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联合国粮食及农业组织

THIRD MEETING OF THE GLOBAL RECORD INFORMAL OPEN-ENDED TECHNICAL AND ADVISORY WORKING GROUP (GRWG)

Rome, Italy 26-28 June 2017

KEY DISCUSSION ITEMS

Background/Introduction

The 32nd session[1] of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) held in 2016 expressed strong support for the Global Record and its continued development and recognized it could play an important role as a tool in combating illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and supporting the implementation of the Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA) and other related international instruments. The Committee also urged broader participation, including the provision of data by Members.

Since COFI 32, a Pilot Project[2] was launched on 21 December 2016 with 11 pilot partners[3] providing a good geographic coverage. On 21 April 2017, the first working version[4] of the Global Record Information System was launched and made available to all FAO Members through restricted access for this initial phase. With COFI 33 (July 2018) in mind, consideration should be given to the possibility of releasing the first publicly available version prior to that event.

With the aim of further advancing the development and initiate implementation of the Global Record, this document explores the main issues to be discussed by the third meeting of the Global Record Working Group (GRWG).

Agenda items:

8. The Global Record Information System

The pilot project provided an opportunity to test the information system with real data both for the search functionalities and the upload mechanism. One of the findings of the pilot project is that some countries face some difficulties in providing data to the Global Record which underlines the need for capacity development. The data provided covered mainly the vessel details module, historical data and authorizations for fishing vessels, refrigerated transport vessels and also supply vessels. One partner also provided

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[1] http://www.fao.org/3/a-i6882e.pdf
[2] http://www.fao.org/in-action/global-record/background/global-record-pilot-project/en/
[3] Colombia, Comoros, Ghana, Iceland, Indonesia, Mauritius, Mozambique, Philippines, Seychelles, Spain and Uruguay.
[4] http://www.fao.org/in-action/global-record/news-events/detail/en/c/882133/

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inspection and surveillance data and port entry denials which served as a test case for linking these information modules with the others through the Unique Vessel Identifier (UVI). All data was retained in the information system except for the last two modules, inspection and surveillance and port entry denials, given the advice provided by the GRWG2 to not fill the 5 essential data fields with information other than coming from the flag State.

It is now important to create a momentum and not to delay the implementation of the system and also to use the opportunity of the year ahead before COFI 33 to show results to the international community.

At this point the Global Record Information System is half way through its development phase based on the medium-term (5 year) proposal presented in the Strategy document[5]. This version includes sufficient features and functionalities to be considered ready for its release to the FAO Members, keeping in mind that improvements and new developments to strengthen the tool will continue.

Consequently, the release also marks the beginning of the implementation phase in which countries/partners will have to start uploading data.

Once a sufficient level of fleet coverage is reached (the reference will be related to phase 1), the next step could be taken to make the public release. It is strategically important to reach this point prior to COFI 33, and for that, concerted efforts are to be made.

a. First working version:
i. User experience

The first working version of the Global Record Information System is simple and easy to use with logical sequencing of the main features and functionalities. The system currently runs in English language only but will also be available in French and Spanish too. Other languages are under consideration given the difficulties and the cost of developing a system working in multiple languages. Consideration is also being given to developing the system as a dynamic web application that can work in most types of terminals including tablets and smart phones. This feature would enhance the possibilities for users to rely on the Global Record directly from the harbor or as needed.

ii. Features and functionalities

Query (search) functionalities, data validation, error reporting, user management and data upload were developed and allow i) data from Members to be uploaded to the system, ii) an initial quality check to be carried out as well as iii) display and search of the information inserted. The query allows a simple search, when the user knows exactly the vessel he/she is searching for, and an advanced search, when the user is tracking down a vessel for which the main identification information is not available. In this case, the user can start querying the system and add information to the latest query to narrow the search.

This process is very intuitive and takes the user through three different levels: 1) a summary of the global fleet included in the Global Record, 2) a subsample of it from the search and 3) detailed information of a particular vessel organized in 6 different

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[5] http://www.fao.org/cofi/33133-01d7de5488a77180759efacea7c39dbb7.pdf

modules: vessel details, historical details, authorizations, inspection and surveillance, port entry denials and IUU vessel lists. In addition, information external to the system can be consulted through a deep-hyperlink that takes the user directly to additional information on that particular vessel contained in other systems.

