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Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

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Продовольственная и сельскохозяйственная организация Объединенных Наций

Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Alimentación y la Agricultura

منظمة الأغذية والزراعة للأمم المتحدة

Seventh meeting of the Global Record Informal Open-Ended Technical and Advisory Working Group (GRWG7) [1]

Panama City, Panama[2], 19 March 2024

DISCUSSION ITEMS

I. BACKGROUND

The FAO Global Record of Fishing Vessels, Refrigerated Transport Vessels and Supply Vessels (Global Record) was conceived as a tool to fight illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing. The FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) provided guidance for its scope and purpose and called for an informal open-ended technical and advisory working group, the Global Record Working Group (GRWG), to provide advice on specific technical matters.

The design, structure and characteristics of the Global Record are thus defined through the meetings of the GRWG and then shared with COFI for endorsement as relevant. Six meetings[3] of the GRWG were held from 2015 till 2022 including an interruption in 2020 and 2021 due to Covid-19 pandemic.

The FAO Global Record information system was launched back in April 2017, accessible only to FAO Members, and in 2018 it became publicly accessible. In August 2022 a new version of the system, based in the cloud, was launched. The system has been in use since then, with the participation of a total of 69 States to date and has collected information of almost half of the global eligible fleet[4].

II. SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES OF RELEVANT MEETINGS

The thirty-fifth session of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) was held in Rome, Italy, from 5 to 9 September 2022. The Committee welcomed the launch of the second version of the FAO Global Record of Fishing Vessels, Refrigerated Transport Vessels and Supply Vessels (Global Record), and reiterated its call for increased engagement to ensure wider participation in the Global Record, and the importance for Members to upload and update information on their fleets.

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[1] To be held in Arabic, Chinese English, French, Russian and Spanish
[2] Hotel El Panama by Faranda Grand, Panama City, Panama
[3] https://www.fao.org/global-record/meetings/en/
[4] Vessels currently having an IMO number that fall within the scope of the Global Record.

Conclusions and recommendations from the sixth meeting of the Global Record Informal open-ended technical and advisory Working Group (GRWG6), held in Rome on 12 December 2022, of relevance to this meeting include the following:

- the need for an increased action by States, to increase the amount of information and ensuring that it remains up to date;
- the necessity for States to maintain their Global Record National Focal Points updated and welcomed plans to provide this information within the user area of the application;
- the importance of various data exchange mechanisms, welcomed connections between the Global Record and S&P Global, and looked forward to further improvements in bulk upload mechanisms and automatic exchange with regional and national systems;
- the facilitation of data exchange through application programming interfaces or by using the UN/FLUX standard
- the importance of the vessel type data field and that it should be considered for inclusion as an essential data field of the Global Record and encouraged FAO Members to supply this information;
- the importance of sharing information on ownership, beneficial ownership and operators for conducting risk analysis and called on the Secretariat to propose solutions on how such information could be shared in a secure manner for analysis by the GRWG;
- the inclusion of the possibility for registering multiple VMS types to a vessel within the Global Record.
- the RFMO IUU lists to be fully integrated within the Global Record as an important marker for risk analysis;
- the usefulness of a feedback mechanism between the GIES and the Global Record for the purpose of data conflict notification;
- assessing the benefits of the inclusion of a crew module to be included in the Global Record, in consultation with the ILO and IMO Secretariats, and to also consider as part of this module a tracking of captains having recognized to be involved in IUU fishing;

At the third meeting of the Technical Working Group on Information Exchange (TWG-IE3), held in Rome on 13-14 December 2022, Parties:

- considered that a feedback mechanism whereby Global Record NFPs of the flag State would be notified when a vessel entered in the GIES is not in the Global Record, or when information on a vessel is out of date, could be included in future phases of development, if agreed by the Parties.
- recalled the importance of linking both systems, the GIES and the Global Record, to existing regional systems as appropriate, should RFMO members agree to do so.

In January 2024, the FAO/ILO/IMO Joint Working Group on IUU fishing and related matters (JWG) held its fifth session in Geneva from 8-12 January. The JWG5 addressed the Global Record in the context of its mandate and recommended the following:

Section 5.3 on Flag State Performance

- The JWG 5 recommends FAO, ILO, and IMO Members to ensure their relevant authorities contribute to the management of the IMO Number Schemes, by requesting for assignment of

new numbers and updating data associated to existing numbers linked to national registers of fishing vessels.

