussions on the classification of vessels beyond the scope of statistical reporting was stressed. The GRWG recommended that FAO Members bring up the subject of vessel classification at relevant RFMO meetings.

## DATA EXCHANGE STANDARDS AND MECHANISMS: FISHERIES LANGUAGE FOR UNIVERSAL EXCHANGE (FLUX).

26. Ms Mosteiro introduced the topic recalling the work carried out since 2012, with particular regard to the participation of the Global Record team in collaboration with the EU on the development of data standards and formats for vessel data exchange under the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT).

27. The participant from NEAFC informed the participants of NEAFC’s experience in the use of FLUX. She informed that NEAFC’s first approach started on 2012-13, but it was not until 2017 that the UN/CEFACT international standard was adopted. She added that NEAFC is working on deploying a production FLUX node for VMS Positions, as well as on an implementation agreement for the Electronic Recording and Reporting System (ERS), including a web interface to visualize their data. She also indicated that NEAFC is already using an automatic communication system (2-way SSL) and has minimized formats and report types. She explained that changing to FLUX will reduce significantly

their number of connections, with the additional value and benefits of using an open source, scalable and flexible architecture based on an International XML Standard for global fisheries data exchange.

28. Subsequently, the participant from the EU described the advantages of adopting the UN/CEFACT FLUX standard and how to implement it, in particular concerning the vessel subdomain. The need of standardization in order to minimize the cost and problems associated with complex exchange fisheries data mechanisms involving many parties, reports, formats and communication systems, while keeping good data quality, was mentioned as major reason for its adoption. It was noted that FLUX has been operating since the end of 2016 for vessel positions (VMS) followed by aggregated catch data exchange. Plans are in place to start exchanging information on fishing activities sales notes and vessel data later this year, and information on licenses and inspections will materialize in 2019-2020.

29. With regards to the setting up of FLUX, two relevant documents were presented: the Business Requirement Specifications and Vessel Implementation documents. The former aims to standardize the exchange of fishing fleet data between defined interested parties by producing the XML Schema Definitions that will determine the data models and data flows used for its implementation. The latter is intended for technical staff responsible for the system implementation and focuses on its application by describing the stakeholders and defining the data exchange procedures, data models, business rules and code lists.

30. The GRWG noted that FLUX is a priority and required by law within the EU and that the EU is making available open source tools and is working to strengthen cooperation with other FLUX partners such as the Global Record.

### **SUPPORT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FAO AGREEMENT ON PORT STATE MEASURES**

31. Ms Mosteiro introduced the topic highlighting the value of the Global Record for data verification and risk analysis, prior to port entry and during port inspections, both important aspects for the implementation of the PSMA. In this regard, the Global Record could facilitate the verification of vessel details, historical information and authorizations data, requested prior to entry into port as defined in Annex A of the Agreement. Likewise, it could support risk analysis of both, Parties and Non Parties' vessels, through the information available on port entry denials, as well as inspection and surveillance.

32. Moreover, it was underlined, that the PSMA would benefit from the Global Record's experience on the decision, set-up and use of different formats and information exchange mechanisms like FLUX, as well as on the implementation of the standards described in Annex D of the Agreement.

33. Other additional key points mentioned were the voluntary nature of the Global Record, which makes it equally accessible to Parties and Non Parties, the inclusion of valuable information on surveillance activities conducted by Coastal States or inspections made by Market States, along with the important linkage it provides between vessel and inspection information.

34. The participants agreed, stating those considerations should be raised during the PSMA Working Group on Information Exchange planned for the following week.

### **BROADENING STATES' PARTICIPATION PRIOR TO PUBLIC RELEASE**

35. Ms Mosteiro announced that the time has come for the release of the Global Record to the wider community. To guarantee its success, the need to broaden participation was mentioned, not only in terms of number of participating FAO Members, but also in terms of vessel record numbers (with the scope of achieving at least 50% of the 23 000 (circa) fishing vessels included in phase 1 and that possess IMO numbers) and information modules (such as historical details, authorizations and compliance modules). Participants were invited to promote further participation in the Global Record in their regions, including through RFMOs. Ms Mosteiro informed the participants that a presentation on the public version of the Global Record will be delivered during a side event at the upcoming COFI session.

36. The participant from IOTC informed about the current state of implementation of IMO numbers within the framework of the Tuna Consolidated List of Authorized Vessels (CLAV), stating that 40% of the CLAV fleet have IMO numbers.

37. The participants agreed to include a communication item on the next Working Group's agenda to discuss ways to increase visibility and participation.

