



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
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DEPARTMENT OF  
FISHERIES



**BOBP**

*Report on the National Workshop on*  
**Port State Measures Agreement  
to Combat IUU Fishing (PSMA)**

**10 - 11 Feb 2025**  
**Hotel Taj Vivanta, Kochi**



## About the Organisers



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations

### Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

FAO is a specialized UN agency founded in 1945 to combat global hunger and promote sustainable agricultural development. Headquartered in Rome, FAO works with governments and international organizations to improve food security, nutrition, and rural livelihoods. It plays a key role in fisheries and aquaculture governance, developing international agreements.



DEPARTMENT OF  
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### Department of Fisheries (DoF)

The Department of Fisheries (DoF), under the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying, is a key government body responsible for the development and regulation of India's fisheries sector. Established in 2019, the DoF focuses on formulating policies, implementing schemes, and advising state governments and union territories on matters related to inland, marine, and coastal fisheries. Over the past decade, the DoF has catalysed transformative growth in the fisheries sector through strategic interventions, shaping up a robust and sustainable future for India's fisheries sector, contributing to economic development and rural prosperity.



### Bay of Bengal Inter Governmental Organisation (BOBP-IGO)

The BOBP-IGO is an intergovernmental regional fisheries advisory body with Bangladesh, India, Maldives and Sri Lanka as its contracting parties. It is mandated to enhance cooperation amongst its member countries and other countries for sustainable fisheries management in the Bay of Bengal region. Formed in 2003, BOBP-IGO works closely with its member countries to address key challenges in marine fisheries, and fisheries-dependent livelihoods.



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**Bay of Bengal Programme**  
Inter-Governmental Organisation

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## Meeting Coordination & Report Preparation

The National Workshop on Port State Measures Agreement to Combat IUU Fishing (PSMA) was jointly organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental Organisation (BOBP-IGO) and was hosted by the Department of Fisheries (DoF), Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, and Dairying, Government of India, during 13 February 2025.

This report on the “National Workshop on Port State Measures Agreement to Combat IUU Fishing (PSMA)” is prepared by BOBP-IGO.

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of BOBP-IGO concerning the legal or development status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

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## Executive Summary

The PSMA Workshop on Combatting IUU Fishing was conducted from 10–11 February 2025 at Kochi, India. The Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental Organisation (BOBP-IGO) organized the workshop in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and the Department of Fisheries (DoF). It aimed to strengthen the Indian approach in implementing PSMA and fisheries governance by bringing together government officials, legal experts, fisheries researchers, and industry stakeholders.

The PSMA, the world's first legally binding international agreement to address IUU fishing, has strong momentum worldwide. India has since recognized this importance, and is taking steps to bring its fisheries governance framework in line with international best practices. The workshop was dedicated to the review on India's Legislative preparedness, capacity-building, inter-agency coordination and, and the role of PSMA in enhancing maritime trade and economic opportunities.

Some of the key discussions held were on India's vessel classification system, technological developments like the indigenous vessel monitoring system, and the importance of regional cooperation in addressing the menace of illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing.

The technical sessions witnessed presentations from the FAO experts viz., Dr. Matthew Camilleri (FAO), Senior Fisheries Officer and Ms. Alicia Mosteiro Cabanelas, Fisheries Officer (PSMA/IUU Fishing); national experts viz., Shri. M. Habibullah, Director, CIFNET, Dr. Mohammed Koya, FDC, DoF, and Dr. M. Karthikeyan, Director, MPEDA.

The speakers addressed crucial elements of PSMA viz., legal aspects, compliance measures, enforcement hurdles, and economic influences. The discussions further covered on-board AI-based surveillance tools, such as Skylight for better maritime monitoring.

The workshop ended with practical recommendations regarding amendments to lawmakers, capacity-building initiatives, enhanced data-sharing mechanisms, and strengthened inter-agency coordination.



## Abbreviations

AI	Artificial Intelligence
AIS	Automatic Identification System
CCAMLR	Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EPSM	Electronic Port State Measures
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GIES	Global Information Exchange System
GIS	Geographic Information System
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMO	International Maritime Organization
IOTC	Indian Ocean Tuna Commission
IPOA-IUU	International Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
IUU	Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (Fishing)
MCS	Monitoring, Control, and Surveillance
MFISH	Marine Fishery Information System Hub
MPEDA	Marine Products Export Development Authority
MZI	Maritime Zones of India
PPSMA	Procedures for the Port State Measures Agreement
PSMA	Port State Measures Agreement
RFB	Regional Fisheries Body
RFMO	Regional Fisheries Management Organization
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SIOFA	Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement
TNNLU	Tamil Nadu National Law University
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
VMS	Vessel Monitoring System

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Participants at the workshop on Port State Measures Agreement to Combat IUU Fishing (PSMA); 10 – 11 February 2025; Kochi, India.



