



DCoC/JA WG2-Thematic Chairs Meeting No.1

Virtual via Teams

Monday 15 April 2024

Record of the Meeting

Present

1. Capt Daniel Adam-Seychelles
2. Yonis Adan- Somalia
3. Stella Katondo-Tanzania
4. Mwinyi-Kenya
5. Lawrence Mwendwa- Kenya
6. Capt Asiva Coopen- Mauritius
7. Kiruja Micheni-IMO
8. Esther Kung'u-IMO
9. Winnie Maina-IMO

Apologies

1. Capt Getinet Abay- Ethiopia

Preliminaries

1. The meeting began at 1105am EAT. An update was provided by the WG2 Chair who noted that in the last meeting of the WG2 held on 14 March 2024, the Signatory States agreed that implementation of the thematic sub-working groups be undertaken in a piecemeal approach, beginning with the first key three areas that were agreed upon: Port & Ship Security, Protection of Coastal Installations led by Ethiopia, IUU Fishing led by Tanzania, and Maritime Environment led by Mauritius.
2. IMO noted that in addition to the above, there is a need to agree who is the lead in the thematic areas and specifically the subject matter leads who will work with the DCoC National Focal Point and how the work can be aligned with the ongoing programs of IMO and other agencies. He noted that IMO then will link the Chairs with the partners at IMO and others who are working in the different areas.

Deliberations

3. Lawrence Mwendwa (Kenya) noted that regarding IUU Fishing, there is a need to handle the threat as a regional issue and not as a national issue. He noted the threat is committed by vessels outside national boundaries hence the need for a transboundary response as that's where the gaps are which DCoC needs to tackle at the regional level using a regional approach.
4. Yonis Adan (Somalia) highlighted there is a need to invite the NGOs and implementing partners including FAO, UNEP, IMO and others to assist in supporting the IUU Fishing area thematic area as collaboration and partnership are essential. He noted that there

is a need to enhance information sharing in the IUU fishing thematic area as a foundation for addressing the same.

5. Kiruja Micheni (IMO) noted that he agrees with previous speakers and the need for addressing IUU Fishing as it's a major cause of insecurity and instability. He noted that there is a lot the region can do in working together and as earlier mentioned supports the regional engagement and utilization of the DCoC Information Sharing Network to monitor and report the same through the NMISCs and linking it to the Regional Centres. He further noted that these crimes are normally transferred amongst the countries and hence the need to maintain a Vessels of Interest list will be a good area to deal with. He also encouraged the idea to work in collaboration with NGOs and partners to provide support in addressing these threats. He encouraged the need for each thematic area to develop a concept paper identifying the key outlines, key partners, and what can be done to address those threats and the need to have high-level discussions in the next High-Level Meeting.
6. Stella Katondo (Tanzania) emphasized the need for use of the regional information-sharing centres to maximize information sharing as the perpetrators operate in various countries. She further recommended the use of partnerships and collaborations through international partners who can assist the Signatory States in handling the threats. She emphasized the need to identify what is needed so that the Friends can support based on the identified areas of need.
7. Capt Asiva Coopen(Mauritius) noted that there is need to make the regional voice heard and ensure there is adequate participation of the Signatory States to work as a group and issue information notes and papers at IMO Meetings as a team to have maximum effect. He noted that where financial challenges are dire due to a lack of resources, such regional collective action will assist and make an impact.
8. It was noted that Mauritius and IOC have been working on environmental threats and there is a lot to build on in this area and DCoC needs to see how to plug in especially due to the current ongoings in the Red Sea and the cases that have so far happened in the region where the DCoC wasn't fully prepared hence need to be fully prepared in case of such eventualities. It was noted that IMO is also doing some work on this and this is an area the DCoC can plug into.
9. It was noted that the need for cooperation cannot be overemphasized as how the Signatory States and Implementing partners cooperate will be key to the successful implementation of the thematic working groups.
10. There was deliberation on the need for a structured agreed way of handling the threats to avoid incidents of paying ransom which will encourage perpetrators to commit the crimes.
11. Deliberation was held on the need for resource mobilization and the need to request more funding for the identified areas and the 8-action plan as submitted to the SG-IMO and keep the momentum.
12. Further deliberation was held regarding publicity and the need to coordinate with other existing mechanisms in reporting the activities without imposing on areas where we haven't directly sponsored. It was noted that requests can be made to the main sponsors and partners on consent to report and publicize the work and build upon the blocks and progress of the DCoC as a whole. It was noted the actual issue is lack of coordination and once the DCoC addresses this area then even reporting will not be an issue.

13. Regarding what needs to be included in the CB Matrix in the thematic areas, it was noted that the list of identified subject matter experts, partners to work with and areas to work on can be included following this meeting as we progress more on the implementation. It was noted that the information can include a statement of purpose (why the thematic area and what it hopes to achieve), potential partners and potential programs, contact details of the thematic working group Chair, promote the work that the Chairs are doing in regards to the various thematic areas.

Recommendations/Way Forward

1. It was agreed that Concept Papers be developed on the guidelines for operating the thematic areas including the TORs, key partners and areas for support and using this have further deliberations at the next High-Level Meeting.
2. It was agreed that the Chair of WG2 to update the Friends of the DCoC Meeting scheduled for 23 April 2024 on the progress made so far and request the Friends to support and guide on what areas/programs the DCoC can tap into which will be useful even in drafting the Concept papers.
3. Each thematic Chair to find a subject matter expert that will support the Chair in the operationalizing of the thematic area as its not the NFPs's day to day business and if not supported by a subject matter expert from their country may negatively impact the operationalization of the thematic areas.
4. Each thematic lead was requested to tap into the opportunities where these thematic areas are discussed in the IMO Meetings and keep the team updated as this will ensure that there are no gaps and the DCoC is updated on any ongoing engagements for them to participate in.
5. After deliberation, it was agreed that the risk assessment for each threat needs to be addressed to find ways to mitigate the risks in a structured way and avoid scenarios like what has happened with MV Abdulla where ransom was paid which shouldn't have been the case as it will encourage the progression of the threat and also the money can be used to buy weapons or other contraband.
6. It was agreed that a statement be prepared for members attending MSC 108 to read the same and ensure the regional voice is heard in MSC 108 on matters of our interest.

The meeting ended at 1205 EAT with a vote of thanks from the Chair and agreement to implement the agreed way forward at the earliest opportunity to enable the thematic areas to be fully operational and tap into the existing opportunities.