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

Panama City, Panama², 19 March 2024

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**REPORT OF THE SIXTH MEETING OF THE GLOBAL RECORD INFORMAL OPEN-
ENDED TECHNICAL AND ADVISORY WORKING GROUP**

¹ To be held in Arabic, Chinese English, French, Russian and Spanish

² To be held at the Hotel el Panama, Panama City, Panama.



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Report of the

**SIXTH MEETING OF THE GLOBAL RECORD INFORMAL OPEN-
ENDED TECHNICAL AND ADVISORY WORKING GROUP**

Rome, 12 December 2022

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PREPARATION OF THIS DOCUMENT

This is the report of the Sixth Meeting of the Global Record Informal Open-Ended Technical and Advisory Working Group held in Rome on 12 December 2022. 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 sixth Meeting of the Global Record Informal Open-Ended Technical and Advisory Working Group (GRWG) was held in Rome on 12 December 2022.

The meeting was attended by experts from FAO Members, intergovernmental organisations and international non-governmental organisations. Issues discussed included confidentiality and data security matters, new features of the information system, role of regional fisheries bodies in data exchange, role of the Global Record in support of the implementation of international instruments and assistance to developing States.

The GRWG agreed 1) on the need for an increased action by States, to increase the amount of information and ensuring that it remains up to date; 2) that the vessel type data field is important for the identification of a vessel and that it should be considered for inclusion as an essential data field of the Global Record; 3) on 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; 4) on the importance to use multiple factor authentication to further Global Record account security; 5) on the inclusion of the possibility for registering multiple VMS types to a vessel within the Global Record; 6) on the RFMO IUU lists to be fully integrated within the Global Record as an important marker for risk analysis; 7) on the usefulness of a feedback mechanism between the GIES and the Global Record for the purpose of data conflict notification; 8) on 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; 9) on the facilitation of data exchange through application programming interfaces or by using the UN/FLUX standard; and 10) on the importance of interagency cooperation for the purpose of information exchange on fishing vessels.

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OPENING OF THE MEETING

1. The sixth meeting of the Global Record Informal Open-Ended Technical and Advisory Working Group (GRWG) was held in FAO Headquarters on 12 December 2022. The meeting was attended by 74 FAO Members and by 11 FAO Observers for a total of 172 participants who attended in person and virtually. The list of participants is attached as Appendix B. The documents placed before the Meeting are listed in Appendix C.
2. Ms Alicia Mosteiro, Fisheries Officer and Technical Secretary of the meeting, 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.

STATE OF AFFAIRS OF THE GLOBAL RECORD

5. The FAO Secretariat provided an overview of the current state of affairs of the Global Record programme, including:
 - An overview of the team working on the Global Record, and collaborations within FAO supporting this programme of work.
 - The launch of the second version of the Global Record and its architecture;
 - The Global Record environments planned to be rolled out and their purposes;
 - The main components and features of the second version of the Global Record;
 - The status of information shared by States through the Global Record.
6. The Secretariat noted that background information on each agenda item could be found within the Working Document GRWG6/2022/2.
7. The Working group welcomed the work of the Secretariat in the release of the second version of the Global Record and some noted that they were looking forward to testing the system.
8. The Working Group emphasised the importance of the Global Record for combatting IUU fishing and in this regard noted the importance that States continue to input their fleets into the system and keep them up to date.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA SECURITY

9. The FAO Secretariat informed the Working Group that the vast majority of States that have submitted information on their fleets to 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). Confidentiality of personal data was noted as a factor that could limit sharing of such information as all data in the Global Record is publicly accessible.

10. The FAO Secretariat emphasised the importance placed on data and system security in the design and development of the second version of the Global Record, and described the various measures taken in this regard.

11. The Working Group welcomed the emphasis placed on security within the new version of the system.

12. Some States noted that due to national laws on personal data, they were not able to share certain information on individuals such as vessel representatives and owners.

NEW FEATURES OF THE INFORMATION SYSTEM

13. The FAO Secretariat noted that with the initial development of the second version of the Global Record being complete, the team was now in a position to develop new features. Key features and aspects currently being prioritized by the Secretariat based upon discussions and recommendations from previous Global Record Working Groups include:

- Upload and edit through online forms;
- Connection to national and regional vessel registers and records;
- Advanced user management;
- National Focal Point information page ;
- Bulk upload guide;
- Dynamic dashboard.

14. The FAO Secretariat noted that close to half of the vessels contained within the Global Record do not have vessel type information specified within the system. Due to the importance of this field, the Working Group was asked to consider the expansion of the current essential data fields for uploading vessels to the system with the inclusion of the vessel type data field.

15. In follow-up to discussions made at the Joint FAO/ILO/IMO Working Group on IUU fishing and related matters (JWG-IUU) and the established linkages between IUU fishing and issues related to labour standards onboard fishing vessels, the FAO Secretariat asked the Working Group whether an evaluation should be carried out in conjunction with the ILO on the potential inclusion of a crew module within the Global Record.

