Economic Commission for Europe

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Team of Specialists on Sustainable Fisheries
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Implementation and documentation

Template for the development of case studies on UN/FLUX implementation

Summary

In line with its Programme of Work (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2018/22), the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Team of Specialists on Sustainable Fisheries engages in communication and outreach activities (Working Area 3) to facilitate the sharing of experiences and lessons learned in the implementation of fishery data standards. This document provides a template for the collection of case studies on the implementation of the United Nations Fisheries Language for Universal Exchange (UN/FLUX).

Document TOSSF/2019/INF.3 is submitted to the second session of the Team of Specialists on Sustainable Fisheries for discussion.

I. Background

1.   In line with its Programme of Work (ECE/TRADE/C/CEFACT/2018/22), the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Team of Specialists on Sustainable Fisheries (TOS on SF) engages on communication and outreach activities (Working Area 3) to facilitate the sharing of experiences and lessons learned in the implementation of fishery data standards.

2.   The purpose of this template is to guide the collection of qualitative and quantitative data and relevant information regarding the implementation of UN/FLUX in different countries with the aim of developing case studies on the use of the standard.

3.   Respondents are invited to provide references to reliable sources of information (ex. Links to official websites).

II. Questionnaire

Question 1:   Please provide the **context** surrounding and **rationale** behind the decision to implement UN/FLUX (150 words)

Question 2:   **Stakeholders**. Which agencies or organizations are involved in the implementation process, and what are their roles? (70 words)

Question 3:   **Implementation** stage. To what extent has UN/FLUX been implemented? How many and which of its domains have been implemented? Why were these domains prioritised? What are the main factors that have influenced the process of its implementation? (250 words)

Question 4:   **The timeframe** of the UN/FLUX implementation. When was the implementation process initiated? If UN/FLUX is not yet operational when it will be? (50 words)

Question 5:   Actual and anticipated **benefits** of implementing UN/FLUX. (200 words)

Question 6:   **Figures / Statistics**. Please provide data on the amount of fish/fish sales and catches reported via UN/FLUX. It is important to indicate these statistics about fishery activities managed at the national/RFB/RFMO level. (250 words)

Question 7:   Reference to the **legal/regulatory** framework in support of UN/FLUX implementation (legislation/regulation that adopts UN/FLUX as a standard) (150 words)

Question 8:   **Lessons learned about benefits and challenges.** How would you qualitatively describe the implementation experience, and how would you advise others approach implementation? (*300 words*)

Question 9:   **Link to SDGs[1].** How will implementing UN/FLUX contribute to the achievement of the SDGs? One likely impact could be on Indicator 14.4.1, *Proportion of fish stocks within biologically sustainable levels.* (*200 words*)

Question 10:   **Contact information.** Please include an email address or another appropriate contact method for those wishing to learn more about these experiences.

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[1] UN/FLUX is directly linked to the SDG 14 (Life Below Water), namely Target 14.4, which focuses on ending illegal and illicit fishing and overfishing, and destructive fishing practices and implementing science-based management plans by 2020; SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), especially Target 12.2, that focuses on achieving sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources.

Annex
UN/FLUX Case Study – Thailand Implementing UN/FLUX

Thailand Implementing UN/FLUX

Thailand is one of the world's top fishing nations, averaging 2 million tonnes of maritime catch per year, with the fisheries sector accounting for 1.2% of national GDP, and 9.9% of agricultural GDP (FAO 2008). Combating illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing is high on the country's political agenda. Therefore, setting up systematic mechanisms that allow the effective monitoring and control of fishing activities is extremely important. UN/FLUX is a new global standard for fisheries data exchange, whose implementation would support Thailand's efforts to achieving its IUU-free objective.

Purpose

In addition to becoming IUU-free, implementing UN/FLUX could contribute to reducing overfishing, creating barriers to sales of illegally caught fish, and more efficient fishery data management.

Stakeholders

The Digital Government Development Agency (DGA), responsible for representing Thailand as its IT hub, is technically in charge of UN/FLUX implementation. However, the primary data sources are the Department of Fisheries and Marine Department, operationally coordinated by the Command Centre for Combating IUU Fishing (CCCIF).

Implementation stage

Thailand is conducting a technical feasibility study, focusing primarily on the domains of Licenses, Vessel, Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) and Fishing Activities. Thailand prioritised these domains to align with the country's regulations, operational requirements and technical support resources.

Timeframe

Thailand is in the first stage to officially establish UN/FLUX as its data exchange standard for fisheries. After the feasibility study, the next steps will be testing the data exchange, and final political approval. The CCCIF and DGA experts estimate that Thailand could begin data exchange using UN/FLUX by April 2019.

Benefits

The complete implementation of UN/FLUX will be mutually beneficial for both the government sector and fishery-related industries. This standard could greatly enhance the interoperability of IT systems among different organisations in the fisheries supply chain. Better fisheries-related data management could then lead to advanced tracking opportunities, increasing the transparency of fisheries value chains. The approximately 2 million people employed in the sector, of whom 40% are fishermen and fish farmers (FAO

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2008), may benefit from preserving future fish stocks and ensuring economic security for their families. Furthermore, UN/FLUX could help communicate the country's achievements combating IUU across the world. Finally, the implementation of the standard could contribute to better cooperation among countries heavily invested in the fishing industry.

Facts and figures

According to Thailand's latest official report to the FAO, the average amount of marine catch in Thailand between 2004 and 2014 was 2.048 million tonnes per year. Once UN/FLUX is active, the source of vessel data will be from VMS tracking systems. Currently, there are 5,645 VMS-ready licensed fishing vessels that VMS tracking facilities can monitor, which account for 53% of all licensed fishing vessels in the country.

Lessons learned

The full implementation of UN/FLUX requires cooperation from multiple relevant sectors. Not only do the government sector and fishery-related industries benefit from such practice, but organisations with similar interests in other countries would gain as well. Both national and international collaborations can pose challenges, and Thailand aims to develop lessons learned based on their experiences. The implementation success will depend on how the main stakeholders' data will be managed. The creation and

integration of a data ecosystem based on global data exchange standards may lead to the sustainability of marine resources and improved data-management infrastructure.

Sustainable Development Goals

The implementation of UN/FLUX would facilitate the conservation and sustainable use of ocean, sea and marine resources for sustainable fishing (SDG 14.4), sustainable management and use of natural resources (SDG 12.2), and sustainable food production and resilient agricultural practices (SDG 2.4).

Further Information

For further information on Thailand's implementation experiences, kindly contact their Digital Government Agency at: contact@dga.or.th

For further information on the UNECE Team of Specialists on Sustainable Fisheries, kindly navigate to: www.unece.org/uncefact/unflux