



**Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations**

FIAO/R1237 (En)

**FAO
Fisheries and
Aquaculture Report**

ISSN 2070-6987

AGREEMENT ON PORT STATE MEASURES

Report of the

**OPEN-ENDED TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP ON INFORMATION
EXCHANGE**

London, United Kingdom, 16-18 April 2018

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ISBN 978-92-5-130775-5

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PREPARATION OF THIS DOCUMENT

This is the final report of the first meeting of the Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA) Open-ended Technical Working Group on Information Exchange that was held in London, United Kingdom, from 16 to 18 April 2018.

FAO. 2018.

Report of the first meeting of the Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA) Open-ended Technical Working Group on Information Exchange, London, United Kingdom, 16-18 April 2018.

FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Report No.1237. Rome, Italy.

ABSTRACT

The transmittal, electronic exchange and publication of information are key components of the Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA) and are essential if it is to meet its objective. There are several references to information exchange in the PSMA, with some that are general in nature while others are more specific in relation to the type of information to be exchanged and the recipients.

The PSMA Open-ended Technical Working Group on Information Exchange meeting, called for by the Parties to the Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA), was held in London, United Kingdom, from 16 to 18 April 2018. The Working Group was established to consider the information exchange requirements to support the implementation of the PSMA including the most appropriate structure for an information exchange system and how such a system would interact with complementary tools.

The Working Group agreed, *inter alia*, that a global information exchange system was needed to support the implementation of the PSMA. It was agreed that a two-staged approach for developing this system should be taken prioritizing the need to access basic information such as national points of contact and designated ports. It was also agreed that the PSMA information exchange system would:

- include a publicly available information section;
- include a limited access section for protected information such as port inspection report;
- facilitate the near-real time exchange of information; and
- link with the relevant systems of RFMOs and the global systems such as IMO's GISIS and Equasis and the Global Record information exchange system.

The Working Group agreed that a second meeting of the PSMA Open-ended Technical Working Group on Information Exchange will should be held before the second meeting of Parties to the PSMA in 2019.

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OPENING OF THE MEETING

1. The Open-ended Technical Working Group on Information Exchange meeting, called for by the Parties to the Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA), was held in London, United Kingdom from 16 to 18 April 2018. The meeting was attended by experts from thirteen PSMA Parties, nine from other FAO Members, four intergovernmental and four international non-governmental organizations. A list of participants is attached in Appendix 1. Mr Matthew Camilleri, Officer in Charge, Fishing Operations and Technology Branch (FIAO), opened the meeting and welcomed participants offering his thanks to the North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) for their hosting of the meeting. Dr Darius Campbell, NEAFC Secretary, welcomed participants to the NEAFC Headquarters and wished them well in their deliberations.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE MEETING

2. The Working Group was reminded of the open-ended, informal nature of the meeting and that their discussions would focus on the information exchange requirements to support the effective implementation of the PSMA. In developing information exchange requirements, the Working Group was invited to consider national, regional and international experiences in the development and implementation of information exchange systems related to port State measures and complementary tools.

3. The Working Group noted that during the meeting they would consider the most appropriate structure for an information exchange system and how such a system would interact with complementary tools. The Working Group also noted that they would discuss the dissemination of information, confidentiality and access restrictions as appropriate.

4. The Working Group agreed that the FAO Secretariat would facilitate the meeting and prepare a report of the meeting for review.

5. The Working Group adopted the agenda without modification (Appendix 2).

REVIEW OF THE OUTCOME OF THE FIRST MEETING OF PARTIES TO THE PSMA

6. The Secretariat introduced document PSMA_TWG/1/2018/Inf.1 on matters concerning the first meeting of the Parties to the PSMA and highlighted the need for action by port, flag and other States, regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) and FAO in the implementation of the PSMA. The Working Group noted that it was important to draw on successful initiatives related to port State measures, particularly those of RFMOs. It was also noted that there was a need for flexibility and to minimize the burden on Parties in the implementation of the PSMA.

7. The Working Group recalled that the Parties to the PSMA had agreed that a staged approach should be taken in developing an information exchange system and that FAO has an important role in gathering and disseminating relevant information needed for the implementation of the PSMA. The Secretariat informed the Working Group that in accordance with the decision of the Parties to the PSMA, it had developed draft templates for the online submission of designated ports and national points of contact to be presented to and reviewed by the Working Group later in this meeting.

8. It was further noted that the Parties to the PSMA had recognized the importance of the regular and systematic monitoring and review of the PSMA and that FAO would develop a web-based questionnaire on the implementation of the PSMA to be completed every two years initially.