# Report on the National Workshop on Port State Measures Agreement to Combat IUU Fishing (PSMA)

10 – 11 February 2025, Kochi, India

## 1.0 Background

Illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing is recognized as a global threat to fisheries sustainability as well as safety and livelihoods of the fishing communities. In 2015, the United Nations (UN) General Assembly noted that IUU fishing is “one of the greatest threats to fish stocks and marine ecosystems and continues to have serious and major implications for the conservation and management of ocean resources, as well as the food security and economies of many States, particularly developing States” (UNGA 2015: para 56). Three UN Specialized Agencies – the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), and the International Maritime Organization (IMO) – have developed instruments relating to sustainable harvesting, working conditions, and vessel safety on board fishing vessels. Common to these instruments is that they contain port state measures for enforcement.

The Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA) of 2009 is the first legally binding international agreement to target IUU fishing. It entered into force in June 2016 and, as of now, has been ratified by 79 countries, underscoring a collective international effort to safeguard and promote sustainable fishing practices.

The primary goal of the Agreement is to prevent and deter IUU fishing by restricting port access for vessels involved in these activities. By denying these vessels the opportunity to land their illicit catches, and blocks illegally sourced fish from entering local and global markets. the PSMA disrupts the economic incentives driving IUU fishing.

The agenda of the workshop is given in Annex 1 and the list of participants is given in Annex 2.

## 2.0 Technical Session

The Technical session set the stage for in-depth discussions on policy frameworks, implementation strategies, and technological advancements aimed at strengthening fisheries governance in India and the broader Bay of Bengal region. The opening session laid a strong foundation for subsequent discussions, reinforcing the importance of collaborative efforts between governmental agencies, international organizations, and technological innovations in achieving effective fisheries governance.





## 2.1 Opening Session

Dr P. Krishnan, Director, BOBP-IGO, in his opening remarks explained the recent steps taken by the Department of Fisheries, Government of India, in combating IUU Fishing and the steps taken by India in Joining the Agreement. He further provided an overview of status of PSMA in the region and explained the significant advantages of India becoming a party to the agreement.

Dr. M. Habibullah, Director, CIFNET, acknowledged the pivotal role of the FAO advancing discussions on the PSMA in India. He emphasized that PSMA represents a significant step towards combating IUU fishing by strengthening port inspection protocols and enhancing inter-agency coordination. He highlighted the need for structured capacity-building initiatives to ensure effective implementation, particularly in training fisheries inspectors and port authorities on risk assessments, vessel verification processes, and compliance procedures. Drawing from global best practices, he noted that CIFNET is committed to equipping fisheries professionals with the necessary technical and operational expertise to align with international fisheries regulations.

## 2.2 Enhancing Fisheries Governance: The Role of Collaborative Port State Measures and Capacity Building



**Dr. Matthew Camilleri** leads the Fisheries Global and Regional Processes Team. His work focuses on promoting responsible fisheries, combating illegal fishing, and overseeing the implementation of key FAO agreements. He also serves as Technical Secretary for international fisheries guidelines and capacity development programs.

**Dr. Camilleri** addressed the workshop participants, emphasizing the collaborative nature of fisheries management and port state measures.

He explained how FAO supports countries through technical assistance and capacity development, structured around three fundamental pillars: policy and legislation support, institutional setup, and operational procedures. He emphasized that these elements must work in harmony - having excellent legislation without trained inspectors, or trained personnel without proper institutional coordination, would undermine the system's effectiveness.

Dr. Camilleri used relatable analogies to explain complex concepts, particularly comparing port state measures to airport operations where different agencies (immigration, customs, health) work together seamlessly. He stressed that port inspections must precede any port services, emphasizing the critical need for inter-agency coordination.

Regarding the PSMA, he detailed the practical aspects of implementation, explaining how vessels must request entry 48-72 hours in advance, similar to visa applications. He outlined the verification processes, risk assessments, and inspection procedures, emphasizing that PSMA isn't just about restrictions but can benefit countries by expanding their maritime trade and port services.

He concluded by highlighting that PSMA is not only relevant to countries receiving foreign vessels but also can be taken as a useful measure to access data on catch by the fishing vessels of fishes which are also reported from the national waters. He illustrated how Thailand, as an example, leveraged the provisions of the Agreement for significantly boosting the country's fish export economy. His presentation encouraged participants to view PSMA as an opportunity for economic growth rather than just a regulatory requirement.

## **2.3 India's Fisheries Governance**

**Dr. Mohammed Koya**, Fisheries Development Commissioner, Department of Fisheries, Government of India provided participants with a detailed overview of India's fishing industry and regulatory framework. He explained about the India's vessel classification system and highlighted India's robust resource assessment system, updated quinquennially, which shows that 80-90% of fisheries stocks remain in a healthy, sustainable state as of the 2023 assessment.

In discussing governance, Dr. Koya emphasized India's federal structure where provincial states manage territorial waters through a uniform fishing bill model provided by the central government. He noted that while the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) falls under union government jurisdiction, fishing vessels operate under state licensing across both territorial waters and the EEZ. The country implements comprehensive surveillance through multiple agencies, including coastal marine police, Indian Coast Guard, and Indian Navy, with the National Security Council Secretariat coordinating standard operating procedures.

Dr. Koya then addressed India's evolving position on foreign vessels, explaining that while currently restricted, the government is moving toward allowing foreign fish imports for processing and export purposes, aligning with the PSMA. He highlighted India's technological advances in monitoring, including an indigenous vessel monitoring system developed with the space research agency, currently installed in 70,000 vessels, featuring two-way communication capabilities and an Android application for easier compliance.

