

## Minutes of the Working Group for Large-Scale Fisheries

<b>MEETING TITLE</b>	<b>1st Call Working Group for Large-Scale Fisheries</b>
<b>MEETING PURPOSE (AGENDA)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce purpose and outline main tasks of the group</li> <li>• Gather feedback on input document prepared by André Standing</li> </ul>
<b>MEETING DATE</b>	12.01.2016
<b>MEETING TIME</b>	16.30 – 18.00 (GMT+1)
<b>MEETING LOCATION</b>	Telephone Conference
<b>ATTENDEES (BY ALPHABETICAL ORDER)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maria Cornax (Oceana)</li> <li>• André Standing (Adviser – FiTI Secretariat)</li> <li>• Xavier Vincent (The World Bank Group)</li> <li>• Sven Biermann (FiTI Secretariat)</li> <li>• Sebastian Wegner (FiTI Secretariat)</li> </ul>
<b>EXCUSED</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alexander Biryukov (Président de l'Association des Armateurs Russes - Dakar)</li> <li>• Philippe Michaud (Chairman of the Board of the Seychelles Fishing Authority (SFA))</li> </ul>
<b>SUPPORTING INFORMATION</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Input Document prepared by André Standing</li> <li>2. Input by Greenpeace based on Input Document provided by Sebastian Losada</li> </ol>
<b>MEETING MINUTES FROM</b>	25.01.2016

## PURPOSE OF WORKING GROUP

S. Biermann welcomed all participants and outlined purpose and process of working group:

- Discuss transparency elements based on table presented in Rome during 2nd Advisory Group meeting
- Discuss handling of other possible requirements (e.g. publication of texts of fisheries access and charter agreements and related protocols)
- Discuss participation of stakeholders in reporting and validation of data
- Make recommendations to Advisory Group based on discussions

## DISCUSSION

1. André Standing provided an introduction by discussing the draft table circulated prior to the meeting. The table is divided into three parts, with sub-components under each. It was noted that in developing this further, a balance is needed between extending the scope the FiTI and making FiTI reporting practical and feasible for all participants. For example, too many reporting elements may overburden countries and companies alike, making FiTI unlikely to gain the necessary support.
2. The table presented to the group was considered a good starting point, although there were several areas that required further discussion. It was also noted that the draft table on the transparency elements was intended to illustrate the thematic headings only – the final version (as part of the overall FiTI Standard) would need to be more detailed and accompanied with extensive guidance notes.

### Transparency Elements Part 1: Tenure Arrangement

1. It was agreed that the **type of access arrangement** is included in the reporting. FiTI reports would therefore identify the type of access arrangement for each vessel, including private licenses, charter arrangements, joint venture agreements and fishing licenses issued as part of a bi-lateral fisheries agreement.
2. It was agreed that FiTI reports should include details of the **name and location of the fishing agent** employed by fishing companies to gain access arrangements. This information is also required in the proposed EU regulation on Fishing Access Arrangements.
3. The question of whether to include information on the **beneficial ownership of fishing companies** was discussed. It was recognized that identifying the beneficial owner of a fishing company may be challenging in some cases. However, it was recognized that beneficial

ownership is a key theme these days in increasing transparency (in all sectors). The current G20 High-Level Principles on Beneficial Ownership Transparency was mentioned as an example. It was agreed that more information is needed to understand better how such principles translate into practice. .

➡ **It was agreed that the Sven and Sebastian would provide further input on beneficial ownership to the group in one of the next calls of the Working Group.**

4. Following the recommendations submitted in writing to the group by Greenpeace (December 2015), the provision of extended information on vessels characteristics was discussed. It was noted that **vessel identification** should include the IMO number for all vessels. However, some of the more detailed data on vessel characteristics, including the vessel's age, information on call signs etc. would be superfluous for FiTI reporting, as this data can be found in other databases through the IMO number. It was agreed that where possible, information to be contained in FiTI reports should be limited and not duplicate information on other databases.
5. Under the terms of license, it was suggested that FiTI reports should include information on any **authorized ports** for fishing vessels, if this is part of a license agreement.
6. It was suggested to review transparency elements and terminology from the latest European Union **Fishing Authorisation Regulation (FAR)** to assess their applicability for the FiTI.
7. Reporting on the **terms of the access arrangements** should be for each arrangement, not vessel by vessel.
8. It was agreed that further discussions are needed on the primary "starting point" for the provision of information on tenure arrangements. Such a starting point could either be The starting point could here be either the 'vessel' or the 'rights holder'. It was also suggested to distinguish between national (nationally owned, chartered arrangements) and foreign fleets (access regime).
9. It was further discussed to include data for all vessels authorized by a country, including those authorized to fish in a third country or on the high seas. A discussion on this aspect included the point that the initial focus of FiTI has been on transparency of fishing in a country's EEZ, and this additional data will broaden the scope of reporting, particularly for those countries with extensive distant water fishing fleets. Further discussion is needed to clarify what information should be included in FiTI reports for vessels flagged in a FiTI implementing country that are primarily engaged in fishing outside of the country's EEZ (*information may include which countries the vessel has licenses to fish in, although information on payments and catches might not be included? – AS.*)

➡ **Xavier Vincent offered to provide some background on the case of the Comores in**

**the next calls to illustrate possible scenario the FiTI has to deal with.**

### Transparency Elements Part 2: Payments

1. It was suggested that further details are needed to include the **full range of payments** made by fishing vessels/companies, including payments for on-board observers, satellite monitoring systems, payments to agents and so forth. This needs to be developed further in the detailed notes that will accompany the FiTI reporting template.
2. There was discussion devoted to the issue of whether details of **bank accounts** are to be included in FiTI reports. The primary intension was to specify information of the government bank account to which payments by vessels owners should be made. The reason for this is that there are cases where payments from the fisheries sector have been made to private bank accounts. The group agreed that it would be sufficient to include such information as part of contextual information within the FiTI report; it was not considered necessary to include details of the bank account for each payment in FiTI reports.
3. The group discussed whether to include details on **finest and penalties** in FiTI reports. There was agreement that this information is important and should be in the public domain. However, initial reactions identified practical difficulties in including this information in an annual FiTI report. For example, there may be delays between infractions, issuing fines/penalties and the payment of these, and penalties may be agreed out of court. The subject was considered highly sensitive for companies if not captured adequately. Also, comparison country by country can be very difficult due to different sanctioning regimes. It was further noted that in addition to information on the amounts involved, FiTI reports should include information on the specific offence (i.e. typology of offences). Nevertheless, there was agreement that FiTI should consider how to capture this information, and further discussion on this is needed.

### NEXT STEPS

#### TASKS:

- **FiTI Secretariat** to collect **information on beneficial ownership** and ultimate beneficial ownership for discussion an applicability for fisheries
- **Xavier Vincent** to provide some background on the case of the Comores in the next calls to illustrate possible scenario the FiTI has to deal with.

**NEXT CALL:**

- Continue discussion on part 3 of the table in the Input Document and subsequent questions
- Prepare input of Working Group to 3<sup>rd</sup> International Advisory Group meeting in Nouakchott (4 February 2016)

**ANNEX**

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