

Update of activities for the Port Inspection Expert Group for Capacity Building and Assistance (PIEG) in 2023

ICCAT Secretariat

Working Group

The [Meeting of the Port Inspection Expert Group for Capacity Building and Assistance \(PIEG\)](#) was held online on 30 May 2023, with the participation of 16 experts in total from Contracting Parties, Cooperating non-Contracting Parties, Entities, Fishing Entities. The discussions centered around the review of progress since the previous meeting ([June 2022](#)), particularly regarding the training activities carried out by the CPCs on port inspection. Consideration of opportunities and partners to deliver training, the determination of next steps in the assessment of needs and review of training requests were also raised.

ICCAT Port State Measures (PSM) Inspector Training Manual

The Manual had been updated and revised according to the discussions conducted during the Working Group: the regulatory references and footnotes had been removed, retaining only the titles of the ICCAT Recommendations. The Manuals had been printed in the three versions (100 in French, 75 in Spanish and 100 in English) and each participant received the Manual during inspectors' training courses held in Côte d'Ivoire and Nigeria.

As the Manuals had been developed primarily for the authorities and authorised staff of the CPCs, its use remains for the moment with restricted access. The possibility of making it public will be further discussed with experts during the 2024 meeting.

Training

The Working Group confirmed the prioritisation of the needs for CPCs based on an assessment of the responses to the questionnaire on capacities and training needs that was developed by the Group in 2018. During 2023, ICCAT Port Inspection Needs Assessments and subsequent Training Courses were held in Côte d'Ivoire and Nigeria.

In Côte d'Ivoire, the needs assessment mission took place on 19-20 April 2023 and the training was delivered on 10-11 July 2023 in French in Abidjan, with effective support from the Côte d'Ivoire authorities in charge of fisheries. The main purpose of this training, based on the [Recommendation by ICCAT on port state measures to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing \[Rec 18-09\]](#), was to work on a methodology of inspection to implement in the best way the obligations of the Port State CPC.

In Nigeria, the needs assessment mission took place on 5-7 June 2023 and the training was delivered on 18-20 July 2023 in English in Lagos. The objectives were similar to the ones in Côte d'Ivoire, concentrating on the obligations of Port State CPC.

These training courses highlighted the importance of inter-administrative cooperation, particularly regarding issues of port entry permits for foreign fishing vessels. The next step would be to organise another training session in these two CPCs with practical cases (tabletop exercises, "inspections" in port).

With a view to planning future training courses and needs assessment missions, one training course and one needs assessment mission could be carried out per year over the duration of the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO/ABNJ) funding (for the next four years). The Circulars #10903/23 on 4 October 2023 and #3915/ 23 on 8 May 2023 were sent to request CPCs to submit either new or revised assessment forms (Pre-assessment form and in some cases also the Self-Assessment form) to the Secretariat to assess the possible needs, before the end of 2023. These will be taken into account and reviewed at the next meeting of the PIEG. Additionally, it is important to exchange information about the cooperation or training courses that the CPCs have already received (topics and participants) to improve coordination and to avoid duplication.

Funds and Contributions

In 2023, the training sessions conducted in Côte d'Ivoire and Nigeria were mainly thanks to the assistance (financial and/or in-kind) of the European Union (European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA)), Senegal and the United States.

Since July 2023, the Secretariat has received the first funds from the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to carry out this activity under the ABNJ Common Oceans Project Phase II. This new fund should help to conduct further training courses that can be held over the coming years.

Any type of voluntary contribution is encouraged, particularly in-kind contributions from evaluators, trainers and/or consultant experts in the field. Canada, European Union, Senegal, and the United States have already indicated their interest in taking part in the training courses as trainers, and further details should be discussed at the next meeting of the PIEG. Such in-kind contributions would however be subject to availability by experts on a country-by-country basis.