Section 7.2 Global Record of Fishing Vessels, Refrigerated Transport Vessels and Supply Vessels
- The JWG 5 recommends FAO, ILO and IMO to promote and further enhance use of the UN/FLUX standard for information exchange through the FAO Global Record, the GIES and complementary information systems.
- The JWG 5 recommends FAO and IMO to re-establish the hyperlink between the FAO Global Record and IMO GISIS, as well as other relevant systems, as an efficient way of accessing additional relevant information about the vessel.
- The JWG 5 recommend FAO, ILO and IMO Secretariats to organize an intersessional expert meeting to discuss the concept of beneficial ownership. This should include discussions on the definitions of beneficial ownership, linkages with IUU Fishing, the data currently collected by States, and what information is required to have effective controls. The expert meeting should identify joint next steps in addressing the gaps in understanding related to beneficial ownership and links to IUU fishing to develop best practices or guidelines. This effort should be done in collaboration with relevant organizations, who have done substantial groundwork on this, in order to avoid duplication of work so far.

Section 7.3 IMO Number Schemes
- The JWG 5 recommends IMO Secretariat to maintain close cooperation with FAO, ILO and the managers of the schemes to address the needs of various users in the context of FAO's Global Record and IMO regulatory requirements for fishing vessels.

Section 7.4 Data information systems
- The JWG 5 recommends IMO, in its review of relevant GISIS modules, to address the needs of fishing vessels in consultation with FAO and ILO, in particular in the context of IMO regulatory requirements for fishing vessels in connection with combating IUU fishing.
- The JWG 5 recommends FAO, IMO and other relevant organizations to promote the implementation of relevant international standards and instruments, such as UN/LOCODE and UN/FLUX, to enhance communication and electronic exchange of data for sustainable fisheries management.

Section 7.7 Fraudulent Registration and Registry
- The JWG 5 recommends IMO, in close cooperation with FAO and ILO, to engage in the identification, and development of remedial actions against, deceptive activities associated with the fraudulent registration and registry of fishing vessels.

The first session of the Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management (SC-FM) of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) took place virtually from 15-18 January 2024. The Sub-Committee:

- recognizing the urgent need to improve flag State performance and compliance with international measures and agreements of fishing vessels, requested FAO to follow up the study on the implementation of the FAO Compliance Agreement and examine institutional options to strengthen its implementation and to report the outcomes to the 36th Session of COFI;
- recalled the importance of access to information on beneficiary ownership in order to make sure that efforts in combatting IUU fishing target those taking advantage of this practice.

III.   STATE OF AFFAIRS OF THE GLOBAL RECORD

a.   Participation in the Global Record – the global fleet

As of 6 March 2024, 69 FAO member States are participating in the Global Record Information System and 11,919 vessels are in the Global Record fleet, compared to 66 FAO member States and 11,847 vessels in the GR when GRWG6 was held in December 2022.

Analysis and trends of the GR fleet since the last GRWG meeting in Dec 2022

Table 1: Global Record Fleet overview as of 06 March 2024

	Number of vessels	% of vessels	Average LOA (m)	Total GT
Africa	553	5%	41,07	228,000
Asia	2971	25%	49,41	4,986,288
Europe	4092	34%	32,8	1,948,598
Latin America & Caribbean	1149	10%	64,89	5,295,710
Near East	1	0%	29	294
North America	2881	24%	39,27	2,055,695
Pacific	272	2%	42.89	118,500
Global	11,919	100%	43,5	14,633,272

Overall Trends:

• The total number of vessels increased slightly by 0.61%

• Total GT (Gross Tonnage) rose significantly by approximately 150.47%

• The distribution of vessels among regions underwent various changes.

Regional Comparisons:

• Africa: The region contributes 5% of the Global Record fleet, with a 6.16% increase in vessel numbers. Total GT increased slightly by 0.19%.

• Asia: Asia accounts for 25% of the GR fleet, experiencing a notable 39.83% increase in vessel numbers. Total GT surged by 195.59%.

• Europe: Europe represents 34% of the GR fleet, with a marginal decrease of 0.71% in vessel numbers. Total GT decreased by 3.76%.

• Latin America & Caribbean: This region constitutes 10% of the GR fleet in 2024, witnessing a 5.30% decrease in vessel numbers. However, total GT increased significantly by 201.45%.

• Near East: Minimal contribution to the GR fleet.

• North America: North America contributes 24% of the GR fleet, with a notable decrease of 20.12% in vessel numbers. Total GT decreased by 18.02%.

• Pacific: Contributes 2% of the GR fleet in 2024, with a slight increase in vessel numbers. Total GT increased by 21.59%.

