

EUROPEAN UNION PROPOSAL FOR GFCM RECOMMENDATION
ON PRECAUTIONARY CONSERVATION MEASURES PENDING THE
DEVELOPMENT AND ADOPTION OF GFCM MULTIANNUL MANAGEMENT
PLANS FOR RELEVANT FISHERIES AT SUB-REGIONAL LEVELS IN THE
GFCM AREA

The General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM),

RECALLING that the objectives of the Agreement establishing the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) are to promote the development, conservation, rational management and best utilization of living marine resources;

RECALLING the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development of 2002 and in particular its Plan of Implementation;

RECALLING the Declaration of the Third Ministerial Conference on the Sustainable Development of the Fisheries in the Mediterranean held in Venice, Italy, on 25 and 26 November 2003;

REAFFIRMING the principles of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and recalling the precautionary and ecosystem approach to fishery management;

RECALLING Recommendation GFCM/2002/1 which urges the control of fishing effort and the improvement of the exploitation pattern of demersal fisheries;

RECALLING Recommendation GFCM/27/2002/1 on the management of selected demersal and small pelagic species;

RECALLING Recommendation GFCM/30/2006/1 on the management of certain fisheries exploiting demersal and small pelagic and calling to develop a management programme of fishing effort in several geographical sub-areas as well as in adjacent sub-areas as relevant;

CONSIDERING that fishing mortality should be kept below safe thresholds to ensure long-term high yields while limiting the risk of stock collapse and guaranteeing stable and more viable fisheries

CONSIDERING that the small pelagic fishery is multispecies and that management decisions should therefore be taken considering at least both sardine and anchovy;

CONSIDERING that small pelagic stocks play a fundamental ecological role in transmitting biomass and energy from short trophic webs towards higher trophic levels;

CONSIDERING the socio-economic importance of fisheries exploiting small pelagic stocks and the need to ensure their sustainability

CONSIDERING that certain fisheries management measures need to be revised and adapted to the evolution of both the state of exploited stocks and of the scientific knowledge and that an appropriate method to this end shall be established;

CONSIDERING that the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) in its recurrent scientific advices consider that several stocks are subject to high overfishing and that sustainable management requires measures aimed at controlling or reducing the fishing effort and to improve the exploitation pattern safeguarding the juveniles;

RECALLING Resolution GFCM/2009/1 on the management of demersal fisheries in the GFCM area resolving that unless proven unnecessary by sound scientific advice, a reduction of a minimum of 10% of bottom trawling fishing effort shall be applied in all GFCM areas;

RECALLING the Guidelines on a general management framework and presentation of scientific information for multiannual management plans for sustainable fisheries in the GFCM Area agreed at its 36th Session (hereinafter named GFCM guidelines for management plans);

CONSIDERING that preventing actions are needed to counteract and control excessive fishing mortality levels pending the development and adoption of the multiannual management plans for the relevant stocks and fisheries concerned;

DETERMINED to ensure the long-term conservation and sustainable use of exploited marine living resources with particular attention to straddling fish stocks and on fish stocks exploited by more than one Member of the GFCM;

ADOPTS, in conformity with the provisions of paragraph 1 (b) and (h) of Article III and article V of GFCM Agreement that:

PART I FOSTERING MULTIANNUAL MANAGEMENT PLANS

1. Members and Cooperating non-Members of GFCM (hereafter referred to as CPCs), whose vessels exploit either the small pelagic or demersal stocks of the species listed in Annex I and that may be exploited by more than one CPC in some GFCM Geographic Subareas (GSAs), agree to develop, whenever advisable and through regional and sub-regional cooperation, joint fisheries management measures including, in particular, the development of multiannual management plans for the mixed fisheries concerned as identified in the GFCM guidelines. Such management plans should be subsequently adopted by the GFCM.

The list of species in Annex I is not deemed to be exhaustive and may be revised by GFCM on the basis of SAC advice. Notwithstanding Annex I, upon request from a CPC the SAC may include additional relevant species, in the analysis of different management scenarios for the development of multiannual management plans for the fisheries concerned at sub-regional level.

The management measures shall be based on the evaluation of different management scenarios by SAC and shall be designed in line with the GFCM guidelines for management plans and, in particular, with the following general objectives:

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The management measures shall be based on the evaluation of different management scenarios by SAC and shall be designed in line with the GFCM guidelines for management plans and, in particular, with the following general objectives:

- to counteract and/or to prevent overfishing with a view to ensure the sustainable economic viability of fisheries,
 - to provide high long-term yields
 - to restore and/or to maintain, to the extent possible, the stock size of harvested species at least at levels which can produce the maximum sustainable yield
 - to guarantee a low risk of stocks falling outside safe biological limits,
 - to ensure protection of biodiversity
 - to avoid undermining ecosystems' structure and functioning
2. The coordination and cooperation among concerned CPCs, as referred to in paragraph 1, shall be further promoted with a view for GFCM to adopt further multiannual management plans for fisheries concerning more than one CPC as from 2014.
 3. Notwithstanding provisions under paragraph 1, fisheries exploiting marine living resources exclusively distributed in territorial waters or in waters under national jurisdiction of a coastal State, which are not exploited by more than one CPC, shall not be included in a GFCM multiannual plan, unless specifically requested by the concerned CPC.
 4. CPCs shall ensure:
 - a. the quality and completeness of the primary data collected under their national programmes, and for the detailed and aggregated data derived therefrom which are transmitted to the GFCM Secretariat for SAC scientific analysis as a basis for advice on different management scenarios for sustainable fisheries
 - b. an adequate annual scientific monitoring and data gathering both on the exploitation levels of their fisheries and of the status of the marine living resources exploited by them. To this end appropriate data shall be collected, analysed and made available at SAC working groups and Subcommittees meetings for assessment of the stocks.
 5. Notwithstanding data submission through the TASK I statistical matrix as requested by recommendation GFCM/33/2009/3, the GFCM Secretariat, on behalf of SAC, may request, through specific calls, the detailed and aggregated data needed to perform the scientific and impact assessment analysis..
The GFCM Secretariat with the assistance of the SAC, and on the basis of advice by its Subcommittees, is requested to provide the format for the data submissions.
 6. With a view to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of the SAC scientific advice-making process, the CPCs may coordinate themselves at sub-regional level to facilitate the sharing of data and carrying out of preliminary scientific analysis to be subsequently presented and discussed at the SAC working groups and its Subcommittees. Scientific analysis done outside the SAC working groups must be presented using the SAC Assessment Forms including the input and output tables together with the diagnostic of the method(s) applied.

PART II
TRANSITIONAL MEASURES ON FISHING EFFORT

7. Pending the adoption of multiannual plans by the GFCM, CPCs commit to apply, for the first time in 2015, an overall reduction of the fishing effort both for bottom trawling and for bottom-set nets carried out in the following GSAs: 1,3,5,6,7,9,12,13,14,15,16,17,18,25,26.

The reduction above mentioned shall be counted with respect to the fishing effort deployed in the reference period as indicated below in paragraph 10 and notified by the Members to the GFCM via, inter alia, the TASK 1 statistical matrix.

8. GFCM shall adopt in 2015 specific modalities to reduce the fishing effort as stipulated in paragraph 7 and, with a view to bring the levels of exploitation in line with the maximum sustainable yields as advised by the SAC. Such a reduction shall not be less than 10 % in the first two years of application
9. By way of derogation, the provisions of paragraphs 7 and 8 do not apply to a CPC in case they have adopted a seasonal ban of at least consecutive 4 months (90 consecutive working days) for the bottom trawl fishing fleet (hereinafter called "bottom trawl Operational Units), both in territorial and international waters, unless otherwise requested by the scientific advice. However, such derogation shall not apply if the concerned bottom trawl Operational Units may operate in all other months open to trawl fishing with a maximum of 200 fishing days in the year.
10. The reference period to be used for the reduction of bottom trawl and of bottom-set nets fishing effort as stipulated in paragraphs 7 and 8 above correspond to the average fishing effort over 3 consecutive years to be chosen in the timeframe of 2004-2013.
11. On the basis of information provided by CPCs via the TASK 1 statistical matrix as compiled by the GFCM Secretariat, COC and SAC should monitor the fishing effort of demersal fisheries together with their impact on demersal resources, with a view to include such fisheries under the provisions of paragraphs 7 and 8, if necessary and not yet done.
12. Provisions of paragraph 8 are without prejudice to the number of bottom trawl fishing vessels
13. CPCs shall communicate to the GFCM Executive Secretary not later than 1 February 2014 the activities in terms of average "fishing days" carried out by each bottom trawl Operational Unit and by the bottom-set nets in each year of the reference period indicated in paragraph 10. For the purpose of this recommendation "Fishing day" means any continuous period of 24 hours, or part thereof, during which a vessel is present within a specific GSA and absent from the port. The GFCM Secretariat shall report this information to the SAC for its consideration and advice at its 16th annual session in 2014.

PART III

IMPROVEMENT OF THE EXPLOITATION PATTERN

14. CPCs shall promote more selective fisheries to improve their exploitation patterns with a view to reduce and eliminate, to the extent possible, discards while avoiding capture of juveniles at least below a certain minimum conservation size.
15. A marine organism which is smaller than the minimum conservation size specified in Annex 2 (hereinafter undersized marine organism) shall not be caught, retained on board, transhipped, transferred, sold, displayed or offered for sale.
16. The size of marine organism shall be measured in accordance with the following criteria:
 - a. total length (from the tip of the snout to the end of the tailfin) for finfishes,
 - b. For crustaceans
 - i. either the length of carapace, parallel to the midline, from the back of either eye socket to the midpoint of the distal dorsal edge of the carapaceor
 - ii. the total length, from the tip of the rostrum to the rear end of the telson not including the setae where present.
17. If more than one method of measuring size is permitted, the marine organisms shall be deemed to be of the required size if at least one of the stipulated measurements is equal to or greater than the relevant minimum conservation size.
18. Provisions under paragraph 15 above are without prejudice to stricter measures adopted by a CPC.
19. Notwithstanding paragraphs 14 and 15 when due to unavoidable circumstances undersized marine organisms have been actually caught, the master of the catching vessel shall record those catches of undersized specimens (estimated weight and numbers) in a specific section of the logbook.
20. Without prejudice to provisions foreseen in paragraphs 15 and 16 when a system of avoiding discards and obligation to land all catches has been established by a CPC, the master of the fishing vessel will not be allowed to discard those catches and shall therefore land the fish caught independently of the size of the fish caught in line with the provisions stipulated by the CPC. All quantities landed shall be recorded and shall not be displayed, offered for sale or used for human consumption.
21. CPCs implementing a landing obligations scheme shall notify its content and characteristics to the GFCM Secretariat in advance of the subsequent GFCM plenary session with a view to inform the other Parties.