Concluding his address, Dr. Koya discussed India's international commitments, including participation in Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs). He emphasized ongoing efforts to develop comprehensive guidelines for EEZ and high seas fishing, which will strengthen the existing system and enhance India's capacity to combat unauthorized fishing activities in the Indian Ocean region.

## **2.4 India's Marine Fisheries Sector**

**Dr. M Karthikeyan**, Director, MPEDA, provided a comprehensive overview of India's marine fisheries sector, emphasizing its critical role in food security, employment, and economic growth. He highlighted the sector's historical significance, noting that fishing has been integral to India's culture for centuries, with sustainable practices naturally embedded in fishing communities even before modern regulations.

Dr. Karthikeyan explained the evolution of India's fisheries management, particularly focusing on the implementation of the Marine Fisheries Regulation Act (MFRA) following the model Marine Fisheries Regulations Bill in 1979. He discussed how the government has strengthened conservation efforts through measures such as extending the fishing ban from 45 to 61 days. He then elaborated on MPEDA's crucial role since 1972 in promoting exports and implementing traceability systems, noting the shift in export composition where aquaculture now contributes 65% of export value while marine fisheries account for 35%.

Regarding international compliance, Dr. Karthikeyan described India's proactive approach to meeting global requirements, such as implementing catch certification systems for the EU and Japan. He emphasized the importance of the Marine Fishery Information System Hub (MFISH) and the deployment of Sagar Mitras in fishing villages for improved data collection and traceability. On PSMA implementation, he advocated for viewing it as an opportunity to enhance India's processing capacity and export diversity, rather than as a regulatory burden. He concluded by stressing the importance of proactive trade compliance measures, citing India's successful response to requirements like the U.S. Marine Mammal Protection Act, finalization of Turtle



Excluder Device (TED) design with US NOAA and encouraged setting strong domestic standards that align with international norms while advancing India's fisheries management objectives.

## 2.5 Insights on PSMA Implementation

Dr. Camilleri clarified that PSMA, while focused on port state measures, supports broader international instruments and contributes to sustainable fisheries, shared stock management, and EEZ enforcement. Explaining its structure, he noted that PSMA is an Article 14 FAO agreement, with a Secretariat led by FAO and a core team managing its implementation. However, its effectiveness depends on the participating countries, which convene every two years in meetings of the parties, the next scheduled for April 2025 in Ecuador. He outlined the operational aspects of PSMA, including the establishment of a global information exchange system and three working groups focused on strategy, information sharing, and developing state requirements. Recent meetings, including the Strategy Working Group in Korea and the upcoming Technical Working Group in Paris, have been instrumental in advancing PSMA's implementation. Regional coordination meetings, such as the one in Japan for Asia, provide crucial technical discussions feeding into statutory meetings. He emphasized that PSMA has achieved one of the highest ratification rates among ocean governance instruments, with increasing global momentum, particularly in regions like the Pacific. Countries now recognize that non-participation is becoming an exception. Discussions on monitoring implementation continue, with self-assessment questionnaires providing insight into legislative alignment. While a compliance committee is not yet established, developing states' requirements are being considered. The PSMA questionnaire is currently limited to parties and RFMOs ensuring broad but structured engagement. Dr. Camilleri concluded by reiterating the importance of PSMA in strengthening fisheries governance, aligning conservation with sustainable fisheries management, and enhancing global cooperation on fisheries enforcement.

## 2.6 Global Monitoring and PSMA Implementation - Enhancing Fisheries Compliance



**Ms. Alicia Mosteiro Cabanelas**, Fisheries Officer at the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), specializing in combating IUU fishing. She plays a key role in the implementation of the PSMA and the development of global fisheries monitoring systems.

Ms. Cabanelas in her presentation emphasized the complexities of global fisheries, where vessels operate across different oceans, transshipment occurs separately, and landings take place elsewhere, making it challenging to track fish origins and legality. To ensure sustainability, vessels must have unique identifiers, such as IMO numbers, akin to passports, enabling effective monitoring. The FAO has established two global fisheries control systems: the Global Record of Fishing Vessels, which tracks internationally active vessels, and the PSMA Information Exchange System, which facilitates inspection data sharing to combat IUU fishing. These systems help port states assess vessel compliance profiles, prioritize high-risk inspections, and optimize resource allocation.

Countries must actively engage by designating national contact points and ports for effective enforcement. The number of inspectors required depends on entry points, and states can choose whether to designate ports for foreign vessels, with unauthorized port entries deemed illegal. The GIS system, operational for a year, aids in monitoring PSMA implementation through compliance indicators, while the Global Record tracks vessel histories, standardizing electronic data exchange for enforcement. The PSMA mandates flag states to respond to port state actions against illegal fishing, allowing suspected vessels to be inspected or denied entry. Effective fisheries regulation requires legal authority, institutional coordination, and operational enforcement, with fisheries inspectors relying on legal backing and law enforcement support. Violations such as fishing without a license are clear, while others, like misreporting fishing locations, require vessel monitoring system (VMS) verification. Denying port entry can have diplomatic implications, so it is reserved for strong suspicions, while inspections serve as a primary mechanism for identifying IUU fishing. Non-compliant vessels may be denied port services, with inspection results shared with flag states, RFMOs and the FAO under the PSMA framework. The GIS streamlines electronic data sharing, integrating national, regional, and global monitoring efforts, and enabling countries to register designated representatives for engagement. The PSMA website



provides resources such as operational guidelines, party status, and global monitoring dashboards, allowing public access to national contact points and designated ports.

