

GENERAL FISHERIES COMMISSION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN

COMMISSION GÉNÉRALE DES PÊCHES POUR LA MÉDITERRANÉE



Fourth Session of the Committee on Administration and Finance (CAF)

Split, Croatia, 13-17 May 2013

REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT ON ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL ISSUES

- Draft -

INTRODUCTION

1. This document, along with its Appendixes, aims to report on administrative and financial issues related to the actions taken during the 2012 intersessional period. It includes the achievements of the GFCM Task Force, issues such as staffing, GFCM headquarters, meetings, publications, the status of ratification of the GFCM Agreement as amended in 1997, the status of payment of the contributions made by Members to the autonomous budget and reviews of the statement of the expenditures made in 2012 including for extrabudgetary funded programmes.

ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

Recommendations adopted under Article V of the GFCM Agreement

2. The Secretariat officially transmitted to Members and Observers the text of recommendations and resolutions adopted at the Thirty-sixth Session of the Commission (Morocco, May 2012). These were also posted on the GFCM website. Upon completion of a "grace" period following notification of the recommendations, during which no official objection was lodged, and in accordance with Article V of the GFCM Agreement, the above mentioned recommendations entered into force on 6 October 2012. The Members were duly informed.

Progress on the activities of the Task Force for modernizing and improving the legal and institutional framework of the GFCM, including the first GFCM strategic Framework Programme (FWP)

3. It is recalled that Task force was established at the thirty-fifth session of the Commission with the objective to improve the legal and institutional framework of the GFCM. The "First strategic GFCM Framework Programme (2013-2018) in support to Task Force Activities" (FWP) was adopted by the Commission during the above mentioned session to serve as a platform to promote sustainable development and cooperation in the GFCM competence area through multi-annual and multi-donor arrangements. Its final aim is promoting regional collaboration - including in collaboration with FAO regional projects and the partner Organizations – and strengthening the capacity of the GFCM in the

field of data collection by establishing reliable regional databases through promoting a sub-regional approach to manage the fisheries.

- 4. Thanks to the financial support from some Members, the FWP was effectively launched in December 2012, focusing during its first phase on selected activities aimed at i) strengthening data collection and submission frameworks for fisheries management purposes in the GFCM area of competence and ii) promoting the implementation of the GFCM Guidelines for multiannual management plans at sub-regional level, including issues related to monitoring, control and surveillance and the fight against IUU, both through sub-regional workshops and various surveys and methodologies. National focal points were nominated for each GFCM Member to undertake specific tasks under these actions.
- 5. In line with the priorities identified by the Task Force, this programme is also a cornerstone for the new institutional framework of the GFCM, as the main objective is to provide the GFCM with a comprehensive information system, which will empower the Commission in its decision-making thanks to a stronger scientific basis. Such initiative is in fact coupled with the launch of the amendment process of the GFCM basic texts, circulated to Members in March 2013 to be considered in time for the annual session of the Commission.
- 6. As per last year's practice, the outcomes emerged from this first phase of the FWP are scheduled to be analysed among Members representatives during the second validation meeting of the Task Force (10-11 May 2013, Split, Croatia). The main thrust of the meeting, also open to observers and partner Organizations to ensure a participative and transparent process, is to advise the Commission at its thirty-seventh session on the course of action for the amendment process of the GFCM basic texts.

The action of the GFCM for the Black Sea

- 7. In line with the increased presence of the GFCM in the Black Sea, activities in the area were carried out during the intersession under the auspices of both the Working Group on the Black Sea (WGBS) and the FWP. The former established ad hoc WGBS focal points for each of the six Black Sea riparian States and brought about the creation of a regional online database of Black Sea experts, whereas the latter allowed for the holding of two specific Black Sea workshops: on Monitoring, Control and Surveilance issues and on data collection issues.
- 8. During the intersession, the GFCM Secretariat maintained a considerable cooperation with all Black Sea riparian States, both Members and non-Members. On the one side, and in light of the increased number of fisheries and aquaculture activities carried out in the area, contacts with GFCM focal points for Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey were strengthened, also through the establishment of specific FWP focal points for these countries. On the other side, non-Member countries expressed particular interest in GFCM activities and increased their implication in the Commission's work and fostered links with the Secretariat. Overall, a good and regular level of attendance was remarked to both technical meetings (including the presentation for the first time of stock assessments to the related GFCM working groups) and statutory sessions from all riparian States.

Functioning of the Secretariat

Organization of the Secretariat and appointment of staff

- 9. The post of Fishery Resources Officer (P-4) was filled by Mr Miguel Bernal (Spanish national) on 1 August 2012 and the post of Scientific Editor/Translator (P-2) was filled by Ms Dominique Bourdenet (French national) on 1 October 2012. The upgrade of Ms Claudia Escutia to Programme Associate (G-6) was finalized before the 37th Session of the Commission.
- 10. With the move of GFCM to its premises in Palazzo Blumenstihl, security coverage was provided temporarily and on rotation by a pool of four former FAO guards, during working hours divided in 2 shifts (7.00 am to 7.30 pm). At the time of print, the recruitments of the Fishery Officer on Legal and Institutional Matters, Office Assistant (G-3) and the Security Guard (G-2) are being processed.
- 11. It should be noted that, in order to face the workload, selected tasks were carried out with the contribution of temporary human resources (e.g. volunteers, interns and consultants) who collaborated in addressing issues like VMS, selected species of Elasmobranchs, stock assessment, etc.

GFCM intersessional activities (meetings, cooperation, publications and other issues)

Regular activities (autonomous budget)

12. During the intersession, the Secretariat coordinated and actively contributed to the preparation and delivery of the activities and meetings agreed by the Commission, namely i) the fifteenth session of the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) and 9 meetings of its subsidiary bodies, ii) the eighth session of the Committee on Aquaculture (CAQ), including SIPAM, and 4 meetings of its subsidiary bodies and iii) the second session of the Working Group on the Black Sea (WGBS).

Bureau of the Commission

13. During the intersessional period, liaison was maintained at an excellent level of coordination and consultation with the Bureau of GFCM and the Bureau of its Committees. A meeting of the GFCM Bureau was held in January 2013 to review major issues, including the workplan implementation, the Task Force and the Framework Programme. A meeting of the CoC Bureau was held on 12 April 2013 at GFCM HQ. No reactions were received in relation to the invitation to organise a CAF Bureau meeting on the same day.

