

**Report of the Meeting of the  
Port Inspection Expert Group for Capacity Building and Assistance (PIEG)**  
*(Online, 22 February 2024)*

**1. Opening of the meeting**

The Meeting of the Port Inspection Expert Group for Capacity Building and Assistance (PIEG) held online on 22 February 2024 was opened by its Chair, Mr. Alexandre Kempff (European Union – European Fisheries Control Agency (EU-EFCA)), who welcomed participants and wished the Group fruitful deliberations. The ICCAT Secretariat also welcomed and thanked members for their participation and expressed optimism for productive conclusions.

**2. Adoption of the Agenda and meeting arrangements**

The draft Agenda for the meeting was unanimously adopted by the Group without any comments or concerns from members after it had been presented by the Chair item by item and is attached as **Appendix 1**. Mr. Frank Eshun (Ghana) was appointed Rapporteur for the Meeting, without objections from participants. Under item 6 “other matters”, as a follow-up to last year’s Meeting, the Chair indicated his intention to discuss the issue related to the publication of the ICCAT Manual on Port Inspection.

The List of participants is contained in **Appendix 2**.

**3. Review of progress since last Meeting**

The Chair reminded the Group of the uniqueness of the Meeting highlighting early occurrence (in February 2024) as opposed to previous years ([PIEG Meeting](#) in June 2022 and [PIEG Meeting](#) in May 2023) and called on participants to report to the Group activities they have done regarding training and capacity building in port inspections under the ICCAT scheme.

The EU-EFCA reported its PIEG-related activities undertaken in the previous year, in particular evaluation missions that were undertaken, the training sessions held in Côte d’Ivoire and Nigeria (selection of these two CPCs was discussed in the previous PIEG Meetings), which helped to address training needs and requests identified during evaluation missions. The two (2) countries were within the first priority CPCs. The Group was also informed that the United States could not send a trainer to Nigeria as proposed earlier because of logistical reasons. The first training (two full days) which was organized in Côte d’Ivoire (Abidjan) in July 2023 was attended by 29 participants from fisheries inspection, customs, port authorities, and other maritime agencies. The second training (two days and a half) happened in Nigeria (Lagos) in July 2023 with 24 participants from various national maritime and security agencies like that of Côte d’Ivoire’s. The feedback indicated that participants showed interest and were satisfied with the training but would have preferred to have more time dedicated to practical sessions. The Manual that had been printed by the ICCAT Secretariat and the presentations that were made by the trainer were given based on the [Recommendation by ICCAT on port State measures to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing \(Rec. 18-09\)](#). Finally, the Group was informed there is a need to follow up on the training sessions to assess the needs of two additional countries with respect to the new methodology.

The United States reported that it could not send a trainer to Nigeria for the evaluation training due to Visa acquisition issues. The United States indicated its interest in similar future opportunities. There were no ICCAT-specific activities undertaken but it has been running similar projects in Colombia, Ecuador and Peru, focusing on the Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA) implementation. A similar project was run in Southeast Asia with Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam and some others.

Canada indicated that it did not organise or contribute in ICCAT training-related activities but had port-related trainings with Indonesia, Peru and some others.

Namibia reported on a two-day training session for its inspectors in May 2023 focusing on port inspection and risk assessment. Like Canada and the United States, there were no ICCAT-specific trainings held.

Panama highlighted that two of its inspectors were sent to a United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)-funded three-week training on the PSMA implementation held in Vigo (Spain). Inspectors had the chance to look at a wide range of scenarios related to their work and to visit the EFCA coordination centre. Morocco benefitted from a training organized by the EU-EFCA (December 2023) in the framework of the “e-FishMed” Project funded by the EU. The focus was on risk management, and it was very useful for participants.

Senegal reported that it benefitted from an FAO-funded training on risks and Fisheries Monitoring Centre (FMC) operators in July 2023.

The Republic of Guinea indicated that it had support from the FAO for a training on the PSMA implementation. The focus was on how to deal with port entry and risks analysis. There was also a practical experience in port inspections. The involvement of port and other maritime authorities was to improve collaboration among these state agencies. In all, 15 agents were trained. It also reported that with the help of its donor partners, a six-member team of its inspectors received training in PSMA implementation to deal with foreign fishing vessels entering its ports. Additionally, preparations are underway to train a team of four experts onsite in data processing in the context of catches in March 2024.