User management tools enable the creation of accounts for inspectors and relevant authorities, assigning access levels for enforcement personnel. The inspection module standardizes data collection, cross-checking vessel records with the global system to highlight discrepancies. Inspectors enter details such as vessel authorization, prior port visits, ownership, and catch verification, with future system upgrades set to include EEZ and RFMO area tracking. The process also includes compliance checks on logbooks, catch documentation, and fishing gear, with vessel masters signing inspection reports. Supporting documents like irregular gear photos or scanned records can be attached, and contact points of involved countries are notified.

The system also manages transshipment authorizations, tracking donor vessels and species data without requiring fishing authorizations from carrier vessels. Additionally, electronic port entry requests allow authorities to assess vessel history, conduct risk assessments, and communicate securely with vessels in real time. Decisions on port entry or denial generate automated inspection reports, ensuring compliance tracking and post-inspection updates. While still evolving, the system enables countries to fulfill PSMA requirements, standardize enforcement, and enhance fisheries compliance efforts. Future developments will further strengthen its role in monitoring and enforcement, ensuring sustainable fisheries management worldwide.

## Special Evening Session

### AI-Powered Vessel Detection to combat IUU fishing



*Mr. Théo Girard, Regional Partnership Manager, Gulf of Guinea and Indian Ocea, Skylight. He plays a crucial role in developing AI-driven surveillance tools that enable real-time vessel monitoring, detection of "dark" vessels, and analysis of fishing and transshipment activities.*

Skylight operates independently, offering advanced technology solutions free of charge to government agencies. The program collaborates with nearly 200 agencies across 79 countries, working closely with organizations such as the UNODC, IUCN, and the Bay of Bengal Programme Intergovernmental Organisation to develop user-driven tools that address operational challenges. Traditional vessel monitoring relies on manually analyzing raw VMS or AIS data, a process that can take over 30 minutes to identify fishing activity. Skylight's AI streamlines this process, providing near real-time intelligence by automatically detecting and categorizing vessel behavior, such as fishing and transshipment, within minutes. The system enhances efficiency by marking fishing activity with a fish icon and transshipment with a crossed arrow, allowing enforcement officers to focus on critical cases without sifting through excessive data. In addition to AIS tracking, Skylight integrates satellite imagery to identify "dark" vessels that do not transmit AIS signals. By leveraging radar satellites, night-light satellites, and optical imagery from sources like Sentinel-2 and Landsat, the system can detect vessels in various conditions and process satellite images within minutes. The vessel details page enables agencies to search for specific vessels and review up to 18 months of historical data on fishing activity, transshipment, and port visits. Skylight provides this intelligence through two main access points: a user-friendly interface for interactive real-time monitoring and an API for direct data integration. The platform enables agencies to monitor areas of interest, analyze AI-detected events, and cross-reference vessel data with satellite images for verification. Its advanced capabilities, including tracking longline buoys and identifying dark vessel operations in restricted zones, significantly strengthen maritime surveillance, compliance, and enforcement efforts.

## 3.0 Discussion

### 3.1 Review of PSMA Requirements and Benefits (Participants in break out)

Summary of the questionnaire for the review and assessment of the effectiveness of the agreement on Port State Measures. The views shared were based on their experience and perceptions.

#### Legislative Gaps & Compliance

- \* India is reviewing its legislative framework to align with PSMA obligations. The National Policy on Marine Fisheries (2017) is mentioned as being pivotal in ensuring compliance with PSMA. India's current legal framework, such as the Maritime Zones of India Act, also supports the objectives of the PSMA.
- \* However, India needs to amend its existing regulations in line with PSMA provisions.

#### Regional & International Cooperation

- \* India demonstrates a strong commitment to regional and international fisheries management through active collaboration with neighbouring countries to address Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing. The country plays a proactive role in Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) such as the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC), Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) and the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA).
- \* India's **accession to and implementation of the Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA)** can further enhance regional cooperation. By strengthening port controls and denying entry or services to vessels involved in IUU fishing, the PSMA promotes transparency and accountability across fishing operations. Enhanced information exchange and coordination with both flag states and coastal states through PSMA frameworks offer valuable opportunities to improve monitoring, enforcement, and compliance efforts.

#### Institutional Coordination & Enforcement

- \* **Strengthening collaboration among key national agencies**—including the Coast Guard, Customs, Fisheries Departments, Port Authorities, and MPEDA—is crucial for effective implementation of port state measures. Establishing a streamlined coordination mechanism would ensure unified and efficient responses to IUU fishing threats, especially if India chooses to ratify the PSMA.
- \* To align with PSMA obligations, India would benefit from creating a **dedicated enforcement unit** for port state measures and undertaking comprehensive revisions of state-level Marine Fisheries Regulation Acts (MFRAs) and Guidelines for fishing in the Exclusive Economic Zone of India & High Seas, 2025.