A data upload functionality was developed following GRWG2 advice[6] on using CSV. files for direct upload through the web portal[7]. Basic instructions are available in the site, together with CSV templates for data upload and files with the data requirements for ease of use. This functionality also allows viewing previous files uploaded for reference.

The data validation includes an error reporting functionality that sends automatic messages to the user regarding the results of the upload, with specifications on the number of records inserted and rejected and, for the latter, a placeholder for any individual errors identified together with some indication of the error itself for correction.

Further features and functionalities will be implemented during the coming months. These include improved global picture, automatic data exchange through use of schemas developed through UN/CEFACT[8], and advanced validation. An initial test will be carried out with the EU and possibly other countries, towards the end of 2017.

iii. Participation

The implementation of an automatic data exchange mechanism will ease participation and eliminate burden from the Members. Delayed participation by some Members seem to respond in most cases to an initial period of preparation of the data in the formats required and agreed by the GRWG. In addition, lack of participation might also be linked to lack of capacity to undertake the necessary adjustments. Several Members are currently in contact with the Secretariat for clarifications on the data upload procedures and are expected to upload data soon. Participation is key to advance the Global Record and has been identified in the Strategy document as a risk factor for the implementation of the Global Record.

> *The GRWG3 is requested to advice on possible ways of improving the user experience and any further feature or functionality that could make the Global Record Information System more useful and easy to use. The GRWG3 is invited to encourage broader participation to the Global Record and identify areas that might need action from FAO.*

b. Rules and procedures
i. Frequency of data submission

Given that COFI 31 agreed that the data and its submission (possibly through RFMOs) is the responsibility of the State generating it, it is recommended that frequency of data submission is determined by each Member State (or RFMO) participating to the Global Record. For data to be relevant it needs to be updated as soon as any change occurs. Different modules of information might require different frequencies of upload. Vessel details and historical information modules are expected to be more static than the others. Other similar systems seem to receive data on a

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[6] Three different mechanisms of data exchange should be developed to allow developed and developing countries to submit information. See http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5793e.pdf

[7] http://www.fao.org/in-action/global-record/information-system/en/

[8] http://www.unece.org/cefact/xml_schemas/index

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weekly, monthly or yearly basis, but this might jeopardize the effectiveness of the Global Record as a tool to fight IUU fishing, since reliable, up-to-date information is necessary to take actions against IUU perpetrators.

ii. Data quality

Current data validation procedures are very simple and deal mainly with basic data types (text, numbers, alphanumeric, reference) and ranges with broad intervals (in this initial phase). More advanced data validation procedures will be implemented in the next phase of development to refine the data quality to the highest standards possible for a global system like this one. The error reporting feature currently implemented provides the user with information regarding number of entries accepted or rejected, and indication of the location of those errors and some brief explanation of actions to be taken.

Another additional way of improving data quality would be to compare (cross-checking) flag State data with IHSM&T data (the 5 essential data fields offered) and report any discrepancies to the flag State for consideration. Development of this feature depends on the outcomes of discussion under Agenda item 7, "IHSM&T revised offer for inclusion of vessel data into the Global Record"[9]. In the same way, the GRWG3 might consider checking port and coastal State data (the 5 essential data fields only) against flag State data[10].

It is a proven fact that transparency improves data quality as many users could detect mistakes in the data and report to the system. In this line, consideration should be given to the usefulness of users reporting errors detected into the system.

iii. Data conflicts

Data conflicts could be expected in a global system where some States might decide to transfer the duty (and responsibility) of data submission to the relevant RFMOs. For example, data for the same vessel could eventually be provided by two different RFMOs (for vessels authorized to operate in different areas in different periods) and potentially show discrepancies. The most crucial of these discrepancies being the ones related to vessel details module (identification, registration, characteristics, ownership, etc.). Discrepancies could also raise in any other module, depending on the level and type of validation that would be implemented.