The Chair urged each participant to report training activities under the FAO capacity building portal to each other so that future trainings in respect to the West Africa Fisheries Project could be planned taken into consideration what had been done. He also highlighted that a link<sup>1</sup> had been provided during the latest PIEG Meeting for experts to obtain information on FAO, EU and other Donor Partner-funded programmes. Again, the EU indicated it is working on disseminating training manuals and developing an e-FishMed platform that would be available to EU Member States as Project partners (France, Italy, Malta, Portugal and Spain) as well as non-EU Member States around the Mediterranean (Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia) as beneficiaries. The goal is to train inspectors on subjects like sea and ports inspections among others. The Chair further indicated that experts from Beneficiary Countries can be granted access to online training platforms upon request.

Equatorial Guinea reported that its inspectors need training on ICCAT and FAO regulations and port inspection to be able to man its several new port infrastructures efficiently. The Chair took note and indicated that this request should be channelled through the ICCAT Secretariat.

#### **4. Determination of next steps in the assessment of needs and review of training requests**

#### **5. Consideration of opportunities and partners to deliver training in 2024 including use of FAO funds**

These two Agenda items were discussed together.

The Chair recalled that questionnaires and self-evaluation questionnaires were made available to make it possible for the Group to identify and update the priorities in the CPCs based on needs. So far, three groups of CPCs have been identified (groups “A”, “B” and “C”) depending on the degree of priority; “A” (Côte d’Ivoire and Nigeria), “B” (Republic of Guinea, Namibia and Senegal) and “C” (Mauritania, São Tomé e Príncipe and Sierra Leone).

The ICCAT Secretariat confirmed that no updates of training courses and new requests were received. Meanwhile, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea was asked to fill out and submit a questionnaire for assistance upon their request during the Meeting. It indicated that FAO has funds for two ICCAT-specific evaluation missions and training sessions for the year. The ICCAT Secretariat further explained that according to the FAO rules, the fund will cover trainers’ costs only; participants who are nationals of the host countries will not be covered.

St Vincent and Grenadines put in a request for assistance regarding the FAO-funded training.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.fao.org/iuu-fishing/capacity-development/en/>

Canada asked for an extension of the deadline concerning filling out and submission of training questionnaires. The Chair indicated that the ICCAT Secretariat has sent the link to experts to access the questionnaires<sup>2</sup> and further urged them to fill out (or update) the questionnaires meticulously and submit them. The Republic of Guinea and Namibia confirmed interest in the training and requested support from PIEG trainers, in particular from Canada, EU-EFCA and the United States. The Chair further reported that the EU's Programme for Improved Regional Fisheries Governance in Western Africa (PESCAO) Project, which began in 2018 came to an end in 2023 with a closing seminar with the beneficiaries and that a follow-up project West Africa Sustainable Ocean Programme (WASOP) would be launched soon; training experts are needed in this regard to address the needs expressed by Republic of Guinea and Namibia.

Canada and the USA offered to provide trainers for the evaluation/training exercises in the Republic of Guinea and Namibia but would confirm their availability later, preferably during the second half of the year, after August 2024.

The ICCAT Secretariat suggested that it would be appropriate to send Francophone and Anglophone trainers to the Republic of Guinea and Namibia respectively.

For the next PIEG meeting in 2025, Canada proposed to review and update the two questionnaire templates that were elaborated in 2017-2018 for the needs assessment. The Chair agreed and indicated this point will be included in the next year's meeting agenda.

## **6. Other matters**

The Chair asked the Group whether the ICCAT training manual for port inspections should be made public or remain restricted. It was agreed that it will be published on the [ICCAT website](#). Equatorial Guinea indicated that it would put in the questionnaire.

The ICCAT Secretariat thanked Ghana for stepping in for the "rapporteur" role.

## **7. Adoption of report and adjournment**

The Group agreed to the Chair's proposal that the Rapporteur prepare a draft report of the meeting for the ICCAT Secretariat to circulate to PIEG members by email for adoption by correspondence.

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<sup>2</sup> Circular No. 00191/2024 of 10 January 2024.

**Agenda**

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Adoption of the Agenda and meeting arrangements
3. Review of progress since previous meeting, including results of the Côte d'Ivoire needs assessment
4. Consideration of opportunities and partners to deliver training utilizing the new manual
5. Determination of next steps in the assessment of needs and review of training requests
6. Other matters
7. Adoption of report and adjournment

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