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Fifth Meeting of the Global Record Informal Open-Ended Technical and Advisory Working Group

Seoul, Republic of Korea, 13-14 May 2019

Key discussion items

The Working Group is invited to:

- Note and provide feedback on the state of affairs of the Global Record and developments of the new version of the Global Record Information System;

- Consider adopting the amended 2016 ISSCFG (gear type) as a reference list for use within the Global Record Information system;

- Review the amended ISSCFV (vessel type) list currently being proposed for adoption at the 27th session of the CWP;

- Consider whether to adopt the UN/LOCODE as the reference code list for ports within the Global Record Information System;

- Note and provide feedback on the developments related to data exchange mechanisms and consider the inclusion of APIs as an alternative mechanism for data exchange.

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1.   Background

The 32nd session of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI32) held in July 2016 expressed strong support for the Global Record of Fishing Vessels, Refrigerated Transport Vessels and Supply Vessels (Global Record) and its continued development, and recognised its importance as a tool to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, including through its supporting role in the implementation of the Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA) and other complementary international instruments. The Committee also urged broader participation, including the submission of data by Members.

On 21 April 2017, the first working version of the Global Record Information System was launched and made available to all FAO Members to submit their information and access the records submitted on the system, with restricted access for this initial phase. On 9 July 2018, the Global Record Information System was launched to the general public. The public launch was commended by COFI33 and it reaffirmed the importance of its role in the fight against IUU fishing, such as through supporting the implementation of the PSMA and other international instruments, and national and regional initiatives, and further encouraged Members to submit information to the Global Record and provide regular updates. The Committee recommended that the Global Record Information System be further developed, in particular to allow for automatic uploading of information.

2.   State of affairs

The fourth meeting of the Global Record Working Group (GRWG4) held in April 2018, emphasised the need to strengthen the involvement of the regional fisheries management organisations (RFMOs) to widen the participation of States. The GRWG4 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. The need to align national legislation with the Global Record requirements, including on obtaining IMO numbers, was also highlighted. The GRWG provided suggestions for improvement of the functionalities of the 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 United Nations Code for Trade and Transport Locations (UN/LOCODE) list. The GRWG agreed on the necessity to broaden discussions for the revision of the 1984 International Standard Statistical Classification of Fishery Vessels by Vessel Types[1] (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.

Since the public launch of the Global Record Information System, FAO has encouraged increased participation of States, including through, regional and national meetings across the globe. Participation in the Global Record Information System has increased steadily, particularly in the European, Latin American and North American regions, with further information being provided on the "Authorisations", "Historical Details" and "Inspections and Surveillance" information modules. Since the GRWG4 in April 2018, an additional 13 States have submitted data, while the overall number of vessels has increased by 1604. During this period, 49 percent of the participating States have provided an update on their fishing fleet.

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[1] http://www.fao.org/fi/static-media/MeetingDocuments/GlobalRecord/GRWG4/Inf10e.pdf

Summary of data in the system as at 07 May 2019:

Region	Number of States	Number of Vessels	% of Total Vessels	Average Length	Total GT
Africa	7	369	4	43.37	100,358
Asia	5	380	4	55.83	348,839
Europe	26	3,432	38	33.24	1,504,852
Latin America & Caribbean	12	1,111	12	56.03	666,946
Near East	0	0	0	0	0
North America	2	3,495	39	27.28	453,580
Pacific	3	133	1	47.9	6,534
GLOBAL	**55**	**8,921**	**100**	**35.34**	**3,081,404**

In follow-up to the GRWG4 and in response to the need to improve user experience, integrate new data upload mechanisms and develop new functionalities, a new version of the Global Record Information System is currently under development. The improvements featuring in the new version of the system are as follows:

- System migration to the Cloud in order to increase server stability and offer better system performance. Particularly relevant when uploading heavy files or searching with multiple criteria.

- Modifying underlying structural aspects to make the system more independent from other systems, allowing for facilitated removal of related bugs, while facilitating future development of the system such as the automatic data upload mechanisms.

- New interface to improve user experience, with better visualisation of data contained within the system, such as through the inclusion of various summary statistics, maps and graphs, in addition to a faster and more versatile search engine.

- New editing capabilities directly within the search function, allowing data providers to visualise and edit their country's vessels.

- New upload mechanism, allowing users to upload a vessel by filling an online form; ideal for States with small fleets or single vessel uploads.

- Improved CSV upload mechanism, more user-friendly process for understanding validation rules, improved speeds of upload for larger files and enhanced error feedback.

- Mobile friendly, allowing users to view the system via mobile phone or tablet.

The new version is expected to be launched will be launched within the second semester of 2019.