Framework Programme activities (extra-budgetary funds)

14. In addition, the GFCM held 4 workshops within the first phase of activities of its Framework Programme (with 3 additional workshops scheduled to be held between June and October 2013) to address specific issues – namely fisheries data collection, IUU fishing and MCS issues and multinannual management plans – for each GFCM sub-region (Western, Central and Eastern Mediterranean; Adriatic; Black Sea).

Cooperation with Members

- 15. From the moment the Secretariat became fully operational in its new headquarters in Palazzo Blumenstihl, the premises allowed for the hosting of several high level meetings: in November 2012, during a visit by an EU delegation headed by EU Commissioner for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Ms Maria Damanaki, the reform of GFCM and the need for a sub-regional approach in the adoption of long term management plans in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, including the fight against IUU fishing, were tackled. In October 2012, Mr George Pullicino, the then Minister for Resources and Rural Affairs of Malta was received to discuss in the frame of the strengthening of the cooperation between Malta and the GFCM about several issues relating to data collection, aquaculture and control of fishing activities.
- 16. Constant contacts and excellent collaboration has been ensured with the Italian Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies (MiPAAF) and the Government of France through bilateral communications and meetings which allowed for the identification of specific actions to be undertaken within some FWP work packages.
- 17. The GFCM and the Italian Ministry of the Environment entered into a joint project agreement on "A Mediterranean Cooperation for the Sustainable Use of the Marine Biological Resources", expected to contribute to the ongoing work relating to the "good environmental status" of the Mediterranean ecosystems as well as to the sustainable use of marine biological resources found therein, together with fostering cooperation with relevant international organizations, competent institutions and GFCM Members. Coordination meetings were held to define the terms of the workplan of the first phase of activities.
- 18. Contacts with Members to determine the strengthening of GFCM's presence in some areas or the development of particular activities have continued during the intersession. In this regard, discussions with Monaco, Turkey and other Members for the agreement on specific actions to be addressed through the FWP are advanced.

Specific actions for Members

- 19. With the objective of enhancing existing collaboration with Members and/or when specifically requested by countries, the Secretariat organised ad hoc meetings, including all relevant stakeholders (FAO Regional Projects, experts, partner organisations as appropriate), to identify precise needs and plan adequate workplans to address the issues raised. The Concerted Action for Lebanon meeting held in December 2012 led to the identification of several priorities and decided on the design of a fully-fledged programme and then a targeted roadmap to be proposed to potential donors. In this regard, and with the objective to support the sub-regional approach fostered by the Task Force, the Lebanese Ministry of Agriculture sent an official letter in November 2012 offering to host the GFCM sub-regional office for the Eastern Mediterranean in a rehabilitated and equipped centre in Batroum. It was decided to examine this offer, which would imply the recruitment of a GFCM coordinator for the sub-region, at the annual session of the Commission.
- 20. Similarly, the pilot project on feasibility of a Vessel Monitoring System in Egypt continued its activities: following a first meeting in September 2012 with concerned stakeholders, a second meeting to test the material envisaged to be used in the trial phase is foreseen in the upcoming months. On the basis on these successful experiences, other Members of the Commission expressed their willingness to envisage similar concerted action in their countries.
- 21. Moreover, the development of the Network of Research Institutes of Maghreb during the intersession allowed for the establishment of a web portal supporting the Network and for the organisation of a meeting to be held in June 2013 to address both technical aspects relating to the definition of a work-plan to be executed in the upcoming years by the Network at regional level, in

cooperation with the GFCM and other partners, and operational aspects, including the identification of elements for a Memorandum of Understanding with the GFCM.

Cooperation with partner organisations

- 22. The GFCM strengthened collaboration in areas of common interest with partner organisations such as the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the UNEP Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (RAC/SPA) and the International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM). In particular, close cooperation was maintained through joint workshops and initiatives, among others with those key partners with whom Memoranda of Understanding had been signed at the thirty-sixth session of the Commission, namely the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic Area (ACCOBAMS), the Commission on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution (Black Sea Commission BSC), EUROFISH, the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES), MedPAN, the Mediterranean Regional Advisory Council (RAC-MED), and the Mediterranean Action Plan for the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP-MAP).
- 23. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed in January 2013 between the GFCM and the "Master in Human Development and Food Security" of the Italian University of Roma Tre, in order to establish an effective base for ensuring maximum harmony towards the shared goal of strengthening the human resource development and research capacity of developing countries. Such collaboration will allow for the exchange of ideas and competencies on subjects of common interest.
- 24. The Secretariat also participated in a number of external meetings of partner organizations or entities and selected meetings of the UN, the FAO and the FAO regional projects. At some of those meetings, the Commission was represented by its Chair or Vice-Chair or by the Chairpersons of its Committees. Because of time and budget constraints, the Secretariat was again obliged to decline invitations to several other meetings relevant to the work of the Commission.
- 25. The list of above meetings is provided in Appendix 1 of this document.

Publications

26. During the intersessional period, the Secretariat produced 35 technical and administrative documents: 20 "grey literature" documents available on the GFCM website, 6 already published and 9 to be released in 2013. The list of publications is provided in Appendix 2.

IT and Information Systems

- 27. A permanent cloud-based IT infrastructure based on SharePoint Online and Azure has been set-up by the GFCM Secretariat with four main objectives: i) provide required online tools for meetings and intersessional activities of the SAC, subsidiary bodies and Framework Programme activities, ii) provide an integrated solution for communication and data storage between interested parties and the GFCM, iii) improve the internal efficiency of the GFCM Secretariat work and iv) enhance overall cost-efficiency of the former IT infrastructure.
- 28. The first phase of deployment of this system has been completed, with user credentials for personalized access to the online tools, including the following achievements: a) definition of document libraries to store and disseminate all contents produced by the GFCM, both during meetings and in intersessional activities, b) creation of different portals to host all activities generated within the technical working groups, statutory meetings, FWP, and the GFCM Secretariat activities, c) features to facilitate data submission and compliance monitoring. Subcommittees and Working Groups recommended to extend its use.