- \* **Developing a standardized risk assessment methodology** to identify high-risk vessels before they enter Indian ports will significantly enhance early detection and deterrence of IUU fishing

### Economic and Social Impact

- \* The implementation of stricter port inspections under the PSMA is **not expected to impact small-scale fishers**, as the agreement primarily targets foreign vessels suspected of engaging in IUU fishing. This ensures the livelihoods of local coastal communities remain protected.
- \* Moreover, **streamlining landings—by directing catch from port straight to fish processing plants**—can significantly enhance operational efficiency. This shift has the potential to boost the capacity utilization of processing units and strengthen the quality and traceability of exports

### Capacity Building and Technical Support

- \* Establishing a **national reporting system** to document IUU fishing detections following port inspections would significantly improve transparency and responsiveness in enforcement efforts.
- \* To support consistent and effective implementation, **India can benefit from developing specialized training programs for port inspectors**, including hands-on capacity-building as recommended in Annex E of the PSMA. Equipping personnel with practical skills and technical expertise will lead to more uniform and impactful monitoring and compliance measures.
- \* **Designating a national authority** to oversee electronic information exchange under the PSMA will be a key step in enhancing coordination and international cooperation.

### Designation of PSMA-Compliant Ports

- \* India has yet to **designate specific ports for foreign fishing vessels**, as per PSMA, which is essential for effective PSMA implementation.

## 7. Inspection Procedures & Capacity Development

India currently lacks a national reporting system for documenting IUU fishing detections following port inspections, limiting its ability to track and address violations effectively. Additionally, there has been no formal training for inspectors in PSMA enforcement, resulting in inconsistencies in monitoring and compliance measures. Furthermore, hands-on training as outlined in Annex E of PSMA has not been implemented, leaving enforcement personnel without the necessary practical skills and technical expertise. To enhance PSMA implementation, India must prioritize establishing a structured reporting system, conducting specialized training programs, and ensuring hands-on capacity-building for inspectors.

### Port Entry & Inspections

- \* **Establish a clear and standardized process** for granting or denying port entry based on IUU fishing risk assessments, leading to potential gaps in enforcement.
- \* **Designating a dedicated authority** to oversee port use authorizations and denials will bring clarity to decision-making and streamline enforcement efforts.
- \* Additionally, **introducing structured communication mechanisms** to notify flag states, coastal states, and RFMOs of port entry denials will enhance international collaboration and transparency.

## 3.2 Capacity Development Needs

### Theme 1: Alignment with National Policies and Framework

The MZI Act should be effectively enforced to ensure that foreign fishing vessels are only permitted to land fish in India, not engage in fishing within the country's EEZ. To align with the PSMA, amendments to the MZI Act are necessary to strengthen port state regulations and close existing legal gaps in EEZ governance. A clear regulatory framework is required to define vessel size and enforcement jurisdiction— State / UT's authorities should handle registration / licensing and enforcement within 12 nautical miles (nm) & EEZ, the coast guard should take responsibility beyond 12 nm, and a central nodal authority should act as the statutory body for overarching governance. Additionally, MFRA / Guidelines for fishing in the Exclusive Economic Zone of India &



High Seas, 2025 must be revised to align with the IPOA-IUU Fishing. Capacity development is crucial, particularly in MCS practices and the GIES implementation.

## **Theme 2: Economic and Social Impacts**

The regulation of foreign vessel landings will enhance traceability, ensuring that high-quality fish and fishery products serve as reliable raw materials for eco-labeled and certified seafood exports to premium international markets and retail outlets. Additionally, infrastructure development in ports and harbors as part of PSMA implementation will strengthen fisheries-related industries and create economic opportunities for fishers and allied workers. However, to safeguard the interests of small-scale fishers in India, fish caught from the high seas and landed by foreign vessels under PSMA regulations must be directed towards reprocessing and export rather than entering the domestic market, ensuring that their livelihoods remain unaffected while benefiting from a more structured and sustainable fisheries trade.

## **Theme 3: Strengthening Regional and Global Cooperation**

India's accession to the PSMA presents a strategic opportunity to strengthen regional collaboration in South Asia and the Indian Ocean Region, fostering collective efforts against IUU fishing. By enhancing diplomatic relations, India can improve information exchange with neighboring countries, reinforcing economic cooperation and promoting sustainable trade in fisheries. Active engagement with RFMOs such as the IOTC, SIOFA, and the CCAMLR will help strengthen conservation and management measures to combat IUU fishing effectively. Additionally, as SDG-14 emphasizes the roles of port state and flag state responsibilities, PSMA implementation will contribute significantly to marine resource conservation and management. The BOBP-IGO, alongside the FAO and the DoF, Government of India, can play a key role in ensuring the successful implementation of PSMA, providing technical support and capacity-building initiatives to enhance enforcement and compliance measures.

## **Theme 4: Capacity Building and Technical Support**

A dedicated PSMA wing comprising officials from Ports, Fisheries, and Enforcement Agencies should be established to streamline policy implementation and inter-agency coordination. Comprehensive training programs are essential for senior and middle-level officials, covering policy and legislation, institutional frameworks, MCS, and operational procedures. Additionally, hands-on training should be conducted in accordance with Annex E of the PSMA, ensuring practical exposure for enforcement personnel.