16. The Working Group discussed on which features should be prioritised for future development as well as small amendments that should be made to the system, as well as on the potential inclusion of a module detailing information on the vessel crew.

ROLE OF REGIONAL FISHERIES BODIES (RFBS) IN DATA EXCHANGE

17. The FAO Secretariat presented the key role that regional fisheries bodies play in the facilitation of data exchange to the Global Record, and noted that plans are in place to establish data connections with certain bodies.

18. The Working Group noted that connecting with regional systems would be beneficial in reducing duplication of effort for States as well as for increasing the vessel coverage contained within the Global Record.

ROLE OF THE GLOBAL RECORD IN SUPPORT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS

19. The FAO Secretariat introduced the current role and further potential of the Global Record as a tool to support the implementation of various international instruments, including:

- The FAO Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA);
- The FAO Compliance Agreement;
- The Voluntary Guidelines for Transshipment;
- The Voluntary Guidelines for Catch Documentation Schemes;
- The IMO Cape Town Agreement;
- The ILO Work in Fishing Convention.

20. The GRWG recognized the key role of the Global Record in supporting the implementation of various international instruments and further encouraged participation by all FAO Member States by submitting information and keeping it up to date.

ASSISTANCE TO DEVELOPING STATES

21. 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, Spain, Sweden and USA. 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.

22. The GRWG welcomed the support provided by donors and the FAO Secretariat and called for additional efforts to strengthen the Programme to be able to assist additional developing States.

ADOPTION OF CONCLUSIONS OF THE MEETING

23. The GRWG welcomed the increased capacity and the work of the FAO team working towards the implementation of the Global Record. The group welcomed the release of the second version of the Global Record and looked forward to testing the new system.

24. The GRWG recalled that it is the role of States to supply information on their vessel fleet. In this regard, called upon increased action by States, including, the participation of new States, increasing the amount of information submitted by those already participating and ensuring that such information remains up to date.

25. The GRWG emphasised the importance of the availability of various data exchange mechanisms as a means of facilitating data upload by States. In this regard, welcomed the connection between the Global Record and S&P Global, the improvements to the bulk upload mechanism and looked forward to the implementation of automatic exchange with regional and national systems and the ability to upload and edit information through online forms.

26. The GRWG noted that not all vessel registration ports currently have a UN/LOCODE. In this regard, the Group welcomed the UNECE providing a process whereby ports not currently registered with a UN/LOCODE could be registered within 6 months of asking, and that new types or categories of ports could be added in the UN/LOCODE registry in the future if deemed necessary. The Group expressed concerns that these 6 months can be too long in some cases.

27. The GRWG agreed that the vessel type data field is important for the identification of a vessel and that it should be considered for inclusion as an essential data field of the Global Record at the next GRWG. In the meantime, FAO Members are encouraged to supply this information.
28. The GRWG emphasised the necessity for States to maintain their Global Record National Focal Points updated and called for this information to be available to users, which could be used to resolve for example vessel flag registration conflicts. In this regard, welcomed plans by the Secretariat to provide information on Global Record National Focal Points, within the user area of the application.
29. The GRWG 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.
30. The GRWG noted the importance of the use of multiple factor authentication to further Global Record account security.
31. The GRWG called for the inclusion of the possibility for registering multiple VMS types to a vessel within the Global Record.
32. The GRWG called for the RFMO IUU lists to be fully integrated within the Global Record, as an important marker for risk analysis.
33. The GRWG considered that it would be useful to have a feedback system between the GIES and Global Record for the purpose of data conflict notification.
34. Noting the relevance to the work of the Joint FAO/IMO/ILO Working Group on IUU Fishing and Related Matters, the GRWG invited the 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 Group also highlighted that as part of this module, a tracking of captains having recognised to be involved in IUU fishing could be considered. The Group however noted that such a development should only be considered after main functionalities of the Global Record are completed.
35. The GRWG called for the facilitation of data exchange through application programming interfaces or by using the UN/FLUX standard, and consider upload use cases such as that of all FAO Members.
36. The GRWG reiterated the importance of interagency cooperation for the purpose of information exchange on fishing vessels.
37. The GRWG emphasised the importance of the Global Record as a tool to tackle IUU fishing, such as through its key role in supporting the implementation of various international instruments.
38. The GRWG noted that consideration should be made for developing States which may require technical assistance to build their capacity in order to more effectively upload information onto the Global Record and welcomed projects under the FAO Global Capacity Development Programme which aim to support States in this regard.

DATE AND VENUE FOR THE NEXT MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP

39. The next meeting of the GRWG is to be hosted by Panama in March 2024, back-to-back with the fourth meeting of the PSMA Technical Working Group on Information Exchange (TWG-IE).

CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

40. The meeting was closed at 17hrs on 12th December 2022.

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AGENDA AND TIMETABLE

Monday 12 December 2022

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. Confidentiality and data security

LUNCH

Afternoon, 14:00 – 16:30

5. New features of the information system
6. Role of Regional Fisheries Bodies (RFBs) in data exchange
7. Role of the Global Record in support of the implementation of international instruments

Evening, 17:00 – 19:30

8. Assistance to developing States
9. Adoption of conclusions of the meeting
10. Date and venue for the next meeting of the Working Group
11. Closure of the meeting

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

ANGOLA

Helder JAMBA
 Técnico de instrução processual
 Ministério das pescas e recursos marinhos
 Luanda
 E-mail: helderjamba26@hotmail.com

Liliana PEDRO
 Technician
 Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources
 Luanda
 E-mail: lilimarino39@gmail.com

ARGENTINA

Suarez JULIAN OSVALDO
 Director Nacional de Coordinación e
 fiscalización pesquera
 Ministerio de economía
 Buenos Aires
 E-mail: josuarez@magyp.gob.ar

BANGLADESH

Shoukot Kabir CHOWDHURY
 Assistant Director
 E-mail: shoukot2014@gmail.com

BELIZE

Ian CONSTANTINO
 Monitoring Officer,
 High Seas Fisheries Unit
 Belize City
 E-mail: Ian.Constantino@bhsfu.gov.bz

Robert ROBINSON
 Deputy Director
 High Seas Fisheries Unit
 Belize City
 E-mail: robert.robinson@bhsfu.gov.bz

BENIN

Urbain Thibauthéon Arron Sonagnon BRITO
 Chef Service des Contrôles et Suivi des
 Produits halieutiques et de la post-capture
 E-mail: cresusfr2004@yahoo.fr

BRAZIL

Vitor PONTES
 Head of Division, Fishery and
 Aquaculture Secretary
 E-mail: vitor.matos@agro.gov.br

CABO VERDE

Maysa VERA-CRUZ ROCHETEAU
 General Inspector of Fisheries,
 Ministerio do Mar
 E-mail: maysa.rocheteau@mm.gov.cv

CAMBODIA

Roitana BUOY
 Deputy Director General
 Fisheries Administration
 Phnom Penh
 E-mail: roitana@gmail.com

Kimchhea CHHUON
 Deputy Director of the Department of Fishing
 Affairs and PSMA technical assistant in FiA
 Phnom Penh
 E-mail: kimchhea@yahoo.com

CANADA

Harris WILLIAM
 Policy Analyst
 E-mail: william.harris@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

Marsden DALE
 Deputy Director, International Fisheries
 E-mail: dale.marsden@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

Browne DION
 Senior Compliance Officer
 E-mail: dion.browne@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

CHILE

Pablo ORTIZ
 Subdirector de Pesquerías, Servicio Nacional
 de Pesca e Acuicultura
 E-mail: portiz@sernapesca.cl

Carlos AHUMADA QUEZADA
 Ingeniero Pesquero, Encargado del Centro de
 Monitoreo y Control
 E-mail: cahumadaq@sernapesca.cl

CHINA

Ying JING

Consultant IV, bureau of Fisheries, Ministry of
Agriculture and Rural Affairs

E-mail: fishcngov@126.com

Ming XU

Consultant III, bureau of Fisheries
Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs

E-mail: yyjaqc@agri.gov.cn

Chao LV

Vice Professor
Shanghai Ocean University

E-mail: clv@shou.edu.cn

Zhenye CHEN

Chief officer, 2nd class

E-mail: boffad@agri.gov.cn

COMORES

SAID, BOINA

Conseiller, direction générale des ressources
halieutiques et NFP for GR

E-mail: dalili@live.fr

FATIMA MZE ALI ABDALLAH

Assistante de la Direction Générale des
Ressources Halieutiques

E-mail: fatoumamzali@yahoo.fr

YOUSSOUF, Ali

Directeur Général Adjoint des ressources
halieutiques

E-mail: yousmed69@yahoo.fr

CONGO

Kissiekiaoua, Dieudonne

Conseiller à la pêche et à l'aquaculture

E-mail: kissiekiaouad@yahoo.fr

COSTA RICA

RAMIREZ GATGENS, Guillermo

Jefe Asesoría Jurídica

Instituto costarricense de pesca y acuicultura

E-mail: gramirez@incopesca.go.cr

OBANDO CUBERO, MARICELA DE LOS
ANGELES

Departamento de fiscalización

INCOPECA

E-mail: mobando@incopesca.go.cr

SIERRA ZUNIGA, Carla

Consejera

Representante permanente alterna de Costa
Rica

E-mail: csierra@rree.go.cr;

miscr-fao@rree.go.cr

COTE D'IVOIRE

Maxime Diomande

Ingenieur informaticien

E-mail : maxime.diomande@gmail.com

Fofana, Bina

Directeur des pêches, Ministère des
Ressources Animales et Halieutiques

E-mail: Binafof3@gmail.com

**DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE
CONGO**

Bienvenu NTSOUANVA

Conseiller d'Ambassade, Représentant
Permanent Adjoint du Congo

E-mail: bienvenuntsouanva@gmail.com

ECUADOR

FUENTES FALCONES, Byron Alejandro

Especialista de Control y Vigilancia

bfuentes@produccion.gob.ec

CONTRERAS PARRA, Nancy Janneth

Especialista de política pesquera y Acuicola

E-mail: ncontreras@produccion.gob.ec

ALVADOR GILCES, Cesar Alfredo

Analista de analisis y procesamiento 2,
Ministerio de produccion, comercio exterior,
inversiones y pesca