- 29. A second phase of the deployment, currently in progress, includes a) migration of the ongoing systems into Azure databases, b) automatic publication of feedbacks and contents on the public website of the GFCM, c) realization of technical Wikis to assist members in complying with data submission procedures and d) assessment to include GIS capabilities.
- 30. Moreover, further improvements were applied to the SIPAM Information Systems and data management activities were carried out for the Task1 and the Vessel Records data submissions.

Other issues

31. Several other tasks coordinated directly by the Secretariat are not detailed here. These include liaison and communication with the Permanent representations of Members, Heads of Delegations and focal points, coordinating the editing, translation and distribution of documents and publications and organizing the activities of the 4 GFCM subsidiary bodies including SAC and CAQ.

Issues related to management of GFCM HQ and its budgetary implications

32. Since the establishment of GFCM Secretariat at Palazzo Blumenstihl in 2011, a considerable number of maintenance works and arrangements with the condominium of Palazzo Blumenstihl were deemed necessary. Infrastructure works to enhance security through the installation of a video surveillance system monitored from the Secretariat and connected to FAO control room, the installation of a cooling system in the technical room, the purchase of IT and audio-visual equipment and furniture were some of the actions carried out in the course of 2012.

Status of acceptance of the 1997 amendments to the GFCM Agreement

33. So far, 21 Members have deposited their instruments of acceptance (Appendix 3). Members that have not yet done so are Egypt (remitting its contribution) and Israel. Regarding the case of the Syrian Arab Republic, the Secretariat received a letter on 17 September 2010 from the Syrian Embassy in Rome notifying that Syria ratified the agreement on 12 July 2009. According to FAO Legal Office, this Letter could not be considered as a formal ratification since the specific standard model for the ratification process had not been used. The Syrian Embassy was informed accordingly.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

- 34. In May 2012, the Commission adopted its annual budget for 2012 amounting to **US dollars 1,805,027**. A "call for funds letter" was sent on 6 June 2012 through diplomatic channels and directly to GFCM Heads of Delegation.
- 35. The total of contributions received in 2012 amounted to **US dollars 1,639,563** (90.83 percent of the adopted budget), as shown in Appendix 4. The amount of **US dollars 93,047** as arrears was also received (in February 2013) as outstanding contribution of Greece for 2010 and 2011. Therefore, the total of contributions and arrears amounted to **US dollars 1,732,610**. Thus, the status of the 2012 contributions can be summarized as follows:
 - eighteen Members have deposited their instruments of acceptance and remitted their contributions;
 - one Member (the Syrian Arab Republic) has neither yet deposited the formal instruments of acceptance nor remitted its contribution;
 - three Members (Lebanon, Libya and Malta) have deposited their instruments of acceptance but have not paid their contribution;

- one Member (Egypt) has not yet deposited its instruments of acceptance but remitted its contribution
- Following its withdrawal from the Commission in 2007, Serbia presents an outstanding amount of US dollars 8,785.421
- one Member (Israel) has neither deposited its instrument of acceptance (nor participated in the vote for the selection of Executive Secretary), nor paid its contribution.
- 36. Appendix 4 shows a negative balance for Italy (US 5,598.38), Lebanon (US dollars 14,142), Libya (US dollars 117,313.84), Malta (US dollars 50,056), Monaco (US dollars 77,767), Serbia (US dollars 8,785.42) and the Syrian Arab Republic (US dollars 75,218).

Payment and use of arrears

It should be recalled that: i) Regulation IV.3 states that "any unliquidated prior year obligation shall be cancelled or, where an obligation remains a valid charge, transferred against current appropriations"; ii) Regulation V.1 states that "pending receipt of annual contributions, the Secretary is authorized to finance budgeted expenditures from the uncommitted balance of the autonomous budget"; iii) Regulation V.3 also stipulates that "as of 1 January of the following calendar year, the unpaid balance of such contributions shall be considered to be one year in arrears"; iv) at its Thirtieth Session, the Commission agreed to use arrears to constitute a Working Capital Fund to serve as a buffer for the Secretariat in the case of delays in the remittance of contributions; v) at its Thirty-first Session, the Commission authorized the Secretary to readjust activities and expenditures as required for meeting ongoing obligations at the end of 2007, using arrears if necessary²; vii) at its Thirty-second Session³, the Commission had asked the Secretariat to adjust the budget to include, among other matters, Arabic as a working language for the Session.

Arrears

As shown in Appendix 4, the balance of accumulated pending contributions⁴ for the 2005, 38. 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 GFCM fiscal years amounted to US dollars 348,880.64 as of 31 December 2012. The increase over the previous year is essentially due to the failure of Lebanon, Libya, Malta, Monaco, Serbia and the Syrian Arab Republic to pay their contributions and/or arrears in full.

Working Capital Fund

In view of the above and based on data provided directly by the FAO central accounting system (Oracle), GFCM received -from 2005 and accountable for 31 December 2012- a total of US dollars 9,978,3595 in contributions, for a total of expenditures of US dollars 9,975,0506. The Working

¹ In 2008 Montenegro had informally expressed its willingness to cover Serbia's contribution for 2008. The Commission is invited to make a decision on this issue and, eventually, envisage the possibility to write off this outstanding amount from its accounting books

² Paragraph 93 of the Report of the 31st Session.

³ Paragraph 122 of the Report of the 32nd Session.

⁴ Excluding Israel.

⁵ This amount includes the contributions received totalling US dollars 9,964,770 along with the interests credited for US dollars 31,835, minus the transfer of funds for the amount of US dollars 18,245 to another project (TEMP/GLO/681/MUL) as agreed by the Commission at its 35th Session.

⁶ The amount of US\$ 108,175 spent on GFCM running costs (covered by the government of Italy and by FAO Regular Programme) is not included in this total.

Capital Fund (i.e. the contingency fund of arrears remitted since 2005) accountable for 31 December 2012 amounted to a positive balance of **US dollars 3,309**. Given the circumstances, the increase of the Working Capital Fund appears crucial in order to cover the expenses of the Secretariat until the new budget is approved. In this sense, it is recalled that Members should submit their contributions within 30 days after the budget approval, and also ensure to pay their arrears, if applicable, as a matter of priority.