Global Comparison:

• Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America & Caribbean, and North America are the major contributors to the GR fleet, collectively representing 98% of vessels in 2024.

• Asia saw the most significant increase in vessel numbers, contributing substantially to the GR fleet.

• Despite variations in vessel numbers, all regions except Europe experienced an increase in total GT.

Analysis of the fleet by Length overall and Vessel type

Length overall (LOA):

The data on the length overall (LOA) of the Global Record fleet presents a clear breakdown across different size categories. There are 622 vessels with a LOA of less than 18 meters, indicating a presence of smaller vessels within the fleet. The category with LOA between 18 and less than 24 meters consists of 2,904 vessels, suggesting a significant proportion of medium-sized vessels. The largest category includes 8,393 vessels with a LOA of 24 meters or greater, indicating a substantial representation of larger ships within the fleet. This data reflects the diverse range of vessel sizes present in the GR fleet.
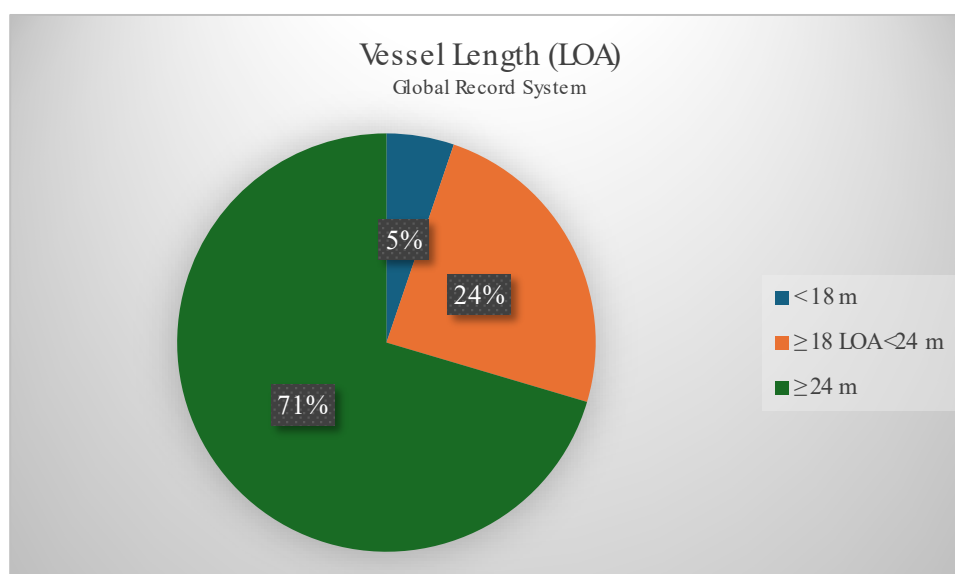

Figure 1 – Distribution of vessels by Length overall in the Global Record System

Vessel Type:

The analysis of the reported vessel types in the Global Record reveals a wide distribution within the fleet. The largest category comprises fishing vessels not specified, accounting for approximately 47.81% of the total vessels. Trawlers follow with 8.59%, while longliners and purse seiners represent 7.49% and 4.43%, respectively. Fish carriers and tuna purse seiners contribute 2.61% and 1.99%, respectively, to

the fleet. Additionally, lift netters constitute 1.85%, while other vessel types collectively make up 9.62%. This breakdown highlights the variety of vessels engaged in fishing activities, with fishing vessels not specified dominating the fleet, followed by a range of specialized vessels such as trawlers, longliners, and purse seiners.