## **Theme 5: Market Access and Trade Considerations**

Implementing the PSMA will ensure that foreign fishing vessels seeking entry into Indian ports are strictly monitored and do not engage in fishing within India's EEZ, thereby protecting the livelihoods of Indian fishers. Additionally, with over 600 seafood processing units in the country, many of which remain non-operational



during the off-season, PSMA enforcement could enable these units to function year-round by ensuring a steady supply of legally sourced fish. This would increase employment opportunities, enhance foreign exchange earnings, and contribute to a more stable fisheries sector.

### **Theme 6: Environmental and Sustainability Goals**

Effective inter-agency coordination between the Indian Coast Guard, Department of Fisheries, Customs, and port authorities is essential for the successful enforcement of the PSMA. Additionally, India must refine its MFRA at the state level to ensure alignment with PSMA obligations and strengthen its legal framework against IUU fishing. However, while stricter port inspections are necessary for compliance, they should not place an excessive burden on small-scale and artisanal fishers, who often lack formal documentation. Careful policy design is required to prevent market access barriers, as delays in port clearance due to stringent PSMA measures could increase operational costs for the seafood industry and negatively impact exports. A balanced approach is needed to uphold fisheries sustainability while ensuring economic viability and fair treatment of all stakeholders.

### **Theme 7: Implementation Roadmap and Challenges**

Strengthening the training and articulation of field officers is essential to enhance enforcement capacity and ensure efficient inspection protocols. Additionally, capacity development in existing ports is crucial to designate them as PSMA-compliant ports, enabling better enforcement of port state measures. To ensure smooth implementation, coastal states must harmonize their policies and collaborate effectively, creating a unified national approach to PSMA enforcement. Raising awareness among fishers about PSMA's implications and benefits is necessary to minimize apprehensions and encourage compliance.

## **4.0 Discussion (Q&A Session)**

During the Workshop there were extensive discussions among the participants and the same are summarized hereunder.

### **1. What is a non-party signatory to the PSMA?**

A non-party signatory is a country that signed the PSMA during the one-year signature period after its introduction in 2009, thereby indicating its intention to support the agreement. However, unless the country formally ratifies the PSMA, it is not legally bound by its provisions. For example, Brazil and Samoa are signatories but have not yet ratified the agreement.

### **2. Who can participate in PSMA council or meeting sessions?**

All countries, including non-parties, may attend council meetings as observers. However, only parties that have ratified or acceded to the PSMA can actively participate in decision-making.

### **3. What is meant by 'subsistence' and 'artisanal fishing' under Article 3 of the PSMA? Have these terms been defined by the Parties?**

These terms are not uniformly defined across countries. "Subsistence fishing" generally refers to fishing for personal or family consumption, while "artisanal" or "small-scale" fishing may involve small vessels selling catch commercially. Definitions vary by region, and discussions among PSMA parties are ongoing. PSMA measures typically do not apply to non-commercial subsistence fishing. However, commercial operations, even by small boats, may fall under PSMA obligations.

### **4. Are there standardized inspection procedures under the PSMA?**

The PSMA outlines minimum inspection standards, but countries must develop their own Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) tailored to their administrative structures. Some countries rely on a single agency, while others use multiple authorities to conduct inspections.

### **5. What is meant by "catch control," and how is it enforced?**

Catch control refers to verifying whether the catch declared by a vessel aligns with quotas set by RFMOs. If quotas are exceeded, the catch is considered illegal. Port states, flag states, and RFMOs collaborate to determine follow-up actions such as seizure or investigation.

## **6. How does Article 4 of the PSMA relate to other international agreements?**

Article 4 ensures alignment with international instruments such as CITES (species protection), the ILO Convention C188 (labor conditions), and the IMO Cape Town Agreement (vessel safety). The PSMA reinforces global fisheries governance and encourages inter-agency cooperation across sectors.

## **7. How is an electronic catch certificate verified in India?**

Verification is done through both on-site and digital methods. Harbour data collectors record species, size, and price details, which are uploaded to a centralised portal. Exporters use this data to apply for catch certificates, which are validated and accessible to EU authorities for compliance verification.

## **8. How does India monitor foreign fishing vessels in its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)?**

India uses a combination of tools, including AIS tracking, radar, aerial surveillance, and patrols by the Navy and Coast Guard. Domestic vessels are tracked using biometric and color-coding systems. Unauthorized foreign vessels are intercepted, and no foreign vessels are currently permitted to fish in Indian waters.

## **9. Does India permit transshipment of fish between Indian and foreign vessels?**

India does not currently allow transshipment between Indian and foreign vessels. While discussions on introducing a mothership model are underway, imported fish for reprocessing is transported via containers. These imports are regulated through Sanitary Import Permits (SIP) and are subject to strict rules to protect domestic markets.

## **10. What are the benefits for India in becoming a party to the PSMA now rather than later?**

Joining early enables India to participate in decision-making, shape implementation practices, and gain direct access to information systems. Non-parties may observe but cannot influence policy development. Becoming a party also strengthens India's global leadership in sustainable fisheries governance.