Budgetary expenditures under the autonomous budget in 2012

- 40. The 2012 accounts continued to be kept by FAO central accounting system (run through Oracle), coupled with the Secretariat's budget monitoring system, which tracks allocations, forecasts, obligations and expenditures of each chapter.
- 41. Table 1 below provides an overview of the financial status of the autonomous budget, i.e. total expenditures as of 31 December 2012, revealing a negative balance between income vs. adopted budget (US dollars 72,717), as well as a negative balance in budget based on income vs. expenditures (amounting US dollars 41,539). There was, instead, a positive balance between the adopted budget and expenditures (totalling US dollars 30,878).

Contributions received for 2012	1,639,563
Total income 2012 (contributions and arrears) ⁷	1,732,610
Autonomous budget adopted for 2012	1,805,027
Extra-budgetary resources for 2012 ⁸	1,161,297
Total resources	2,966,324
Total expenditures 2012	1,774,149
Balance: income vs. adopted budget	- 72,417
Balance: income vs. expenditures	- 41,539
Balance: adopted budget vs. expenditures	30,878

TABLE 1: Financial status in US dollars (as on 31 December 2012)

42. The financial status of the main budget chapters is given in Appendix 5 following standard FAO/Oracle trust fund budget line allocations. They can be divided into three broad categories: i) salaries of Secretariat staff (61.40 percent of approved autonomous budget/39 percent of total resources); ii) activities (about 30 percent of approved autonomous budget/18 percent of total resources); iii) miscellaneous expenses (1 percent of autonomous budget) and FAO service costs (4.5

⁷ Contribution and arrears from Greece received in February 2013 are accounted for 2012.

⁸ Total expenditure of ongoing baby projects and total of signed Agreements.

percent). The expenditures effected under each budget chapter and corresponding budget lines are explained in greater detail in the explanatory note on budget expenditures provided in Appendix 6.

Status of GFCM extra-budgetary resources within the FWP

43. At its thirty-first session, the Commission requested that extra-budgetary resources (i.e. voluntary contributions from Members) also be reflected in the financial statement. The situation is as follows:

Recently closed activities

European Commission Cooperative Project in support of CAQ Working Groups on Aquaculture Sustainability (InDAM Phase 2) and Siting and Carrying Capacity (SHoCMed Phase 2)

- 44. The agreement to launch SHoCMed Phase 2 signed in September 2010 between DG MARE and GFCM was concluded in December 2011. The Final Financial Report of such agreement submitted in 2012 recorded a total contribution of € 48,925.47 (approximately **US dollars 68,324**) from the donor, representing 30 percent of the project eligible costs.
- 45. The agreement to launch InDAM Phase 2 signed in November 2010 between DG MARE and GFCM was concluded in December 2011. The Final Financial Report of such agreement submitted in 2012 recorded a total contribution of € 81,211.07 (approximatively **US dollars 107,628**), which represented 50 percent of the project eligible costs.

European Commission Cooperative Project in support of stock assessment of selected species of Elasmobranchs in the GFCM area

46. The agreement between DG MARE and GFCM signed on 28 October 2011 to launch a project on "Stock assessment of selected species of Elasmobranchs in the GFCM area" was concluded in October 2012. The total contribution received from the European Commission amounted to € 55,663.68 (approximately **US dollars 75,836.30**) representing 90 percent of the project eligible costs.

Italian Cooperative Project in support of GFCM activities: "Information System for the promotion of aquaculture in the Mediterranean" (SIPAM)

47. The project on "Information System for the promotion of aquaculture in the Mediterranean" funded by the Italian Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies (MiPAAF) with a total contribution of € 30,000 (US dollars 39,498) was launched on 12 October 2011 and concluded in February 2012 with the organisation of the Thirteenth Session of SIPAM.

Ongoing activities

Italian Cooperative Project in support of GFCM activities: "Strengthening cooperation on fisheries and aquaculture management in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea" (LaMed)

48. The project on "Strengthening cooperation on fisheries and aquaculture management in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea" (LaMed), funded by the Italian Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies (MiPAAF) with a total contribution of €300,000, was launched on 1 September 2010 and has been extended until 31 April 2013. The project has two components: Component 1 "Fisheries laws and regulations in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea (LaMed-1)" and

Component 2 "Mediterranean coastal lagoons management: interactions between aquaculture and capture fisheries (LaMed -2)". The amount of **US dollars 99,863** was spent in 2012 in various expert meetings convened and consultancies on both components.

European Commission Cooperative Project in support of the Implementation of a Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) in the GFCM area

49. The agreement to launch a project on the "Implementation of a Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) in the GFCM area" was signed between DG MARE and GFCM in October 2011. Such agreement, which foresees a contribution of €120,000 (approximately US dollars 164,159) representing about 90 percent of the project eligible costs, has been extended until 8 July 2013. The amount of US dollars 60,723 was spent in 2012 for consultancies and duty travels.

European Commission Cooperative Project in support of CAQ Working Groups on Aquaculture Sustainability (InDAM Phase 3) and Siting and Carrying Capacity (SHoCMed Phase 3)

- 50. An agreement to launch SHoCMed Phase 3 was signed in November 2012 between DG MARE and GFCM. Under such agreement, DG MARE will provide a total contribution of € 63,005.10 (approximately **US dollars 81,825**), representing 30 percent of the project eligible costs. No expenses were registered in 2012.
- 51. An agreement to launch InDAM Phase 3 signed in November 2012 between DG MARE and GFCM. The Commission will receive a total contribution of € 100,842.50 (approximatively **US dollars 130,964**) from the donor, representing 50 percent of the project eligible costs. No expenses were registered in 2012.