The Global Record Information System is conceived as a single-access point for all vessel-related data critical to fight IUU fishing. Only a single record per vessel of certified[11] , reliable and up-to-date information should be included. Consequently, it becomes necessary to decide whether to: i) establish conflict-resolution protocols, at least for discrepancies in the 5 essential fields or ii) designate a single RMFO as source of data (per vessel type? Species? Area?).

A suggested procedure for conflict resolution could be as follows: originating State data prevails; when conflicts arise (discrepancy of incoming data with data already in the system), a message will be sent to both sources (and to the originating State) indicating the discrepancy, and including a request to clarify it within 24-48 hours;; when a response is lacking, the original data stays as the State is fully responsible for the data.

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[9] http://www.fao.org/fi/static-media/MeetingDocuments/GlobalRecord/GRWG3/3e.pdf

[10] A discussion in this regard took place in GRWG2, where it was decided that port or coastal State data (the 5 essential fields for identification) should not replace flag State data whilst is missing. However, consideration might be given to its potential use for cross-checking.

[11] by the State originating it

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> *The GRWG3 is requested to provide guidance on the desired frequency of data submission to the Global Record, advanced data validation procedures including or not the possibility of checking data against IHSM&T, port and coastal States and even general users, if necessary. The GRWG3 is also requested to advise on procedures to deal with data coming from RFMOs including, if relevant, resolving data discrepancies.*

9. **Outcome of the first meeting of the Parties to the FAO Agreement on Port State Measures and The Ocean Conference in relation to the Global Record. Synergies with the Voluntary Guidelines for Catch Documentation Schemes**.

As previously indicated, COFI 32 "*recognized that the Global Record could play an important role as a tool in combatting IUU fishing and supporting the implementation of the PSMA and other related international instruments*".

Back in 2014, the Strategy document [12] provided some initial detailed indications in Appendix 1 "*Synergies with international instruments*" on ways in which the Global Record could support i) the implementation of the PSMA, ii) Flag State Performance and iii) Market Related Measures.

With the PSMA recently entering into force (5 June 2016) and the Voluntary Guidelines for Catch Documentation Schemes (VG-CDS) having been approved by the Third Resumed Technical Consultation (5 April 2017) and put forward for adoption by the FAO Conference (3-7 July 2017), it is now the right moment to consider ways in which these instruments can create stronger synergies to fight IUU fishing and close the net around IUU perpetrators.

PSMA
At the first [13] meeting of the Parties (29-31 May 2017, Oslo, Norway) several Parties indicated that:
  ➢ (Paragraph 13) "*consideration should be given to the role of complementary instruments and tools in supporting the Agreement, in particular the Global Record of Fishing Vessels, Refrigerated Transport Vessels and Supply Vessels (Global Record), the Voluntary Guidelines for Catch Documentation Schemes, and tools developed by regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs)*"
  ➢ (Paragraph 14) "*it was stressed that critical challenges, such as information on transshipments, development of robust risk assessment procedures, cooperation throughout the value chain and real time information on vessels and inspection results, should be addressed*".

It seems clear that the Global Record can support PSMA implementation at least in two ways:
  1. On the verification and validation by the port State of the information to be provided in advance by (foreign) vessels requesting port entry. This will support the decision of authorizing or denying port entry and use of port;

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[12] http://www.fao.org/cofi/33133-01d7de5488a77180759efacea7c39dbb7.pdf
[13] http://www.fao.org/fi/static-media/MeetingDocuments/PSMA/Parties/adoptedreport.pdf

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2. In carrying out risk analysis to understand if the vessel is suspicious of IUU fishing and take decisions for inspection or not;

And this is particularly important for obtaining information on non-Party vessels.

VG-FSP

With regards to the Voluntary Guidelines for Flag State Performance[14], the Global Record can support certain duties of the flag State, such as:

1. Adequate registration procedures; through verification of vessel records and their history (to avoid registration of vessels with a history of non-compliance or registered in another State);
2. Granting authorization (to fish, transship or other) to vessels with an "unique, internationally recognized identification number" and a clean record of compliance;
3. Transparency of information through information exchange and use of international standards.

All of the above apply to fishing vessels but also to refrigerated transport vessels and supply vessels, which are also included in the Global Record.