REVIEW OF THE GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR INFORMATION EXCHANGE UNDER THE PSMA

9. As noted by the Parties to the PSMA, the transmittal, electronic exchange and publication of information are key components of the PSMA and are essential if it is to meet its objective. The Secretariat highlighted that there are several references to information exchange in the PSMA, with some that are general in nature while others are more specific to the type of information to be exchanged and the recipients. A staged approach for developing an information exchange system was considered important with a priority focus on facilitating access to basic information including national points of contact and designated ports.

EXISTING REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION EXCHANGE MECHANISMS AND DATABASES OF RELEVANCE TO PORT STATE MEASURES

10. Several initiatives related to the exchange of information to support port State measures were presented, including those implemented by RFMOs, namely the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR), General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) and NEAFC. Other organizations also provided relevant examples, including the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) Global Integrated Shipping Information System (GISIS), the European Fisheries Control Agency's (EFCA) Exchange of Fishery Inspection and Surveillance data and the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency's (FFA) Information Security Management System (ISMS) and Regional Information Management Facility (RIMF). FFA also introduced the Niue Treaty Information System (NTIS).

11. The Working Group noted that several RFMOs implement port State measures at regional level, or at least, set minimum standards for vessel inspections in port and the exchange of information was already occurring. In some cases, these information exchange systems were well developed and the PSMA information exchange system should draw on the successful experiences of these existing systems.

12. The Working Group considered that the near-real time exchange of information provided for by the NEAFC system provided a good model for the development of an electronic information exchange system. The Working Group agreed that several successful initiatives benefited from integration with other systems that provided relevant information. The Working Group considered that linkages with the relevant systems of RFMOs and global systems such as IMO's GISIS, Equasis and the Global Record are important.

13. The Working Group noted that in developing the IOTC e-PSM system, industry had been actively involved from the beginning and this had contributed to its success. The integrated nature of IOTC's e-PSM was seen as useful and could guide the development of a port State measures information exchange system.

14. The Secretariat presented an update on the status of the Global Record and highlighted the significant progress that had been made since the 32nd session of COFI, including the April 2017 release of the Global Record information system. The Global Record information system is now available to Members through restricted access to view and upload vessel information. To date, several States have uploaded vessel data with strong participation by Latin American and European States. Several of these States have started including additional information beyond the Phase 1 requirements including the historical details of vessels, fishing authorisations and compliance information. The fourth meeting of the Global Record Informal Open-Ended Technical and Advisory Working Group (GRWG) held in April 2018, explored ways of broadening States' participation, particularly through the use of automatic data exchange mechanisms including the use of FLUX (Fisheries Language for Universal eXchange). The Working Group considered that the use of a harmonized standard, such as FLUX for information exchange, was important but moving forward with current modalities was equally important.

15. The Working Group welcomed the developments in the Global Record and noted the importance of coordination and information exchange between the Global Record and the PSMA information exchange systems. The Working Group also welcomed IMO Amendment Resolution A.1117(30) that expands the voluntary use of the IMO Ship Identification Number Scheme to non-steel hull fishing vessels and length categories beyond Phase 1 (vessels less than 100 GT).

STATUS OF PSMA INFORMATION PORTAL AND REPORTING TEMPLATES

16. The Working Group welcomed the new PSMA website and noted that with the new Global Record website, will sit under an IUU fishing website still to be developed by FAO. The Working Group considered that the website provided useful information including news and events, capacity development activities, related links and background material. The Secretariat highlighted the PSMA contact point¹ that had been provided on the PSMA website.

17. The Working Group welcomed the designated ports and national points of contact templates developed by FAO using the PSMA website and presented at the meeting. The Working Group agreed that the templates will greatly enhance the exchange of important information and the inclusion of non-Parties to provide information was useful.

18. The Working Group noted that it was important to have a centralized standard system for naming ports and that the United Nations Code for Trade and Transport Locations (UN/LOCODE) was used for several initiatives. However, it was recognized that UN/LOCODE did not provide codes for all ports. It was understood that the UN/LOCODE is subject to ongoing review and development.

REQUIREMENTS OF DEVELOPING STATES AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT FOR INFORMATION EXCHANGE

19. In presenting PSMA_TWG/1/2018/Inf.1, the Secretariat provided an overview of the requirements of developing States and capacity development issues that had been considered at the first meeting of Parties to the PSMA. The Ad Hoc Working Group (Part 6 Working Group) was established by the Parties to the PSMA and its first meeting was held in Oslo, Norway, from 1 to 2 June 2017. The Part 6 Working Group discussed the main requirements and priorities of developing States in the implementation of the PSMA and the link between activities supported by the PSMA Assistance Fund and FAO's PSMA Capacity Development Umbrella Programme. The Secretariat informed the Working Group that there are currently five projects under the Programme to support States in the implementation of the PSMA, including for relevant information exchange systems.