It should be emphasised that out of a total of 11919 vessels uploaded to GR, 20% (2338 vessels) indicate the specific type of vessel as per ISSCFV; 25% (3056 vessels) are fishing vessels not specified , and for the remainder 54% of cases (6525 vessels) this information is totally missing. This means that there is no information on the specific type of vessel for 80% of the Global Record fleet.
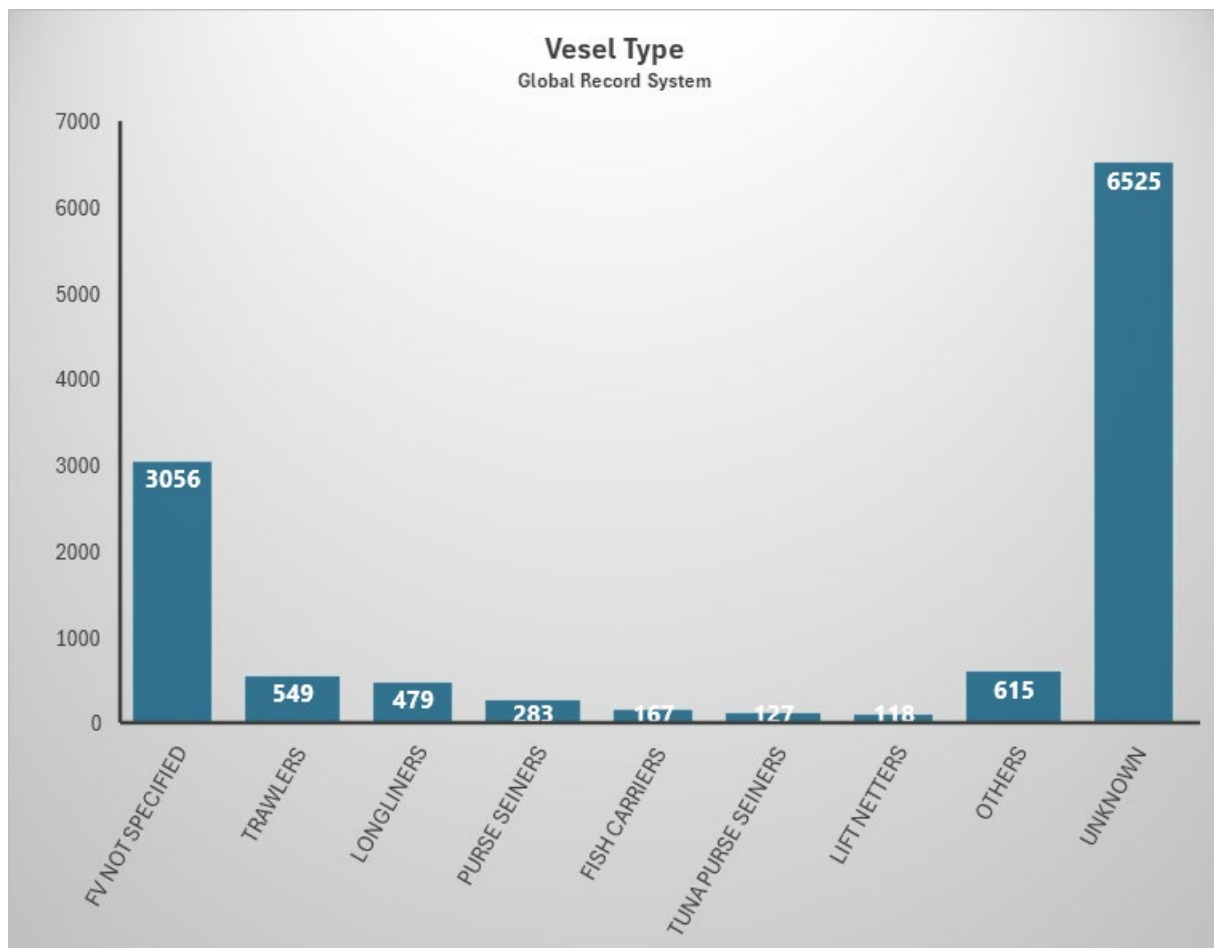

Figure 2 – Distribution of fleet by Vessel type in the Global Record System

Analysis by information modules in GR

An analysis of the provision of modules by FAO Member States shows a clear predominance of Module 1 (Vessels), which is provided by 97.10% of States, indicating a near-universal commitment to vessel-related data. Module 6 (Ports) follows closely behind, with 91.30% of countries providing information on ports. However, there is a noticeable drop in participation for Modules 5 (Regional Body Identifiers) and 3 (Authorizations), with only around a quarter of States providing data for each. Modules 2 (Historical details) and 4 (Inspection and surveillance) have even lower submission rates . This breakdown underlines the different levels of commitment of FAO Member States to different components of the GR.

Table 2. Key for uploaded modules: 1 Vessels, 2 Historical Details, 3 Authorizations, 4 Inspection and Surveillance, 5 Regional Body Identifiers and 6 Ports.

