

CHECK FOR DELIVERY

The Pew Charitable Trusts welcomes this discussion topic being included, as effective MCS and enforcement mechanisms form part of the critical chain of implementation for fisheries management.

We believe that information exchange underpins effective MCS and is necessary for efficient allocation of control staff through risk assessment. We welcome the PSMA GIES and urge Parties to put it to use, as soon as possible, and to submit their national contact points and designate ports, as a first step. We also strongly encourage Members to improve their reporting to the Global Record, both in terms of range of data as well as timeliness of information.

Like several delegations before us, Pew urges the FAO to meet its commitment to the revitalisation of the Compliance Agreement and to propose options to strengthen its implementation and enforcement. This agreement is critical to high seas governance and has been dormant for far too long.

We support the comments made by the UK on beneficial ownership and the recommendation of the JWG for FAO to convene an expert meeting to discuss the collection, use, and sharing of beneficial ownership information in relation to fishing vessels, in order to develop best practices or guidelines. We believe that the only way to eliminate the financial incentives of operating illicitly would be for States to establish and enforce domestic penalties for their citizens who profit from IUU fishing activities. To do so, enforcement officials must know who controls and profits from the fishing operations.

We welcome the plans FAO laid out in making progress on vessel tracking, and reiterate that it is a flag State responsibility laid out in existing international instruments, and very important for effective enforcement.

Chair, Pew would like to refer back to the previous agenda item and, specifically, the proposal made by the US and supported by several delegations regarding squid on the high seas. We echo the importance of understanding the status of these unregulated species, and ensuring sustainable management, and we support the proposal for the FAO to take this on as a priority.

Finally, we continue to offer our support to Members in combatting IUU fishing. To best target our efforts, we encourage Members to test the indicators approach for assessing MCS performance, noting that we welcome the shift from quantitative estimates, and to share the results of those assessments as well as their identified capacity needs.