Improvement and modernization of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean

- 52. The First Phase of the FWP activities on "Supporting Task Force activities for the improvement and modernization of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean", aimed at assisting the Commission in the identification of the necessary improvements to be brought to the GFCM Agreement and associated procedural and financial Rules, was launched in December 2011 and concluded in May 2012. It benefited of a total contribution of € 135,000 (US dollars 177,644) from the Italian Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies (MiPAAF) of which the total of US dollars 177,577 were spent between September 2011 and May 2012 for the creation of an online electronic platform, the organization of an expert meeting for the GFCM subcommittees (SAC and CAQ), four sub-regional consultations for Western/Central Mediterranean, Eastern Mediterranean and Black Sea and a validation meeting that made recommendations to the 37th Session of the Commission.
- 53. Additionally, the government of France contributed with the amount of €30,000 for selected activities to be undertaken in 2013 while the government of Italy through MiPAAF committed to supply € 30,000 in "Support to the start up phase of the first GFCM Framework Programme (2013-2018) as well as € 40,000 to "Support the work of the Task Force at sub-regional level (Vessel Monitoring System and Control Measures" for activities to be carried out in 2013.

European Commission Cooperative Project to provide further support to the work of the Task Force in view of strengthening data collection and submission frameworks for fisheries management in the GFCM area of competence and promoting the implementation of the GFCM Guidelines for multiannual management plans

- A first agreement to launch the Project "Supporting the work of the Task Force in view of: A) strengthening data collection and submission frameworks for fisheries management purposes in the GFCM area of competence and B) promoting the implementation of the GFCM Guidelines for multiannual management plans" was signed in November 2012 between DG MARE and GFCM. The Commission will receive a total contribution of € 300,000 (approximately US dollars 388,601) from the donor, representing 90 percent of the project eligible costs. The amount of US dollars 31,260 was spent in December 2012 for its initial phase.
- 55. A second agreement to launch the Project "Further support to the work of the Task Force in view of: A) strengthening data collection and submission frameworks for fisheries management purposes in the GFCM area of competence and B) promoting the implementation of the GFCM Guidelines for multiannual management plans" was signed in December 2012 between DG MARE and GFCM. The Commission will receive a total contribution of € 200,000 (approximately US dollars 258,469) from the donor, representing 90 percent of the project eligible costs. No expenses were registered in 2012.

Ministry of Environment/GFCM Mediterranean cooperation for the sustainable use of the marine biological resources

The Ministry of Environment and GFCM signed an agreement for the "Mediterranean cooperation for the sustainable use of the marine biological resources - A supportive tool for the synergic implementation of the MSFD and the ECAP Initiative" in December 2012. The former will contribute with US dollars 250,000, amounting to 76,92 percent of the project eligible costs in the course of 2013.

Extra-budgetary contributions from FAO and Italy towards running expenses of GFCM HQ

56. It is recalled that FAO Director-General had approved a voluntary contribution of € 46,000 per annum (US dollars 62,500) to cover specific running costs (water, electricity, etc.) while the host country, Italy, would contribute € 100,000 per annum, corresponding to the remaining share of the estimated total of these costs. In this respect, GFCM received and spent the contribution of US dollars 62,500 from FAO for 2012. Additionally, the amount of US dollars 45,675 was spent from the contribution received from Italy to complete the purchase of furniture and equipment for the new offices, enhace security systems and cover start-up and maintenance works as well as running costs for a total amount of US dollars 108,175

SUGGESTED ACTION FOR THE COMMISSION

57. The Commission is invited to review the administrative report and provide general guidance, particularly on issues relating to the strengthening of personnel in relation to the autonomous budget and, in doing so, to assess the remittance of contributions by Members, with a special focus on the situation and use of arrears, and on the financial statement of the autonomous budget in 2012.

List of meetings

1. Regular activities (intersessional meetings – autonomous budget)

Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC)

- Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) Fifteenth session. Italy, 8-11 April 2013
- Second meeting of the ad hoc Working Group on the Black Sea (WGBS). Bulgaria, 24-26 April 2013
- Thirteenth session of the subcommittee on Marine Environment and Ecosystems (SCMEE). Italy, 18-20 February 2013
- Thirteenth session of the subcommittee on Statistics and Information (SCSI). Italy, 18-20 February 2013
- Thirteenth session of the subcommittee on Economic and Social Sciences (SCESS). Italy, 18-20 February 2013
- Fourteenth session of the subcommittee on Stock Assessment (SCSA). Italy, 18-20 February 2013
- Working Group on Stock Assessment of Demersal Species. Croatia, 5-9 November 2012
- Working Group on Stock Assessment of Small Pelagic Species. Croatia, 5-9 November 2012
- Workshop on Mediterranean gears, fishing technology and selectivity in collaboration with CopeMed. Morocco, 26-30 November 2012
- Workshop on age determination of elasmobranchs in GFCM area. Turkey, 8-12 October 2012

Committee on Aquaculture (CAQ)

- Committee on Aquaculture (CAQ) Eighth session. France, 13-15 March 2013
- Ad hoc WGBS meeting on Black Sea aquaculture species diversification. Turkey, 21-22 February 2013
- Training Workshop on site selection, allocated zones for aquaculture and site management for coastal marine aquaculture (WGSC-SHoCMed). Turkey, 18-21 February 2013
- Ad hoc meeting on Environmental monitoring scheme for Mediterranean and Black Sea marine aquaculture activities. Morocco, 7-8 February 2013
- Training Workshop on site selection, allocated zones for aquaculture and site management for coastal marine aquaculture (WGSC-SHoCMed). Morocco, 4-7 February 2013

2. Task Force and Framework Programme activities (extra-budgetary funds)

- Second validation meeting of the Task Force. Croatia, 10-11 May 2013
- Sub-regional workshop on data collection for the Black Sea. Bulgaria, 22-24 April 2013
- Sub-regional workshop on data collection for Western, Central and Eastern Mediterranean. Italy, 25-27 March 2013
- Sub-regional workshop on data collection and to test the feasibility of implementing multiannual management plans in the Adriatic Sea. Croatia, 20-22 March 2013
- Workshop on IUU, including MCS and fleet, in the Black Sea. Turkey, 25-27 February 2013

3. Cooperation with Members and partner organisations

- High level meeting with the Government of Monaco to discuss strategic collaboration and the First GFCM Framework Programme. Monaco, 6 May 2013
- Coordination meeting with the European Commission. Belgium, 16 April 2013
- Meeting with CIHEAM to discuss the possibility of a Memorandum of Understanding and collaboration between the two organisations. Italy, 31 January 1 February 2013
- Meeting with the Marine Stewardship Council on fostering joint cooperation. Italy, 9 July 2012 and 12 April 2013.
- High level meeting with the Government of France to discuss strategic collaboration and the First GFCM Framework Programme. France, 16 November 2012
- High level meeting with Ms. Maria Damanaki, EU Commissioner for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, and EU delegation. Italy, 8 November 2012
- High level meeting with the Honourable George Pullicino, Minister for Resources and Rural Affairs of Malta. Italy, 20 October 2012

In addition, the GFCM hosted a number of external meetings at its headquarters in Palazzo Blumenstihl, amongst which an FAO meeting of the Office of Corporate Communications and External Relations (OCE), the EU and others.