FAO Member	Modules provided	FAO Member	Modules provided3	FAO Member	Modules provided	FAO Member	Modules provided
Algeria	1,6	Denmark	1,5,6	Latvia	1,5,6	Singapore	1,6
Argentina	1,6	Ecuador	1,2,3	Liberia	1	Slovenia	6
Australia	1,6	El Salvador	1,6	Lithuania	1,5,6	South Africa	1,6
Belgium	1,5,6	Estonia	1,5,6	Malta	1,6	Spain	1,2,3,5,6
Belize	1	Finland	1,6	Mozambique	1,6	Sri Lanka	1,3,6
Bosnia and Herzegovina	6	France	1,3,5,6	Namibia	1,6	Sudan	1,6
Brazil	1	Gambia	1,3,6	Netherlands	1,5,6	Sweden	1,5,6
Bulgaria	1,5,6	Germany	1,5,6	New Zealand	1,3,6	Thailand	1
Cameroon	1	Ghana	1,3,6	Nicaragua	1	Tonga	1
Canada	1,6	Greece	1,6	Norway	1,6	Trinidad and Tobago	1,3,6
Chile	1,6	Guatemala	1,6	Panama	1,3,4,6	Türkiye	1
China	1	Guinea	1,6	Peru	1,2,3,6	UK and Northern Ireland	1,5,6
Colombia	1,3,6	Iceland	1,3,6	Philippines	1,3	USA	1,6
Cook Islands	1,6	Indonesia	1	Poland	1,5,6	Uruguay	1,6
Costa Rica	1,3	Ireland	1,5,6	Portugal	1,5,6	Vanuatu	1
Côte d'Ivoire	1,3	Italy	1,5,6	Republic of Korea	1,3,6		
Croatia	1,5,6	Japan	1	Romania	1,6		
Cyprus	1,5,6	Kenya	1,6	Seychelles	1,6		

*69 FAO member States are participating in the Global Record Information System

b. Connections and Interoperability with Other Systems

S&P Global

Following recommendations from previous GRWGs, the Global Record is connected to S&P Global, the company in charge of creating and assigning IMO numbers on behalf of the IMO. States are able to 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. This can be useful especially for States that have not previously uploaded their fleet on to the Global Record, with the S&P Global data working as basis upon which to build information on their vessel fleet within the Global Record.

GIES

As two key systems in the support of the implementation of the PSMA, linkages between the GR and GIES are crucial. Currently, real-time, flag State-verified vessel information can be automatically inserted and independently verified for the compilation of port inspection or denial forms. In early 2024, a feedback mechanism notifying the GR NFP when a vessel entered in the GIES does not coincide with

(or exist in) the Global Record will also be implemented, further contributing to the efficiency and sustainability of both applications.

Connections with regional and national systems

As part of the implementation of the Global Record Programme, the team is actively looking at developing connections with both national and regional systems, as a way of improving data contained in the Global Record and reducing duplication of effort by States.

As noted within section V of this document on assistance to developing States, the team has carried out a number of technical support missions to States, among which to assess potential APIs with national vessel registers.

Discussions have also been advancing with several RFMO Secretariats (see annex A), including in some cases an agreement to move forward with an analysis of the connection already underway. The main complication that has been encountered up until now being, how to deal with situations where information on a vessel is coming from two different sources but some of data fields are contradictory, for example the data in one source is less up to date. Several solutions are being evaluated with the premise that even with the existence of a connection with a regional system, the flag State retains the ownership and responsibility for information on their fleet published through the Global Record.

UN/FLUX

As referenced in the workplan below, the team is also working towards making the Global Record UN/FLUX compliant. This would entail that data could be exchanged with the Global Record through the UN/FLUX standard for the vessel and the license domain, connecting the Global Record with other systems currently exchanging information using UN/FLUX.

c. **Work Plan**

Further to the launch of the GR Version 2 in August 2022, FAO developed a long-term work plan and strategy for the continued development, implementation and maintenance of the GR, including through the provision of backstopping support through the GR Help Desk, technical assistance to beneficiary countries and development work related to the use of the UN/ FLUX standard to facilitate automatic connections.

The 2024-25 workplan includes the following main features:
  ➢ Advanced User management: Enhance coordination at the national level through the decentralization of the account management process to NFPs.
  ➢ Improvement of Error Handling: Enhance the error identification and diagnosis process to simplify bulk upload operations.
  ➢ Enhancement of the Advanced Search: Bolster the functional use, efficiency and layout of the advanced search, including by expanding the permissible search criteria.
  ➢ Feedback mechanism to notify users of inconsistent vessel (multi-flag) data: Automatically notify relevant GR users and NFPs of inconsistent flag State data during the registration or update of vessels and vessel-related data.

➢ Edit and upload vessels and vessel images through online forms: Advance the upload and modification of vessels through online forms and accommodate the submission of vessel images. Final preparations are underway for a release to production in Q2 2024.

➢ Multi-VMS types: Allow for the possibility of adding multiple VMS types to a vessel.

