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Report of the

**SEVENTH MEETING OF THE GLOBAL RECORD INFORMAL
OPEN-ENDED TECHNICAL AND ADVISORY WORKING GROUP
Panama City, Panama, 19 March 2024**

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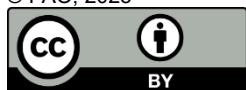
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PREPARATION OF THIS DOCUMENT

This is the report of the Seventh Meeting of the Global Record Informal Open-Ended Technical and Advisory Working Group held in Panama City on 19 March 2024. 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 seventh Meeting of the Global Record Informal Open-Ended Technical and Advisory Working Group (GRWG) was held in Panama City on 19 March 2024.

The meeting was attended by experts from FAO Member States, intergovernmental organisations and international non-governmental organisations. Issues discussed included: state of affairs of the Global Record, key considerations for the Global Record moving forward and assistance to developing states.

The GRWG called for states to continue uploading, maintaining and updating vessels given its critical role for the PSMA Global Information Exchange System (GIES) which requires reliable information on the identity of vessels. The GRWG considered as a minimum, the introduction of three broad categories of vessels of the Global Record (fishing vessels, refrigerated transport vessels and supply vessels) for those cases where vessel type is not communicated using the ISSCFV classification.

The GRWG called for studies on the feasibility and implications of obtaining and sharing ultimate beneficiary ownership information recognising this information as crucial in combatting illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU fishing). The GRWG approved the reintroduction of a deep hyperlink to the IMO's GISIS system for accessing additional relevant information contained in that system.

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OPENING OF THE MEETING

1. The seventh meeting of the Global Record Informal Open-Ended Technical and Advisory Working Group (GRWG) was held in Panama City, Panama, 19 March 2024. The meeting was attended by 64 delegates from 33 states and the European Union, together with by 5 FAO Observers. The list of participants is attached as Appendix B. The documents placed before the Meeting are listed in Appendix C.
2. Ms Alicia Mosteiro, Technical Secretary of the GRWG, called the meeting to order and welcomed the participants.
3. Mr Matthew Camilleri, Senior Fisheries Officer, Leader, Global and Regional Processes (Fisheries), provided introductory remarks.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE MEETING

4. The FAO Secretariat presented the agenda and arrangements for the Working Group. The agenda was adopted without any changes as attached in Appendix A.
5. The Secretariat pointed to the Working Document GRWG7/2024/3 for background information on each agenda item.

STATE OF AFFAIRS OF THE GLOBAL RECORD

6. The FAO Secretariat provided an overview of the current state of affairs of the Global Record programme, including:
 - A global and regional analysis of the Global Record (GR) data by fleet numbers and characteristics;
 - the different levels of commitment of FAO Member States to different components of the GR; some modules (historical data, inspection and surveillance, vessel type) show lower submission rate compared to others (vessels, ports) ;
 - the connections and interoperability of the Global Record with the S&P Global database, the Global Information System (GIES) of the Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA), regional and national systems and the UN/FLUX. Specifically, these include;
 - o possibility for states to now extract the five essential fields for vessels flagged to their State within the S&P Global database, reviewing the list and upload it onto Global Record.
 - o The importance of linkages between the GR and GIES. Current features enable real-time, flag State-verified vessel information to be automatically inserted and independently verified for the compilation of port inspection or denial forms.
 - o A feedback mechanism to notify the GR National Focal Point (NFP) when a vessel entered in the GIES does not coincide with data the Global Record will be implemented in 2024 to enhance the efficiency and sustainability of both applications.
 - o developing connections with both national and regional systems, thereby reducing duplication of effort by states.
 - o making the Global Record UN/FLUX compliant.
 - The 2024-25 workplan with the following main features:
 - o Advanced User management
 - o Improvement of Error Handling
 - o Enhancement of the Advanced Search

- Feedback mechanism to notify users of inconsistent vessel (multi-flag) data
- Edit and upload vessels and vessel images through online forms
- Multi-VMS types
- Advance connections with existing systems
- Further develop support and communication materials

KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE GLOBAL RECORD MOVING FORWARD

7. The FAO Secretariat proposed to the GRWG for consideration the imperative of making the “vessel type” in the Global Record as the 6th essential (compulsory) data field especially for due diligence purposes when registering a new vessel or verifying its information when conducting risk analysis. Further proposed for “vessel type” to be classified either as a fishing, refrigerated or support vessel.

8. The FAO Secretariat highlighted that the vast majority of states that have uploaded information on their fleet into the Global Record, have not provided information on the vessel operators, owners or beneficial owners despite its importance in effectively combatting illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU fishing). In recent years there has been more concern about the disclosure of personal information particularly with data privacy regulations introduced across the globe.

9. The FAO Secretariat provided insight about the International Maritime Organization (IMO) “IMO Unique Company and Registered Owner Identification Number Scheme” introduced to enhance maritime safety, security and environmental protection, and to facilitate the prevention of maritime fraud. It reiterated its purpose as to assign a permanent number for identification purposes to each company and/or registered owner managing ships of 100 GT and above engaged on international voyages and it has also been extended to the fishing sector.