E-mail: calvarado@produccion.gob.ec

MARIN DELGADO, Ivan Fabricio

Ingeniero en sistema, Ministerio de
produccion, comercio exterior, inversiones y
pesca

imarin@produccion.gob.ec

ANZULEZ SANTOS, Jorge Luis

Asistente Ministerio de produccion, comercio
exterior, inversiones y pesca

E-mail: janzulez@produccion.gob.ec

LOOR SOLORZANO, Roberto Carlos

Analista de importacion 2, Ministerio de
produccion, comercio exterior, inversiones y
pesca

E-mail: rloor@produccion.gob.ec

EL SALVADOR

PEÑA SALAZAR, Katya Lisbeth
Jefe del registro nacional de pesca y
acuicultura
E-mail: katya.salazar@mag.gov.sv

EQUATORIAL GUINEA

NGUEMA ASANGONO, Mariano
Director general de pesca, Ministerio de Pesca
y Recursos Hidricos
E-mail: mariano.n68@yahoo.com

ERITREA

Asmerom, Kinane Tecleghiorghis
A.P.R of Eritrea to FAO
E-mail: asmeromk2016@gmail.com

Gezaf Feven Sium
MCS Staff, Ministry of Marine Resources
E-mail: fevensium7@gmail.com

Idris, Sulema Osman
Director of fishing liaison Division, Ministry
of Marine Ressources
E-mail: suleosm755@gmail.com

EUROPEAN UNION

RICHIR, Marc
International Relations Officer, EC Directorate
General Maritime Affairs and Fisheries
E-mail: Marc.Richir@ec.europa.eu

BERZINS, Maris
Policy Officer, Directorate General for
Maritime Affairs and Fisheries
E-mail: Maris.BERZINS@ec.europa.eu

KJOLSEN, Desiree
Policy Officer, Directorate General for
Maritime Affairs and Fisheries
E-mail: desiree.kjolsen@ec.europa.eu

GABON

BOUPANA BOLA EPSE IGABOUGH, I,
Bernice Carol
Responsable du centre de surveillance des
pêches, Direction Générale des pêches et de
l'aquaculture
E-mail: carolboupana@gmail.com

GEORGIA

CHKHOBADZE, MAIA
Head of the Biodiversity control service of the
Department of Environmental Supervision,
State Sub-Agency, Ministry of Environmental
Protection and Agriculture of Georgia
E-mail: maiachkhobadze@gmail.com

Dadiani, Davit
Chief Specialist of International and Public
Relations Division of administrative service
E-mail: david.dadiani@nea.gov.ge

GHANA

ODOI, Richner
Principal Capture Fisheries Manager
E-mail: richnerodonkor@yahoo.com

ADU-ANTWI, Alexander
Legal/principal fisheries manager
E-mail: alexander-antwi@fishcom.gov.gh;
lexozua@gmail.com

SACKEY-MENSAH, Rebecca
Senior Fisheries Officer
E-mail: rebecca.sackey-
mensah@fishcom.gov.gh

GUINEA

Lansana Kolië
Chef de la division plans d'aménagement des
pêcheries
E-mail: klansana74@gmail.com

INAPOGUI, Guile
Inspecteur des pêches
E-mail: guileinapogui6@gmail.com

GUINEA-BISSAU

KITANNY DA SILVA, Wane
Chefe de repartição de informática
Ministério das Pescas
E-mail: kitannywane@gmail.com

HONDURAS

GONZALEZ FLORENTINO, Mirella
Asistente Tecnico, Direccion General de la
Marina Mercante
E-mail: bgonzalez@marinamercante.gob.hn

ICELAND

Matthías G. Pálsson
Permanent Representative of Iceland to FAO,
WFP and IFAD
E-mail: matthias.palsson@utn.is

INDONESIA

Mochammad Rachadian Prayoga
Sub Coordinator of Design and
Standardization of Fishing Vessels, DG
Capture Fisheries
E-mail: rachadian.prayoga@gmail.com

Andreas Mahardika
Cooperation Analyst, Public Relation and
Cooperation Bureau
E-mail: andreasmdl@gmail.com

IRAN

FOROOZANDEH, Vahid
Deputy Director General of the Office of
Development and Management of Fishing
Ports
E-mail: vahidforoozandeh@yahoo.com

ELYAS, Vahedi
Director General of the Office of Development
and Management of Fishing Ports
E-mail: elyasevahedi@gmail.com