### **CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT**

38. Mr Camilleri introduced the different mechanisms foreseen to assist developing States particularly through FAO's Global Capacity Development Programme in support of the PSMA, complementary instruments and tools. It was explained that FAO delivers assistance on the basis of a needs assessment exercise carried out on the national policy, legal, institutional and operational frameworks necessary to fulfill flag, port, coastal and market State responsibilities.

39. The GRWG noted that support for the implementation of the Global Record at national level could be received through the above-mentioned programme and some participants expressed interest in receiving such assistance as soon as possible.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE THIRTY-THIRD SESSION OF COFI**

40. The Chairperson opened discussions by indicating that the following matters, which were brought up during the meeting, would need to be presented to COFI along with the recommendations elaborated by the third meeting of the GRWG:

41. The GRWG agreed on the following recommendations to the Thirty-third Session of COFI:

#### **The Committee is invited to:**

- States and FAO should take advantage of existing regional and bilateral meetings and contacts to promote the participation in and use of the Global Record.
- FAO should make the Global Record publicly accessible as soon as possible and provide States the date that will happen in advance, so that they can verify their data.
- States are encouraged to use the mechanisms for automatic information exchange being developed in the Global Record, in order to improve the quality and availability of the information.

42. It was understood that these recommendations would be accompanied by explanatory text, and that the Secretariat might be required to make editorial changes to the agreed recommendations.

### **ADOPTION OF CONCLUSIONS OF THE MEETING**

43. The GRWG adopted the conclusions of the meeting on Friday 13 April 2018 as follows:

44. The GRWG welcomed the positive news on the increased participation in the Global Record and discussed ways of increasing the number of States submitting information prior to COFI33. These include strengthening the involvement of RFMOs into the process through linkages with the Global Record information system. The GRWG agreed on the importance of spreading the message at RFMO meetings and bilateral meetings among States to encourage participation.

45. The GRWG noted several common themes in States' experiences in adding their vessel information into the Global record, including the need to ensure that national laws and regulations were aligned with the requirements, the value of working regionally to share resources and experiences, the need to sort out which national authorities were responsible for providing information, and the challenges of managing data originating from multiple systems and sources.

46. The GRWG stressed the need of focusing on the vessel details information at this initial stage but also on the importance of other information modules, particularly the historical and authorization details, to support risk analysis.

47. With regards to the IMO number and Resolution A.1117(30), several States indicated difficulties in obtaining the number in a short timeframe for certain vessel categories and discussed ways of addressing this matter. It was emphasized that States may need to amend their national legislation to mandate the use of the IMO number and RFMOs to update their measures, as appropriate, as a first step.

48. On the information system, the GRWG provided several suggestions for improvements of the functionalities including the extraction of single country vessels' information (limited to the provider) for verification in particular prior to the public launch, the possibility to include vessel photos, summary information on search criteria, management of non-Latin characters, etc.

49. With regards to the submission of information the need for a document with validation rules and detailed instructions was reiterated. Furthermore, other guidance materials such as web tutorials on data upload and search functionalities could facilitate participation and support communication/publicity.

50. The recent advancements on the UN/LOCODE list were noted and GRWG requested the Secretariat to study its applicability in the Global Record at this stage.

51. With regards to the new proposed vessel classification by CWP, the GRWG agreed on the necessity to broaden discussions for the revision of the International Standard Statistical Classification of Fishery Vessels by Vessel Types (ISSCFV), to a broad range of experts in fields beyond fisheries statistics. The GRWG stressed that this classification, although developed for statistical purposes, is in use in other areas such as fishing operations and control and referenced in international agreements. The GRWG noted that, for non-fishing vessels in particular, the classification categories should not be too streamlined, as different kinds of supply and support vessels are subject to different instruments and tools to fight IUU fishing. The GRWG noted specific examples where having a separate classification would be important, such as support/tender vessels for FADS, tankers/supply vessels and auxiliary vessels engaged in marine fish farming. It was agreed to continue using the 1984 classification for the time being and encourage States to take this matter up within the relevant RFMO fora.

52. With regards to FLUX, the GRWG welcomed the advancements made in standardizing fisheries information exchange through an open global process under UN/CEFACT and considered the multiple benefits offered, such as simplification of the exchanges, sustainability of the process once implemented, and its applicability and usefulness for the Global Record and other similar systems. The GRWG encourages States to consider the automatic submission of information to the Global Record through this mechanism which would result in improved frequency of update and quality of the information.

