

## **Recommendation GFCM/39/2015/3**

### **on the establishment of a set of measures to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in turbot fisheries in the Black Sea**

The General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (hereafter the “GFCM”),

*RECALLING* that the objectives of the Agreement establishing the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean are; ensure the conservation and sustainable use, at the biological, social, economic and environmental level, of living marine resources in the area of application

*RECALLING* the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development of 2002 and in particular its plan of implementation;

*REAFFIRMING* the principles of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (hereafter the “FAO”) and recalling the precautionary and ecosystem approach to fishery management;

*REAFFIRMING* the GFCM roadmap to fight illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (hereafter “IUU fishing”) in the Black Sea endorsed at the thirty-seventh annual session of the GFCM (Croatia, May 2013);

*REAFFIRMING* the grave concerns about the continuation of IUU fishing and its detrimental effects upon fish stocks, marine ecosystems and the livelihoods of legitimate fishers, as well as the increasing need for food security;

*RECALLING* Recommendation GFCM/37/2013/2 on the establishment of a set of minimum standards for bottom-set gillnets fisheries for turbot and conservation of cetaceans in the Black Sea;

*RECALLING* Recommendation GFCM/32/2008/1 on a regional scheme on port State measures to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishery activities in the GFCM area;

*NOTING* that for turbot in GSA 29 the SAC has concluded in its 17<sup>th</sup> session of 2015 that the stock is in overfishing and considered as a priority the setting of measures to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU activities together with the adoption of control measures in view of implementing a recovery plan in the near future;

*NOTING* that, for turbot in GSA 29 the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) has also concluded in its 17<sup>th</sup> session of 2015 that the setting of measures to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU activities together with the adoption of control measures shall be drafted on the basis of the agreement of the Black Sea riparian countries at the fourth meeting of the Ad-hoc Working Group on the Black Sea held in Tbilisi in March 2015;

*RECOGNIZING* that fishing operations carried out in turbot fisheries shall be consistent with the sustainable exploitation and conservation of the fish species targeted;

*RECOGNIZING* that measures that could facilitate the fight against IUU fishing for turbot should be a priority in any future management and/or recovery plan;

*AIMING* to provide a series of elements for the reduction of IUU fishing;

*ADOPTS* in conformity with the relevant applicable provisions of the GFCM Agreement:

### **PART I**

#### **Scope**

1. The Contracting Parties and cooperating non-Contracting Parties of the GFCM (hereafter the “CPCs”) shall adopt as a priority appropriate control measures to evaluate, prevent, deter and, to the extent possible, eliminate IUU fishing for turbot in the Black Sea.

## **PART II**

### **Definitions**

2. For the purposes of this recommendation the following definitions shall apply:
- a) "Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing" or "IUU fishing" means the activities set out in paragraph 3 of the 2001 FAO International Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing, hereinafter referred to as "IUU fishing";
  - b) "Black Sea" means the GFCM geographical subarea n° 29 as defined in Resolution GFCM/33/2009/2;
  - c) "Turbot" means fishes pertaining to the species *Psetta maxima* [(synonym: *Scophthalmus maeoticus* (Pallas))];
  - d) "Bottom-set gillnet" means any net made up of a single piece of net held vertically in the water by floats and weights fixed or capable of being fixed by any means to the bottom of the sea and maintaining the gear in place either close to the bottom or floating in the water column;
  - e) "Designated landing point" means ports, or places close to the shore, designated by the CPCs according with recommendation GFCM/2008/32/1 on Port State Measures, including offshore terminals and other installations for landing, transshipping, packaging, processing, refuelling or resupplying of fishing vessels, where landings, transshipments, packaging and/or processing operations of fishery products are permitted;
  - f) "Authorized vessel" means fishing vessel in possession of a fishing authorization entitling it to carry out specific fishing activities during a specified period, in a given area or for a given fishery under specific conditions;
  - g) "Fisheries restricted area" means a geographically-defined sea area in which all or certain fishing activities are temporarily or permanently banned or restricted in order to improve the exploitation and conservation of living aquatic resources or the protection of marine ecosystems;

## **PART III**

### **Specific measures to address illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in turbot fisheries in the Black Sea**

#### **Section 1: authorized vessels**

3. Active vessels operating in the GFCM GSA-29 targeting turbot shall be authorized to carry out specific fishing activities only insofar as they are indicated in a valid fishing authorization, which shall specify the technical conditions under which those activities could be exerted (see Annex I).
4. The CPCs shall maintain an updated register of those fishing authorizations and communicate to the GFCM Secretariat, not later than 31<sup>st</sup> January of the year, the list of all vessels using bottom-set gillnets authorized to fish for turbot. The list shall contain for each vessel the information referred to in Annex I.
5. Upon request, the CPCs shall report information on the fishing vessels authorized to engage in a fishing activity in a given period. In particular, the CPCs shall report the names of the fishing vessels concerned, their external identification number and the individual fishing opportunities allocated to them.
6. Authorized vessels shall comply with the obligations established in Recommendation GFCM/37/2013/2, and provide a detailed report of their fishing activities, including as minimum requirements: operating days, operating area and total catch of turbot. This information shall be provided to the GFCM Secretariat at least quarterly.
7. The CPCs that require a transitional period to fully implement the provisions of Section 1 shall duly inform the GFCM secretariat by 31 December 2015. Such information shall also specify the duration of this transitional period, which shall not exceed 24 months from the entry into force of this recommendation. In such case, the deadline for submission foreseen in paragraph 4 shall be adapted.