JAMAICA

JONES, IAN
SNR Director Compliance, National Fisheries
Authority
E-mail: fisheries@nfa.gov.jm

JAPAN

Sayako TAKEDA
Assistant Director, Fisheries Agency of Japan
E-mail: sayako_takeda590@maff.go.jp

Yasumoto, Kyutaro
Officer, Fisheries Agency of Japan
E-mail: kyutaro_yasumoto890@maff.go.jp

Ono, Kenichi
Officer, Fisheries Agency of Japan
E-mail: kenichi_ono250@maff.go.jp

KENYA

MACHUA SHADRACK
Assistant Director of Fisheries (ADF), Kenya
Fisheries Service
E-mail: machuask@gmail.com

KIILU, Benedict
Assistant Director of Fisheries, Kenya
Fisheries Service
E-mail: kiilub@yahoo.com

LATVIA

ABOLTINS Artis
Senior Expert, Ministry of Agriculture
E-mail: artis.aboltins@zm.gov.lv

LEBANON

NASSAR, Ali
Head of fisheries centre, Fisheries and
Wildlife Department, Ministry of Agriculture
E-mail: nassar_a78@hotmail.com

LIBERIA

BOIMAH, Francis
Director, MCS, National Fisheries and
Aquaculture Authority (NaFAA)
E-mail: fboimah@nafaa.gov.lr

LIBYA

Feras Elgabri
Director of info and documentation , Ministry
of Marine Resources
E-mail: felgabri@gmail.com

Abou Sbie, Abdalah Mohamed A
Port Management, Ministry of Marine
Resources
E-mail: info@gam.com.ly

MADAGASCAR

Andrianaivonavalona Rakotoniaina
Chef Service technologie de l'information e
communication, centre de surveillance des
pêches
Ministère de la pêche et de l'économie bleue
E-mail: csp-mprh@madagascar-scs-peche.mg

RAMAHEFALALA, Sedera
Chef de service des affaires juridiques et
contentieuses, centre de surveillance des
pêches
E-mail: sedera.ramahefala@gmail.com

MALAYSIA

MAHADIE CHAN, Nur Fadhlina Chan
Senior Fisheries Officer, International Section
Policy and Strategic Planning Division,
Department of Fisheries Malaysia
E-mail: fadhlina@dof.gov.my

NUR FADHLINA CHAN BINTI MAHADIE
CHAN
Fishery Officer, International Section
E-mail: fadhlina@dof.gov.my

Abdul Wahab, Abdul Rahman
Agriculture Counsellor, Embassy of Malaysia
E-mail: aa.rome@ambasciatamalaysia.it;
rahman_wahab@mafi.gov.my

MALTA

Owen Zammit
Manager II, Fisheries Control Unit
E-mail: owen.zammit.1@gov.mt

Myfanwy Cortis
Assistant Manager, Fisheries Control Unit
E-mail: myfanwy.cortis@gov.mt

MARSHALL ISLANDS

BLAHA, Francisco Ignacio
Offshore Fisheries Advisor, Marshall Island
Marine Resource Authority
E-mail: fblaha@mimra.com

MAURITIUS

MAHADOO, Shakeel Sen
Senior Officer, Senior Scientific Officer,
Ministry of Blue Economy, Marine Resources,
Fisheries & Shipping
E-mail: smahadoo@hotmail.com

MYANMAR

THAN THAN LWIN, Than Than
Deputy Director, Department of Fisheries
E-mail: Than21win@gmail.com

Soe, Min Min
Deputy Director, Department of Fisheries
E-mail: minsoedof@gmail.com

Hlaing, Tun Tun
Staff Officer, Department of Fisheries
E-mail: tunhlaingkym@gmail.com

NEW ZEALAND

MESSINA, Monique
International Fisheries Compliance, Ministry
for Primary Industries
E-mail: monique.messina@mpi.govt.nz

WRIGHT, Andrew
Team Leader, International fisheries
compliance, Ministry for Primary Industries
E-mail: Andrew.Wright@mpi.govt.nz

OWCZAREK, Jordan
International fisheries compliance, Ministry
for Primary Industries
E-mail: Jordan.Owczarek@mpi.govt.nz

NICARAGUA

Nora Palacio Alegría
Punto focal Nicaragua
INPESCA
E-mail: npalacios@inpesca.gob.ni

BRENES SOTELO, Brenda
Subdirectora General, INPESCA
E-mail: bbrenes@inpesca.gob.ni

NIGERIA

OPUAMA, Apoy Paul
Deputy Director of Fisheries, Fedral
Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture
E-mail: paulopuama@yahoo.com

OMAN

ALBUSAI, Ali
Head of the coastal and commercial fishing
fleet control department
E-mail: Tidaq@hotmail.com

Al Alawi, Tariq Darwish
Director of Fisheries Surveillance and
Licensing
E-mail: Tariq.alalawi@maf.gov.om; E-mail:
ta_alalawi_211@hotmail.com