10. The FAO Secretariat noted that cooperation with IMO could be explored to facilitate the retrieving of ownership or beneficial ownership information through the Global Record only to authorities (National Focal Points of the Global Record, National Contact Points of PSMA, etc.) and/or to those access restricted systems for which the information is relevant, such as the GIES users when receiving an advance request for port entry. Notwithstanding, The FAO Secretariat assured the GRWG of an extensive study prior.

11. The FAO Secretariat recalled in relation to the possible addition of a crew module that though the GRWG had advised the “FAO Secretariat to assess the benefits of the inclusion of a crew module to be included in the Global Record, in consultation with the Secretariat of the ILO and IMO, to be considered at the next GRWG”, the assessment has not yet been undertaken due to lack of resources.

12. The FAO Secretariat highlighted that unlike the first version of the FAO Global Record, the current version does not have a deep-hyperlink connection to relevant modules of the IMO Global Integrated Shipping Information System (GISIS) which had been recommended by the GRWG. The JWG5 recommended reinstating the link to be able to access to relevant information about the vessel in the various systems of FAO, IMO and ILO to support the fight against IUU fishing and related matters.

ASSISTANCE TO DEVELOPING STATES

13. The FAO Secretariat presented on activities carried out and plans going forward to supporting the uptake of the Global Record by states as undertaken under the FAO Global Capacity Development Programme with the support of financial contributions from the European Union, and the Republic of Korea. This related to activities covering, awareness raising, support to attend GRWG meetings, in-country technical assistance for the assessment of national systems or IT support for automatic linkages, backstopping support, through a dedicated Help Desk and direct training on the Global Record.

ADOPTION OF CONCLUSIONS OF THE MEETING

The GRWG recommends that;

1. States are encouraged to submit and update information on their vessels in the Global Record, especially considering the developments in information sharing on port State measures through the PSMA Global Information Exchange System (GIES) which requires reliable information on the identity of vessels.
2. Whilst considering the importance of reporting the information on vessel type using the ISSCFV codification, the Secretariat should introduce intermediate options for those cases where vessel type is not communicated using the ISSCFV codification to categorize vessels in other ways, reflecting the three broad groups of the Global Record (fishing vessels, refrigerated transport vessels and supply vessels) as a minimum.
3. The Secretariat to conduct Studies on the feasibility and implications of obtaining and sharing ultimate beneficiary ownership information. In order to address data privacy concerns, and without prejudice for a decision to be taken on the possible inclusion of beneficial ownership information, it is recommended that a restricted access area of the Global Record, only accessible to the flag states in the Global Record and to the flag and port States in the GIES when the vessel requests entry into port, be created to host ownership related information including, owner, operator and beneficial owner, recognizing the importance of these pieces of information for due diligence processes under flag, coastal, port and market State responsibilities.
4. Subject to availability of financial support, the Secretariat should initiate the assessment of the feasibility, technical modalities, and benefits of inclusion and development of a crew module to be included in the Global Record in consultation with the Secretariats of IMO and ILO, to be considered, at a GRWG meeting.
5. To reintroduce a deep hyperlink to the IMO's GISIS system for accessing additional relevant information contained in that system.
6. The Secretariat will delete the Global Record field on information on the number of infringements for a vessel in the activity overview section, considering that this field is useless in the case States do not provide this information, and in case this information is provided, this could lead to misinterpretation.
7. The Secretariat should continue to provide technical assistance for the use and implementation of the Global Record to developing states, including to small island developing states, and to expand to other beneficiary states requesting assistance, through increased collaboration with additional potential donors.
8. Global Record National Focal Points for vessel registration shall resolve any discrepancies detected in the Global Record resulting from the use of GIES in the shortest delay.

DATE AND VENUE FOR THE NEXT MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP

14. The FAO Secretariat noted that the next meeting will take be in January 2024 and encouraged interested Member States who wish to host to contact the Secretariat.

CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

15. The meeting was closed at 16.40 hours.

AGENDA AND TIMETABLE**Tuesday 19 March 2024***Morning, 10:00 – 12:30*

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Adoption of the agenda and arrangements for the meeting
3. State of affairs of the Global Record
4. Key considerations for the Global Record moving forward
5. Assistance to developing states
6. Adoption of conclusions of the meeting
7. Date and venue for the next meeting of the Working Group
8. Closure of the meeting

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LIST OF DOCUMENTS

GRWG7/2024/1	Provisional Agenda and Timetable
GRWG7/2024/2	Provisional annotated agenda and timetable
GRWG7/2024/3	Discussion items
GRWG7/2024/Inf.1	List of documents
GRWG7/2024/Inf.2	List of participants
GRWG7/2024/Inf.3	Report of the Sixth meeting of the Global Record Working Group
GRWG7/2024/Inf.4	Report of the Third meeting of the PSMA Open-ended Technical Working Group on Information Exchange (TWG-IE)

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