## **Section 2: Marking and identification of bottom-set gillnets**

8. The CPCs shall progressively ensure that all bottom-set gillnets operating in the turbot fishery are clearly identified. A database of the common codifications used by all riparian States shall be created.
9. It shall be prohibited to carry out fishing activities with gillnets used in the turbot fishery which are not identifiable.
10. It shall be prohibited to carry out fishing activities with gillnet used in the turbot fishery for which marker and intermediary buoys are not identifiable.
11. Unmarked abandoned gillnets used in the turbot fishery and found at sea shall be recovered by competent authorities in whose Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) the net is found.
12. Unmarked abandoned gillnets used in the turbot fishery and found at sea shall be confiscated until the owner is either duly identified and sanctioned or destroyed if no owner could be identified.

## **Section 3: Designated landing points**

13. Each CPC shall take the necessary measures to designate, where possible, landing points in which landings of turbot in GSA 29 shall take place.
14. For a landing point to be considered as a designated port, the following conditions shall be met: (a) established landing and transshipping times and places; (b) full inspection coverage during all landing and transshipping times and at all landing and transshipping places.
15. The CPCs shall transmit to the GFCM Executive Secretary, by no later than 30 November of each year, a list of designated landing points in which landings of turbot in GSA 29 shall take place.
16. It shall be prohibited to land or tranship from fishing vessels any quantity of turbot fished in the GSAs 29 at any other place than the landing points designated by the CPCs in accordance with paragraphs 13 and 14.
17. The CPCs shall engage to cooperate in the fight against IUU activities, in particular by sharing information and gathering intelligence to fight against organized crime.

## **PART IV**

### **National plans for monitoring, control and surveillance**

18. National monitoring, control and surveillance plans for the implementation of the provisions of this recommendation shall be established by the CPCs, taking into account the elements listed in Annex II and ensuring, *inter alia*, a proper and accurate monitoring and recording of the monthly catches and/or fishing effort deployed.
19. Such national monitoring, control and surveillance plans shall be communicated to the GFCM Secretariat, by 31 January of each year. Each year, one month before the annual session, the results of control activities shall be sent to the GFCM Secretariat for information. These results shall be analysed and discussed annually in a special session of the Compliance Committee.
20. The CPCs shall communicate to the GFCM Secretariat the type of sanctions applied when IUU activities have been detected as well as global figures for infringements related to IUU activities on turbot fisheries.

## **PART V**

### **Specific technical measures**

21. In 2016 the SAC shall advice on the dimension of turbot bottom-set gillnets allowed to operate in the fishery (maximum length, maximum height and hanging coefficient). To this end, countries shall provide to SAC, prior to their meeting of the Working Group on Black Sea (WGBS), the dimensions of gillnets

currently used in their fisheries. The WGBS shall analyze this information and propose the maximum dimensions to be used.

22. The SAC and the Black Sea working group shall jointly provide an advice for the technical requirements necessary to implement the provisions contained in Part III, section 2.

## **PART VI**

### **Development of information strategies and awareness campaigns related to the progressive reduction of IUU fishing in turbot fisheries**

23. Communication and awareness-raising plans related to the fight against IUU fishing in turbot fisheries will be established amongst stakeholders and the general public in order to make the problems of IUU better known.

24. The effective participation of stakeholders, including women and fisheries organizations, shall be supported through access to information and education. Diversification activities by fishers seeking to engage in non-fishing activities shall be encouraged.

25. The GFCM Secretariat shall facilitate cooperation among the CPCs, including, when necessary, by ensuring that a scientific contribution is obtained from the SAC.

The list referred to in Part III, Section 1 shall contain for each vessel the following information:

- Name of vessel
- Vessel register number (code assigned by CPCs)
- GFCM registration number (country ISO 3-alpha code + 9 digits, e.g. xxx000000001)
- Port of registration (full name of the port)
- Previous name (if any)
- Previous flag (if any)
- Previous details of deletion from other registries (if any)
- International radio call sign (if any)
- VMS (indicate Y/N)
- Vessel type , length overall and gross tonnage (GT) and/or gross registered tonnage (GRT) and engine power expressed in kW
- Name and address of owner(s), and/or charter and/or operator(s)
- Main target species
- Main gear(s) used for turbot and fleet segment allocation and operational unit as identified in the TASK 1 statistical matrix
- Time period authorized for fishing with gillnet or any other gear likely to fish turbot (if any of such authorization)

**Guidelines for the development of specific monitoring, control and surveillance plans  
for turbot in the Black Sea**

Specific monitoring, control and surveillance shall clearly define the following:

***a) Means of control***

Description of human, technical and financial means specifically available for the implementation of the plans.

***b) Inspection strategy (including inspection protocols)***

Inspection and surveillance of fishing activities shall concentrate on fishing vessels likely to catch turbot and associated species. In addition, action plans for the control of markets and transport shall be included.

Definition of inspection tasks and procedures.

Each CPC shall specify and describe which sampling strategy will be applied to verify the weighing of catches at first sale as well as the sampling strategy for vessels that are not subject to logbook/landing declaration rules.

***c) Guidelines***

Explanatory guidelines for inspectors, producer organizations and fishers regarding the set of rules in place for fisheries likely to catch turbot:

- ✓ Rules for the completion of various documents including inspection reports, fishing logbooks, transshipment declarations, landing and take-over declarations, transport documents and sales notes;
- ✓ Technical measures in force, including mesh size and/or mesh dimensions, minimum catching size, temporary restrictions, etc.,
- ✓ Sampling strategies,
- ✓ Cross-check mechanisms.

***d) Training of inspectors***

National inspectors shall receive all information on authorized vessels, fishing gears and regulations as well as adequate training to specifically achieve the objectives of the monitoring, control and surveillance plan related to turbot. Minimum training requirements are those specified in Recommendation GFCM/2008/32/1 on Port State Measures..

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