## **11. How is FAO supporting port states in addressing labor standards in fisheries?**

While labor standards fall under ILO Convention C188, FAO supports this agenda through collaboration with ILO and IMO. A joint working group meets every four years to improve labor and safety conditions. FAO provides training, promotes awareness, and supports inter-agency cooperation to address violations effectively.

## **12. Why is vessel size important in PSMA reporting? Are smaller vessels also monitored?**

Currently, PSMA inspections focus on vessels over 24 meters, which are more likely to engage in international fishing. However, reporting systems are evolving to include smaller vessels, especially those operating under bilateral or regional arrangements. This will enhance traceability and compliance.

## **13. What is the impact of including smaller vessels and bilateral arrangements in national reports?**

Including these vessels strengthens transparency and helps ensure that fish entering the global market is legally sourced. It also supports better enforcement, especially when catches from bilateral arrangements move beyond two countries and enter international trade routes.

## **14. Are PSMA inspectors authorized to assess labor conditions onboard vessels?**

No, PSMA inspectors focus solely on fisheries compliance. However, if inspectors observe labor or safety concerns, these can be reported to the appropriate national authorities. Effective enforcement depends on coordinated action between fisheries, labor, and safety agencies.





## 5.0 Recommendations for Strengthening PSMA Implementation

**Legal and Regulatory Reforms:** Align national legislation with the PSMA's requirements by amending relevant laws, including the Maritime Zones of India (MZI) Act and state-level Marine Fisheries Regulation Acts (MFRAs), to clearly define port state authority and enforcement jurisdiction.

**Establishment of a Dedicated PSMA Enforcement Mechanism:** Create a dedicated multi-agency PSMA enforcement wing comprising officials from Fisheries, Ports, Customs, Coast Guard, and relevant maritime security agencies to coordinate actions efficiently. Introduce a national contact point for PSMA communication, ensuring timely coordination with flag states, RFMOs, and international bodies.

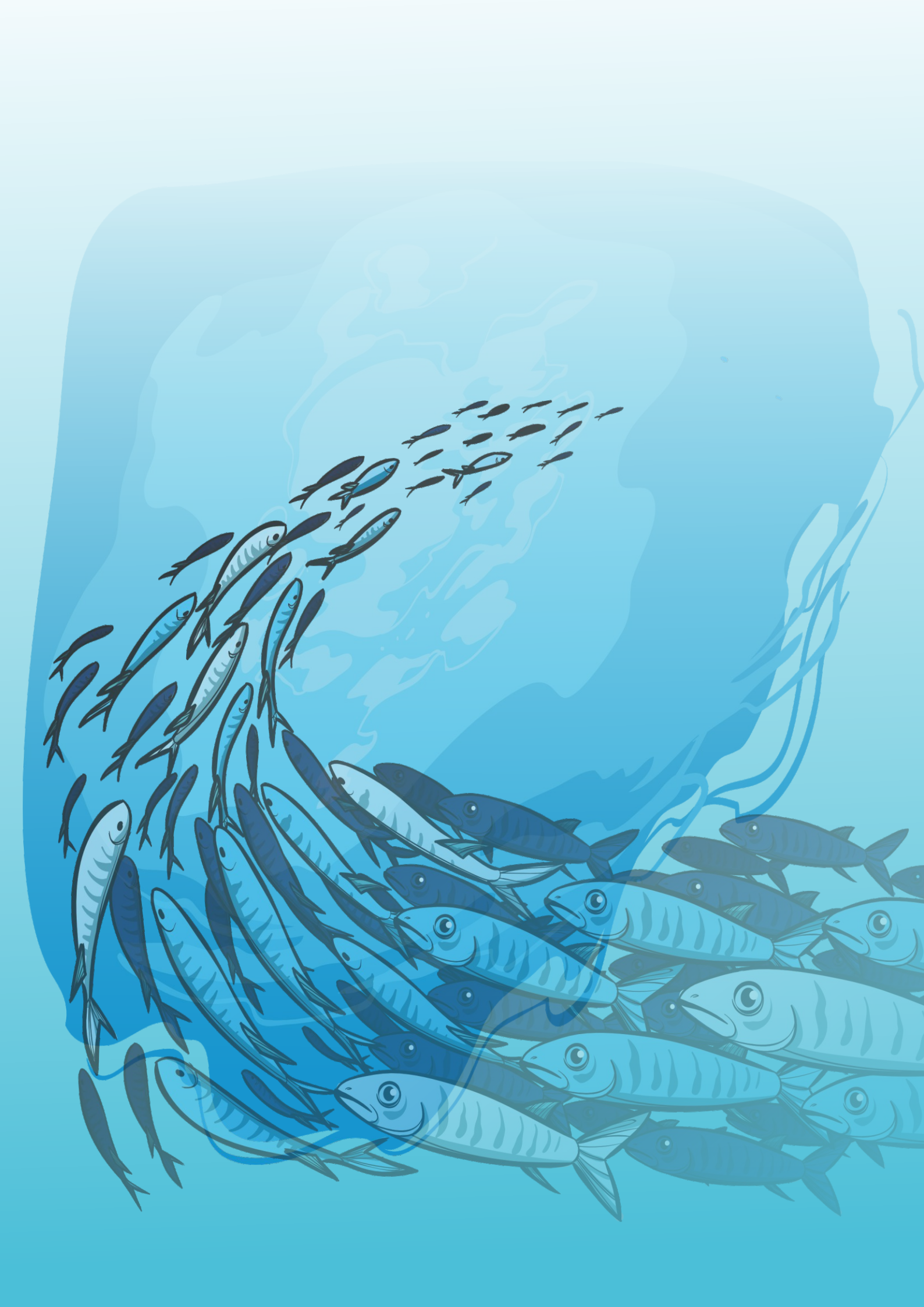
**Designation and Development of PSMA-Compliant Ports:** Identify and designate specific ports authorized to receive foreign fishing vessels in accordance with PSMA Article 7, with clearly defined inspection, documentation, and reporting protocols.