3.   International standards used in the Global Record

The Global Record Information System uses several international standards agreed at international level as its reference code lists. This includes, ISO 3166-1 alpha-3 (ISO3) country codes, the 1980 International Standard Statistical Classification of Fishing Gear[2] (ISSCFG) and the ISSCFV. In addition to these code lists, the GRWG4 noted the developments being made in the UN/LOCODE and requested that the Secretariat studied its applicability.

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[2] http://www.fao.org/fi/static-media/MeetingDocuments/GlobalRecord/GRWG4/Inf11e.pdf

3.1. ISSCFG and ISSCFV

The ISSCFG and ISSCFV were developed and later approved by the Coordinating Working Party (CWP) on Fisheries Statistics in 1980 and 1984, respectively. These two reference code lists, developed for statistical purposes, were considered and approved by the GRWG2 in 2016 and are currently in use within the Global Record Information System. By request of its Members, the CWP started a review process of both reference code lists. The ISSCFG (gear type) has since been reviewed and endorsed by the 25th session of the CWP in 2016.

In the case of the ISSCFV, the CWP proposed an initial amendment of the 1984 list which the Secretariat presented to the GRWG4 for review. The GRWG4 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 necessary to fulfil the objectives of the Global Record and other instruments, initiatives and tools to fight IUU fishing. In follow-up to these recommendations, the Secretariat initiated an online consultation through the Global Record Specialized Core Working Group on Data Requirements (GRCG-DR), the report of the consultation is presented in GRWG/5/2019/Inf.4. The CWP Secretariat reviewed the conclusions of the consultation and in consideration of these, further amended the ISSCFV, including the addition of specific classification categories for non-fishing vessel types. The final amended ISSCFV, as shown in appendix 1 of this document, along with the final feedback from the GRWG5, is to be presented to the 26th session of the CWP for endorsement on the 15-18 May 2019.

3.2. UN/LOCODE

The UN/LOCODE, is a geographic coding scheme developed by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). Although developed and maintained by the UNECE, it is the product of a wide collaboration in the framework of the joint trade facilitation effort undertaken within the United Nations and its Member States. The UNLOCODE is a five-character geographic coding scheme designed to unequivocally identify an administrative or economic area, relevant to international trade and transport, in order to facilitate information interchange. The UNLOCODE integrates information associated to each location including the type of transport associated (entitled as function, where ports would be denoted by digit 1), the administrative subdivision within the country, the geographical coordinates, status of the entry and date of upload. Codes are assigned by the UN/LOCODE Secretariat after consultation with the governments or international bodies concerned. The UN/LOCODE code list by country is available on the UNECE website[3].

In the context of the Global Record Information System, the identification of a particular location constitutes a key piece of information that allows reporting information about ports where landings, vessel registration, inspection and control activities occur. Frequently, such locations are given multiple names, spelt differently in other languages and / or possess accents or diacritic marks which could create confusion and hamper data exchange. The identification of ports using a standardised system, ensuring that each port has a unique code, is of great importance for the Global Record Information System in an effort to ensure accurate exchange of data.

To determine which reference codes should be used for port locations within the Global Record Information System, an expert consultation was opened through the convening of the GRCG-DR in 2015. The consultation noted the benefits of using an internationally recognised standard for port locations such as the UN/LOCODE. However, due to the fact that the list of ports was not comprehensive and the issues that were encountered in attempting to extend or use the list, it concluded that further refinement was needed prior to it being considered as a reference code list within the system. Consequently, the consultation agreed that an in-house list of ports and reference codes should be used within the system.

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[3] https://www.unece.org/cefact/locode/service/location.html

In consideration of the revision of the UN/LOCODE list (last revised as at 21 December 2018), the Secretariat invites the GRWG to assess whether the UN/LOCODE should be adopted as the reference code for ports within the Global Record Information System.

4. Data exchange mechanisms and role of regional fisheries bodies

During the second and third meeting of the GRWG, it was agreed that the five following mechanisms for data exchange should be available for States to upload data into the system:

1. Online form: manual input through a web form. Currently only available in the development environment of the new version of the Global Record Information System.

2. Upload file: manual upload through CSV files. Operational since the launch of the system in April 2017.

3. Through UN/FLUX: the United Nations Fisheries Language for Universal Exchange (UN/FLUX) for automatic transfer of data from a vessel register. Ideal for countries with large fleets with well-established registers willing to share data as part of a network following a United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT) standard for exchange of fisheries information. Pending implementation and testing States and RFMO's using or intending to use UN/FLUX.

4. Through regional record systems: importation of selected national data from a regional system to the Global Record, subject to States' review and approval. Pending creation of a link between the Global Record Information System and relevant regional systems.