RAFEET, Musallam
Assistant Director General of Fisheries in
Dhofar Governate
E-mail: musallemr@gmail.com

Al-Abudi, Naseer
Specialist Marine Navigation
E-mail: alaboudi85@gmail.com; E-mail:
naser.alabodi@maf.gov.om

PANAMA

MIGUEL ALFONSO GONZALEZ
GAMBOA
Adjunto, medico veterinario
E-mail: migonzalez@arap.gob.pa

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Martina Bubula Ragagalo
Manager, Compliance and Enforcement
National Fisheries Authority
E-mail: Mragagalo@fisheries.gov.pg;
mragagalo993@gmail.com

MADALAG, Aldrin Jude
Focal Person, global records, bureau of
fisheries and aquatic resources
E-mail: ajudem7@gmail.com

MANAPAT, Madeleine
Market Specialist II, Bureau of Fisheries and
Aquatic Resources
E-mail: mmanapat@bfar.da.gov.ph

PERU

Johnny Gonzales Carmen
Analista, Encargado del registro mundial de
buques
Ministerio de la Producción
E-mail: jgonzalesc@produce.gob.pe

SAAVEDRA MONCADA, Santos Eladio
Director General de Supervisión fiscalización
y sanción, Ministerio de la Producción
E-mail: sesaaavedra@produce.gob.pe

ARANDA VARILLAS, Jorge Joel
Profesional de la Direccion General de
Supervision Fiscalizacion y Sancion
E-mail: jaranday@produce.gob.pe

PHILIPPINES

MANAPAT, Madeleine
Market Specialist II, Bureau of Fisheries and
Aquatic Resources
E-mail: mmanapat@bfar.da.gov.ph

PADRO, Glenn
Senior Fishing Regulations Officer, Bureau of
Fisheries and Aquatic Resources
E-mail: glennpadro@gmail.com

SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS

QUEELEY, Maritza
Port State Control, Department of Marine
Resources
E-mail: maritzaqueelee@gmail.com

SAINT LUCIA

Williams-Peter, Sarita
Chief Fisheries officer, Ministry of
Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and
Rural Development
E-mail: sarita.peter@govt.lc.

SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

CONNELL, Shamal
Fisheries Officer, Fisheries Division
E-mail: fishdiv@gov.vc

SEARLES, Jeremy
Fisheries Officer, Fisheries Division
E-mail: fishdiv@gov.vc

SAUDI ARABIA

ALSHAYE, Khalid
Director Marine Fisheries Department
E-mail: shaye@agriserv.com.sa

AJIMAN, Ibrahim
Fisheries Center Manager, Marine Fisheries
Department
E-mail: e15450@mewa.gov.sa

SENEGAL

FALL, Cheikh
Ingénieur des pêches, chef Division
inspection, Direction de la Protection et de la
Surveillance des Pêches
E-mail: cheihf@gmail.com

DIOP, Magatte Birama
Inspecteur des pêches, juriste, Direction de la
protection et de la surveillance des pêches
E-mail: bbiirroouu@gmail.com

MBENGUE, Modou
Chef du Bureau des Autorisations de pêche,
Direction des pêches maritimes
E-mail: modoumalickmbengue@gmail.com

SIERRA LEONE

JALLOH, Kadijatu
Director of Fisheries, Ministry of Fisheries and
Marine Resources
E-mail: kadijatujalloh4@gmail.com

Momoh, Hindolo
Assistant Director of Fisheries, Ministry of
Fisheries and Marine Resources
E-mail: hindomoh@yahoo.co.uk

Duramany Seisay, Lahai
Assistant Director of Fisheries, Ministry of
Fisheries and Marine Resources
E-mail: Lahaisesay@yahoo.com

Covier, Ivorymae Chrismin Remi
Senior Fisheries Officer; Ministry of Fisheries
and Marine Resources
E-mail: Coker-ivorymae007m@gmail.com

Sandy, Sahr Patrick
Senior Fisheries Officer; Ministry of Fisheries
and Marine Resources
E-mail: sarpsandi@gmail.com

Saffa, Harold Bundu
Deputy head of mission
E-mail: haroldsaffa410@gmail.com

SINGAPORE

LIN, Tingting
Senior Manager, Fishery ports team
E-mail: lin_tingting@sfa.gov.sg

THE, Kihua
Team Lead, Fishery Ports Team
E-mail: The_kihua@sfa.gov.sg

SOLOMON ISLANDS

Golu, Charlyn Grace
Principal Fisheries Officer Compliance,
Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources
E-mail: CGolu@fisheries.gov.sb

SOMALIA

ADOW, Abdullahi Abdi
Director of Planning, Policy and Economic
Development, Ministry of Fisheries and
Marine Resources
E-mail: planning@mfmr.gov.so

SOUTH SUDAN

BAYA, David Peter Mina
Researcher of Fisheries and Aquaculture,
National Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries
E-mail: dodipeter@yahoo.com