53. Considering that the Global Record primarily contains flag State vessels' information which is required to link the results of an inspection to a particular vessel, the GRWG reiterated the importance of a speedy implementation and release of the Global Record to support the implementation of the PSMA, particularly for data verification. The Global Record may also support risk analysis at this very initial stage, and serve as a precursor of the global system to be established for the exchange of inspection information under the PSMA. Specifically, the processes developed through the Global Record Working group such as the standards, formats and information exchange mechanisms provide a good basis for a speedy development of the PSMA information exchange mechanism. Furthermore, it was noted that the Global Record offers an opportunity for compliance information other than inspections to be shared at global level. Finally, the Global Record could eventually provide an opportunity for non-Parties to disseminate information, should the Parties of PSMA decide on restricting the exchange of inspection among Parties only.

54. Sharing of information on the Global Record National Focal Points through the Global Record website might be very beneficial both to increase participation and facilitate communication among States.



55. The GRWG agreed that the Global Record is a fundamental tool to fight IUU fishing as it makes information available. This information will shorten and simplify the administrative processes, such as cross-checks, to provide clearance for entry into port, as well as the implementation of other schemes such as catch documentation and traceability. The fishing vessels will benefit from it too.

56. The GRWG provided several suggestions for increasing the visibility of the tool including at COFI, in RFMO meetings and through making material available through the website, and suggested including an agenda item on communication for the next meeting of the GRWG.

57. The GRWG noted the opportunities available for capacity development support through the FAO Global Capacity Development Programme in a vast range of areas concerning the capacity to combat IUU fishing, including specific support for participation in the Global Record. In particular States are encouraged to seek support, as needed, on further developing integrated information systems and automatic data exchange mechanisms.

#### **DATE AND PLACE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF THE GRWG**

58. The GRWG agreed to reconvene in 2019 the fifth meeting of the Working Group. The Republic of Korea kindly offered to host the next meeting.

#### **CLOSURE OF THE MEETING**

59. On behalf of the Secretariat, Ms Mosteiro expressed her gratitude to all the participants for their valuable contribution, in particular the Chair, Vice Chair and NEAFC staff for their kind assistance in organizing and assisting the meeting. She reminded the Working Group the need to broaden participation and looked forward to strengthen collaboration with all participants.

60. The acting Chairperson thanked the Secretariat and all the participants for the preparatory work and the fruitful discussions during the meeting and declared the meeting closed at 13:15 hours on 13 April 2018.

**AGENDA AND TIMETABLE****Wednesday 11 April 2018***Morning, 09.30 – 12.30*

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Election of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson
3. Adoption of the agenda and arrangements for the meeting
4. Progress report and state of affairs of the Global Record Programme
5. States' experiences in data upload

*LUNCH**Afternoon, 14.00 – 17.00*

6. IMO Amendment Resolution A.1117(30)
7. Global Record information system updates
8. ISSCFV<sup>1</sup> – vessel types (fishing vessels, transshipping vessels, supply vessels)

**Thursday, 12 April 2018***Morning, 09.30 – 12.30*

9. Data exchange standards and mechanisms: Fisheries Language for Universal eXchange (FLUX).
10. Support for the implementation of the FAO Agreement on Port State Measures

*LUNCH**Afternoon, 14.00 – 17.00*

11. Broadening States' participation prior to public release
12. Capacity development support

**Friday, 13 April 2018***Morning**Free**(preparation of draft conclusions and recommendations)**Afternoon 14.00 – 17.00*

13. Recommendations to the Thirty-third session of COFI
14. Adoption of conclusions of the meeting
15. Date and venue for the next meeting of the Working Group
16. Closure of the meeting

<sup>1</sup> International Standard Statistical Classification of Fishing Vessels

## LIST OF DOCUMENTS

### Working documents

GRWG/4/2017/1	Provisional Agenda and Timetable
GRWG/4/2017/2	Discussion items

### Information documents

GRWG/4/2018/Inf.1	List of documents
GRWG/4/2018/Inf.2	List of participants
GRWG/4/2018/Inf.3	Report of the first meeting of the Global Record Working Group
GRWG/4/2018/Inf.4	Report of the meeting of the Global Record Specialised Core Working Groups
GRWG/4/2018/Inf.5	Report of the second meeting of the Global Record Working Group
GRWG/4/2018/Inf.6	Report of the third meeting of the Global Record Working Group
GRWG/4/2018/Inf.7	Report of the 32nd Session of the Committee on Fisheries
GRWG/4/2018/Inf.8	IMO Ship Identification Number Scheme. IMO Resolution A.1117 (30)
GRWG/4/2018/Inf.9	CWP proposed amendments to the International Standard Statistical Classification of Fishing Vessels
GRWG/4/2018/Inf.10	ISSCFV (1984 classification) currently in use in the Global Record
GRWG/4/2018/Inf.11	ISSCFG (1980 classification) currently in use in the Global Record
GRWG/4/2018/Inf.12	UN/CEFACT FLUX Brochure

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