



A Webinar on
**Understanding Global Experiences in
Regional Cooperation to Curb IUU Fishing**



*Organised Under the
Aegis of BOBLME-II Project*

Implemented By



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

Funded By



 **Norway**

Executed By



PROSPECTUS

23 March 2026
1400-1700 Hours (IST)

If interested, please register:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/joinMeeting?meetingid=9876543210>

Background

The Bay of Bengal Regional Plan of Action on IUU Fishing (BOB RPOA-IUU) was adopted by the four BOBP-IGO member-countries – Bangladesh, India, Maldives and Sri Lanka – in February 2025. This is the first regional IUU governance instrument for the Bay of Bengal, and its adoption marks the shift from policy to implementation. Under BOBLME-II, BOBP-IGO supports the operationalisation of the RPOA-IUU, contributing to Outcome 1.2: IUU catch in the BOBLME reduced.

Other regions: Southeast Asia, the Mediterranean, the Pacific, and the Southwest Indian Ocean, have developed cooperation mechanisms over decades, with measurable results. The Bay of Bengal stands to benefit directly from these experiences as it moves from plan adoption to coordinated action.

Purpose

The webinar is a peer-learning forum. Its purpose is to help BOBLME countries and BOBP-IGO understand how other regions have converted IUU cooperation plans into operational routines – covering information exchange, vessel registers, port state controls, joint surveillance and market measures – and to identify what is realistically transferable to the Bay of Bengal context.

Objectives

- Build practical understanding of the institutional designs, legal tools, operational mechanisms and lessons from five regional IUU cooperation experiences.
- Identify transferable elements for BOB RPOA-IUU implementation and agree on concrete follow-up actions within the BOBLME-II project framework.

Regional Experiences Featured

WECAFC / Caribbean	Regional Plan of Action on IUU in the WECAFC area of competence: The Plan proposes to curb IUU fishing in the area of competence of the Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission (WECAFC) through effective regional cooperation among its 34 Member States and other subregional organizations.
Southeast Asia	ASEAN RPOA-IUU (coordinated through SEAFDEC): voluntary ministerial instrument, coordination committee, MCS information-sharing network, transshipment controls.
Indonesia – Malaysia	Bilateral MOU and joint patrol arrangement: incident-handling protocols, focal-point system and coordinated patrols despite unresolved maritime boundary – directly relevant to Bay of Bengal sovereignty sensitivities.
Mediterranean	GFCM RPOA-IUU (2017): binding compliance framework, IUU vessel list, harmonised port state scheme, regional VMS standards and catch documentation schemes – most institutionally comprehensive model.
Pacific	Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) and Niue Treaty framework: binding surveillance treaty, joint operations covering 21 million km ² , regional vessel register and e-PSM system – most operationally advanced model with quantified IUU reductions.
South West Indian Ocean	SADC MCS Coordination Centre: coordination of regional fisheries MCS activities by facilitating cooperation, information sharing, and harmonised tools that strengthen Member States' capacity to combat IUU fishing. SWIOFC Minimum Terms & Conditions: harmonizing regional standards for granting foreign fishing access to waters under the competence of the Commission, by strengthening MCS measures to improve compliance, enhance cooperation, and IUU fishing.

Target Audience

National focal points / officials / MCS specialists from Fisheries administrations; legal experts; researchers from Bangladesh, India, Maldives and Sri Lanka; FAO, BOBP-IGO staff; and invited regional resource persons.

Expected Outputs

- **Webinar proceedings:** recording, slides and curated resource pack of RPOA instruments and templates
- **Comparative synthesis notes** mapping transferable cooperation mechanisms to BOB RPOA-IUU implementation priorities
- **Agreed action matrix:** three to five concrete follow-up steps with responsible leads under BOBLME-II coordination.



PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME

23 March 2026 | 14:00 – 17:00 IST



Virtual (Online)

Time (IST)	Activity	Speaker / Facilitator
Opening		
14:00 – 14:05	Welcome and Context Setting	Dr. P Krishnan <i>Director, BOBP-IGO</i>
14:05 – 14:10	Opening remarks	Dr. Rishi Sharma <i>FAO, Rome</i>
14:10 – 14:20	The BOB RPOA-IUU: From Adoption to Implementation: What we intend to learn today	Mr. Rajdeep Mukherjee <i>Policy Analyst, BOBP-IGO</i>
Regional Experiences in collaboration		
14:20 – 14:35	Curbing IUU Fishing in Small-Scale Fisheries Contexts — Lessons from the WECAFC RPOA-IUU	Ms. Yvette Diei Ouadi <i>WECAFC Secretariat FAO/UN, Rome, Italy</i>
14:35 – 14:50	Southeast Asia: Regional Technical Organization Facilitating Capacity Building and Collaboration	Mr. Kongpathai Saraphaivanich <i>Training and Research Supporting Division Head, SEAFDEC</i>
14:50 – 15:05	Indonesia – Malaysia: Bilateral cooperation in Joint patrols, focal-point system and incident-handling protocols (<i>TBC</i>)	Dr. Fayakun Satria Dr. Duto Nugroho <i>Senior Researchers Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, Indonesia</i> Dr. Sallehudin Jamon <i>Research Officer Dept. of Fisheries, Malaysia</i>
15:05 – 15:20	Mediterranean: The GFCM compliance framework IUU vessel list, port state scheme and catch documentation	Dr. Miguel Bernal <i>Executive Secretary, GFCM Secretariat, FAO Rome</i>

Time (IST)	Activity	Speaker / Facilitator
15:20 – 15:35	Pacific: FFA operations and the Niue Treaty system Joint surveillance operations, regional vessel register and e-PSM system (TBC)	Mr. Noan David Pakop <i>Director-General Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) Honiara</i>
15:35 – 16:00	South West Indian Ocean: The SADC MCS Coordination Centre - coordinating regional fisheries MCS to combat IUU fishing The SWIOFC Minimum Terms & Conditions - harmonizing regional rules for foreign fishing access by strengthening MCS to curb IUU fishing	Dr. Stanley Ndara <i>Chair of SADC Board of Directors</i> Mr. Jon Lansley <i>SWIOFC Secretary</i>
Remarks		
16:00 – 16:20	Linkage to IPOA-IUU, Port state measures and Bay of Bengal capacity needs	Dr. Alicia Mosteiro Cabanela <i>PSMA Secretariat, FAO, Rome</i> Ms. Angela Lentisco <i>FAO-RAP, Bangkok</i>
Moderated Panel Discussion and Q&A		
16:20 – 16:50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which cooperation mechanisms changed behaviour most? • What makes regional vessel information exchange operational? • Cooperation despite maritime boundary sensitivities • Realistic first-year success indicators for the Bay of Bengal 	Moderator: Dr. Rishi Sharma Panelists: Regional speakers + national representatives from Bangladesh, India, Maldives and Sri Lanka.
Closing		
16:50 – 17:00	Closing Remarks and Next Steps Post-webinar deliverables, timeline and follow-up coordination	Dr. P Krishnan <i>Director, BOBP-IGO</i>