➢ Advance connections with existing systems: Improve existing connections with national and regional systems, including through the further development of APIs, to achieve full compliance with GR data requirements. Advance on UN/FLUX implementation for GR, including through the development of core functionalities and business requirements to achieve compliance. To continue advancing GR connections between national and regional systems, in addition to APIs, progress towards the implementation of the United Nations Fisheries Language for Universal eXchange (UN/FLUX) to connect with other UN/FLUX-compliant records and systems is underway.

➢ Further develop support and communication materials: To facilitate capacity development and backstopping support, work towards the enhancement and further development of communication and support materials, along with their translations in all six official FAO languages, will continue, Notably, an updated and fully translated version of the GR Bulk Upload instructions will be distributed to all GR users by mid-2024.

The development of the Global Record to date has been possible through FAO's resources and the supplementary support of several donors including the European Union, Spain, Sweden, and the United States of America.

IV.   KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE GLOBAL RECORD MOVING FORWARD

Vessel type

During GRWG6[5] several key considerations were put forward to enhance the Global Record as a useful tool to fight IUU fishing and in support of the implementation of relevant international instruments.

Section III of the GRWG/6/2022/2 "Discussion items" document introduced the fact that practically half of the vessels in the Global Record do not contain information specifying the vessel type, not even referring to the higher categories of "fishing", "transport" and "supply" vessels, in line with the very name of the tool: "Global Record of Fishing Vessels, Refrigerated Transport Vessels and Supply Vessels". This is corroborated in section III.a. above for March 2024 data.

A number of States submitting information to the Global Record have only provided the 5 essential data fields, namely, IMO number, vessel name, flag State, LOA and GT/GRT. In many instances authorization details are not provided either (see section III.a. above).

Clearly this poses a problem, particularly when trying to identify the vessel or to understand the type of activity a vessel might be carrying out, especially when licensing/authorization information is not available (especially for due diligence purposes when registering a new vessel or verifying its information when conducting risk analysis). This information is mostly publicly available anyway through regional (authorized lists) and national systems and the GRWG should consider making "vessel type" in the Global Record (as a one-stop-shop) as an essential (compulsory) data field, to facilitate the

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[5] See GRWG6/2022/2, "Discussion items": https://www.fao.org/3/cc3439en/cc3439en.pdf

work of control authorities, such as those of States Parties to the PSMA, especially when dealing with transshipped fishing products.

Additionally, this piece of information would ensure the relevance of vessels contained within the Global Record, supporting the clear identification of the fleet that is engaged in fishing and fishing related activities only.

Beneficial ownership

The Global Record was conceived as a tool to fight IUU fishing. A one-stop-shop providing information about vessels, their activities and their ownership. The Global Record was also designed with the premise of being a global system promoting transparency within the fisheries sector with all the information contained within it being in the public domain. However, if the objective is to fight IUU fishing, putting all the focus on the vessel itself and its latest operations is disguising the fact that, behind each operation, there is always someone benefiting. Information about ownership played a central role in the first steps of conception of the Global Record from the Technical Consultation to the first meetings of the GRWG.

Clearly, identifying the ultimate beneficial owner and taking appropriate action against the perpetrator/s could reap more benefits in the fight against IUU fishing than simply targeting individual "vessels". Consequently, the FAO Global Record includes in the "vessel module" information related to the owner, the operator/manager and the beneficial owner. For each one of them, name, nationality, address or contact details and IMO Company Number can be reported (all voluntary data fields).

In the version 1 of the Global Record there were some national fleets that partially contained this information; however, this is totally absent in the current version. The reasons for this may vary. One of them might be data privacy regulations, and another one could be the difficulty of collecting this information.

In recent years there has been more concern about the disclosure of personal information particularly with data privacy regulations introduced across the globe.

Considering that 71% of the global fleet included in the Global Record is of 24 metres of LOA and above, with an average LOA of 43.5 metres, it may well be that a majority of these vessels belong to more than one owner or company. Often, several vessels (a small fleet) belong to one company. Therefore, targeting actions against companies owning or managing fleets where a vessel has been identified as conducting IUU fishing could be far more effective than targeting vessels simply.

Beneficial ownership information can be important for:

1) the due diligence process for flag States when registering or licensing vessels;

2) it can be a key element for risk analysis by supporting identification of higher risk vessels as those owned by companies/owners with known cases of IUU fishing;

3) in support of implementation of international instruments such as:

 ➢ the PSMA, where information about owner, operator/manager and beneficial ownership are required by Annex C (inspection report) of the PSMA;
 ➢ the FAO Compliance Agreement where owner name and address are compulsory whilst operator/manager is optional;
 ➢ the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Transshipment where owner name, address and contact details are also required in Annex I (transshipment declaration) and Annex II (landing declaration); and

➢ the WTO Fisheries Subsidies, where subsidies should not be granted to vessels or operators having engaged in IUU fishing.