4. Meetings at which GFCM was represented in 2013

- MedSudMed Coordination Committee. Malta, 25-27 April 2013
- RAC MED Working Group 3. Athens, Greece, 22-23 April 2013 (attended by SAC Chair)
- ACCOBAMS Coordination Meeting project on cetaceans and other threatened species. Morocco, 3-4 April 2013
- EastMed Coordination Committee. Italy, 4-5 April 2013
- AdriaMed Coordination Committee. Croatia, 18-19 March 2013
- Salon Halieutis 2013. Morocco, 13-17 February 2013
- UNEP/MAP Correspondence Group on GES & targets of ECAP and case study for EAF. Italy, 7-8 February 2013

5. Meetings at which GFCM was represented in 2012

• 1st Steering Committee Meeting for the Mediterranean & Black Sea Regional DataBase (Med&BS-RDB) within EU-DCF, GFCM HO, Rome, Italy, 29-30 November 2012

- Forum on MPAs in the Mediterranean. Turkey, 25-28 November 2012
- Ocean acidification impacts on fisheries and aquaculture economics and industries. Monaco, 11-14 November 2012
- RAC MED General Assembly. Rome, Italy, 5-6 November 2012
- Black Sea Day 2012. Batumi, Georgia, 31 October 2012
- STECF EWG-WGBS meeting on Black Sea stock assessments. Ispra, Italy, 8-12 October 2012

6. Selected Meetings at which GFCM was not represented

- CopeMed Coordination Committee. Spain, March 2013
- Black Sea Commission 28th Regular Meeting. Turkey, November 2012
- UN Negotiations for General Assembly annual resolutions on the Law of the Sea. USA, November 2012
- COMFISH Black Sea workshop on communication with stakeholders. Bulgaria, November 2012
- EMECS 10 MEDCOAST 2013 Joint Conference Global Congress on Integrated Coastal Management: Lessons Learned to Address New Challenges. Turkey, November 2012
- ICES/COEXIST "Best practice guidelines for spatial planning to integrate fisheries, aquaculture and other uses in the coastal zone". Norway, September 2012
- CAC Fish Technical Advisory Committee. Ukraine, September 2012
- MARA International Workshop on Offshore Mariculture. Turkey, October 2012
- MEDCOAST Ninth International Training Workshop on Integrated Coastal Management in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. Turkey, October 2012
- ICCAT Reunion du Comité Permanent pour la Recherche et les Statistiques. Spain, October 2012
- World Aquaculture Conference. Prague, Czech Republic, September 2012

List of publications

1. Grey literature available on line:

- Reports of the meetings of the SAC subsidiary bodies (10 reports).
- Reports of the meetings of the CAQ (5 reports)
- Other reports (5 reports)

2. Published documents:

- Report of the thirty-sixth session of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM). Marrakech, Morocco, 14–19 May 2012. GFCM Report N° 36. FAO, Rome, 2012 (available in Arabic, English, French)
- Elasmobranchs of the Mediterranean and Black sea: status, ecology and biology. Bibliographic analysis. Studies and Reviews. General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean. No. 91. FAO, Rome. 2012. (by Bradai M.N., Saidi B. and Enajjar S.)
- Review of jellyfish blooms in the Mediterranean and Black Sea. Studies and Reviews. General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean. No. 92. FAO, Rome. 2013. (by Boero F.)
- Indicators for sustainable aquaculture in Mediterranean and Black Sea countries. Guide for the use of indicators to monitor sustainable development of aquaculture. Studies and Reviews. General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean. No. 93. FAO, Rome. 2013 (by Fezzardi D. et al., 2013)

3. Documents in the pipeline to be issued in 2013:

- Report of the fourteenth session of the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC), FAO
 Headquarters, Rome, Italy, 8–11 April 2013. FAO, Fisheries Report N° R1042 (Bi). FAO,
 Rome, 2013
- Report of the eighth session of the Committee on Aquaculture (CAQ), Paris, France, 8–10 March 2011. FAO Fisheries Report N° R1043 (Bi), Rome
- Status of alien species in the Black and Mediterranean Seas. Studies and Reviews. General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean. No. 87. (by Öztürk, B.)
- Age determination of elasmobranchs, with special reference to Mediterranean species: A technical manual Studies and Reviews. General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean. No. 94. FAO, Rome. 2013 (by Campana S.).
- Mediterranean coastal lagoons: sustainable management and interactions among aquaculture, capture fisheries and environment. Studies and Reviews. General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean. (by Cataudella S., Crosetti D. and Massa F., eds.)
- Site selection and carrying capacity in the Mediterranean marine aquaculture: key issues. Studies and Reviews. General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean. N° XXX (by Borg J.A., Crosetti D. and Massa F., eds).
- Establishment of allocated zones for aquaculture (AZA). Guide for establishing coastal zones dedicated to aquaculture in the Mediterranean countries. Studies and Reviews. General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean. (by Macias J.C. et al.)

