



**GENERAL FISHERIES COMMISSION FOR  
THE MEDITERRANEAN**  
**COMMISSION GÉNÉRALE DES PÊCHES  
POUR LA MÉDITERRANÉE**



**GENERAL FISHERIES COMMISSION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN**

**Thirty-fifth Session**

**Rome, Italy, 9-14 May 2011**

**INTERSESSIONAL ACTIVITIES  
OF THE SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR 2010**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. This document provides an outline of the work undertaken by the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) together with its subsidiary bodies during the intersessional period.

**ACTIVITIES OF THE SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SAC)**

2. The thirteenth session of the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) was held in Marseille, France, from 7 to 11 February 2011. The session was attended by delegates from 21 Members of the Commission together with representatives of from 9 GFCM Partners. The report of this session is contained in document GFCM:XXXV/2011/Inf.6.

3. The intersessional activities were carried out in accordance with the programme of work agreed upon by the thirty-fourth session of GFCM (April 2010). All the approved meetings of SAC were convened as listed below:

## Meetings

- Ninth Session of the CMSC; FAO Headquarters (FAO-HQ), 9–10 June 2010
- Transversal Workshop on red coral; Italy, 16–17 September 2010
- First Expert Meeting on the status of elasmobranchs in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea; Tunisia, 20–22 September 2010
- Transversal Workshop on European Eel; Tunisia, 23–24 September 2010
- Transversal Workshop on Fishing Capacity; FAO Headquarters (FAO-HQ), 27–28 September 2010
- SCSI Workshop on data collection methods applied to all segments of the fleet and their coherence with the requirements of the GFCM Task 1; FAO Headquarters (FAO-HQ), 29 September– 1 October 2010
- SCMEE Workshop on algal and jelly fish blooms; Turkey, 6–8 October 2010
- SCSA Working Group on stock assessment of demersal species; Turkey, 18–23 October 2010
- SCESS Workshop on monitoring recreational fisheries in the GFCM area; Spain, 20–22 October 2010
- Transversal Workshop on selectivity improvement, bycatch reduction and alternative gears; Egypt, 25–27 October 2010
- SCSA Working Group on stock assessment of small pelagic species; Italy, 1–6 November 2010
- Session of the SCSA; Malta, 29 November–2 December 2010
- Session of the SCESS; Malta, 29 November– 2 December 2010
- Session of the SCSI; Malta, 29 November – 2 December 2010
- Session of the SCMEE; Malta, 29 November – 2 December 2010
- SCMEE workshop on alien species and their interaction with fisheries (back-to- back with the SCMEE meeting); Malta, 29 November 2010
- 10th Session of the CMSC; Malta, 3 December 2010

## Main activities and outcomes of SAC subsidiary bodies

4. The main deliberations, activities and outcomes of the technical workshops and meetings listed above, as well as those of the two sessions of the Coordination Meeting of the Sub-Committees (CMSC), are summarized below:

The *Transversal Workshop on red coral* discussed the current status of populations of this species and the level of its exploitation in some regions of the Mediterranean and addressed technical issues related to the management and conservation of red coral in the Mediterranean. The workshop drew up a list of conclusions related to management and conservation measures, as well as proposals for scientific monitoring programmes and collaboration initiatives.

The *Expert Meeting on the status of elasmobranchs in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea* reviewed the available information on elasmobranchs in the GFCM Area, including taxonomy, spatial distribution, critical habitats, status of the species, biology, ecology, fishing activities and population dynamics. The meeting also discussed methods and approaches to assess the stocks of some commercial elasmobranch species, together with mitigation methods for the reduction of by-catch of threatened, endangered and protected species. The meeting agreed upon a number of recommendations dealing with by-catch mitigation, identification of critical habitats, fisheries management strategies and Plans of Action, data collection, research programmes and networking.

The *Transversal workshop on European Eel* reviewed the available information on the biology of this species in the GFCM Area, along with the current management schemes in place. The workshop discussed and proposed options for the way forward on the establishment of a regional management plan for European eel along with working strategies to achieve this.

The *Transversal Workshop on Fishing Capacity* addressed the current status of the monitoring of fishing capacity in the GFCM Area, as well as the development and future trends of fishing capacity in the region. On the basis of the outcomes of the previous workshop on fishing capacity, the information delivered by the participants, the frameworks of the International Plan of Action for the Management of Fishing Capacity and Recommendation GFCM/34/2010/2 on the management of fishing capacity, the workshop participants produced a draft outline for a Regional Plan of Action for the Management of Fishing Capacity in the GFCM area.

The *Workshop on data collection methods and their coherence with the requirements of the GFCM Task 1* assessed the current situation of the data collection and data submission processes in relation to the Task 1 framework, on the basis of experiences shared by national experts. Technical issues related to data collection methods and practices, data quality, data compilation and data submission protocols were discussed and a number of conclusions were drawn up. Sources of information for the fulfilment of Task 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 and 1.4 data submission obligations were identified. Aspects concerning training and assistance programmes in data collection and fisheries statistics were also addressed.