SPAIN

LABORDA SÁNCHEZ, Cristina
Inspectora de pesca, Ministerio de agricultura,
pesca y alimentación
E-mail: claborda@mapa.es

DELGADO GONZÁLEZ, Gonzalo
Tecnico Gestión Area de lucha contra la pesca
ilegal, Ministerio de agricultura, pesca y
alimentación
E-mail: gdelgado@mapa.es

TORRESANO VILLAREJO, Carolina
Inspectora de pesca, Ministerio de agricultura,
pesca y alimentación
E-mail: ctorresano@mapa.es

SRI LANKA

MALLIKAGE, Marcus
Director Management, Department of
Fisheries and Aquatic Resources
E-mail: mmallikage67@gmail.com

JAYAKODY, Medawaththe Gedara Nishanta
Director (Investigation & training),
Department of fisheries & Aquatic Resources
E-mail: jayakodymgn@gmail.com

HEWAPATHIRANA, Kalyani
Director Fishing Operation
E-mail: hewakal2012@gmail.com

SUDAN

AHMED, Fathi Mirghani Yousif
A. Manager, Ministry of Animal resources,
Fisheries administration
E-mail: fnyahmed@gmail.com

SWEDEN

Ylva Mattsson
Analyst, Swedish Agency for Marine and
Water Management
E-mail: ylva.mattsson@havochvatten.se

THAILAND

Thira Rodchevid
Fishery Biologist, Practitioner Level, Port
State Measures Implementation Group
E-mail: thirar.dof@gmail.com

SANBOONPENG, Jitpisut

Fishery Biologist, Practitioner Level,
department of Fisheries
E-mail: pompam58@gmail.com

TOGO

AHOEDO, Kossi
Chef de la Section promotion des pêches,
Direction des pêches et de l'aquaculture
E-mail: secretariat.dirap@maritime.gouv.tg

TONGA

ATUEKAHO, MELE FEHOKO
Ministry of Fisheries
E-mail: meletoaatuekaho@gmail.com

Lotoahea Losalina
Principal Fisheries Officer
Ministry of Fisheries
E-mail: losilini@gmail.com

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

MOHAMMED, Elizabeth
Senior Fisheries Officer
E-mail: emohammed.2fdtt@gmail.com

De Costa Bria
Fisheries Researcher
E-mail: decostabria.fd@gmail.com;
bdecosta.gov.tt

Martin Louanna
Fisheries Officer
E-mail: lmartin@fp.gov.tt;
louannamartin@gmail.com

**UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT
BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND**

BANTOCK, Luke
Policy Lead, DEFRA
E-mail: luke.bantock@defra.gov.uk

Nick Mynard
Head of Fisheries Services
E-mail:
Nick.Mynard@marinemanagement.org.uk

BUCKLEY, Joanna
Head of IUU fishing and Control Enforcement
E-mail: Joanna.Buckley@defra.gov.uk

SCHAEFFTER, Gerlinde
Senior Policy Advisor, IUU Fishing Team
E-mail: Gerlinde.Schaeffter@defra.gov.uk

FENNER, David
Maritime and Coastguard Agency
E-mail: David.Fenner@mca.gov.uk

READE, Stefan
Head of Fisheries Management Statistics and
Publications
E-mail:
stefan.reade@marinemanagement.org.uk

FLAHERTY, Jacob
Principal Marine Officer
IUU Fishing Team

UKRAINE

Klochak, Oleh
Head of the Division of International
Cooperation
E-mail: klochak2003@yahoo.com

Honcharuk, Ihor
Chief Specialist of the Division of
International Cooperation
E-mail: igor-goncharuk96@ukr.net

Vovkotrub Volodymyr
Head of the Department of the Organization of
the Use of Aquatic Bioresources, Aquaculture
and Scientific Support
E-mail: vetmed_bcrda@ukr.net

Bakumenko Volodymyr
Head of the Division of the Fishing Industry
Fleet
E-mail: darg_vgb@ukr.net;
tehoglyad@darg.gov.ua

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Katheryn Patterson
Foreign Affairs Specialist. U.S. National
Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
(NOAA)
E-mail: katheryn.patterson@noaa.gov

Rebecca Wintering
Foreign Affairs Officer. Department of State
E-mail: winteringrj@state.gov

Cheri McCarty
Senior Foreign Affairs Specialist. National
Marine Fisheries Service
E-mail: Cheri.McCarty@noaa.govUSA

Fisher Brandon
Lieutenant Commander. US Coast Guard
E-mail: FisherBC@state.gov

PRAY, Tara
LCDR, Department of State/U.S. Coast Guard
E-mail: PrayTC@State.gov

HAKALA, Siri
Foreign Affairs Specialist
E-mail: siri.hakala@noaa.gov

VANUATU

NGWANGO, Felix Toa
Acting Compliance Manager, Department of
Fisheries
E-mail: ftngwango@fisheries.gov.vu