- Fisheries legislation of GFCM Mediterranean and Black Sea Members. Studies and Reviews. General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean. (by Scovazzi T., Samier C.)
- Review of the Black Sea Fisheries. Studies and Reviews. General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean. (by Colloca F., Coppola R.)
- Draft Compendium of GFCM decisions (by GFCM Secretariat)

Status of acceptance of the GFCM Agreement as amended in 1997

Members	Acceptance			
Albania	10 October 2003			
Algeria	26 April 2005			
Bulgaria	29 November 2006			
Croatia	28 November 2003			
Cyprus	3 August 2000			
Egypt	-			
European Union	27 July 2000			
France	30 October 2002			
Greece	29 August 2002			
Italy	23 August 2000			
Israel	-			
Japan	30 July 2004			
Lebanon	4 March 2005			
Libya	23 December 2003			
Malta	23 December 1999			
Monaco	12 June 2001			
Morocco	24 July 2006			
Romania	1 October 2003			
Montenegro	31 January 2008			
Slovenia	29 April 2004			
Spain	15 February 2002			
Syrian Arab Republic*	-			
Tunisia	30 June 2003			
Turkey	5 June 2000			

^{*} Refer to Paragraph 33 of this document.

STATUS OF CONTRIBUTIONS AS AT 31 DECEMBER 20129

GFCM Members	Outstanding until 2011	Contribution due for 2012	Received as 2012 contribution	Arrears received for 2012	Total income received for 2012	Outstanding until 2012
ALBANIA	0.00	16,103.00	16,103.00		16,103.00	0.00
ALGERIA	0.00	63,180.00	63,180.00		63,180.00	0.00
BULGARIA	0.00	12,060.00	12,060.00		12,060.00	0.00
CROATIA	0.00	75,306.00	75,306.00		75,306.00	0.00
CYPRUS	0.00	49,965.00	49,965.00		49,965.00	0.00
EGYPT	0.00	70,470.00	70,470.00		70,470.00	0.00
EUROPEAN COMMISSION	0.00	572,810.00	572,810.00		572,810.00	0.00
FRANCE	0.00	92,083.00	92,083.00		92,083.00	0.00
GREECE ¹⁰	93,047.00	49,965.00	49,965.00	93,047.00	143,012.00	0.00
ISRAEL						
ITALY ¹¹	-1,672.20	92,083.00	84,814.82		84,814.42	5,598.38
JAPAN	0.00	92,251.00	92,251.00		92,251.00	0.00
LEBANON	0.00	14,142.00				14,142.00
LIBYA	43,555.84	73,758.00				117,313.84
MALTA	91.00	49,965.00				50,056.00
MONACO	77,767.00	7,848.00	7,848.00			77,767.00
MONTENEGRO ¹²	-5,919.60	8,531.00	2,611.40		2,611.40	0.00
MOROCCO	0.00	30,426.00	30,426.00		30,426.00	0.00
ROMANIA	0.00	12,060.00	12,060.00		12,060.00	0.00
SERBIA ¹³	8,785.42					8,785.42
SLOVENIA	0.00	49,965.00	49,965.00		49,965.00	0.00
SPAIN	0.00	92,083.00	92,083.00		92,083.00	0.00
SYRIA	61,005.00	14,213.00				75,218.00
TUNISIA ¹⁴	-198.70	68,796.00	68,597.30		68,597.30	0.00
TURKEY	0.00	196,964.00	196,964.00		196,964.00	0.00
TOTAL	276,460.76	1,805,027	1,639,562.52	93,047.00	1,732,609.52	348,880.64

Contributions received until February 2013 and accounted for fiscal year 2012, excluding Israel
Contribution received in February 2013
The contribution received from Italy in 2011 exceeded the amount due by US dollars 1,672

Partial contribution received from Montenegro in September 2011

Outstanding contribution from Serbia following its withdrawal in 2008

The contribution received from Tunisia in 2011 exceeded the amount due by US dollars 198.70

Status of income and expenditure as at 31 December 2012

Autonomous Budget	Budget adopted in 2012	Budget based on income (*)	Expenditures 2012	Balance (expenditures vs. adopted budget)	Balance (expenditures vs. budget based on income)
ADMINISTRATION					
Executive Secretary, D-1	245,000		256,461	11,461	
Deputy Executive Secretary, P-5	0		0	0	
Senior Aquaculture Officer, P-5	238,000		237,279	-721	
Fishery Resources Officer – P-4 (5 months)	80,000		90,164	10,164	
Fishery Information Officer – P-2	135,000		156,498	21,498	
Data Compliance Officer – P-2	115,000		123,199	8,199	
Scientific Editor/Translator – P-2 (3 months)	35,000		31,404	-3,506	
Sub-total Professional salaries	848,000		895,006	47,006	
Programmer/Systems Analyst G-5	90,000		90,516	516	
Bilingual Secretary, G-5	102,000		99,048	-2,952	
Administrative Assistant G-3	68,000		69,280	1,280	
Sub-total General Service salaries	260,000		258,844	-1,156	
Total Administration	1,108,000		1,153,850	-45,850	
ACTIVITIES					
Temporary human resources (Security Guards, Office Helper, overtime)	100,000		98,967	-1,033	
Consultancies (editor, WG moderators, Task Force/FWP)	52,197		48,714	-3,483	
Travel (including interpreters and Task Force/FWP)	220,000		210,944	-9,056	
Chargeback (including interpretation)	160,000		152,569	-7,431	
Training	15,000		1,045	-13,955	
Equipment	10,000		7,118	-2,882	
Operating costs and overheads	25,000		15,935	-8,306	
Contracts (including publications)	20,000		4,591	-15,409	
Total activities	602,197		540,643	-61,554	
AUTONOMOUS BUDGET	1,710,197		1,694,493	15,704	
Miscellaneous (1%)	17,102		3,257	-13,845	
FAO servicing costs (4.5%)	77,728		76,399	-1,329	
TOTAL AUTONOMOUS BUDGET	1,805,027	1,639,563	1,774,149**	-30,879	-41,539

^(*)Adjustment of the income-based budget was only applied for the activities sub-chapter (**)The total of expenditure of the Commission is given by expenditures borne by GFCM autonomous budget (US dollars 1,774,149) along with GFCM running costs covered by the government of Italy and FAO (US dollars 108,175), totalling US dollars 1,882,323

Explanatory note on budget expenditures per chapter

Below are explanations on expenditures recorded for the fiscal year 2012 related to the budget adopted at the Thirty-sixth Session, as adjusted to incorporate amendments decided by the Commission and with the application of the allocation factor for each budget line, as shown in Appendix 5. The financial operations and status by chapter are based on Appendix 5, which presents incomes and expenditures following FAO/Oracle standard budget line allocation. Total expenditures comprise payments until 31 December 2012, including expenditures related to the organization of the Fourteenth Session of SAC held in Sophia and the Thirty-sixth Session of GFCM held at Marrakech. Other expenditures (e.g. salaries and expenditures) committed from January 2013 are not accounted for, as they apply to the 2013 fiscal year.