ANNEX I: INDICATIVE LIST OF SPECIES* THAT MAY BE INCLUDED IN REGIONAL OR SUB-REGIONAL MULTIANNUAL MANAGEMENT PLANS BY FISHERY(IES).

<i>Aristaeomorpha foliacea</i>	ARS	Giant red shrimp
<i>Aristeus antennatus</i>	ARA	Blue and red shrimp
<i>Coryphaena hippurus</i>	DOL	Common dolphinfish
<i>Dicentrarchus labrax</i>	BSS	Sea bass
<i>Eledone cirrhosa</i>	OCM	Horned octopus
<i>Eledone moschata</i>	OCM	Musky octopus
<i>Engraulis encrasicolus</i>	ANE	Anchovy
<i>Eutrigla gurnardus</i>	GUG	Grey gurnard
<i>Helicolenus dactylopterus</i>	BRF	Rockfish
<i>Illex coindetii</i>	SQM	Broadtail squid
<i>Lophius budegassa</i>	ANK	Black-bellied angler
<i>Lophius piscatorius</i>	MON	Anglerfish
<i>Merlangius merlangus</i>	WHG	Whiting
<i>Merluccius merluccius</i>	HKE	European hake
<i>Micromesistius poutassou</i>	WHB	Blue whiting
<i>Mugilidae</i>	MUL	Grey mullets
<i>Mullus barbatus</i>	MUT	Red mullet
<i>Mullus surmuletus</i>	MUR	Striped red mullet
<i>Mustelus mustelus</i>		smoothound
<i>Nephrops norvegicus</i>	NEP	Norway lobster
<i>Pagellus acarne</i>	SBA	Axillary seabream
<i>Pagellus bogaraveo</i>	SBR	Blackspot seabream
<i>Pagellus erythrinus</i>	PAC	Common Pandora
<i>Parapenaeus longirostris</i>	DPS	Deep water rose shrimp
<i>Phycis blennoides</i>	GFB(Greater forkbeard

<i>Psetta maxima</i>	TUR	Turbot
<i>Raja clavata</i>	RJC	Thornback ray
<i>Raja asterias</i>		Starry ray
<i>Raja clavata</i>		Thornback ray
<i>Raja miraletus</i>		Brown ray
<i>Rapana venosa</i>	RPW	Rapa whelk
<i>Sardina pilchardus</i>	PIL	Sardine
<i>Scomber spp.</i>	MAZ	Mackerel
<i>Sepia officinalis</i>	CTC	Common cuttlefish
<i>Solea solea</i>	SOL	Common sole
<i>Spicara smaris</i>	SPC	Picarel
<i>Sprattus sprattus</i>	SPR	Sprat
<i>Squalus acanthias</i>	DGS	Piked dogfish
<i>Squilla mantis</i>	MTS	Spottail mantis squillids
<i>Trachurus mediterraneus</i>	HMM	Mediterranean horse mackerel
<i>Trachurus trachurus</i>	HOM	Horse mackerel
<i>Trigla lucerna</i> (= <i>Chelidonichthys lucerna</i>)	GUU	Tub gurnard
<i>Trisopterus minutus capelanus</i>	POD	Poor cod

* Subject to further advice from the SAC

ANNEX II: Minimum conservation size of marine organisms

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	Minimum size
1. Fishes		
<i>Engraulis encrasicolus</i> *	<u>European anchovy</u>	9 cm
<i>Merluccius merluccius</i>	<u>Hake</u>	20 cm
<i>Mullus</i> spp.	<u>Red mullets</u>	11 cm
<i>Pagellus bogaraveo</i>	<u>Red sea-bream</u>	33 cm
<i>Pagellus erythrinus</i>	<u>Common pandora</u>	15 cm
<i>Sardina pilchardus</i> **	<u>European sardine</u>	11 cm
<i>Solea solea</i>	<u>Common sole</u>	20 cm
2. Crustaceans		
<i>Nephrops norvegicus</i>	<u>Norway lobster</u>	20 mm CL 70 mm TL
<i>Parapenaeus longirostris</i>	<u>Deep water rose shrimp</u>	20 mm CL

(*) Anchovy: CPCs may convert the minimum size into 110 specimens per kg;

(**) Sardine: CPCs may convert the minimum size into 55 specimens per kg;