CONCLUSIONS

20. The Working Group considered what type of information exchange mechanism they wished to see developed by FAO. Options considered included a basic reporting system, a complete e-PSMA system or a system that linked with other systems and networks as described in PSMA_TWG/1/2018/2.

21. The Working Group noted in particular that:

- a staged approach should be used to develop a global information exchange system prioritizing the need to access basic information;
- the designated port and national points of contact templates should be piloted and open for review by the Parties at their second meeting;

- the near-real time exchange of information, both public and protected, was crucial;
- the FAO will explore options to facilitate a standardized approach for the electronic exchange of information;
- the linkages with the relevant systems of RFMOs and global systems such as IMO's GISIS and Equasis was important; and
- the Global Record is a promising platform for information sharing and could be linked with the PSMA information exchange system as appropriate to facilitate the exchange of information for the PSMA

22. The Working Group noted that several States, particularly developing States, may not have any information exchange systems and some may not be a party to RFMOs. It was also acknowledged that not all RFMOs had developed information exchange systems for port State measures and not all RFMO member States are Party to the PSMA. It was also noted that some RFMOs and regions have existing information exchange systems and duplication should be avoided where possible.

23. The Working Group considered that a two-staged approach for developing a global information exchange system was appropriate. The first stage would facilitate the exchange of basic information such as designated ports and national points of contact and be implemented as soon as possible through the PSMA website. The second stage would focus on the development of a robust global system that facilitates the exchange of information and would include a publically available information section and a limited access section for protected information such as port inspection reports.

24. The Working Group agreed that the information exchange system should provide information to facilitate a risk assessment for a vessel including if it has been placed on an IUU vessel list, its compliance history (e.g. previous inspection reports) and denial of port entry including the reason for the denial of port entry. It was noted that the history of the denial of port entry was of particular importance to support risk-based assessments for port inspections.

25. The Working Group agreed that the mechanism for information exchange was important and the modalities that provide for the timely exchange of information should be used. It was further agreed that the use of a harmonized standard, such as FLUX for data exchange, was a promising way forward and would be explored further. Developments in the implementation of such standards should not preclude moving forward with the exchange of information using other modalities currently used.

26. The Working Group acknowledged that FAO could also promote the exchange of information between RFMOs and highlight this through the Regional Secretariat's Network (RSN). The Working Group agreed that the PSMA website could include relevant links to RFMOs such as IUU vessel lists, vessel registries and other relevant information on IUU fishing.

27. The Working Group acknowledged that the linkage of information exchange systems between RFMOs was important. Parties could also consider promoting RFMOs port State measures to be compatible with the PSMA.

28. The Working Group noted that the draft designated port template prepared by FAO would be refined to include the timing for the advance request for port entry and a notes section that could be used, for example, to add additional information about a port including if it has been designated for landings for an RFMO.

DATE AND VENUE FOR THE NEXT MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP

29. The Working Group agreed that a second meeting of the PSMA Open-ended Technical Working Group on Information Exchange should be held before the second meeting of Parties to the PSMA in 2019. The Republic of Korea kindly offered to host the next meeting.

REPORT ADOPTION

30. The Working Group adopted the conclusions in this report on 18 April 2018 at 14.35 hours and agreed that participants will review the draft report prepared by the Secretariat before it is finalized.

CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

31. Mr Camilleri closed the meeting and thanked participants for their useful and constructive contribution, and looked forward to future collaboration and input by participants. Mr Camilleri thanked the staff of the NEAFC Secretariat for their kind assistance in organizing the meeting.

APPENDIX 1

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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AGENDA AND TIMETABLE**Monday, 16th April 2018***9:30 – 12:30*

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Adoption of the agenda and arrangements for the meeting
3. Review of the outcome of the first meeting of the Parties to the Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA)
4. Review of the general requirements for information exchange under the PSMA

*LUNCH**14:00 – 17:00*

5. Existing regional and international information exchange mechanisms and databases of relevance to port State measures

Tuesday, 17th April 2018*9:30 – 12:30*

6. Status of PSMA information portal and reporting templates
7. Options for the development of a global electronic information exchange mechanism

*LUNCH**14:00 – 17:00*

8. Requirements of developing States and capacity development for information exchange
9. Conclusions and recommendations
10. Date and venue for next meeting of the working group

Wednesday, 18th April 2018

9:30 – 12:30

11. Adoption of report conclusions
12. Closure of meeting

The Open-ended Technical Working Group on Information Exchange meeting, called for by the Parties to the Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA), was held in London, United Kingdom from 16 to 18 April 2018. The Working Group was established to consider the information exchange requirements to support the implementation of the PSMA including the most appropriate structure for an information exchange system and how such a system would interact with complementary tools.

ISBN 978-92-5-130775-5 ISSN 2070-6987



9 7 8 9 2 5 1 3 0 7 7 5 5

CA0287EN/1/06.18