Chapter 1: Administration

This chapter covers salaries and remuneration of the Secretariat staff, including certain overhead costs and allowances (e.g. basic medical plan, pension scheme, dependant's allowance, home leave, etc.) and is subject to fluctuations (positive or negative) in post-adjustment (cost of living in Rome), which is difficult to fully anticipate in the forecast budget. In addition, when adjusting the original (adopted) budget to the income-based (real) budget, the budget lines for staff salaries remain constant as related expenditures are incompressible.

Professional staff. The first sub-chapter includes expenditures for the six staff in the professional and higher categories (Executive Secretary, Senior Aquaculture Officer, Fishery Resource Officer¹⁵, Fishery Information Officer, Data Compliance Officer and Scientific Editor/Translator¹⁶). In relation to the adopted budget (see Appendix 5), the salary expenditures for the professional staff produced a negative balance of **US dollars 47,006**, mainly due to the fluctuations mentioned above.

Administrative staff. The sub-chapter covers expenditures for Secretariat staff in the General Service category (amount forecast for the Programmer/Systems Analyst, Administrative Clerk and Administrative/Financial Assistant). The budget line was not fully used, given that the post of Administrative/Financial Assistant (G-5) was promoted to Programme Associate in January 2013 rather than October 2012. This budget chapter presented, consequently, a positive balance of **US dollars 1,156.**

Chapter 2: Activities

Temporary human resources: The allocations for temporary staff and overtime, which resulted in the positive balance of **US dollars 1,033**, were mainly used on the Pool of temporary Security Guards, Office Assistant and Overtime. These resources were needed to ensure security coverage on GFCM premises, support the logistic activities related to the preparation of statutory meetings (Sub-Committees and Coordinatio meetings of SAC, the Fourteenth Session of SAC, and the Thirty-sixth Session of GFCM), as well as in administrative tasks.

16 3 months

^{15 5} months

Consultancies: This sub-chapter, which resulted in a positive balance of **US dollars 3,483**, covers the fees of consultants, i.e. contracted specialists (project formulation and implementation, statistical data quality, etc.), moderators and resource experts for meetings as well as technical backstopping provided in the context of GFCM Task Force and Framework Programme.

Travel: This sub-chapter covers all travel (tickets and daily subsistence allowances) of the GFCM Bureau, Secretariat staff, Coordinators, interpreters, consultants, selected national experts and resource persons recruited for selected activities of GFCM Task Force and Framework Programme, technical meetings of the SAC and CAQ subsidiary bodies, the Fourteenth Session of SAC, and Thirty-sixth Session of GFCM. Total expenditures for this budget line show a positive balance of **US dollars 9,056**.

Chargeback: This budget line covers costs for interpreters (excluding travel and per diem) serving the the Fourteenth Session of SAC, and Thirty-sixth Session of GFCM, translation and internal printing of Session documents. It also covers official translation and as indicated above along with the deployment and loan of equipment for technical meetings. The positive balance (**US dollars 7,431**) is attributable to the recruitment of local interpreters for the 14th Session of SAC along with the slightly reduced rates applied by FAO Interpretation Group.

Training: Language and IT training of Secretariat staff scheduled for 2012 were partially carried out through individual and class lessons. The balance for this budget line resulted in the positive amount of **US dollars 13,955** due to the increased work commitments of the Secretariat and the difficulty of organizing ad-hoc training at Palazzo Blumenstihl.

Equipment: This sub-chapter comprises budget lines for the procurement of expendables and non-expendables. Expenditures included the purchase of various items (e.g. flags and country name plates) for meetings, security equipment, special software packages and development libraries for data analysis and presentation purposes as well computers, laptop and printers. The balance of this sub-chapter results in a positive amount of **US dollars 2,882**.

General operating costs, overheads and miscellaneous expenses: These sub-chapters cover the cost of two servers to host certain GFCM computer applications and databases as well as rent of equipment (microphones and headphones) for meetings held at GFCM HQ. Telephone bills (for land and mobiles) were charged to FAO until August 2012 but are covered by GFCM autonomous budget from then onward (billing is foreseen in 2013). Overheads and miscellaneous expenses include support costs for the organization of meetings of SAC subsidiary bodies and contingencies, including the dispatch by Pouch and DHL of meeting documents as well as the mailing of official correspondence (e.g. call for funds letters, letters of invitation to statutory meetings, GFCM circular letters, etc.), the purchase of stationery through FAO, leasing cost of photopiers, transportation of goods to GFCM HQ, etc. The balance of this sub-chapter results in the positive amount of US dollars 8,306 due to credits received from bills charged subsequently to other funding sources.

Contracts (including scientific publications). Expenditures related to preparation of the leaflet dedicated to the 60th Anniversary of GFCM along with GFCM e-compendium and translation/editing of selected documents in Arabic are included in this sub-chapter, which shows a positive balance of **US\$ 15,409**.

As reflected in the Balance (expenditures vs adopted budget) of Appendix 5, it could be concluded that the over expenditure in **Administration** (for a total of **US dollars 45,850**) was compensated by savings in **Activities** for the amount of **US dollars 61,554.**

Chapter 3: FAO support costs

Miscellaneous: This budget line (1 percent of total available budget), used for hospitality and miscellaneous expenses produced a positive balance of **US dollars 13,845**.

FAO Servicing Costs: FAO support costs, calculated at 4.5% of the original budget for 2012, in accordance with GFCM Financial Regulation III.5, resulted in a positive balance of **US dollars 1,329** due to the fact that the whole contribution had not been received.

Finally, it should be noted that the Balance column of Appendix 5 should be read as "before budget revision" (i.e. compensation between positive and negative budget lines), as the purpose of this presentation is to highlight budget lines whose initial allocation was insufficient and thus indicate where increases might be considered in the draft budget proposal for 2013 (document CAF:IV/2013/9).