Consideration should thus be given to the need or not for this information to be publicly available, and if not, such information could be protected under access restrictions through credentials and be made accessible to authorized users.

This information is key to the port State receiving the vessel, and possibly also to market States. In the case of flag States, although the information should be part of the requisites under national law for due diligence, it might not always be the case, and thus it would be appropriate/convenient to obtain it from the previous flag State(s) through the Global Record.

On the other hand, the International Maritime Organization has developed a scheme for the IMO Company Number and the IMO Registered Owner Number. The JWG5/4/2 working document submitted by FAO, ILO and IMO Secretariats"[6] provides insight in section 4.4 about the "IMO Unique Company and Registered Owner Identification Number Scheme". The scheme was introduced by adoption of resolution MSC.160(78) in 2004, as a measure to enhance maritime safety, security and environmental protection, and to facilitate the prevention of maritime fraud. Its purpose is 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. The scheme could provide a good opportunity for collation and submission of that information to the Global Record.

Considering the above and the guidance from GRWG6[7], JWG5[8] and SC-FM[9], an option for ownership information would be to make it available 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.
Cooperation with IMO could be explored to facilitate the retrieving of ownership or beneficial ownership information when available.

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[6]

https://indico.un.org/event/1008277/attachments/13000/40175/final_JWG%205_Working%20Document_03012024.pdf

[7] The GRWG6 highlighted the importance of sharing information on ownership, beneficial ownership and operators for conducting risk analysis, however noted that the priority should be to complete information on vessel identification. The Group noted that many States have laws limiting the sharing of personal information and in some cases also company information. Therefore, the Group called on the Secretariat to propose solutions on how such information could be shared in a secure manner for analysis by the GRWG at the next meeting, whilst remaining a non-essential data field.

[8] The JWG 5 recommended FAO, ILO and IMO Secretariats to organize an intersessional expert meeting to discuss the concept of beneficial ownership. The expert meeting could be preceded by a study assessing the current scope of data privacy regulations and availability of ownership information as well as the benefits that can come along with it.

[9] The Sub-Committee on Fisheries Management (SC-FM1) recalled the importance of access to information on beneficiary ownership in order to make sure that efforts in combatting IUU fishing target those taking advantage of this practice.

Crew module

In relation to the possible addition of a crew module, the GRWG 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".

However, due to lack of resources, the assessment has not yet been undertaken.

Deep-hyperlink connection to IMO-GISIS

The first version of the FAO Global Record had a deep-hyperlink connection to relevant modules of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) Global Integrated Shipping Information System (GISIS) which had been recommended by the GRWG. The connection expired and is not present in the current version of the Global Record. 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.

V.   ASSISTANCE TO DEVELOPING STATES

In line with capacity development support initiatives delivered for the GIES, the European Commission has also supported the GR through the delivery of capacity development support for up to four countries during 2023 and early 2024. Similarly, the Republic of Korea has also extended support to Uruguay in this matter, delivered in 2023. With these funds, the FAO thus deployed a team composed of an MCS and IT experts to five beneficiary countries, namely:

- ✓ the Republic of Ecuador (8-12 May 2023);
- ✓ the Republic of Panamá (2-9 July 2023);
- ✓ the Eastern Republic of Uruguay (19-22 September 2023);
- ✓ the Republic of Mozambique (8-12 January 2024), and;
- ✓ the Kingdom of Thailand (22-26 January 2024).

The objective of each mission is to assess the status of readiness of national information systems to contribute to, or connect automatically with, the GR. This is done through an initial interagency workshop to raise awareness on the importance of the GR in the implementation of the international instruments, such as the PSMA and the Compliance Agreement, particularly through the involvement of several national agencies. This workshop is followed by bilateral work with each of the relevant national agencies to assess the compatibility of their systems. Finally, a wrap-up meeting gives an initial conclusion of the state of preparedness of the country to connect to GR, followed by a report specifying the next steps required to advance towards an automatic connection. Overall results can be consulted on table 2 above.

In 2024, FAO is planning to deliver another series of missions to other beneficiary countries, with technical assistance to the Republic of Fiji and the Independent State of Papua New Guinee planned in Q2 2024.