YEMEN

Saleh, Ahmed
Director of Quality and Technical Affairs
Ministry of Agriculture, irrigation and fish
wealth
E-mail: a_abood990@yahoo.com

ORGANIZATIONS

BAY OF BENGAL PROGRAMME- INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION

PAULPANDIAN, Krishnan
Director
E-mail: krishnanars@bobpigo.org

BENGUELA CURRENT CONVENTION

KILONGO, Kumbi Nsingi
Ecosystem Coordinator
E-mail: kumbi@benguelacc.org

CENTRAL AMERICAN ORGANIZATION OF THE FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE SECTOR (OSPESCA)

INFANTE, Jose
Director regional SICA/OSPESCA
E-mail: jinfante@sica.int

COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION OF SOUTHERN BLUEFIN TUNA

Iball, Susie
Compliance Officer
E-mail: siball@ccsbt.org

FORUM FISHERIES AGENCY (FFA)

Ramesh Chand
Manager Vessel Monitoring System. Pacific
Islands Forum Fisheries Agency
E-mail: ramesh.chand@ffa.int

INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION OF ATLANTIC TUNAS (ICCAT)

SAMEDY, Valérie
VMS Manager
E-mail: valerie.samedy@iccat.int
PARRILLA MORUNO, Alberto Thais
Compliance Officer
E-mail: alberto.parrilla@iccat.int

INTERNATIONAL SEAFOOD SUSTAINABILITY FOUNDATION

KOEHLER, Holly
Vice President, Policy and Outreach
E-mail: hkoehler@iss-foundation.org

Cohen, Michael
Market outreach associate
E-mail: ncohen@iss-foudation.org

LAKE VICTORIA FISHERIES ORGANIZATION

ACHIENG, Benedict Abura
Director Information, Communications and
Technology
E-mail: sbabura@lvfo.org

NORTH EAST ATLANTIC FISHERIES COMMISSION (NEAFC)

Hrannar Mar Asgeirsson
MCS Officer. NEAFC
E-mail: hrannar@neafo.org

SOUTHEAST ASIAN FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT CENTRE (SEAFDEC)

Kongpathai Saraphaiwanich
Training and information section head of the
Training Department. SEAFDEC
E-mail: kongpathai@seafdec.org

WANCHANA, Worawit
Policy and Program Coordinator
E-mail: worawit@seafdec.org

SMITHRITHEE, Malinee
Secretary-General
E-mail: sg@seafdec.org

TM-TRACKING

YVERGNIAUX, Yann
Senior Analyst
E-mail: yyvergniaux@tm-tracking.org

UNITED NATIONS OFFICE ON DRUGS AND CRIME (UNODC)

Toci, Lejda
Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Officer
E-mail: lejda.toci@un.org

FAO SECRETARIAT

Matthew Camilleri
Head of the Fishing Operations and
Technology Branch (FIAO)
E-mail: Matthew.Camilleri@fao.org

Blaise KUEMLANGAN
Chief Development Law Service Legal Office
E-mail: Blaise.Kuemlangan@fao.org

Alicia MOSTEIRO
Fishery Officer (PSMA/IUU Fishing)
Fisheries - Global and Regional Processes
E-mail: Alicia.Mosteiro@fao.org

Minmin LEI
Fishery Officer
E-mail: Minmin.Lei@fao.org

Gaelle HERMANUS
Office Assistant Fisheries - Global and
Regional Processes
E-mail: Gaelle.Hermanus@fao.org

Gabriel BORG
Consultant
E-mail: Gabriel.Borg@fao.org

Giuliano CARRARA
Consultant
E-mail: Giuliano.Carrara@fao.org

Stefano PIREDDA
Consultant
E-mail: Stefano.Piredda@fao.org

Gregoire PICHENOT
Consultant
E-mail: Gregoire.Pichenot@fao.org

Paul GRIESELHUBER
Consultant
E-mail: Paul.Grieselhuber@fao.org

Lavinia PLATICA
Consultant
E-mail: Lavinia.Platica@fao.org

Antonio PORTALO MESA
Consultant
E-mail: Antonio.PortaloMesa@fao.org

Joao Goncalo PEDROSA CARNEIRO
Consultant
E-mail: Joao.PedrosaCarneiro@fao.org

Olivier ROUX
Consultant
E-mail: Olivier.Roux@fao.org

Fabrizio SIBENI
Consultant
E-mail: Fabrizio.Sibeni@fao.org

Gianluca SILVESTRI
Consultant
E-mail: Gianluca.Silvestri@fao.org

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LIST OF DOCUMENTS

GRWG6/2022/1	Provisional Agenda and Timetable
GRWG6/2022/2	Discussion items
GRWG6/2022/Inf.1	List of documents
GRWG6/2022/Inf.2	List of participants
GRWG6/2022/Inf.3	Report of the fifth meeting of the Global Record Working Group
GRWG6/2022/Inf.4	Report of the second meeting of the PSMA Open-ended Technical Working Group on Information Exchange (TWG-IE)

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