The *Workshop on algal and jelly fish blooms* reviewed the knowledge on jelly fish and algal blooms in the Mediterranean and Black Sea, including human health-related problems caused or associated with these blooms and their effects on fisheries, and appraised existing methodologies and data collection programs related to such blooms. On the basis of this knowledge and the discussions which took place, the workshop drew up a number of recommendations for further research and other work, as well as for management measures of relevance to fisheries, aquaculture, tourism, coastal installations, public awareness and the introduction of Non-Indigenous Species.

The *Workshop on monitoring recreational fisheries in the GFCM area* analysed the status of recreational fisheries in the Mediterranean and Black Sea, together with the associated socio-economic aspects. It discussed and proposed definitions for various recreational fisheries sub-sectors and reviewed the different national regulatory systems connected with recreational fishing. The workshop also identified key elements for a harmonized monitoring and data collection framework.

The *Transversal Workshop on selectivity improvement, bycatch reduction and alternative gears* endeavoured to determine the current status of the effect of the trawl 40mm square mesh and 50mm diamond mesh in reducing by-catches and discards and in improving selectivity in Mediterranean fisheries, on the basis of ongoing studies. It also addressed the socio-economic impact of the new mesh size measures on trawl fisheries and discussed methods for reducing by-catch and impacts of trawling on the seabed. The workshop proposed a number of management measures, research activities and other initiatives related to data collection.

The *Workshop on alien species* was held back-to-back with the meeting of the Sub-Committee on Environment and Ecosystems and focussed on the impact of these species on fisheries throughout the Mediterranean, especially in the Eastern Mediterranean where alien species are significantly changing the biodiversity.

The *Sub-Committee on Statistics and Information (SCSI)* reviewed the outcomes of the workshop on data collection methods related to the framework of Task 1 and focussed on the current situation of data submission, the status of development and management of GFCM databases and information systems, data confidentiality and data access policy, the implementation of the GSA compatible STATLANT 37A reporting scheme, the review of Task 1 data parameters and definitions, as well as on pilot exercises carried out by experts on catch weight thresholds in logbook reporting.

The *Sub-Committee on Economics and Social Sciences (SCESS)* discussed the definition of recreational fisheries, licensing systems for recreational fishing and the monitoring and management of recreational fishing activities, on the basis of the outcomes of the workshop on the monitoring of recreational fisheries in the GFCM Area. In addition, the Sub-Committee addressed the development of a common and harmonised scientific monitoring protocol for recreational fisheries and identified a preliminary set of data parameters required for the estimation of indicators for different segments and modalities of recreational fisheries. The SCESS also reviewed the results of case studies related to the economic impacts of the implementation of the 40mm square mesh codend.

The *Sub-Committee on the Marine Environment and Ecosystems (SCMEE)* reviewed the outcomes of the workshops on algal and jellyfish blooms, red coral, elasmobranchs, alien species and selectivity improvement and bycatch reduction. In addition, it analysed the proposal for the creation of a new Fisheries restricted Area around the seamounts in the Balearic archipelago area. The SCMEE also dealt with the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries (EAF) and the relevance of the fry fishery in connection with the conservation of sensitive habitats for the sustainability of coastal pelagic resources.

The *Sub-Committee on Stock Assessment (SCSA)* convened the meetings of the two Working Groups on stock assessment of demersal and small pelagic species, including practical assessment sessions. During its 11th Session, the SCSA reviewed 32 technical papers on demersal species and 11 technical papers on small pelagics. Out of those 43 stocks studied, a total of 34 were considered to be complete assessments and validated by the Sub-Committee. The total coverage was 14 GSAs for the demersal species and 7 GSAs for small pelagic species. The main outcomes of the workshops on European eel, elasmobranchs and selectivity improvement and bycatch reduction were reviewed by the Sub-Committee. The SCSA also reviewed, approved and added additional sheets related to direct methods into the set of Stock Assessment Forms and discussed technical aspects on the use of reference points in the assessment of demersal and pelagic species.

Two sessions of the *Coordination Meeting of the Sub-Committees (CMSC)* were held during the intersessional period. The Ninth Session (June 2010) discussed issues related to the implementation of the implementation of the 2010 workplan of the Sub-Committees, including planning of meetings and

activities, the roles of the Coordinators, the role of the Secretariat and the support of the FAO Regional Projects. The Tenth Session (December 2010) of the CMSC reviewed the main conclusions and recommendations of the subcommittees including the outcome from the Transversal Session and provided consolidated advice to the Scientific Advisory Committee. It also discussed and agreed upon a strategy for the implementation of the preliminary 2011 workplan following its endorsement by SAC and the Commission. In addition, the meeting addressed aspects related to the functioning of the SAC Sub-Committees and Working Groups.

#### **SUGGESTED ACTION BY THE COMMISSION**

5. The Commission is invited to review the activities carried out by its subsidiary bodies during the intersessional period and to provide guidance on any follow-up that may be required as well as on the working strategies to be adopted.