Since 2022, the dedicated GR Help Desk has also delivered other trainings, tutorials, and demonstrations of the Global Record to States, positively contributing to system activity. These capacity development support initiatives have been illustrated in table 3 below:

Table 3: Assistance provided to States in 2023 through missions, backstopping support and training.

FAO member State	Language	Date	Environment	Attendant/s
Peru, Chile, Costa Rica, Panama, Ecuador, Colombia, Spain and USA	ES	8/2/2023	-	Red ALC-Pesca INDNR
United States of America	EN	7/12/2023	-	NFP
Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Peru and Uruguay	ES/EN	27-28/09/2023	-	16 Inspectors from LAC countries
Libya	EN	25/01/2024	Test	(NFP

Annex A – Status of connectivity to the Global Record - RFB Summary Table

GR connections	Module (Vessels, Authorizations,)	Data Requirements (Data fields)	Standards (Reference / code lists)	Format² Structured /Unstructure	Connection Mech. FLUX / API	Ongoing work	Expected Connection date
RFB¹							
IOTC	Vessel	(Full)	(Partial)	S	API	Compatibility analysis (Data fields, Reference Lists, API doc.)	*June 2024 (COFI36)*
IOTC	Authorisations	(Full)	(Partial)	S	API	Compatibility analysis (Data fields, Reference Lists, API doc.)	*June 2024 (COFI36)*
GFCM	Vessel	(Partial)	(Partial)	S	API, FLUX P1000-2**	Compatibility analysis (Data fields, Reference Lists, API doc.)	*To be discussed with GFCM CPCs (License information are not reported by the GFCM CPCs)*
GFCM	Authorizations	(Unknown)	(Unknown)	S?	API*	Compatibility analysis (Data fields, Reference Lists, API doc.)	*To be discussed with GFCM CPCs*
FFA	Vessel	(Partial)	(Unknown)	S	API	-	*March 2025 (GRWG8)*
FFA	Authorizations	(Partial)	(Unknown)	S	API	-	*March 2025 (GRWG8)*
SPRFMO	Vessel	(Full)	(Unknown)	S	API	Only preliminary discussions held, currently no formal plan for a connection	-
SPRFMO	Authorisations	(Full)	(Unknown)	S	API		-
ICCAT	Vessel	(Full)	(Full)	S (Partial)	API (Partial)	Ongoing work involves the development of the vessels module (including authorizations), incorporating the creation of web services for communication with information consumers such as the ICCAT website.	-
ICCAT	Authorisations	(Full)	(Full)	S (Partial)	API (Partial)		-
WCPFC	Vessel	(Partial)	(Partial)	S (Full)	API (Full)	Discussion with Secretariat at PSMA RCM Pacific Feb 2024	*March 2024 (GRWG7)*
WCPFC	Licenses	(Partial)	(Unknown)	S (Full)	API (Full)	-	*June 2024 (COFI36)*

LEGEND	*N/A*	*Unknown*	*Partial Correspondence*	*Full Correspondence*

RFB	Module	Additional comments
IOTC	Vessel	Real data connection planned. Bilateral communications to coordinate. Code lists are not fully aligned but correspondences can be made
IOTC	Authorisations	"Flag State Authorisation to fish in RFMO area" rather than "fishing license". Code lists are not fully aligned but correspondences can be made
GFCM	-	Meeting with Secretariat - 5 Feb 2024; * Standards sharepoint API available. Interoperability with GR APIs will be assessed in 2024; ** Potential roadmap for the sake is pending discussions with GFCM CPCs
FFA	-	-
SPRFMO	Vessel	SPRFMO Register of vessels contains fully structured data. Approval by SPRFMO decision making body would be needed prior to carrying out a more detailed exercise for understanding the feasibility of an API between the SPRFMO Register of Vessels and the Global Record. As a next step an in depth analysis would need to take place to better examine and correlate the data fields with the respective CMMs and data standards.
SPRFMO	Authorisations	SPRFMO Register of vessels contains infrmation on the vessels authorised within SPRFMO, not on vessel licences.
ICCAT	Vessel	The ICCAT Record of Vessels is currently under development, once this is completed and provided there is agreement with ICCAT CPs, an analysis could carried out to to create an API with the Global Record. In the meantime Secretariat's are communicating documentation to facilitate a potential API in the future.
ICCAT	Authorisations	
WCPFC	-	

NOTES

1. This is a non-exhaustive list. Collaboration with other RFBs is envisioned, as applicable.

*2. How the forms are being exchanged: **Structured (S)** meaning data is defined and searchable (e.g., computed through an online form), and;*

***Unstructured (U)** meaning data is not searchable (e.g., pdf)*