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Appendix

How we visualize the webinar to inform implementation of BOB RPOA-IUU*

Presentation	Presentation coverage	BOB RPOA-IUU Actions Covered
<p>1. WECAFC / Caribbean</p> <p><i>IUU fishing in small-scale fisheries contexts</i></p> <p><i>WECAFC Secretariat / CRFM, Belize City</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WECAFC instrument design choices for small-scale fleets: 12m LOA threshold, VGSSF grounding, community monitoring Gear marking as the most practical near-term IUU deterrent for all vessel sizes – and its dual use as an environmental tool Inter-agency coordination in low-capacity SIDS contexts: what is realistic Why NPOAs need a credible small-scale fisheries chapter to generate political buy-in Three transferable lessons for BOB: vessel record design, gear marking, and NPOA-SSF linkage 	<p>Action 4: NPOA-IUU with VGSSF reference (BOB RPOA-IUU explicitly cites VG-SSF)</p> <p>Action 7: Vessel record designed for small-scale fleet</p> <p>Action 8: Vessel marking including small vessels</p> <p>Action 11: Gear marking – FAO Voluntary Guidelines (also BOBLME-II Component 3)</p> <p>Action 12: IUU vessel listing with due process</p> <p>Action 14: Catch documentation proportionate to risk</p> <p>Action 20: Capacity development for developing countries</p>
<p>2. Southeast Asia</p> <p><i>ASEAN RPOA-IUU and Port State Measures</i></p> <p><i>SEAFDEC / RPOA-IUU Secretariat</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How the coordination committee and secretariat model works in practice PSMA operationalisation: designated ports, advance notification, denial-of-entry procedures Building port inspection capacity from near-zero across countries at different PSMA accession stages MCS information-sharing network: what data is shared, how, and how often Transshipment controls and how the ASEAN RPOA addresses flag-hopping 	<p>Action 2: National focal points and inter-agency coordination</p> <p>Action 4: NPOA-IUU aligned with PSMA</p> <p>Action 5: NPOA-MCS implementation</p> <p>Action 9: Port inspection SOPs</p> <p>Action 10: Joint MCS procedures</p> <p>Action 16: Inter-agency collaboration</p> <p>Action 19: Technical assistance</p>
<p>3. Indonesia – Malaysia</p> <p><i>Bilateral cooperation in contested waters</i></p> <p><i>PSDKP, Indonesia / Dept of Fisheries, Malaysia</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ‘Without prejudice’ design: how enforcement cooperation proceeds despite unresolved maritime boundaries Focal-point system: who calls whom, on what trigger, and with what authority Incident-handling protocols distinguishing small-scale incidental encroachment from deliberate IUU Joint patrol coordination: planning, communication, and follow-up What has worked and what has not – frank assessment of bilateral cooperation limits 	<p>Action 2: Focal points and joint patrols in ABNJ</p> <p>Action 5: MCS harmonisation (Chittagong Resolution)</p> <p>Action 6: Policy alignment to prevent flag-hopping</p> <p>Action 10: Joint MCS and enforcement procedures</p> <p>Action 16: Inter-agency coordination</p>

Presentation	Presentation coverage	BOB RPOA-IUU Actions Covered
<p>4. Mediterranean <i>GFCM compliance framework</i> <i>GFCM Secretariat, FAO Rome</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IUU vessel listing: how vessels get listed, what due process looks like, and how the list is used operationally • Authorised vessel record as the positive complement to the IUU list • Catch documentation scheme: design, implementation and linkage to PSMA • How an advisory body builds a compliance architecture without becoming a full enforcement agency • Lessons on political resistance to vessel listing and how it was managed 	<p>Action 7: Regional vessel record Action 12: IUU vessel listing – fair, transparent, non-discriminatory Action 13: Classification of fish and fishery products Action 14: Harmonised catch documentation scheme (VGCDs) Action 17: Regional information-sharing Action 18: Monitoring magnitude of IUU fishing</p>
<p>5. Pacific <i>FFA operations and the Niue Treaty system</i> <i>Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Niue Treaty Subsidiary Agreement: legal architecture enabling cross-border boarding and enforcement • Regional vessels register and ‘good standing’ conditions that gate access to member waters • Operation Kurukuru: what joint surveillance at scale looks like with measurable outputs • e-PSM system: how port state measures have been digitised and standardised • Defining success in operational metrics rather than policy outputs – and why these matters for political support 	<p>Action 7: Regional vessel record Action 8: Vessel marking and IMO numbers Action 9: Port state measure SOPs Action 10: Joint MCS, patrols and observer programmes Action 15: Regional MCS toolbox Action 17: Information-sharing mechanism Action 19: Technical assistance for MCS</p>
<p>6. South West Indian Ocean <i>SADC MCS Coordination Centre</i> <i>SWIOFC / SADC MCSCC, Maputo</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination-centre model: shared services without a new enforcement authority • SWIOFC Minimum Terms and Conditions for foreign fishing access – a replicable regional policy instrument • Regional vessels register and data exchange architecture • Port state measures support as a shared service • Honest assessment: funding sustainability, data governance trust and variable national capacity 	<p>Action 2: Inter-agency coordination Action 6: Policy alignment for registration and licensing of foreign vessels Action 7: Regional vessel record Action 16: Formal inter-agency collaboration mechanism Action 17: Regional information-sharing Action 20: Capacity development for inter-agency cooperation</p>

**Indicative; Developed with AI inputs for initial guidance only*