**Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol
to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products
Fourth session**

Geneva, Switzerland, 24–26 November 2025

Provisional agenda item 4.2

FCTC/MOP/4/6

30 July 2025

Global information-sharing focal point (Article 8 of the Protocol)

Report by the Convention Secretariat

Purpose of the document

This report outlines the activities carried out by the Convention Secretariat concerning the global information-sharing focal point, in accordance with decisions FCTC/MOP2(6) and FCTC/MOP3(15).

Action by the Meeting of the Parties

The Meeting of the Parties (MOP) is invited to note the present report.

Contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): All SDGs; in particular, SDG 3 and Target 3.a, as well as SDG 16.

Link to Workplan and Budget item: 3.1.2.

Additional financial implications if not included in the Workplan and Budget: None.

Related document(s): None.

Background

1.   In decision FCTC/MOP2(6), the Meeting of the Parties (MOP) to the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products requested the Convention Secretariat, in consultation with the Bureau of the MOP and by September 2023, to make the necessary arrangements for implementation of an interim solution of the global information-sharing focal point, based on a manual exchange of information through an encrypted messaging system.

2.   In decision FCTC/MOP3(15), the MOP requested the Convention Secretariat to continue operating the global information-sharing focal point as established since September 2023 with a view to ensuring efficient exchange of information between the Parties, in accordance with Article 8 of the Protocol. Among other things, the MOP also requested the Convention Secretariat to continue collecting information on national and regional tracking and tracing systems, and to report on its findings.

Global information-sharing focal point

3.   As described in document FCTC/MOP/4/11, the Convention Secretariat and the United Nations International Computing Centre, taking into account the feedback from the Working Group on Tracking and Tracing Systems (Article 8) and under the guidance of the Bureau, finalized the development of the interim solution of the global information-sharing focal point. A webinar was organized on 26 September 2023 to launch the system. The recording of the webinar and a demonstration video of the platform are available on the WHO FCTC website.[1] The global information-sharing focal point was made available to members of the Working Group for voluntary use after the launch in a pilot phase.

4.   Following the pilot phase, the Convention Secretariat and United Nations International Computing Centre have worked to improve the interim solution of the global information-sharing focal point to be ready to be used by all Parties to the Protocol.

5.   Pursuant to decision FCTC/MOP3(15), the Convention Secretariat issued a note verbale (CS/NV/25/13) inviting Parties:

   (a)   to designate authorities and individuals who will serve as administrators at the national and regional levels, and who will be responsible for issuing credentials and granting access rights to end users; and

   (b)   to inform the Convention Secretariat of the designated contact points and to update this information as necessary.

6.   The Convention Secretariat and United Nations International Computing Centre also developed a user guide to facilitate registration for and operation of the global information-sharing focal point, which was shared with the note verbale.

7.   Parties will be required to nominate authorities and individuals who should have access to the system from their territory or region, and are also expected to provide the Convention Secretariat with information on their unique identification marking (UIM) code pattern. This information will be used to create a manual library of UIM code patterns.

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[1] Fifth anniversary of the entry into force of the Protocol (accessed 20 July 2025).

8.   As Parties are still in the process of designating administrators at the national and regional levels for the global information-sharing focal point, no statistics from the system or qualitative data as described in report FCTC/MOP/3/5 are yet available; nor is any relevant feedback from Parties using the system available to be reported at this time.

Collection of information on the development and implementation of tracking and tracing systems

9.   In decision FCTC/MOP3(17), the MOP welcomed a revised reporting instrument (as contained in Annex 2 of document FCTC/MOP/3/7), which includes a new set of questions with regard to Article 8 of the Protocol. At the time of preparing this report, the data from the 2025 reporting cycle for the Protocol were still being analysed.

10.   Information on the status of implementation of Article 8 of the Protocol is available in document FCTC/MOP/4/4. The extended version of the 2025 Global Progress Report on Implementation of the Protocol, to be made available on the WHO FCTC website later this year, will also contain more information on the development and implementation of tracking and tracing systems.[2]

Action by the Meeting of the Parties

11.   The MOP is invited to note the present report.

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[2] Global progress reports (accessed 20 July 2025).