**Capacity Building, Training, and Technical Support:** Develop and implement structured training programs for inspectors, enforcement officials, and port personnel, focusing on PSMA provisions, inspection techniques, and international reporting standards.

**Institutional Coordination and Governance:** Strengthen vertical coordination between central, state, and local fisheries and enforcement agencies to harmonize implementation efforts. Establish inter-agency coordination mechanisms (task forces or working groups) to facilitate shared operations, information flow, and joint inspections.

**Implementation Roadmap and Stakeholder Engagement:** Develop a national PSMA implementation roadmap with clear timelines, milestones, and roles for each stakeholder group. Undertake awareness campaigns and stakeholder consultations, particularly with fishing communities, seafood exporters, state governments, and civil society.







## Agenda and Time Table

## Annexure I

Date/Time	Agenda	Person/Venue
09 Feb 2025	Arrival of the Participants	Kochi
<b>10 Feb 2025</b>	<b>Day 1</b>	Four Points by Sheraton
0900 - 0945	Registration	
1000 -	<b>Session I</b>	
1000 - 1020	Introductory and Welcome remarks	<b>Dr P Krishnan</b>
1020 - 1030	<b>Tea/Coffee</b>	
1030 - 0130	<b>Session II: Technical Session</b>	<b>Dr. Matthew Camilleri</b>
1030 - 1130	Enhancing Fisheries Governance: The Role of Collaborative Port State Measures and Capacity Building	
1130 - 1200	Welcome remarks	<b>Shri. M. Habibullah</b>
1200 - 1230	India's Fisheries Governance	<b>Dr. K Mohammed Koya</b>
1230 - 0100	India's Marine Fisheries Sector	<b>Dr. M Karthikeyan</b>
0100 - 0115	<b>Launch of the Course</b>	
0100 - 0130	<b>Group Photo</b>	
0130 - 0230	<b>Lunch Break</b>	
0230 - 0400	<b>Session III: Technical Session</b>	
0230 - 0300	Insights on PSMA Implementation	<b>Dr. Matthew Camilleri</b>
0300 - 0400	Insights on Global Monitoring and PSMA Implementation - Enhancing Fisheries Compliance	<b>Ms. Alicia Mosteiro Cabanelas</b>
0400 - 0415	<b>Tea/Coffee</b>	
0415 - 0515	<b>Session IV: Technical Session</b>	
0415 - 0515	Harnessing AI for Fisheries Surveillance	<b>Theo</b>
<b>11 Feb 2025</b>	<b>Day 2</b>	Four Points by Sheraton
0900 - 1020	Group Discussion I: Review of PSMA requirements and Benefits	Participants
1020 - 1030	<b>Tea/Coffee</b>	
1030 - 0100	Group Discussion I: Review of PSMA requirements and Benefits	Participants
0100 - 0200	<b>Lunch</b>	
0200 - 0300	Group Discussion II: Capacity Development Needs	Participants
0300 - 0330	<b>Concluding Remarks</b>	<b>BOBP-IGO</b>

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**Dr. Matthew Camilleri** leads the Fisheries Global and Regional Processes Team. His work focuses on promoting responsible fisheries, combating illegal fishing, and overseeing the implementation of key FAO agreements. He also serves as Technical Secretary for international fisheries guidelines and capacity development programs.



**Ms. Alicia Mosteiro Cabanelas** is a Fisheries Officer at the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), specializing in combating illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing. She plays a key role in the implementation of the Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA) and the development of global fisheries monitoring systems.



**Dr. K. Mohammed Koya**, Fisheries Development Commissioner, has a strong background in fisheries science and management. He focuses on pelagic fish population dynamics, sea cage farming, and the use of geospatial technology in marine fisheries management.



**Shri. M. Habibullah**, Director of the Central Institute of Fisheries Nautical and Engineering Training (CIFNET), plays a key role in advancing fisheries education and training in India. He is responsible for overseeing the development of skilled manpower in marine fisheries, navigation, and vessel operations.



**Dr. M. Karthikeyan** is currently serving as the Director of the Marine Product Export Development Authority (MPEDA). With an extensive background in fisheries and aquaculture, he brings over 13 years of experience from the Department of Fisheries, Government of Tamil Nadu, where he managed both inland and marine fisheries sectors.



**Mr. Théo Girard**, Regional Partnership Manager, Gulf of Guinea and Indian Ocean, Skylight. He plays a crucial role in developing AI-driven surveillance tools that enable real-time vessel monitoring, detection of "dark" vessels, and analysis of fishing and transshipment activities.







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