VG-CDS

The Voluntary Guidelines for Catch Documentation Schemes[15] build on the primary responsibility of the flag State to fight IUU fishing, ensuring that catches are taken consistently with applicable international, regional and national conservation and management measures (thus preventing products derived from IUU fishing from entering the supply chain).

In this regard, the Global Record can support the traceability of fish and fish products from the landing or transshipping point to final destination throughout the market chain by:

1. Linking the vessel and fish products through the Unique Vessel Identifier (UVI) that should be included in all documentation related to the product (accompanied with a unique and secure document number);
2. Verifying the legal (or not) origin of fish and fish products (track the product back to its source, the vessel);
3. Supporting risk analysis to design and implement CDS.

Again, the above apply not only to fishing vessels but also to support vessels, fish-processing vessels, vessels engaged in transshipment and carrier vessels equipped for the transportation of fishery products, except container vessels. The latter categories refer to refrigerated transport vessels and supply vessels.

UNFSA

The United Nations Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks[16], in its Article 18 indicates the duties of flag States which relate to those indicated in the IPOA-IUU and VG-FSP for which the Global Record can play a role as indicated above.

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[14] http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4577t.pdf

[15] http://www.fao.org/fi/static-media/MeetingDocuments/CDS/TC2016/wpAnnex.pdf

[16] http://www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/convention_overview_fish_stocks.htm

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With regards to data exchange, Annex I[17] Article 7, indicates in paragraph 2 that "*At the global level, collection and dissemination of data should be effected through the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations*".

Additionally, the Global Record has adopted the list of serious violations listed in Article 21, Paragraph 11 as the reference list for the "Infringement/apparent infringement" data field of the inspections and surveillance module. This is very useful in building a global standard and spreading its use to facilitate the detection and analysis of IUU activities.

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The Oceans Conference in New York, marked a milestone for the international community in terms of fulfilling Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14[18] to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development. Target 14.4 specifically addresses the fight against IUU fishing and results are expected as early as 2020. The Global Record will increase transparency and traceability and it will strengthen synergies among all instruments mentioned above and others, so as to close the net over IUU perpetrators to effectively prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing.

The GRWG3 is requested to provide advice on any potential developments on the Global Record that could further strengthen its role in support of international initiatives to fight IUU fishing and create stronger synergies.

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10. Capacity development support

COFI 31[19] appreciated FAO's continued assistance to developing States in the context of the Global Record. In the same line, the two Global Record Working Group meetings recognized the importance of providing assistance to developing countries in order to enable them to participate by integrating their data within the Global Record information system. Later, COFI 32 urged broader participation, including the provision of data by Members.

The GRWG is also tasked through its Terms of Reference to provide guidance to "*Identify key issues and Member States, in particular developing States, and regions for capacity building, including identifying relevant areas for technical assistance*".

The provision of capacity development support is key to an adequate and broad implementation of the Global Record.

The Strategy document suggested a capacity development framework consisting on some of the following:
  - ✓ study of background information including through questionnaires;
  - ✓ awareness-raising;
  - ✓ capacity development and harmonization workshops;
  - ✓ gap analysis;
  - ✓ customized implementation of recommended activities;
  - ✓ targeted assistance; and
  - ✓ running pilots.

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[17] Standard requirements for the collection and sharing of data.

[18] https://oceanconference.un.org/sdg14

[19] http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4634e.pdf

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Some of these activities have already taken place in the past with great limitations mainly due to insufficient funds. Now that the implementation phase has started, dedicated funds will be sought to support developing States.

It could be beneficial to focus on users and data providers, and collaboration with RFMOs, to align Members' and RFMOs' information systems with Global Record data requirements and data exchange mechanisms.

The Working Group is requested to provide guidance on priority issues/areas and countries/regions for the provision of assistance to enable developing States to participate in the Global Record.

12. Other matters

Transshipment

Given the fact that IUU fishing is not carried out by fishing vessels alone, COFI 32 noted a proposal, made by the United States of America, and encouraged FAO to initiate work on transshipments and provided additional suggestions regarding, among others, the use of the Global Record. Given that the Global Record includes vessels involved in transshipments, such as the refrigerated transport vessels, it could play a key role in bringing transparency to transshipment practices, authorization, notification and reporting requirements and procedures.