5. Through IHS Maritime and Trade: importation of the five essential data fields of all national vessels that exist within IHS Maritime and Trade's database to the Global Record, subject to States' review and approval. Under progress.

In anticipation of the implementation of UN/FLUX, the need of providing an additional mechanism to facilitate data exchange from large Third Party sources of data, such as IHS Maritime and Trade, has been considered by the Secretariat. After discussions with IHS Maritime and Trade, it was agreed that the most appropriate mechanism for data exchange was through an application program interface (API), a widely used mechanism for creating a one to one connection between two systems for data exchange. Not limited to IHS Maritime and Trade, API will allow Member States and other organizations, to expand their already existing software's in order to connect and upload all or part of the data entered with their systems to the Global Record. In cases where an entity is yet to implement UN/FLUX, or especially in the case where it does not intend for it to be implemented, an API mechanism offers a valid alternative.

While an API, offering a direct connection between an existing information system and the Global Record Information System may be preferred in some cases, the Secretariat considers that UN/FLUX through its provision of a standardised envelope and protocol for data exchange within a global network, remains the preferred option.

Table 1. Full listing of the 2005 International Standard Statistical Classification of Fishery Vessels by Vessel Types (2007 revisions)

ISSCFV 2005 (including 2007 amendment) revision		ISSCFV Code	Standard Abbreviation
Category	*Sub-Category*		
Trawlers		**1**	**TO**
	Otter trawlers	1.1	OT
	Pair trawlers	1.2	PT
	Beam trawlers	1.3	BT
	Trawlers nei	1.9	TOX
Purse seiners		**2**	**SP**
	Purse Seiners - American type	2.1	SPA
	Purse Seiners - European type	2.2	SPE
	Drum seiners	2.3	SD
	Purse seiners nei	2.9	SPX
Seiners (other)		**3**	**SO**
	Seiners nei	3.9	SOX
Dredgers		**4**	**DO**
	Dredgers nei	4.9	DOX
Lift netters		**5**	**NO**
	Lift netters nei	5.9	NOX
Gillnetters		**6**	**GO**
	Drifters	6.1	GD
	Set netters	6.2	GS
	Gillnetters nei	6.9	GOX
Trap setters		**7**	**WO**
	Pot vessels	7.1	WP
	Trap setters nei	7.9	WOX
Longliners		**8**	**LL**
	Bottom longliners	8.1	LB
	Midwater longliners	8.2	LM
	Longliners nei	8.9	LLX

The left-most column spanning these rows is labelled: Fishing vessels[4]

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[4] Fishing Vessel: vessels engaged only in catching operations.

ISSCFV 2005 (including 2007 amendment) revision		ISSCFV Code	Standard Abbreviation
Category	*Sub-Category*		
Line vessels (other)		**9**	**LO**
	Jigger vessels	9.1	LJ
	Pole and Line vessels	9.2	LP
	Trollers	9.3	LT
	Line vessels nei	9.9	LOX
Multipurpose vessels		**10**	**MO**
	Purse seine/pelagic trawlers	10.1	MTS
	Multipurpose trawlers (in combination with longline, trap, gillnet, dredge)	10.2	MTW
	Multipurpose non trawlers (longline, gillnet, trap)	10.3	MLG
	Multipurpose vessels nei	10.9	MOX
Other fishing vessels		**19**	**OV**
	Other fishing vessels nei	19.9	OVX
Motherships		**20**	**HO**
	Motherships nei	20.9	HOX
Fish carriers and reefers		**21**	**FO**
	Fish carriers and reefers nei	21.9	FOX
Bunkering and tanker vessels		**22**	**BR**
	Bunkering and tanker vessels nei	22.9	BRX
Support and auxiliary ships		**23**	**SA**
	Support and auxiliary ships nei	23.9	SAX
Towing vessels		**24**	**TV**
	Towing vessels nei	24.9	TVX
Fishery research vessels		**25**	RT
	Fishery research vessels nei	25.9	**RTX**
Protection and survey vessels		**26**	PX
	Protection and survey vessels nei	26.9	PXX
Fishery training vessels		**27**	CO
	Fishery training vessels nei	27.9	**COX**
Multipurpose non-fishing vessels		**28**	NF
	Multipurpose non-fishing vessels nei	28	**NFX**
Non-fishing vessels, nei		**29**	**VO**
	Non-fishing vessels nei	29.9	VOX

Note: The left column groups rows 20–29 under "Non-fishing vessels[5]".

Table 1 - vessel types in yellow are proposed inclusions by the CWP Secretariat after review of the GRCG-DR consultation

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[5] Non-fishing vessels: vessels performing other functions related to fisheries, such as supplying, protecting, rendering assistance or conducting research or training